

2011

St. John's Lutheran Church

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Constitution and Bylaws



St. John's Lutheran Church
Burt, IA 50522
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PREAMBLE

The word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5 and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Therefore we, the members of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

1.0 NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Saint John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Burt, Kossuth County, Iowa.

2.0 MISSION

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to God, to carry out His will, to assist in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand in human need, and to achieve our objectives by the sacraments and by the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3.0 CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation accepts without reservation:

- 3.1 The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice.
- 3.2 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.

4.0 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including children who have not yet been confirmed.
- 4.1.2 Communicant members are those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, accept the confessional standard of Section 3.0 of this constitution, are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, and are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.
- 4.1.3 Voting Members are all confirmed members who have reached their eighteenth year. They automatically become a voting member and are entitled to hold office. All those who reach this age will receive a copy of the constitution and bylaws and are encouraged to read them. A new voting member shall not be expected to hold office during their first year as a voting member unless by their own consent they agree to serve if elected for a term of office.

4.2 Reception

Baptized and communicant members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation, through the rite of confirmation, through transfer from a sister congregation, through profession of faith or reaffirmation of faith. The Voter's Assembly shall approve the reception. Upon reception communicant members, eighteen years or older, automatically become voting members.

4.3 Duties
Members of the congregation shall conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word, and to that end make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the Kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation.

4.4 Termination

4.4.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion.

4.4.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20: if they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be presented individually to the Voter's assembly for a decision. If such members deliberately absent themselves from the meetings at which their case is to be discussed, they shall be regarded as having excluded themselves from the membership of the congregation.

5.0 CALLED CHURCH WORKERS

5.1 Qualifications for Office

5.1.1 This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in section 3.0 of this constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod.

5.1.2 All other called church workers, including teachers, directors of Christian education, directors of Christian outreach, directors of family life ministry, directors of parish music, and deaconesses shall also profess and adhere to the same confessional standard, must be qualified for their work, and be endorsed by the Synod.

5.2 All other employees of the congregation who publicly represent the church, such as non-called teachers, musicians, music directors, and secretaries must be qualified for their work and agree to abide by the confessional standard set forth in article 3.0 in the carrying out of their work.

5.3 Any pastor, other called church worker, or officer may be removed from office by the Voters Assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for only the following reasons: persistent teaching of false doctrine (as defined by section 3.0), leading a scandalous life, willful neglect of the duties of the office, or inability to perform the duties of the office.

5.4 The congregation may request the resignation of any pastor, other called church worker, or officer from his position in the congregation in the case of prolonged incapacity or general incompetence.

6.0 AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

6.1 The congregation as a body, through the voting members shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as the parochial school, Sunday School, youth societies, men's or ladies' organizations, choir, shall at all times be subject to approval and supervision of the congregation. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Section 3.0) and any such decision shall be null and void.

6.2 The right of calling pastors or teachers shall be vested in the congregation through the Voter's Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

7.0 OFFICERS AND BOARDS

The officers and Boards of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as the Bylaws of this congregation may prescribe.

8.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards set forth in Section 3.0 as determined by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose.

9.0 DIVISION

9.1 If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Section 3.0 of this constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of Synod.

9.2 If division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Section 3.0 of this constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of the Synod.

9.3 In the event the congregation should dissolve, the voter's assembly shall decide by majority vote upon a Lutheran mission organization to receive the proceeds from the liquidation of the congregation's property and assets. In the event the congregation cannot reach a decision, the Synodical district in which the congregation holds membership shall identify an appropriate recipient.

10.0 MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the Voter's Assembly shall be held as determined in the Bylaws. Announcements of the meeting shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays. Special meetings require announcement in services in the two previous Sundays or notification by mail and/or phone and announcement in service in the one previous Sunday. Such special meetings may be called at the request of the President or three members of the Council.

11.0 QUORUM

All members present at a validly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.

12.0 LIMITATIONS ON HOLDING OFFICE

Women who have reached the age of eighteen may hold voting membership in the congregation and serve as officers and as members of boards and committees as long as these positions are not directly involved in the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching, the public administration of the sacraments, church discipline) and as long as this service does not violate the order of creation (usurping authority over men). Accordingly, they shall not serve as pastor, as a member of the Board of Elders, as president or vice-president of the congregation.

