

RESURRECTION LUTHERAN CHURCH
765 J. Clyde Morris Boulevard, Newport News, VA 23601-1513

CONSTITUTION

Adopted: May 31, 2009

Updated: May 16, 2010

PREAMBLE

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should live and share the Gospel message to the whole world (Jn. 15:1-16; Lk. 24:44-53), conforming their lives and congregations to the Word of God in doctrine and practice (Gal. 1:6-8; 5:16-26; 2 Tim. 4:1-5), and doing all things decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40) that the mission of the Church may be accomplished.

Therefore, we, the members of this congregation, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Resurrection Lutheran Church, located in Newport News, Virginia.

ARTICLE II – SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod as long as the synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards as set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation shall be:

- A.** To preach, teach, share and study the Word of God and administer the Sacraments according to the confessional standard in Article IV.
- B.** To establish and foster Christian fellowship and love with all Christians.
- C.** To be in Christ's mission by reaching out to all of the world with forgiveness, understanding, encouragement, and love.

ARTICLE IV – CONFESSIONS

The congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and without error in the original manuscripts. The Bible is the only source of special revelation for the church. The congregation also and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These confessional writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord. All doctrine, teachings and practices of this congregation shall conform to, and be consistent with, this doctrinal standard.

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the congregation includes the following:

A. Baptized Membership

Baptized members are all members who have been baptized in the name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

B. Communicant Membership

1. Qualifications. Communicant members are those:

- a. Who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- b. Who accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, and witness to the same in word and life.
- c. Who subscribe to Article IV of this Constitution.
- d. Who permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred.
- e. Who, under the Lordship of Christ, constantly avoid associations which deny this Lordship.

2. Responsibilities:

- a. Attend divine services faithfully.
- b. Partake of the Lord's Supper frequently.

- c. Contribute regularly and faithfully.
- d. Engage in fellowship with one another.

C. Voting Membership

All communicant members, 18 years and older, who sign the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation and who are accepted by the Voters Assembly of the Congregation shall be entitled to vote.

ARTICLE VI – CONGREGATIONAL POSITIONS

A. The Office of the Pastor

The pastoral office of this congregation, headed by the Senior Pastor and including any called associate or assistant pastor, youth pastor, vicar, or other called commissioned officer, shall be conferred upon such candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article IV of this Constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

B. Congregational Elected Positions and Administrative Boards

The elected positions of this congregation shall be such positions and administrative boards as the Bylaws of this congregation shall prescribe.

ARTICLE VII – POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A. General

The congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all organizations within the congregation shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the congregation. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article IV).

B. Right of Calling

The right of calling pastors shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

C. Right to Elect Officials

The right to elect Officials of the congregation shall be vested in the Voters Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

D. Powers of Elected or Appointed Officials or Committees

Congregational Officials or Committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them, and whatever power may have been delegated to them may be altered by the voters.

E. Removal from Office

Any official or pastor may be removed from office by the congregation by two-thirds majority vote in Christian and lawful order for one of the following causes: persistent adherence to false doctrine, immoral behavior, and inability to perform his/their official duties or willful neglect of them. This action shall be taken only after the person or pastor has been pre-advised of the charges preferred against him/them and given opportunity to answer such charges. The Circuit Counselor and District President should be advised of removal procedure against the pastor, and removal action shall be done only in consultation with such officials.

F. Rights and Powers

Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided on the basis of the confessional standard (Article IV) under the direction of the pastor(s) and the Board of Elders. All other matters shall be decided by the voting membership present at a properly convened meeting of the Voters Assembly, by a simple majority unless otherwise specified by this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII – PROPERTY RIGHTS

Resurrection Lutheran Church is a corporate entity under the provisions of the incorporation laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. This congregation may acquire, hold title to, and manage real estate and other property as it may deem necessary to accomplish its purposes as a congregation, and may sell or dispose of such real estate and other property or any part thereof. This congregation shall have all the rights and powers that are granted by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia to religious organizations. If at any time a separation should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall remain with the voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article IV of this Constitution. If arbitration is necessary to decide which members are in agreement with Article IV, the President of the Southeastern

District shall be asked to appoint an arbitration board. In the event the congregation should totally disband, the property and all the rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. The Resurrection Lutheran School is a separate corporate entity under the provisions of the incorporation laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

ARTICLE IX – DOCTRINAL LITERATURE

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public service of the congregation and in all the ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article IV. Likewise, in all classes of instruction in Christian doctrine only such materials shall be used which conform to this standard.

