

BY-LAWS
SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH – ELCA
MOUNT VERNON, WASHINGTON

++ Approved at Special Called Congregation Meeting on 10/6/19 ++

SECTION I.
STATEMENT OF MISSION

It is our mission as members of this Congregation to share the unconditional love of God in Jesus Christ with all people, and to serve God by serving others.

SECTION II.
MEETING OF CONGREGATION

1. The annual meeting shall be held each year on the fourth Sunday in January, unless the Church Council specifies another date.
2. At the annual meeting, the pastor and assistants, the treasurer and the chairpersons of the various organizations within the Congregation shall submit reports in writing.
3. The nominating committee of six members shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting and shall present at the next annual meeting nominations for vacancies occurring on the Church Council. At least one member of the committee shall have served the previous year.
4. The number of nominations shall be no more than twice the number of vacancies to be filled. Nominations may also be made from the floor at the time of the annual meeting.
5. The administrative and fiscal year of the Congregation shall be the calendar year.
6. Materials requiring congregational voting shall be in the hands of the members one week prior to the meeting.
7. Special meetings may be initiated by the pastor, the Council president, the Church Council or by petition by ten members of the congregation, and must be announced two weeks prior to said meeting.
8. Twenty percent (20%) of average worship attendance or forty (40) members, whichever is greater, of the congregation shall constitute a quorum.

SECTION III.
CHURCH COUNCIL

1. Duties and Powers
 - A. Article 9, Section 3 of Constitution, Page 11.
2. Council members
 - A. A term is three years. Members shall be eligible to serve no more than two terms consecutively, plus any partial term to which they may have been previously appointed or elected.
 - B. The Council shall consist of 12 members, at least 4 to be elected annually.
 - C. The Council shall have the following officers, to be elected by the council at the first meeting following the annual meeting:

President	Vice-President
Secretary	Treasurer
 - D. Vacancies occurring in the interim shall be filled by the Church Council, the appointee to serve until the next annual meeting of the congregation.

SECTION IV.
COMMITTEES & MINISTRY TEAMS

1. Committees:

- A. **Executive.** The committee shall consist of the council officers and the pastor.
- B. **Finance.** The committee shall consist of the financial secretary, treasurer and three members of the congregation. It shall be the duty of the financial secretary and treasurer to make the written reports of all financial transactions to the church council monthly and to the congregation annually. Furthermore, it shall be the duty of the committee to prepare for the Council a preliminary annual budget for Council consideration in advance of the January council meeting. It shall give guidance and direction for any loans the Congregation may secure from commercial institutions or individuals.
- B1. **Auditing.** The committee shall consist of three members and shall be appointed by the Council. It shall be the duty of the committee to examine all church records and determine their compliance with legal requirements. Further, that the financial affairs of the Congregation are being conducted efficiently. The committee shall provide to the Council annual audits of all the accounts of the Congregation by the annual meeting.
- C. **Personnel.** Shall consist of a chairperson and two members of the Congregation. The committee shall establish a job description for each staff position, which shall be reviewed once each year with the staff personnel. It shall review annually the compensation paid to staff members and make recommendations to the finance committee as to salaries. The committee and the pastor shall interview and recommend prospective employees to the council for employment. It shall consider any difficulties, concerns or complaints pertaining to staff employees. In so doing, the committee shall make recommendations to the council which shall resolve such difficulties or misunderstandings.
- D. **Investment Fund.** This committee shall consist of five (5) voting members plus one pastor. One of the committee members is also to be a member of the Church Council. Officers are to include 1) Chairman to preside over meetings, 2) Secretary to record and distribute minutes for all committee meetings, and 3) Treasurer to maintain accurate books of accounts for the Investment Fund. Three members shall constitute a quorum.
- a. The purpose of the Investment Fund is to support and expand the ministry and mission outreach of Salem Lutheran Church, by providing periodic disbursements for mission projects. These disbursements will come from distributions (i.e., interest and dividends) generated by the Fund.
 - b. The function of the committee is to receive and manage donations and bequests, to solicit and review applications for mission projects, and to ensure that the Fund is performing in a fiscally sound manner.
 - c. It is the intent of the committee to use only distributions from the Fund for disbursements without affecting the principal. If a larger project were to involve using part of the Fund principal, Church Council and Congregational approval would be required.
 - d. The Fund will not be used for normal or recurring operating expenses of the church.
 - e. The committee will meet at least quarterly to review and discuss potential mission projects, and to recommend qualifying projects to the Church Council. The Congregation may also be involved in final project selection.