13.0 AMENDMENTS

13.1 Amendments to provisions of this Constitution except Sections 2.0,3.0,5.0,8.0,13.0 may be adopted at a regular Voter's Meeting, except as hereinafter otherwise provided:

1. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the Voter's Assembly and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church or by mail prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon;
2. That an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voters present is secured.

13.2 In addition to the above requirements, proposals to amend Sections 2.0,3.0,5.0,8.0,13.0 shall require that previous notice of such amendment and discussion of the same shall be presented at two regular meetings of the Voter's Assembly before the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to receive action. Due notice of the fact that a vote will be taken shall be given all voting members of the congregation. Any changes in these articles shall not destroy

- the essential meaning of the same. Whether or not this has occurred shall be decided, if challenged, by a decision of the commission of Adjudication of the Synodical District in which the congregation holds its Synodical membership.
- 13.3 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 by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district's board of directors before being implemented by the congregation.

BYLAWS

The words "he," "him," and "his"; are intended to include both masculine and feminine genders unless otherwise stated.

14.0 MEMBERSHIP

- 14.1 Baptized Membership shall consist of all those baptized in this congregation and any person coming with evidence of valid baptism shall be received into baptized membership by the Pastor and Elders, whose action is to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 14.2 Communicant Membership
- 14.2.1 By Confirmation: Communicant membership shall consist of all those received by this sacred act.
- 14.2.2 By transfer: Persons coming with a communicant letter of transfer from a congregation in church fellowship, provided they conform in all respects to the requirements of membership of this congregation, shall be received by the Pastor and Elders, whose action is to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 14.2.3 By Profession of Faith: Other persons shall make their request to the Pastor and Elders and having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Pastor and Elders, they shall be received as communicant members, to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 14.2.4 Reinstatement: Persons wishing to be reinstated shall make their request to the Pastor or an Elder, and having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Pastor and Elders, they shall be reinstated in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 14.3 Voting Membership-Duties
- It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the Voter's Assembly meetings. By failing to attend such a meeting a member waves the right to cast his vote during that meeting. He shall accept; nomination for office, committee, appointment, etc. if possible, and generally participates in the business of the Voter's Assembly.

15.0 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 15.1 Baptized Membership may be terminated by giving notice of intention to terminate membership, or their membership in the congregation may be terminated with their parent's termination of membership.
- 15.2 Communicant Membership
- 15.2.1 Transfer to another Congregation: Communicant members desiring to join a congregation in church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor and Elders to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. Such transfer of membership shall be reported to a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voter's Meeting.
- 15.2.2 Peaceful Release: In cases where communicant members have joined another congregation outside our own fellowship, they shall immediately be considered such as having terminated their membership and their names shall be removed from the list and be reported to the next meeting of the Church Council and Voters Assembly.

- 15.2.3 Whereabouts Unknown: The Voter's Assembly shall remove the names of members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established and forthwith such membership is terminated.
- 15.2.4 Excommunication: Any member who persists in false doctrine or conducts himself in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If he refuses to amend his sinful life after proper admonitions, he shall be excommunicated. If the member refuses to attend the Voter's Assembly to discuss his case, he has thereby excluded himself. A unanimous vote shall be required for every resolution by the Voter's Assembly for excommunication.
- 15.2.5 Self-Exclusion: If a member fails to commune for a period of 12 months without notifying the congregation of a legitimate cause (such as attending college, military deployment, incarceration, etc.) the pastor and elders shall admonish the member to return to participation in the life of the congregation. If the member refuses to return or fails to do so within 6 months, he may be considered at the elders' discretion, to have resigned his membership by self-exclusion. This resignation of membership shall be reflected in the congregation's membership records upon authorization by the board of elders. Upon repentance for their neglect of the services of the Lord's House, they may be received into membership by this or any other congregation by Affirmation of Faith.
- 15.2.6 Status: A person whose communicant membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he is not reinstated into membership.