ARTICLE X – BYLAWS

This congregation may adopt such Bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purpose.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

A. General

Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws may be adopted at a regular Voters Assembly, provided:

1. They do not alter or conflict with the provisions laid down in Article IV;
2. The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Church Council and distributed to the congregation;

B. Adoption Requirements

1. A constitutional amendment requires that a quorum of one-third of the voting members are present and that the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voting membership present at the Voters Assembly is cast for the adoption of the amendment.
2. An amendment to the Bylaws requires the affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voting membership present at the Voters Assembly is cast for the adoption of the amendment.

ARTICLE XII – RELATIONSHIP TO RESURRECTION LUTHERAN SCHOOL

A. Relationship

Resurrection Lutheran Church is the sponsoring body of Resurrection Lutheran School and hosts its activities, which are carried out by the Director of Christian Education/School Administrator and the Resurrection School Board.

B. Obligations

1. The Church provides the use of its physical facilities to the School.
2. The School is financially self-supporting. However, as its sponsor and host, the Church may provide supplementary financial support to it.

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BYLAWS

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ARTICLE I – COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

A. Reception: All newly received Communicant Members shall be announced in a subsequent meeting of the Voters Assembly or Church Council. Communicant Members may be received through the following:

- 1. Communion Instruction:** Persons may be recommended for Communicant Membership by the Pastor(s) and the Board of Elders who have not been formally Confirmed but who have successfully completed a course of instruction or review concerning Communion.
- 2. Transfer:** All those who indicate their desire to transfer their membership from sister Lutheran Churches to this congregation shall present evidence of their membership and a letter of transfer to the Pastor(s) or Board of Elders of this congregation.
- 3. Profession of Faith:** Persons shall submit their application to the Pastor(s), and give satisfactory evidence of qualification for Communicant Membership to the Pastor(s).
- 4. Reaffirmation of Faith:** All those who were once members of this congregation but whose membership was terminated may be reinstated as members by reaffirming their faith to the Pastor(s) and Board of Elders.

B. Termination

- 1. Transfer to Other Congregations:** A Communicant Member, upon his or her request, shall be granted transfer to another church which is in fellowship with this congregation.
- 2. Joining Other Churches:** In cases where a Communicant Member has joined a congregation other than one in fellowship with this congregation, he or she shall be considered to have terminated membership at this congregation.
- 3. Whereabouts Unknown:** The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established after a reasonable period of time shall be removed from the membership list.
- 4. Self-Exclusion:** When a member refuses to be a member, that is, to live under the

discipline of love and persistently rejects the forgiveness of sins, as offered by the Church, that member shall be declared as having excluded him- or herself from the membership of this congregation.

- 5. Excommunication:** When a member persists in living as a manifest and impenitent sinner, all the while claiming membership in this congregation, he or she shall be excommunicated.
- 6. Status of Terminated Member:** A person whose membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of the congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he or she is not reinstated into membership.

ARTICLE II – MODE FOR CALLING PASTORS

At the time of vacancy in the Office of Pastor (i.e. Senior Pastor, Associate or Assistant Pastor) the Board of Elders shall notify the District President and the Circuit Counselor, and request the suggested procedure for calling a new Pastor from the District President. At a meeting of the congregation, constitutionally qualified for the transaction of business, candidates may be proposed by an authorized committee and/or by members from the floor. Biographical information and qualifications of candidates must be presented. If no protest is entered and sustained, the persons nominated shall stand as recognized candidates by the entire congregation, and nominations shall be closed. The election shall be held by ballot, and the candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be regarded as elected by the congregation. The Circuit Counselor or his representative shall be present at all “call meetings” during a pastoral vacancy. Excepting the involvement of the District President and Circuit Counselor, these procedures will also apply to the calling and election of any assistant or youth pastor or vicar.

ARTICLE III – MEETINGS OF THE VOTERS ASSEMBLY

- A. Regular Meetings:** The regular meetings of the Voters Assembly shall be held at least semi-annually.
- B. Annual Budget Meeting:** The annual budget meeting of the Voters Assembly shall be held every November to adopt the annual budget for the succeeding year.
- C. Annual Election Meeting:** The annual election meeting of the Voters Assembly shall be held every May to elect officers for the next term.
- D. Special Meetings:** Special meetings of the Voters Assembly may be called by the Pastor(s), the President of the congregation, or by the petition of at least five voting members.

