

CONSTITUTION
of
CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
of SAN PEDRO, CALIFORNIA
COMMONLY KNOWN AS
CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH of RANCHO PALOS VERDES
28850 S. Western Avenue
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
Organized July 2, 1925

PREAMBLE

Whereas, according to the Word of God (I Corinthians 14:40, Colossians 2:5) all things in a Christian congregation are to be done decently and in order; by Voters Assembly approval, we agree that this congregation shall be governed by, and all its internal and external affairs shall be regulated according to this Constitution and the Bylaws.

c1.0 NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church of San Pedro, California commonly known as Christ Lutheran Church (CLC) of Rancho Palos Verdes.

c2.0 MISSION

- c2.1 The purpose of this congregation is to make disciples of all people, as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:19-20: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (NIV 1984).
- c2.2 As a congregation we will fulfill this mission by:

- c2.2.1 Attaining the full measure of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:12-13) through Worship and Teaching/Learning;
- c2.2.2 Inviting those who do not know Jesus Christ into a personal relationship with Him through Witnessing (Acts 1:8);
- c2.2.3 Ministering to the human needs of people through charitable acts and lives of service (Matthew 25:34-36);
- c2.2.4 Forming deep and abiding relationships with people in our Church/School community through Stewardship and Fellowship activities organized and designed for the mutual uplifting and consolation of the Saints (Acts 2:42-47).

c3.0 CONFSSIONAL BASIS

- c3.1 This congregation accepts without reservation:
 - c3.1.1 The scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the inspired Word of God and the rule and norm of faith and practice.
 - c3.1.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord as contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580. These documents are available in English in Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert; "The Book of Concord-The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church," Fortress Press, Minneapolis, 2000.
 - c3.1.3 The beliefs of the The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as set forth in the Synod's Constitution.
- c3.2 Normative doctrinal literature used by this congregation, consisting of prayers, liturgies, hymns, and books shall conform to the Confessional Basis of this Section.

c4.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of the The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

c5.0 MEMBERSHIP

- c5.1 The membership of this congregation is distinguished as follows:
 - c5.1.1 Baptized members are those who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of this congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed into communicant membership.
 - c5.1.2 Communicant members are baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith and accept the Confessional Basis of this Constitution.
 - c5.1.3 Voting members are communicant members who are 18 years or older.
- c5.2 Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. In the case of children, one or both parents give their consent to baptism or that they have been baptized in another Christian congregation.
- c5.3 Communicant members can be received (a) through the rite of confirmation; (b) by presenting a letter of transfer from a sister congregation; (c) through affirmation of faith following an introductory class; or (d) providing satisfactory evidence of their qualifications for membership to the Senior Pastor, and with the recommendation of the Church Council.
- c5.4 Members of the congregation shall, with the help of God, strive to conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word. To that end, members shall make diligent use of the means of grace, pray earnestly for the up-building of the Lord's kingdom both here and abroad, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents (visit the sick, minister to strangers, help the poor and needy), contribute financially, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need for such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation. Membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God is prohibited.
- c5.5 Membership in CLC is terminated as follows:
 - c5.5.1 Membership shall be terminated by (a) transfer to a sister congregation; (b) joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation; (c) excommunication; (d) death; (e) stating their desire to terminate their membership; (f) non-attendance at any of the churches ministries or activities for over a year, with attempts to contact them regarding their status going unanswered.

- c5.5.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in a manner that conflicts with the Confessional Basis set forth in the Constitution c3.0 shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-18. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be presented individually in a Voters Assembly Meeting, to which the individual has been invited, for a decision determined by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Voters Assembly. Any excommunicated member is encouraged to maintain his or her worship life and seek reinstatement at any time.
- c5.5.3 When the circumstances that have led to excommunication have been resolved and the individual desires reinstatement, the Church Council shall recommend reinstatement to the Voters Assembly for its joyous action.

c6.0 PASTORS AND OTHER CALLED WORKERS

The Voters Assembly of this congregation shall have the exclusive right to call ordained Pastors and commissioned Ministers of Religion (e.g., Vicar, DCE, Deacon, Deaconess, School Principal, Teachers, Director of Music). This right shall not be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

- c6.1 This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only upon such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the Confessional Basis (Constitution c3.0), who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by and who is a rostered member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. These same conditions shall apply to all called workers.
- c6.2 In the event more than one ordained pastor is on the staff of this congregation, the working relationship between and among the pastors shall be worked out and articulated as part of the Call process.
- c6.3 Any Pastor, Minister of Religion, or officer may be removed from office by three-fourths (3/4) ballot vote of the Voters Assembly, in Christian and lawful order, for any one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of the office, or the inability to perform those duties.
- c6.4 When a vacancy occurs in an office of an ordained Pastor, the congregation shall notify the president of the District in which CLC is a member to receive assistance in temporarily filling the vacancy and to receive his counsel in calling a new replacement.