16.0 MEETINGS

- 16.1 Regular
Regular meetings of the Voter's Assembly shall be held during the first month of the fiscal year and every 3 months thereafter. The dates of the meetings shall be set by the Church Council.
- 16.2 Election and Budget
An additional meeting shall be held in the final month of the fiscal year and shall include the election of officers and the adoption of next year's church budget. This shall be considered the annual meeting of the congregation.
- 16.3 Special
The President or any three members of the Church Council may call special meetings of the Voters Assembly.
- 16.4 Quorum
Every regular or special Voter's meeting shall be announced 8 days prior to the meeting. The members present at any meeting properly announced constitute a quorum. However, for amending Articles of Incorporation or the Constitution, the erection of buildings, the purchase of property, or the removal of a pastor or other called church worker or some other member from office, a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required for adoption of a resolution, unless otherwise provided by state law or the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation.

17.0 PROCEDURES FOR CALLING PASTORS AND OTHER CHURCH WORKERS

- 17.1 When a pastor or other church worker is to be called from the field, every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the President of the Synodical District for recommendations. In the case of a pastoral call the Board of Elders shall serve as the screening committee, and in the case of the calling of any other church worker the council shall appoint a screening committee.
- 17.2 In the screening process the respective board shall submit all names to the District President for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the District President, the respective board shall present to the congregation, by means of a public announcement, at least six preferred candidates, together with a biographical sketch of each.
- 17.3 At the Voter's Meeting, called for the purpose of calling a new pastor or other church worker the preferred list may be amended by means of a two-thirds vote

of those present. At that point the Voter's Assembly shall be asked to agree to be satisfied with whatever selection is finally made by the congregation.

17.4 Balloting shall proceed by means of a secret ballot vote. A simple majority is needed in order to determine the disposition of the call.

17.5 The Voters Assembly may decide by majority vote to request a pastoral candidate from a Synodical seminary or from a Synodical university for any other called position. In the case where the congregation has determined to call such a candidate, the appointed screening committee shall be responsible for making application through the appropriate synodically determined assignment process at that time. Completion of this application process shall constitute fulfillment of the above requirements listed in 17.1 through 17.4

18.0 ELECTED OFFICERS

The elected officers of this congregation shall be, a Congregational Secretary, a Treasurer, a Financial Secretary, a Sunday School Superintendent, a Head Usher, Chairman of the Worship Committee, and the Boards responsible for a specific area of Kingdom work in the congregation: Board of Elders, Board of Trustees, Board of Stewardship and Finance, Board of Education and Youth, Mission Board, and Preschool Board. The offices of Congregational Secretary and Financial Secretary may be held by one person as a combined office. The Nominating Committee, Audit Committee, and Church Council shall be composed as specified in these Bylaws. All officers shall be voting members of this congregation.

19.0 CHURCH COUNCIL

19.1 Membership

The Church Council shall be the Board of Directors. The voting members of the Church Council shall be: the Congregational Secretary, the Treasurer all members of the Board of Elders, all members of the Board of Trustees, and the Financial Secretary, Other officers may attend meetings of the council in an advisory capacity and report on behalf of their committee. The pastor shall be an advisory member of the Church Council. At its first meeting of each year, the council shall choose one member to serve as its chairman. The chairman of the council shall also be the Congregational President. The Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Congregational Secretary may not serve as chairman.

19.2 Meetings

The Church Council shall meet monthly. The President may cancel a monthly meeting if there is no business, by notifying the Council Members 24 hours in advance, but the Council shall meet no fewer than five times per year (prior to each Voters Meeting). The President, or any three members of the Council, may call special meetings by notifying each member at least 24 hours in advance. A majority of the voting members of the council shall constitute a quorum.

19.3 Duties

It shall be the principal duty of the Church Council to coordinate the program and activities of the various departments of the congregation. It shall have power to act in behalf of the congregation between meetings of the Voter's Assembly.

20.0 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

20.1 The Nomination Committee shall prepare a slate of candidates for the last meeting of the fiscal year of the Voter's Assembly. The Nomination Committee shall attempt to identify at least two candidates for each office, whenever possible. This slate shall be made public prior to the election meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person shall be nominated without his consent.

20.2 The election shall be by simple majority ballot. The officers elected shall assume their respective duties on the first day of the fiscal year. In the event of a vacancy in any office, the Church Council shall appoint a successor to serve until the next annual election. In the event that all offices on the ballot are unopposed, the election may be certified by unanimous consent if no members of the Voters Assembly object.