E. Announcement and Voting: Every meeting of the Voters Assembly shall be announced to the congregation by reasonable means at least one week prior to the meeting. Whenever a meeting has been thus announced and at least twenty-five voting members of the congregation are in attendance, it shall be considered a properly convened and legal meeting capable of transacting business. The meeting will be conducted according to the book, *Robert's Rules of Order*. However, for amending the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, or for the erection of buildings, the sale or purchase of property, or the removal of a pastor or some other member from office, a quorum of one-third of the voting members is necessary, and a two-thirds majority shall be required for adoption of a resolution unless otherwise provided by state law.

F. Order of Business for Regular Meetings of the Voters Assembly

1. Opening prayer
2. Recognition of new voting members
3. Reading of the minutes
4. Report of Financial Secretary and Treasurer
5. Reports of boards and committees
6. Unfinished business
7. New business

ARTICLE IV – Elected Positions

A. Elected Positions

The elected positions include the following:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Recording Secretary
4. Treasurer
5. Assistant Treasurer
6. Financial Secretary
7. Chair, Board of Elders
8. Board of Elders
9. Chair, Board of Trustees
10. Chair, Resurrection School Board
11. Vice-Chair, Resurrection School Board
12. Congregational Members Resurrection School Board (2)
13. Chair, Board of Stewardship and Finance
14. Chair, Board of Outreach and Social Ministry
15. Chair, Board of Youth Ministry
16. Chair, Board of Christian Education

17. Chair, Board of Fellowship
18. Chair, Board of Information Technology

B. Term of Office

The term of office for every elected person shall be one year. A person may succeed themselves in the same office no more than twice. Thereafter, a person must vacate that office for at least one year.

C. Elections

Elections shall be by ballot at the annual election meeting of the Voters Assembly in May, and the candidates receiving the majority of votes cast shall be elected.

D. Assumption of Duties

The elected persons shall assume their duties on June 1, following their election.

E. Appointed Positions.

The appointed positions of this congregation shall be determined by action of the Church Council and the various administrative boards as required by the Operations Manual.

ARTICLE V – DUTIES OF ELECTEES/BOARD CHAIRPERSONS

A. President

1. The President shall be the executive officer of the congregation.
2. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and Voters Assembly.
3. The President shall perform such duties as pertain to this office, and he is to be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees.

B. Vice-President

In the absence of the President, or in the event of his inability to function, the Vice-President shall act for and in the stead of the President.

C. Recording Secretary

1. The Recording Secretary shall faithfully keep and sign the minutes of all meetings of the Church Council and the Voters Assembly.

2. This person shall also conduct all authorized correspondence and issue all official notifications.
3. This person shall keep a record of the members present at all meetings and determine whether or not a quorum is present for the transaction of legal business.

D. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer

1. The Treasurer shall receive notice of all bank deposits of the congregation from the Financial Secretaries, keep a correct account of all financial transactions, and pay all bills and indebtedness of the congregation when properly authorized. Congregational funds shall be subject to withdrawal for congregational and authorized purposes, by check signed by the Treasurer or by another designated officer.
2. The Treasurer shall render a report of all receipts and disbursements in all regular meetings of the voters and of the Church Council. A detailed report covering the previous fiscal year will be submitted to the Church Council by each February meeting.
3. The Treasurer may be aided in his or her duties by an Assistant Treasurer
4. The Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer shall serve on the Board of Stewardship and Finance.
5. The Treasurer will ensure that an annual audit of the financial records is performed and is reported to the Church Council.

E. Financial Secretary

1. It shall be the duty of the Financial Secretary to receive all monies of the congregation and to keep account of all money received and shall deposit same in the name of the congregation in properly designated bank accounts.
2. The Financial Secretary shall submit to the Treasurer a full account of such deposits.
3. Offering Counters will be appointed to assist the Financial Secretary.
4. The Financial Secretary shall present a report in the regular meetings of the Church Council and Voters Assembly.
5. He or she shall prepare and distribute an annual acknowledgment of receipts to the contributors.
6. He or she shall serve on the Board of Stewardship and Finance.

F. Board of Elders

- 1. Members.** There shall be a minimum of three members on the Board of Elders elected by the Voters Assembly
- 2. Qualifications.** They shall be men of good report who have demonstrated their Christian faith by exemplary life and conduct and a mature understanding of the teachings of the Lutheran Church. They shall be at least twenty-five years of age and shall have been active communicant members of the Resurrection congregation for one year.
- 3. Duties:**
 - a. The Elders shall assist the Pastor(s) in the spiritual care of the congregation
 - b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

G. Board of Trustees

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.
- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active communicant members of Resurrection congregation for one year.
- 3. Duties:**
 - a. They shall administer all property belonging to the congregation and shall see that it is kept in good condition and safeguarded against loss or damage.
 - b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

H. Resurrection School Board

1. Organization

- a. The Resurrection School Board, having responsibility for the administration and management of Resurrection Lutheran School, shall consist of four members of Resurrection congregation (Congregational Members) plus a maximum of up to three (3) non-Congregational members. The Director of Christian Education/School Administrator shall be an ex-officio member.
- b. The President shall appoint a presiding officer pro tem for the first organizational meeting of each year when the Chair of the School Board from the previous year is

not available to chair the meeting.

