So, you want to update your congregational constitution

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Well, you say, "want" is not quite right. "Need to" or "ought to" are better choices.

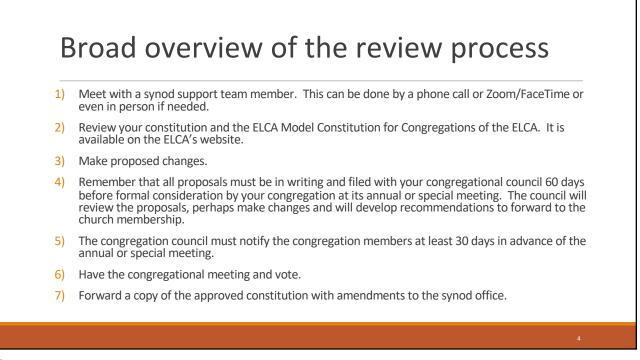
SE MINNESOTA SYNOD COUNCILS AS LEADERS 8 March 2025

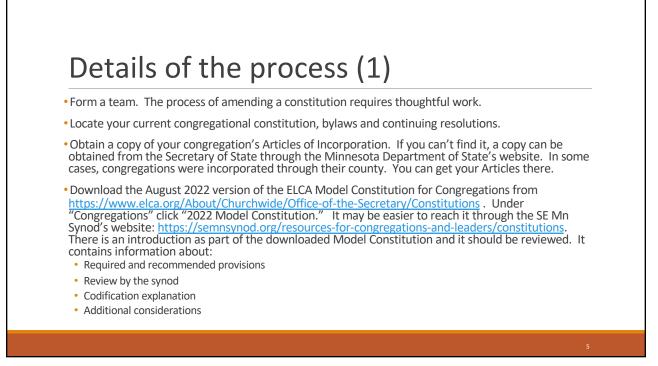
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Why

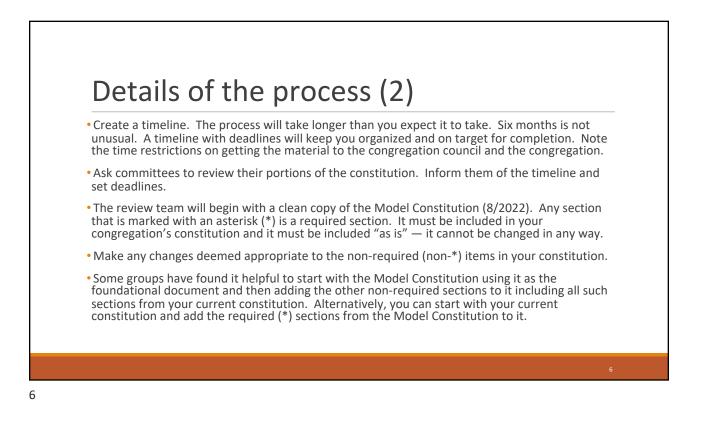
- Constitutions are documents that tell members and interested parties how the congregation will conduct itself.
- Constitutions are especially helpful when difficult situations arise. It is of great value to have decided on a plan about how to manage such situations when specific emotions factors were not present.
- The required sections of the Model Constitution have been thoroughly reviewed by individuals with pastoral, legal and human relations expertise. That review is a significant benefit to congregations.
- You are not giving up autonomy as a congregation or your property by following the Model Constitution.

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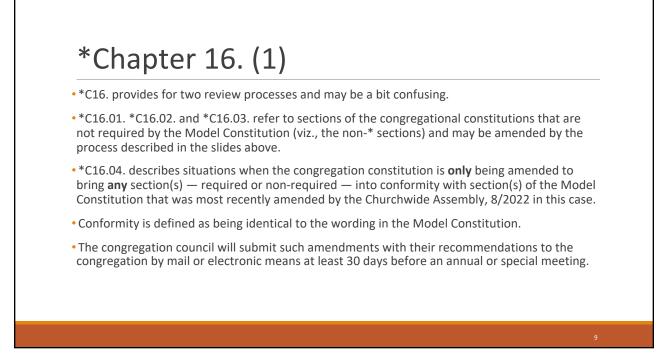


Details of the process (3)

- Develop a system of marking the changes, such as underlines, strikethroughs or font color changes. This will be very helpful to you, the congregation council and congregation members as the changes are being reviewed.
- Bylaws and continuing resolutions are to be incorporated into the constitution and are no longer advised to be separate documents.
- Policies are easily changed and should not be incorporated into the constitution.
- Once you have a draft constitution ready, send an electronic copy to your synod support team member. The intent of this step is to save you time in the long run, so that changes can be made before the document is sent to your congregation council.
- Remember the 60-day and 30-day requirements mentioned in the Overview slide.



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Chapter 16. (2)

• Once approved by the congregation, the congregation's secretary submits a copy to the synod.

- Such provisions become effective immediately following the congregation's vote of approval.
- The synod council is not required to review these changes but may do so at its discretion.

What's the numbering system? (1)

- C refers to the provision's being part of the constitution.
- *C means that it is a required provision. Non-required provisions lack the *.
- The first number is the chapter number. E.g., C5. refers to constitution chapter 5. Notice the period after the number 5 that is used to separate numbers.
- The next numbers refer to the paragraph within the chapter. E.g., *C5.02. refers to the required paragraph of chapter 5 (powers of the congregation) number 02 concerning the powers invested in the congregational meeting.
- The next set of numbers are the bylaws. E.g., C10.01.01. is about the congregation meeting (chapter 10) that meets annually (C10.01.) and the bylaw that states the meeting will be in January or February (C10.01.01.) Of note, the Model Constitution has no required or recommended bylaws.

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What is the numbering system ? (2)

• Number the continuing resolutions is a bit different. The first two sets of numbers are the same as described above — C10.01. that indicates the chapter and paragraph within the chapter. The third set of numbers is preceded by a capital letter indicating sequence and a two-digit number indicating the year of its adoption. E.g., C10.01.A19. would be the first continuing resolution and it would have been adopted in 2019. The second CR would be .B19. The first CR in 2020 would be .A20. CRs are intended to provide more detailed descriptions of operational patterns and practices within the congregation. They should be incorporated following the constitutional provision and/or bylaws to which they apply. Again, the Model Constitution has no suggested or required continuing resolutions.

• In the Model Constitution you will see that certain numbers are missing from the numbering sequence. These omissions are intentional in order to provide options for future additions.

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