20.3 Officers and Board members shall be installed during a public worship service of the congregation.

21.0 OFFICIAL DUTIES/TERMS OF OFFICE

Officers and members of boards shall perform the duties prescribed in the constitution. The congregation shall also have the privilege from time to time of detailing and enlarging these responsibilities by majority vote of the Voter's Assembly. It may also call such other boards and committees into being as it may need from time to time.

21.1 President

- 21.1.1 The chairman of the Church Council shall also be the Congregational President.
- 21.1.2 The President shall be a consecrated man (Titus 1:5-9).
- 21.1.3 He shall preside at all meetings of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly and shall represent the congregation publicly.
- 21.1.4 He shall see to it that all committees and officers are functioning properly.
- 21.1.5 He will confer with the Pastor regularly as to the needs and the activities of the congregation.
- 21.1.6 He shall prepare an agenda for Church Council or Voter's Assembly meetings.
- 21.1.7 He shall be responsible for seeing that the passed resolutions of the Church council and the Voter's Assembly are carried out.

21.2 Congregational Secretary

- 21.2.1 The term of office of the Secretary shall be for two years.
- 21.2.2 He shall keep an accurate and permanent record of all Church Council and Voter's Assembly meetings.
- 21.2.3 He shall see that an accurate list of current voting members and all official committee and board members is kept.
- 21.2.4 He shall be responsible for notifying voters of date, time, and place of regular and special meetings of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly, when so ordered by the Church Council.
- 21.2.5 The Secretary shall be responsible for official correspondence sent and received by the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 21.2.6 He shall keep a record of all changes in church membership.
- 21.2.7 He shall be responsible for the dissemination of minutes and information from meetings of the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 21.2.8 Whenever possible, the office of Congregational Secretary should be combined with that of Financial Secretary

21.3 Treasurer

- 21.3.1 The term of office for the Treasurer shall be for two years, elected on the alternate year that the Financial Secretary is elected.
- 21.3.2 He shall be bonded in such amount as the Church Council may determine. The congregation shall pay the cost of such bonding.
- 21.3.3 He shall be a member of the Stewardship and Finance Board.
- 21.3.4 He shall pay all bills authorized by the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.
- 21.3.5 He shall be responsible for monthly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies and prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the congregation.
- 21.3.6 He shall keep an accurate record of the receipts and disbursements of the congregation in books or electronically, which shall be and remain the property of the congregation; all these books may be audited by the Audit Committee and a report of such audit may be submitted to the Voter's Assembly.
- 21.3.7 He shall submit a written report at each regular Voter's Assembly Meeting and preliminary report at Church council meetings such reports show actual receipts and disbursements, compared with budgeted amounts.

21.3.8 During serious illness of the Treasurer or some other emergency the person whom the Church Council may appoint to serve as temporary Treasurer shall take the books, papers, electronic records, and other valuable articles belonging to the congregation into his custody.

21.4 Financial Secretary

21.4.1 The term of office of the Financial Secretary shall be two years, elected on the alternate year that the Treasurer is elected.

21.4.2 He shall be bonded in such amount, as the Church Council shall determine. The congregation shall pay the cost of such bond.

21.4.3 The Financial Secretary shall prepare a report for each regular meeting of the Voters Assembly and a preliminary report for Church Council meetings.

21.4.4 All offerings shall be counted in the presence of at least two members of the Board of Stewardship and Finance or their substitutes appointed by the chairman of that board.

21.4.5 He shall be responsible for ordering of offering envelopes; record forms and such materials as are necessary for the recording of the congregational receipts.

21.4.6 He shall submit to each recorded contributor a written financial statement of the amount given; such statements shall be submitted no later than January 31st in the following year.

21.4.7 Whenever possible, the office of Financial Secretary should be combined with that of Congregational Secretary

21.5 Sunday School Superintendent

21.5.1 The term of office of the Sunday School Superintendent shall be for three years.

21.5.2 He shall be a member of the Board of Education and Youth.

21.5.3 He shall work together with the Pastor in securing the best-qualified teachers and substitute teachers for the Sunday School staff; such teachers shall be approved by the Board of Education.

