THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
OF
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH CORDOVA, NEBRASKA

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS the Word of God demands that a Christian congregation not only conform to the Word of God in doctrine and practice (Ps. 1l9:105; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4: 1-5), but that also all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40), therefore we, the members of st. John's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation set forth by this present document, the Constitution and the By-Laws in accordance with which our congregational affairs, spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this congregation is and shall be: The St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, of Cordova, Seward County, Nebraska.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this corporate body shall be that of a religious organization; more specifically, that of a Christian congregation, established and maintained for the express purpose of disseminating the Gospel truth according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church, the Book of Concord of the year 1580.

ARTICLE III - CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, to be a true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Symbolical books are the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the same, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP IN SYNOD

In order to do the Lord's work more efficiently, also beyond the confines of our own community, we maintain voting membership in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, as long as the same adhered to the confessional standard detailed in Article III of this Constitution. As a member of this Synod, we participate in its conventions and help to bear its burdens.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

No one can become or be a member of this congregation nor enjoy the rights and privileges of such membership unless he:
a. Is baptized;
b. Accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament as the only divine rule and standard of faith and conduct;
c. Is acquainted with, and accepts, Luther's Small Catechism;
d. Leads a Christian life and abstains from manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21);
e. Attends divine services faithfully and partakes of the Lord's Supper frequently;
f. Submits, for the sake of love and peace, to the regulations already made, or still to be made, by this body, provided they do not conflict with the Word of God, and suffers brotherly admonition when having erred or offended;
g. Is not a member of any secret or other organization conflicting with the Word of God.

When a member of this congregation, after fruitless admonition in the various stages prescribed by the Word of God (Matt. l8:15-20), Where the observance of such stages has been possible, shall have been expelled by unanimous vote from the congregation, such a person shall have 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, as long as he is not again received into membership by the congregation. The same shall apply to such members as refuse to submit to church discipline and thus excommunicate themselves, as also to those who sever their connection with the congregation.

ARTICLE VI - RIGHT OF SUFFRAGE

All communicant members who have reached the majority age (18) shall have the right of suffrage and are eligible to hold office.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

The officers of this corporate body shall be: a President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, a Board of Elders, and a Board of Trustees, and such other officers, boards, and committees as the Constitution and By-Laws of this corporate body may prescribe or as this corporate body may elect in accordance with its needs and Synodical policies. The officers shall be elected at the annual meeting of this corporate body, and their term of office shall be as specified in the By-Laws to this constitution.

ARTICLE VIII - PASTORS AND TEACHERS

Only such pastors and teachers shall be called by this congregation as are in accord with the confessional standard of this congregation (Article III) and as have been prepared for their work and are well qualified for it. The right of calling pastors and teachers shall ever be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual. Reasons for the dismissing of a pastor or a teacher shall be: persistent adherence to false teaching, an ungodly life, unfaithfulness or inability with reference to the performance of duties. For the election of pastors and teachers a unanimous vote is required.

ARTICLE IX - POWERS VESTED IN THE CONGREGATION

The congregation shall decide all matters relating to the church or church affairs, and every member may appeal to it in regard to any matter relating to the affairs and government of said church, and its decision shall be final and binding, but such decisions shall always be in accord with the Word of God and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and, unless it is so, shall be null and void.

ARTICLE X - PROPERTY RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION

This corporate body may receive, acquire, hold title to, and manage such real estate and other property as it may need to accomplish its purpose (Article II) and may sell or dispose of such real estate and other property or any part thereof; and this corporate body shall have all the rights and the powers that are granted by the laws of the State of Nebraska to religious corporations.

In case a separation should occur in this congregation - which we pray that God will graciously prevent - all property of this congregation and all privileges connected therewith, shall pass into the possession of those members of this corporate body which abide with the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, as long as this Synod remains faithful to the Confessional Standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution.

Should this corporate body of its own action disband, all property and all privileges connected therewith, shall pass into the possession of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE XI - BY-LAWS

This congregation may adopt such by-laws as the accomplishment of the purpose of its organization may demand.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution must be made in writing and may be made at any regular meeting, provided that the amendment has already been submitted in a previous meeting and that two thirds of the voting members present cast their vote in favor of such amendment.

BY-LAWS

1. Admission of New Members

Persons intending to join this congregation shall give notice of such intention to the pastor, together with satisfactory evidence of their qualification for membership. The names of all such applicants shall be announced at a meeting of the congregation; and if no protest is entered and sustained, the applicant may at such meeting be received into membership by unanimous vote.

2. Meetings

The regular voters' meetings of this congregation shall be four in number during each calendar year, to be held during the following months: January, April, July and October.

Extra meetings may be called by the President or the Pastor. Every voters' meeting shall be previously announced and when a meeting has been announced, it shall be a valid and legal meeting, capable of transacting business, provided that at least ten of the voting members of the congregation (quorum) are in attendance. It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the voters' meetings; by failing to attend, the member waives his right of casting his vote during such meeting.

In all meetings of the congregation the majority of votes cast shall decide all questions; amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the By-Laws shall require a two-thirds majority of the votes cast; in matters of doctrine unanimity shall be required for a valid decision.

3. Officers

In addition to the officers specified in the Articles of Incorporation and the Constitution the congregation shall elect a Board of Finance and a Board of Education. The term of office of the President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Members of the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees and the Board of Finance shall be three years.

Members of the Board of Education shall serve for a period of two years. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. The Congregation shall elect such standing and special committees as its needs demand.

4. Duties of Officers

The duties of the President and the Secretary are those which usually are required of such officers.

The Treasurer shall receive all monies and shall make disbursements as authorized by the congregation. He shall make a report at the regular meeting of the voters.

The Board of Elders shall assist the Pastor in

a. Admonishing those that err;
b. helping to maintain Christian order and recency;
c. the exercise of his office according to their abilities.

Should the pastor become blameworthy in doctrine or life - which God forbid - it devolves especially upon the Elders to take the necessary initiatory steps.

The Board of Trustees shall care for the property of the congregation, and they shall represent the congregation in all legal matters pertaining to this property.

The Board of Finance shall consist of three members who shall keep themselves well informed in reference to the financial condition of the congregation, shall see to it that all communicant members are annually supplied with envelopes for contributions, shall make reports to the congregation at its regular meeting, and shall embody such matters in its report as will depict the financial situation of the congregation.

The Board of Christian Education will organize, implement and evaluate learning opportunities for Christian discipleship, thereby nurturing, encouraging and equipping all people of St. John's and its extended community. The Board shall consist of the pastor and four elected members. The Board shall elect two of its members as chairman and secretary annually. The Board shall be responsible for implementing the “Guidelines for Christian Education.” The Board is also responsible for annually reviewing these guidelines and making revisions if necessary.

The Church Council shall consist of the President, Secretary, Treasurer, Circuit Forum Representative, Pastor, and at least one member from each elected Board. The Church Council will meet at least one or two weeks before the Quarterly Voters' Meeting to set the agenda for that meeting and to make recommendations to the voters. This Council shall coordinate any activities between the various boards and committees of the congregation. It shall also serve as the nominating committee.

5. Order of Business

1. Opening Prayer
2. Reading of minutes
3. Reception of new members
4. Report of Treasurer
5. Reports of boards and committees
6. Unfinished business
7. New business
8. Adjournment with prayer