- c. At each annual organization meeting, the Director of Christian Education/School Administrator will announce the number of Parent Members to be elected. The nominations will be from the floor. Each family utilizing the School shall have one vote. Voting shall be by written ballot. In the event of a division in voting of a family present at the meeting, the presiding officer may approve apportionment of the vote in the individual family.

2. Quorum.

Official business may be conducted with 2/3 of the membership present and with a majority being congregational members.

3. Members

- a. **Chair and Vice-Chair.** The Voters Assembly shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair among the four Congregational Members, who shall become the presiding officers.
- b. **Treasurer.** A School Treasurer shall be selected from the two congregational members by the School Board. The selected individual shall require the endorsement of the Church Council.
- c. **Secretary.** A School Secretary shall be selected from the two congregational members by the School Board. The selected individual shall require the endorsement of the Church Council.

4. Duties

- a. The Board shall have the authority and be responsible for the administration and management of the School in accordance with policies established consistent with Resurrection congregational policy and federal, state, and local law.
- b. The Board shall develop a written set of goals, rules, and procedures which will be reviewed and approved by the Church Council from time to time, but not more frequently than annually, to ensure that the policies and operation of the School remain an integral part of the mission and ministry of Resurrection.
- c. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

I. Board of Stewardship and Finance

1. **Members.** The Board of Stewardship and Finance shall consist of a Chair elected by the Voters Assembly, the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, and the

remaining members shall be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.

- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active Communicant Members of Resurrection congregation for one year.

3. Duties

- a. The Board shall act to educate the members of the congregation in Christian stewardship and initiate programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in the congregation.
- b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

J. Board of Outreach and Social Ministry

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.

- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active Communicant Members of Resurrection congregation for one year.

3. Duties:

- a. The Board shall investigate specific needs within the congregation and the community and encourage and guide congregational participation in alleviating the identified needs.
- b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

K. Board of Youth Ministry

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.

- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active Communicant Members of Resurrection congregation for one year.

3. Duties:

- a. The Board shall establish and support youth programs that strive to promote discipleship and fellowship, with an ongoing emphasis on outreach and missions.
- b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

L. Board of Christian Education

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.
- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active Communicant Members of Resurrection congregation for one year.
- 3. Duties:**
 - a. The Board shall plan, set goals/objectives, and administer the total education program of the congregation.
 - b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

M. Board of Fellowship

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.
- 2. Qualifications.** They shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active Communicant Members of Resurrection congregation for one year.
- 3. Duties:**
 - a. The Board shall plan, set goals/objectives, and administer programs for adult members that strive to promote discipleship and fellowship in the congregation-at-large.
 - b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual

N. Board of Information Technology

- 1. Members.** Board members will be nominated by the Chair and approved by the Church Council.
- 2. Qualifications.** Members shall be at least eighteen years of age and shall have been active communicant members of Resurrection congregation for one year.
- 3. Duties:**
 - a. The Board shall plan, set goals, and administer programs in order to leverage information technology in order to spread the Gospel inside and outside of Resurrection Lutheran Church.
 - b. All other duties shall be prescribed in the Operations Manual.

ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF APPOINTED OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

- A. The Congregation shall maintain an Operations Manual covering the duties, expectations and processes for each official board, committee or group, along with all adopted policies of the Church Council and the various Boards.
- B. Additions or modifications to the Operations Manual shall be approved by the Church Council.

ARTICLE VII – CHURCH COUNCIL

- A. The Church Council shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary and the Chairs of the following Boards – Elders, Trustees, Resurrection School, Stewardship and Finance, Outreach and Social Ministry, Christian Education, Fellowship, Youth Ministry and Information Technology.
- B. The President of the congregation shall be the Council Chair.
- C. The Church Council shall meet monthly or at other times deemed necessary by the President of the congregation or the Pastor(s).
- D. It shall be the duty of the Church Council to consider and discuss all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the various boards, committees, and officers, and to present specific recommendations to the Voters Assembly.