21.5.4 He is responsible for keeping accurate records of enrollment, attendance, and funds of the Sunday School; and making regular reports of said, enrollment, attendance, and funds to the Church Council and Voter's Assembly.

21.5.5 He is responsible for seeing that the Sunday School be supplied with approved literature and necessary equipment that the teachers receive the necessary instruction for lesson preparation.

21.6 Head Usher

21.6.1 The term of office of the Head Usher shall be for three years.

21.6.2 He shall be a member of the Mission Board.

21.6.3 He shall be a member of the Worship Committee.

21.6.4 He shall, under the supervision of the Pastor, secure a staff of qualified ushers; the Board of Elders shall approve such ushers.

21.6.5 He shall be responsible for the usher staff's training and scheduling so that they create and maintain a worshipful atmosphere in welcoming and seating worshipers for all services of the congregation.

21.6.6 He shall be responsible to see that the physical facilities of the worship are so adjusted that there be no distraction or discomfort during worship.

21.7 Chairman of the Worship Committee

21.7.1 The term of the office of the Chairman of the Worship Committee shall be for two years.

21.7.2 The Chairman of the Worship Committee shall be responsible for coordinating the various people and activities necessary for the conducting of the congregation's worship according to the manner specified by the Pastor and Elders.

21.7.3 The Chairman of the Worship Committee shall preside at all meetings of the Worship Committee.

21.8 Worship Committee

- 21.8.1 The Worship Committee shall consist of the Pastor, one member of the Altar Guild, the Choir Director, the Head Organist, the Head Usher, one member of the Board of Trustees, and one Elder.
- 21.8.2 Other members of the congregation may be invited to participate in the Worship Committee's meetings, as their involvement in services requires.
- 21.8.3 The responsibility of the Worship Committee shall be to coordinate their various duties in the church's worship so that services are carried out in a smooth and professional manner.
- 21.8.4 The Worship Committee shall meet at the discretion of the Pastor and its Chairman.

21.9 Board of Elders

- 21.9.1 The term of the office for an Elder shall be three years; the election of Elders shall be staggered.
- 21.9.2 The Board of Elders shall consist of at least three consecrated men (Titus 1:5-9).
- 21.9.3 Elders shall be consecrated men (Titus 1:5-9) who show themselves to be mature in their judgment, well versed in Scripture, sound in doctrine, and actively loyal to Christ and his church (Acts 6:3).
- 21.9.4 The Senior Elder shall be the chairman of the Board and shall be the representative of the Board at Church Council meetings.
- 21.9.5 Elders shall be assigned to each of the following areas of responsibility, as agreed upon among themselves at their first meeting of the year:
 - 21.9.5.1 Education – One Elder shall advocate for the educational efforts of the congregation, both youth and adult. He shall be a member of the Board of Education and Youth. He shall represent that board at meetings of the Church Council.
 - 21.9.5.2 Worship – One Elder shall advocate for the worship of the congregation. He shall be a member of the worship committee and represent that committee at meetings of the Church Council.
 - 21.9.5.3 Mission – One Elder shall advocate for the mission efforts of the congregation. He shall be a member of the Mission Board and represent that board at meetings of the Church Council.
 - 21.9.5.4 At Large – Additional elders beyond three shall be considered “At Large” Elders. They shall carry out the general responsibilities of Elders, but are not assigned to a particular area of responsibility.
- 21.9.6 One of the “At Large” Elders shall be assigned to the Audit Committee and Nominating Committee. In the event there are no “At Large” Elders, the Junior Elder shall serve in this capacity.
- 21.9.7 Elders shall seek to ensure and protect the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the Pastor and his family.
- 21.9.8 The elders shall advise and assist the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual life of the congregation. They serve as the Pastor's chief assistants and together with the Pastor are accountable for each soul in the congregation, seeing that there is an accurate and up to date membership roster. With the Pastor, they shall assure that all hymnals, liturgies, worship materials, and teaching materials used in the congregation are doctrinally pure according to the congregation's confessional standard (section 3.0).
- 21.9.9 They are to consider the complaints and grievances of members of the congregation, observing the principal of Matthew 18:15-16 **“If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you, If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses’.”** And report such grievances to the congregation that cannot be otherwise resolved, in accordance with Matthew 18:17-18 **“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refused to**

listen to even the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. ‘ I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven’.”

