

**CONSTITUTION
FOR THE
AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF PRESCOTT, ARIZONA**

Contents

	PREAMBLE
CHAPTER 1	NAME AND INCORPORATION
CHAPTER 2	CONFESSION OF FAITH
CHAPTER 3	CHURCH AFFILIATION
CHAPTER 4	PURPOSE AND POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION
CHAPTER 5	MEMBERSHIP
CHAPTER 6	WORSHIP
CHAPTER 7	COMMUNION PARTICIPATION
CHAPTER 8	EDUCATION OF CHILDREN
CHAPTER 9	THE PASTOR
CHAPTER 10	MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION
CHAPTER 11	OFFICERS AND BOARDS
CHAPTER 12	BYLAWS
CHAPTER 13	AMENDMENTS

PREAMBLE

Recognizing our unity in Christ and our common practice in the Christian Faith; desiring to express our fellowship in worship and work; knowing our spiritual needs; mindful of our Christian privileges and duties; and wishing to observe orderly cooperation, we the voting members of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, adopt the following constitution:

CHAPTER 1 – NAME AND INCORPORATION

C1.01 The name of the Congregation shall be American Evangelical Lutheran Church.

C1.02 The Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Arizona.

CHAPTER 2 – CONFESSION OF FAITH

C2.01 The members of this Congregation confess the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

C2.02 The members of this Congregation confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.

C2.03 The members of this Congregation accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and sole norm of its proclamation, faith and life.

C2.04 The members of this Congregation accept the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith.

C2.05 The members of this Congregation accept the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the writings in the Book of Concord, namely the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's Large Catechism and the Formula of Concord, as valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

CHAPTER 3 – CHURCH AFFILIATION

C3.01 This Congregation shall be a member of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ- As an association, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ has no governing authority over this congregation, and none is granted.

C3.02 The Congregation shall have the power to change the Church Affiliation by a two thirds majority ballot vote of the voting members present at a legally called meeting of the Congregation.

CHAPTER 4 – PURPOSE AND POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- C4.01** The purpose of this Congregation is to know Christ and to make Him known. Individuals and groups within the Congregation shall submit to the authority of the Word and all facets of life and activity shall conform to that norm to fulfill the purpose of the Church.
- C4.02** The powers of the Congregation shall be vested in the Congregational meeting, called and conducted in such manner as is provided in this Constitution and its Bylaws as implemented in the Policies and Procedures and in the boards elected by the Congregation. A quorum of 5% of the eligible voting members will be required to conduct a legal meeting. The Congregation is empowered to:
- a. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, bequest, or other lawful means;
 - b. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose
 - c. enter into contract;
 - d. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - e. sue and be sued; and
 - f. elect officers and boards in accordance with this Constitution and its Bylaws, and the resolutions of the Congregation
- C4.03** Real property shall not be purchased, sold, leased, transferred or otherwise disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except by Resolution adopted by not less than two-thirds majority ballot vote of the members present and voting at a legally called meeting of the Congregation.
- C4.04** The Congregation shall have the power to initiate or terminate the Call of a pastor by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at a duly convened meeting of the Congregation.

CHAPTER 5 – MEMBERSHIP

- C5.01** Membership of the Congregation shall be those who are designated as such at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter; and who maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws.
- C5.02** Members shall be classified as (a) baptized; (b) confirmed; (c) voting; (d) associate. A description of each classification is more fully outlined in the Bylaws section of this document.
- C5.03** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of the Congregation to: make diligent use of the means of Grace, both Word and Sacraments; live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God; and support the work of the Congregation.

CHAPTER 6 – WORSHIP

C6.01 As an expression of the unity of the body of Christ, the Congregation recognizes the desirability of conforming to the practices of other Lutheran Congregations in using such forms of worship, including but not limited to liturgies and hymn books.

CHAPTER 7 – COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

C7.01 This Congregation invites all of its members, who have been prepared to receive the Sacrament, to participate regularly in Holy Communion.

C7.02 Preparation for Holy Communion will normally be provided for persons in the latter part of the fifth grade.

