

## CONSTITUTION

As Amended through July 29, 1973

Whereas the Holy Scripture, I Corinthians 14:40, admonishes us to do all things in the church decently and in order, therefore, we do hereby adopt this constitution and determine the discipline and the rules according to which the affairs of this congregation shall be conducted,

### Article 1: NAME

The name of this congregation shall be First Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in the City of Pittsburgh, PA.

### Article 2: CONFESSION

This congregation holds all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired word of God and the sole rule of faith and life.

It accepts all the symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church contained in the book of Concord of the year 1580, viz., the Ecumenical Creeds, The Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession of 1530; the Apology of the Augsburg Confession; the Catechisms of Luther; the Smalcald Articles and the Formula of Concord, as a correct and sound exposition of Christian doctrine, taken from and in full accord with the Holy Scriptures.

Accordingly, no doctrine which conflicts with or sets aside the foregoing norm of doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in the congregation.

### Article 3: SYNODICAL AFFILIATION

This congregation shall be affiliated with The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod so long as the confessions and constitution of said Synod are in accord with the confession and constitution of this congregation as laid down in Article 2.

This congregation shall, to the best of its ability, collaborate with said Synod and assist it in effecting all sound and Scriptural measures intended for the building of the Kingdom of God.

### Article 4: MEMBERSHIP

No one can become, be, or remain a member of this congregation or hold an office in the same, or enjoy and exercise the rights and privileges of a member, but such as:

1. Are baptized. (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38-39; I Peter 3:21).
2. Declare their adherence to all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and norm of faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:21; John 17:17; Psalm 119:105).
3. While they may perhaps be yet deficient in the knowledge of all the Lutheran Symbols, are familiar at least with the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism, and declare their acceptance thereof. (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15).
4. Do not live in manifest works of the flesh but lead Christian lives. (Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Peter 2:21; Matthew 5:14-16).
5. Together with the congregation partake of the Lord's Supper with due frequency. (1 Corinthians 11:26).

6. Are not members, or, after their reception into the congregation do not become members of any ungodly society, such as lodges, secret societies, etc. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; John 18:20; Ephesians 5:6-17; Ecclesiastes 12: 13,14; Matthew 6:24; Matthew 12:30).

7. Submit to the government and discipline of the congregation administered according to its established forms and order, and permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred. (Matthew 18:15-20).

A. Voting Membership

This congregation shall be represented by, and administer all its affairs, through its voting membership.

Communicant members who have attained the age of 18 years shall be eligible for and be received into voting membership in accordance with the By-laws of this congregation.

B. Baptized Membership

All individuals of the congregation, both young and old, who have been baptized and are under the spiritual care of the pastor.

Article 5: POWER VESTED IN THE CONGREGATION

The congregation shall have the supreme power in the control and custody of all of its real and personal property and revenues and in the administration of its ecclesiastical affairs in accordance with the Word of God and the Symbols of the Lutheran Church.

Article 6: PASTORAL AND TEACHING OFFICES

The pastoral office of this congregation shall be conferred upon only such ministers or candidates for the reverend ministry who accept and pledge faithful adherence to the confessions of this congregation as set forth in Article 2. The teachers of the congregation shall likewise conform with this requirement.

Article 7: RIGHTS TO THE PROPERTY IN CASE OF SCHISM

If at any time a separation should take place in this congregation, the real and personal property of the congregation and all rights and benefits therewith connected shall be vested in those members who adhere to Article 2 and Article 3 of this constitution.

Article 8: AMENDMENTS

To alter or repeal any paragraph of this Constitution, it shall be requisite that in two consecutive constitutional meetings of the congregation two thirds of all voting members present cast their votes in favor of such alteration or repeal. The design of such a meeting for alteration or repeal shall be specifically stated when public announcement of the same is made.

## BY-LAWS

Amended December 6, 1998

### Article 1: COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1: Eligibility

Communicant members are received into this congregation by:

- a. Confirmation within this congregation,
- b. Presentation of a letter of transfer from a sister congregation; and in each case,
- c. Proving to the satisfaction of this congregation, full agreement with Article 4 of the Constitution.

#### Section 2: Duties

- a. It shall be the duty of the members of this congregation by faithful use of the Word and Sacraments to grow in faith and Christian life, to provide for the proper Christian training of their children by instruction at home and through the agencies of the church; to contribute toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the Kingdom of God at large according as God has prospered them, in harmony with the New Testament Plan of free-will offerings which is the policy of this church. (1 Cor. 16:2)
- b. To put their time and talents into the service of the Lord and to the best of their ability promote the welfare of His Kingdom.
- c. To admonish erring brethren (members) according to Matthew 18:15-20.

### Article 2: VOTING MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1: Eligibility

Any communicant member of this congregation who is at least 18 years of age may apply for admission into voting membership. The applicant may be proposed for membership at any regular meeting of the voting members. If the proposed member is approved by the voting members, he or she shall sign the Constitution and By-Laws of this congregation and such signing shall confer upon him or her the rights and prerogatives of voting membership, including the right of male members to hold elective office and of any member to hold an appointed office.

#### Section 2: Duties

It shall be the duty of voting members to attend regularly all meetings of that body and to assist in administering the spiritual and temporal affairs of the congregation with due diligence.

### Article 3: MEETING OF THE VOTING MEMBERS

#### Section 1: Notice of Meetings

The recording secretary shall give notice to all voting members of the time and place of each meeting.

Special meetings must be called on the written request of at least six qualified voters and notice of the time and place of a special meeting and of the order of business to be transacted thereat shall be given at a divine service of the Church preceding such meeting. In addition to such notice, written notice must be given whenever time permits.