21.9.10 The Elders shall make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance of services, in the use of the Sacraments, and the financial support of the church to amend their sinful ways and to fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.

21.9.11 The Elders shall assist the Pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services, and guest speakers.

21.9.12 The Elders shall audit the congregation’s membership records.

21.10 Board of Trustees

21.10.1 The Board of Trustees shall consist of three members.

21.10.2 The term of office for a Trustee shall be for three years; the election of Trustees shall be staggered.

21.10.3 The Senior Trustee shall be Chairman of the Board and shall be the representative of the Board at the Church Council meetings.

21.10.4 Trustees shall be assigned to each of the following areas of responsibility, as agreed upon among themselves at their first meeting of the year:

21.10.4.1 Finance – One Trustee shall be a member of the Board of Stewardship and Finance. In the absence of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, he would represent this Board at meetings of the Church Council. The Trustee for Finance shall be a member of the Audit Committee and the Nominating Committee.

21.10.4.2 Preschool – One Trustee shall be a member of the Preschool Board, and shall represent them at meetings of the Church Council.

21.10.4.3 Worship/Christmas – One Trustee shall be a member of the worship committee and shall be the contact between the Christmas Committee and the Church Council.

21.10.5 The Trustees shall be responsible for seeing that the congregation is properly incorporated according to the laws of the State and shall at the instruction of the Voter’s Assembly and in its behalf make contracts, sign legal documents, buy and sell property and appear in court on behalf of the congregation when such need arises.

21.10.6 The Trustees shall make regular inspection of all church properties and recommend needed repairs and improvements, especially noting needed safety and fire equipment; and take the initiative to accomplish such repairs and improvements.

21.10.7 The Trustees shall be responsible that adequate custodial help and supplies are made available for the proper maintenance of the congregational property.

21.10.8 The Trustees shall determine and establish with Voter Assembly approval regulations governing the use of the church property and equipment.

21.10.9 The Trustees shall be responsible for the issue and record of keys to the church property.

21.10.10 The Trustees shall be responsible to annually check the adequacy of all types of insurance and negotiate insurance contracts; they shall make proper registration for tax purposes with the government. (Particularly property).

21.10.11 They shall make an annual inventory of official documents in safekeeping and the contents of safety deposit box.

21.11 Board of Stewardship and Finance

21.11.1 The Board of Stewardship and Finance shall consist of at least five members.

- 21.11.2 The Board shall select a chairman at its first meeting of the year. The Trustee for Finance, along with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be the board's voting representatives at meetings of the Church Council. Other members may attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity. At least two additional members of this Board shall be elected from the Voter's Assembly membership serving for a one-year term of office.
- 21.11.3 This Board shall meet annually to prepare the upcoming year's budget, and at other times, as the needs of the congregation require.
- 21.11.4 The Board members shall assist in counting and recording all offering money received; in case of absence, substitutes may be appointed by the Chairman of this Board.
- 21.11.5 This Board shall prepare and present a yearly budget of planned congregational expenses to the Voter's Assembly.
- 21.11.6 This Board shall consult with the Pastor and Board of Elders in the interest of visiting members who give little or nothing for the work of the church.
- 21.11.7 This Board shall provide the congregation with stewardship information and help build enthusiasm for the work of the church; also being responsible for ordering and preparing necessary stewardship materials.
- 21.11.8 This Board shall supervise the raising of any funds needed within the congregation.

21.12 Board of Education and Youth

- 21.12.1 The Board of Education and Youth shall consist of the Sunday School Superintendent, one Elder, and at least two members elected from membership of the Voter's Assembly.
- 21.12.2 The Board shall select a chairman at its first meeting of the year. The Elder for Education shall be the board's voting representative at meetings of the Church Council. Other members may attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity. The term of office for an elected Board of Education member shall be for three years and elections shall be staggered.
- 21.12.3 This Board shall meet as the needs of the congregation require. This Board shall be responsible in all things pertaining to the maintenance and improvement of Christian education in the congregation.
- 21.12.4 This Board shall aid in the selection and training of such teachers and officers that are needed for the proper educational programs of the church.
- 21.12.5 This Board shall be responsible to see that the proper materials and equipment be available for the teaching ministry of the church; and shall supervise the church library.
- 21.12.6 This Board shall make recommendations concerning needed funds for the educational programs of the church to the Board of Stewardship and Finance so that such funds may be included in the congregational budget.
- 21.12.7 This Board shall aid in the encouragement of all youth, children, and adults in the attendance of Sunday School, Bible Classes, and special educational opportunities.
- 21.12.8 This Board shall be responsible to see that adequate youth programs are made available for the youth of the church and that proper counselors are secured.