C7.03 Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to members of other congregations who accept the Lutheran teaching in regard to this Sacrament.

C7.04 It shall be made known to prospective participants that the belief of this Congregation is:

Participation in the Lord's Supper is the reception of "the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink." We hold that a person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words, "given and shed for you for the remission of sins". But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words "for you" require simply a believing heart."

C7.05 Record of participation in Holy Communion shall be maintained. If a member of another congregation communes, notice shall be sent to his/her church.

CHAPTER 8 – EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

C8.01 As evangelical Lutheran Christians, we recognize it to be our duty to rear our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to have them carefully and conscientiously instructed in the Confession of Faith, as detailed in Chapter 2.

C8.02 The Pastor(s) shall, with all diligence and faithfulness, supervise the preparation and instruction of children for the Rite of Confirmation.

CHAPTER 9 – THE PASTOR

- C9.01** A Pastor of the Congregation shall be a person whose soundness in the faith, aptness to teach, and educational qualifications have been examined and approved by the American Evangelical Lutheran Church and whose ordination is recognized by the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, who accepts and adheres to the confession of faith of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ and who strives in life and conduct to be above reproach.
- C9.02** Authority to call a pastor shall rest in the Congregation. Such authority to call shall be exercised by not less than two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose.
- C9.03** A call for a Pastor may be from Clergy in good standing of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ or one who is recommended for Call by the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.
- C9.04** If the need arises, the Church Council may hire a pastor on an interim basis. The Congregation will ratify a longer appointment if necessary.
- C9.05** If in the judgment of the Congregation, the pastor is no longer able to serve it satisfactorily, he/she may be requested to resign. Before the resignation is requested, all parties, including the pastor, shall have the opportunity to be heard at a specially called meeting of the Church Council. After the hearing before the Church Council a special meeting of the Congregation may be called to consider a request for the pastor's resignation. A resolution requesting a pastor's resignation must be adopted by a two-thirds majority ballot vote of those present and voting. Not less than ten days notice of such meeting of a Congregation must be given. If the pastor's resignation has been requested in the manner here provided, he/she shall vacate the office at the time the Congregation specifies. Should he/she fail to do so, the Church Council shall declare the pastoral office vacant. The conditions and procedures are outlined in the Bylaws Chapter 10.

CHAPTER 10 – MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

- C10.01** The power and authority of the Congregation shall be exercised through the Congregational meeting, which shall be called and conducted in conformity with civil laws and the provisions of this Constitution and its Bylaws.

CHAPTER 11 – OFFICERS AND BOARDS

C11.01 At its annual meeting, the Congregation shall elect the following officers, each for a term of one year:

- a) President – *shall serve as Church Council President;*
- b) Vice President – *shall serve as Church Council Vice President;*
- c) Secretary – *shall serve as Church Council Secretary*
- d) Treasurer-*shall serve as Church Council Treasurer*
- e) Financial Secretary-*shall serve as Church Council Financial Secretary*

C11.02 Boards and Committees – Boards include the Board of Education, Board of Trustees, and Board of Deacons. Other committees, subcommittees, task forces and working groups may be established by the Church Council as deemed necessary.

CHAPTER 12 – BYLAWS

C12.01 With the recommendation of the Church Council, the Congregation shall adopt such Bylaws as may from time to time be necessary. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

C12.02 Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called and conducted meeting of the Congregation by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting.

CHAPTER 13 – AMENDMENTS

C13.01 The doctrinal basis and the confessional subscription of this Constitution shall be unalterable; and no amendment shall conflict therewith.

C13.02 A proposed amendment to this Constitution shall be:

- a) Read at a public service of the Congregation or mailed to the voting members, not less than thirty days before the legally called meeting at which it is to be considered;
- b) Approved without change at the legally called meeting following its announcement, by a majority vote of those present and voting;
- c) Ratified without further change at the next annual meeting or at a specially called meeting, by two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

C13.03 If a proposed amendment fails to be adopted, it may be amended by majority vote of those present and voting; and adopted without change by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the next following annual meeting or at a specially called meeting.