c7.0 AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

- c7.1 The congregation, as a body, represented by the Voters Assembly, shall have the supreme power in the external and internal administration and management of its own congregational affairs.
- c7.2 The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to it, shall be subject to the overall authority and general oversight of the Voters Assembly.
- c7.3 The Voters Assembly shall reserve the right to supersede, rescind, or amend actions taken by anybody within the congregation even where this Constitution and Bylaws delegate authority for such actions or when the Voters Assembly has delegated such authority.
- c7.4 The congregation represented by the Voters Assembly, shall have the right of choosing and calling ordained Pastors, commissioned Ministers of Religion, and members of the Church Council. This power shall never be delegated to an individual or to a minor body within the congregation.
- c7.5 All matters before the Voters Assembly shall be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or Bylaws. This includes calling or removing ordained pastors or commissioned ministers (requires a three-fourths (3/4) vote), removing church council members, erecting buildings, razing old buildings, major remodeling of old buildings, purchasing or selling church property, and amending or altering of the Constitution (Constitution c12.0).
- c7.6 Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided on the Confessional Basis (Constitution c3.0), as decided by the Church Council under the leadership of the Pastor.
- c7.7 Any expenditure of greater than \$25,000 of the current annual Church Budget, for an item that is not budgeted, shall be approved by the Voters Assembly prior to making the expenditure. This can be waived by the Church Council if there are health & safety or security concerns, that require immediate action.
- c7.8 The Voters Assembly shall elect seven (7) members to the Church Council who will be responsible for holding meetings which detail current operational and business activities of the congregation (Constitution c9.2).
- c7.9 Under no circumstances shall the Voters Assembly be empowered to order, enact, or decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the symbols of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Constitution 3.0), and all such enactments or decisions shall be null & void.

c8.0 VOTERS ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

- c8.1 The voting members present at a properly called meeting of the Voters Assembly shall constitute a quorum. The meeting may be conducted via electronic media, but only if circumstances warrant and at the recommendation of the Church Council.
- c8.2 A properly called meeting of the Voters Assembly shall state the agenda, time, and place of the meeting in the church bulletin, in public announcements during all worship services, and by mail for at least two weeks leading up to the meeting.
- c8.3 The Pastor, President, or their designee are to notify the congregation of all regular and special Voters Assembly meetings.

c9.0 CHURCH COUNCIL

- c9.1 The Church Council shall serve as the Board of Directors for the Church, Christian Day School, Preschool, and School Age Care. They shall have the authority to administer all property belonging to the congregation, make contracts, accept and receive grants and bequests, sign documents, appear in court, maintain the Constitution and Bylaws, approve the reception and termination of congregation members, review the Pastor's performance and compensation, and report to the congregation.
- c9.2 The Church Council shall consist of seven (7) members (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Chair of Elders, Chair of Trustees, and Chair of Board of Christian Education) plus the Pastor and Principal who are both ex-officio members and unable to vote.
- c9.3 The officers of the congregation are the President who is designated as President of the corporation; the Vice President who serves as President in the President's absence; the Secretary who is designated the Secretary of the corporation; and the Treasurer who is designated as the Chief Financial Officer of the corporation. These designations shall in no way alter the functioning of the Church Council as defined in this Constitution and Bylaws.

c10.0 LIMITATIONS ON HOLDING OFFICE

- c10.1 Members of the Church Council are elected for a two (2) year term and may not serve continuously in the same position for longer than two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms unless there is no other qualified and willing candidate that exists. In this event, the Church Council shall have the power to recommend to the Voters Assembly an extension of the term of an Officer or Board Chair. Any extension of a term of office will require a majority approval of the Voters Assembly.
- c10.2 Terms of service for Church Council members are staggered: Three (3) (President, Treasurer, Chair of Board of Christian Education) elected every even year; and four (4) (Vice President, Secretary, Chair of Elders, Chair of Trustees) elected every odd year. Initial implementation of this staggered election process will extend a term of service from 2 years to 3 years for some of the Church Council members.
- c10.3 If a Church Council office becomes open (i.e. resignation), then the Church Council is empowered to appoint a person to fill that office for the remainder of the term.

c11.0 DIVISION AND DISSOLUTION

The property of this congregation is dedicated irrevocably to religious and charitable purposes and no part of net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any member or individual.

- c11.1 If a division of the Congregation should occur for any reason, the property of the Congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere to the Confessional Basis in of this Constitution (c3.0), as determined by the district dispute resolution procedures.
- c11.2 In the event that the congregation dissolves, (by affirmation of the Voters Assembly by at least a three/fourths (3/4) vote) all property shall be disposed of by the final Voters Assembly for the payment of debts and all just claims against the congregation, and any and all surplus of all rights connected therewith shall be conveyed to and become the property of the District in which the congregation is a member.

c12.0 AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted by the Voters Assembly provided that:

- c12.1 Any amendment adopted shall require a two-thirds (2/3) ballot vote at two consecutive regular meetings of the Voters Assembly. A Thirty (30) day notice that a vote will be taken shall be given (by telephone, email, and announcement in all Sunday morning worship) to all members of the congregation.
- c12.2 A proposed amendment to this Constitution should be submitted to the Church Council for review and discussion. If the Church Council decides the amendment has merit, it will be brought by the President to the Voters Assembly for discussion and action. If the Church Council decides the amendment lacks merit, the individuals proposing it may request a special Voters Assembly to address the topic.
- c12.3 The revised Constitution shall, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the President of the District for review and approval by the District's Constitution Committee before being implemented by the congregation.

c13.0 PRECEDENCE

This Constitution takes precedence over the Bylaws and Policies of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church.