21.13 Mission Board

- 21.13.1 The Mission Board shall consist of one Elder, the Head Usher, and at least two members elected from the membership of the Voters Assembly.
- 21.13.2 The term of office for members of the Mission Board shall be for three years; the election of the Mission Board shall be staggered.

- 21.13.3 The Board shall select a chairman at its first meeting of the year. The Elder for Mission shall be the board's voting representative at meetings of the Church Council. Other members may attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity. This Board shall meet as the needs of the congregation require.
- 21.13.4 This Board shall work closely with the Board of Elders and with the approval of the Elders, sponsor programs of evangelism on behalf of the congregation.
- 21.13.5 This Board shall plan, promote, and carry out evangelism programs within the congregation and the community on a regular basis.
- 21.13.6 This Board shall be responsible for a program of community public relations that identifies the congregation with the Gospel of Christ.
- 21.13.7 This Board shall educate and motivate all members in the proper stewardship of God's Gifts to reach out to meet the needs of our fellow man, and arrange for the congregation's support of emergency assistance in our community.
- 21.13.8 Promote ministry to those with special physical needs: the elderly, the disabled, the mentally challenged, and the like.
- 21.13.9 Plan, promote, and conduct a program of ministry to those in institutions; nursing homes, mental hospitals, penal facilities and the like, or provide for the same through established Synodical programs.
- 21.13.10 Cooperate with social agencies of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the community to meet the needs of our fellow man.
- 21.13.11 Keep the congregation informed on social issues affecting the life of the community and nation and suggest congregational response or action.
- 21.13.12 In conjunction with the Board of Stewardship and Finance, coordinate volunteer assistance within the congregation.
- 21.13.13 Be responsible for any other expressions of Christian love and concern through physical and material support and assistance as needed in the congregation and community.

21.14 Preschool Board

- 21.14.1 The Preschool Board shall consist of one Trustee and at least four members elected from the membership of the Voter's Assembly.
- 21.14.2 The term of office shall be three years and elections shall be staggered with a yearly election of one or two members.
- 21.14.3 The Director of the Preschool shall be an advisory member of this Board and may serve as the Treasurer but not as Chairman.
- 21.14.4 The Board shall elect one of their members to serve as Chairman on a yearly basis. The Trustee for Preschool shall be the board's voting member at meetings of the Church Council. Other members may attend council meetings in an advisory capacity.
- 21.14.5 This board is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the Preschool of this congregation.
- 21.14.6 This board shall be responsible for interviewing, screening, and hiring applicants for the Director and other employees of the Preschool on behalf of the Church Council, and shall report these actions to the Church Council at the next regular meeting.
- 21.14.7 This Board shall set all fees and salaries for the maintenance of the Preschool.
- 21.14.8 This Board shall meet monthly.
- 21.14.9 This Board shall design ways to help fund and support the Preschool.

21.15 Nominating Committee

- 21.15.1 The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least four members.
- 21.15.2 The Pastor, an Elder and a Trustee shall be members of this committee (as specified above). The Chairman of the Church Council shall appoint a fourth member.
- 21.15.3 This committee shall meet prior to the last quarterly meeting of the fiscal year of the Voter's Assembly and prepare a slate of officers as outlined in Article 20.1 of the congregation By Laws.

21.16 Audit Committee

- 21.16.1 The Audit Committee shall consist of three members.
- 21.16.2 The Chairman shall appoint a member of the council to serve as chairman of the Audit Committee. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary may not serve as chairman of the Audit Committee.
- 21.16.3 An Elder and Trustee shall be the other two members (as specified above). This Committee shall meet with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary after the end of the fiscal year and prior to the first Voter's Assembly meeting of the new year.
- 21.16.4 This Committee shall be responsible to audit all the financial records of the congregation and make a report of the results of such audit at the Voter's Assembly Annual Meeting.