- f. Mission projects to be considered can be on a global, national, community, or local basis. Applications for funds may be made by a church member or by an outside organization.
 - g. Committee members shall serve a three-year term. Initially, the terms will be staggered so that new members are installed yearly.
 - h. The committee shall provide information about the Fund in the form of brochures, newsletters and other informational methods to Congregation members and those outside the church.
- E. **Property.** This committee shall oversee the maintenance of all property belonging to the church and give direction to needed repairs or refurbishment. Repairs or replacements which exceed \$5,000 must have prior council approval. It shall enlist from time to time voluntary work crews secured from within the congregation's membership to accomplish maintenance tasks that do not ordinarily need professional skills. It shall examine and periodically review the church's insurance program and make recommendations concerning proposed changes if necessary. It shall review and make recommendations pertaining to any request for funds that are not budgeted or exceed budget guidelines.
- F. **Mutual Ministry.** The purpose of this group is:
- a. To provide emotional support to the Pastor(s) and his/her family.
 - b. To provide two-way communication between the Pastor(s) and the congregation.
2. **Ministry Teams:** Upon direction from Council and Pastor(s), the following Ministry Teams and/or other special focus Team(s) shall be formed as needed:
- A. **Outreach & Growth.** This Ministry Team shall develop resources, programs and materials to be used in extending the invitation to any and all to share in the mission and ministry of the congregation in our community and throughout the world. It shall develop means of identifying the unchurched within the community and endeavor to invite personally such individuals to make a commitment to a Christian community. It shall oversee and evaluate methods of assimilating new members into the life and ministry of the congregation. It shall assist the pastor in making personal contact with those who are either prospective members of the congregation or who have become inactive with the hope of rekindling faith and commitment on their part.
- B. **Worship and Music.** This Ministry Team shall give direction to all matters pertaining to the conduct of worship services held by the congregation including the schedule, special services, and any proposed changes in the style or liturgy. It shall oversee ministries of music provided by the congregation through choirs, instrumentalists and the organ in determining how they best would assist the worship life of the congregation. It shall develop policies and guidelines for ushers, lectors, greeters and various services of the church such as marriages, baptisms and funerals. It shall oversee and give direction to the Altar Guild and its special needs and ministries. It shall oversee any and all special decorations used for festival services of the church.
- C. **Stewardship.** This Ministry Team shall direct and oversee the means and methods whereby members of the congregation can express and commit themselves to the mission of the congregation in terms of time, talent and financial resources. It shall initiate a year-round program whereby people are informed and made aware of how their gifts are being used and what ministries are made possible because of their commitments. This committee shall also be responsible for the distribution of the offering envelopes.
- D. **Faith Formation.**

- a. **Student Ministries.** This Ministry Team oversees the mission, vision, goals, and execution of programs and policies for pre-school aged children through grade 12.
 - b. **Adult Ministries.** This Ministry Team works with the pastor to provide opportunities for adult education.
 - E. **Nurture & Care.** This Ministry Team shall work to increase efforts to identify and respond to individual needs, providing nurture, care and support to those within our congregation and our community.
 - F. **Fellowship.** This Ministry Team shall work to expand the opportunities for those in our church family to connect with one another in order to forge and strengthen relationships through support, prayer, service and fun.
3. Organization of Committees
- A. The Vice President in consultation with the council representative shall be responsible for the organization of the committees. Each committee is to elect their own chairperson other than Council representative.
 - B. Each committee is to have regularly scheduled meetings throughout the year.
 - C. Each committee should consist of five or more members, unless stated otherwise in the bylaws.
 - 1. Each committee shall have a chairperson and secretary, and one member of the Church Council shall serve on each committee. Chairperson and secretary shall be elected at the first meeting of the committee year.

**SECTION V.
CHURCH STAFF**

- 1. Pastor
 - A. Chapter 9 of Constitution.
- 2. Other Staff Members
 - A. The Personnel Committee, the Council President, and the Pastor shall interview and recommend prospective employees to the Council for employment.
 - B. The Personnel Committee is to prepare job guidelines for each employee. These are to be reviewed and signed at the time of employment. There shall be regular, annual reviews of the guidelines with the employee.

**SECTION VI.
AMENDMENTS & BYLAWS**

- 1. As per Chapters 16-17 of the Constitution.