#### Section 2: Quorum

A quorum at any meeting of the voting members shall consist of twelve voting members and any action shall be decided by a majority of the voting members present at such meeting except in matters of doctrine where a unanimous vote is required.

### Section 3: Order of Business

The order of business shall be decided upon by the voting members at each meeting.

### Article 4: CALLING OF PASTOR OR TEACHER

The election and calling of a pastor or teacher shall take place in the following manner:

After consultation with the President of the Synodical District, candidates for the pastorate or office of teacher shall be proposed by to the voting members at their next regular meeting or at a meeting especially called for that purpose. At such meeting additional candidates may be proposed by the voting members. The voting members, meeting in regular or special session, shall elect one of the proposed candidates by ballot and by unanimous vote.

### Article 5: THE OPERATING BOARD

1. The following officers of the congregation shall constitute the Operating Board:
  - a. The President
  - b. The Pastor
  - c. The Elders
  - d. The Secretary/Treasurer
  - e. The Financial Secretary
  - f. The Trustees
  
2. The Operating Board shall be responsible for managing the temporal affairs of the congregation and in that regard shall have authority to take such action as they determine in good faith, by a majority vote of the members thereof present at a duly called and noticed meeting, to be in the best interests of the congregation, subject to the power of the congregation under Article 5 of the Constitution to change such action.

## Article 6: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

At the June meeting of the voting members, they shall elect the officers of the congregation. The right to hold office shall be restricted to male membership. Such officers shall be a president, a secretary/treasurer, a financial secretary, three trustees, and four elders, each of whom shall serve a term of one year or until the election of their successors. Said officers shall assume their positions on July 1st or, if they are elected to fill a vacancy, upon their election. Said officers shall have the duties prescribed for their office by Article 7 of these Bylaws and each of them may appoint such other members as they in their discretion may deem appropriate to assist them in carrying out their duties.

## Article 7: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

1. The President - The president shall be executive officer of the congregation. He shall enforce the Constitution and By-Laws and shall be responsible for the carrying out of all resolutions passed by the voters' assembly.
2. The Financial Secretary - To keep a record of the amount and source of all monies received through the collection envelopes, plate collections, or any other means, be they for the congregation, for Synod, for Charities and Institutions, or for other causes or persons; to make quarterly and annual reports to all communicants of the congregation of contributions made by them; to make additional reports whenever and as requested by the congregation or the Operating Board; and to give record of all monies received to the Secretary/Treasurer of the congregation.
3. The Secretary/Treasurer - To keep a written account of all amounts by him received and disbursed and enter such accounts in books provided by the congregation for the purpose; to make all disbursements by check after proper authorization of the Operating Board; and to make report of his transactions whenever and as requested by the congregation or the Operating Board. He shall also perform such functions as the Secretary of a Corporation usually performs and may execute documents on behalf of the congregation as Corporate Secretary.
4. The Elders - To assist the pastor in caring for the spiritual welfare of the congregation, in the care of the sick and needy, in the cultivation of peace, harmony, and love among the members; to see to it that the Gospel is preached in its purity; in accordance with the sound Lutheran doctrine; to make necessary provisions for the instruction of the young, and to help maintain Christian discipline within the congregation.
5. The Trustees - The trustees shall have the custody and control of all the real and personal property of the congregation. It shall be the duty of the Trustees to keep the church property in good repair.

## Article 8: COMMITTEES AND OFFICES

- A. The following standing committees and offices shall be appointed by the President.
  1. The Finance Committee - This committee shall consist of three members. Ex-officio members shall be the Financial Secretary and Secretary/Treasurer. This committee shall regulate the financial system of the congregation so that it functions properly. It shall present to the congregation a budget itemizing probable receipts and expenditures and shall have under its supervision all campaigns and methods for raising money for congregational purposes pursuant to congregational resolutions.
  2. Auditing Committee - Shall audit the books of the Secretary/Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

3. Recording Secretary - To keep record of the transactions of all meetings of the congregation and to enter such records in a book provided for the purpose after their approval by the congregation. In the absence of the secretary, or when it may be deemed expedient, the congregation shall appoint a secretary *pro tempore* for one meeting or a part thereof.
- B. Elected Committees may be created by the operating board or the voters. Any voting member may be elected to such committees.
- C. *Ad Hoc* committees may be appointed by any officer or the entire operating board. Such committees will dissolve upon completion of their assigned tasks.
- D. *Ad Hoc* committees may be elected by the voters. Such committees will dissolve upon completion of their assigned tasks.

#### Article 9: DISCIPLINE

All discipline in this congregation shall be in accordance with the Scriptural order of discipline as laid down in Matthew 18:15-20.

When a member of this congregation, after ineffectual application of Matthew 18:15-20, where such order is feasible, be excommunicated, or by evasion of discipline, excludes himself, such member thereby forfeits all rights and prerogative of church membership. Such forfeiture shall be duly noted in the minutes of the voting members.

The failure of a voting member to attend meetings for a period of two years shall effect the forfeiture of his or her right to vote and of all other prerogatives of voting membership. Such forfeiture shall be duly noted in the minutes of the voting members. A voting member may be reinstated by a majority of the voting members.

Any officer of the congregation who neglects his office may be deposed by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at a regular meeting. In such a case and in cases where an office is made vacant by death, excommunication or forfeiture of the incumbent, a successor of such office shall be elected by the voting members at their next regular meeting by ballot and such election shall be determined by simple majority.

Sufficient cause for deposing or dismissing a pastor or teacher shall be persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of duties, or inability to perform the required duties.

#### Article 10: AMENDMENTS

By-Laws may be adopted or amended by majority vote of the qualified members present at any regular meeting.

The Operating Board shall have the authority to make such other changes to the By Laws as they may determine to be necessary and appropriate, provided that the By Laws as so amended are presented for ratification and approval at the next meeting of the voting members.