22.0 CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS

22.1 Financial

- 22.1.1 The financial records kept by the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary shall be the property of the congregation and subject to an audit.
- 22.1.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Audit Committee to audit all financial records.

22.2 Membership Records

- 22.2.1 The personal records of members concerning communion attendance, baptism, confirmation, marriage, and burials kept by the Pastor shall be the property of the congregation and subject to audit yearly or as ordered by the Voter's Assembly.
- 22.2.2 It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to audit the Pastor's record of official acts.
- 22.2.3 The records of official acts shall be taken into custody by the Board of Elders prior to the granting of a peaceful release to a Pastor.
- 22.2.4 During a vacancy the church records shall be kept by the elected Vacancy Pastor and shall be audited every three months by the Board of Elders.

23.0 RULES OF ORDER

In Addition to principles laid down in Scripture, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.

24.0 AMENDMENTS

- 24.1 These By Laws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the Voter's Assembly by a majority of all voting members present, provided the proposed change has been announced in a previous meeting or has been submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting to all voting members.
- 24.2 The revised bylaws shall take effect immediately upon approval by the Voter's Assembly, but shall, as a condition of membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and favorable action by the district at its next regular convention.

25.0 ORDER OF BUSINESS

25.1 The following order of business should be used for regular Church Council meetings:

- A. Call to Order
- B. Devotion
- C. Roll Call
- D. Reading of the Minutes
- E. Treasurer's Report
- F. Pastor's Report
- G. Report of Officers and Boards
 - 1. Board of Elders
 - 2. Board of Trustees
 - 3. Board of Stewardship and Finance
 - 4. Board of Education and Youth
 - 5. Mission Board
 - 6. Preschool Board

- 7. Special Committees
- H. Unfinished Business
- I. New Business
- J. Announcements
- K. Adjournment
- L. Prayer

25.2 The following order of business should be used for regular Voters Meetings:

- M. Call to Order
- N. Devotion
- O. Roll Call
- P. Reading of the Minutes
- Q. Treasurer's Report
- R. Unfinished Business
- S. New Business
- T. Announcements
- U. Adjournment
- V. Prayer

**BY LAWS
FOR
ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND**

I. NAME

This congregation shall have a congregational fund Entitled, **St. John's Lutheran Church Endowment Fund**. It shall be one of the funds of this congregation.

II. GENERAL PURPOSE

- A. This fund's purpose shall be to receive gifts and bequests and to use them for the mission and ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church in Burt, Iowa.
- B. In order to accomplish this purpose, the Endowment Fund Shall maintain the following separate divisions:

1. Growth/Capital Improvement Fund:

Income and/or principal from this fund shall be dedicated for facility expansion, property purchase, erection of new facilities, remodeling of existing facilities, and upkeep of facilities, and upkeep of facilities and grounds.

2. Synodical College Student Endowment:

Income from this endowment shall be distributed yearly to help with expenses for those students from Iowa District West who have elected to prepare for full-time church work by attending a college or seminary of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. First priority will be given to members of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Burt, Iowa who meet the above stated criteria, with that year's income being split equally among them.

In the event no member from this congregation is studying for a church work profession at an LCMS college or seminary, a three-person committee made up of the Vice President, Senior Elder, and Senior Trustee shall take applications from Iowa District West students attending either LCMS seminary (Fort Wayne and St. Louis). Applications shall be taken with a deadline of Sept. 30 and one recipient chosen by Nov. 30. The committee has the option to elect to use that year's income to help pay educational debts incurred by full-time church workers who are called to serve at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3. Preschool Endowment:

Income from this endowment shall be dedicated for the Day-to-day operation of Kids of the Kingdom Preschool. This may include payment of salaries, purchase of equipment, scholarships, upkeep of facility, and expenses.

4. L.I.F.E. (Lutherans Inspired by the Faithful Elderly) Endowment:

Income from this endowment shall be dedicated to support the outreach to, for, by, and with the elderly. This could include tape ministry, payment of salaries, purchase of equipment, upkeep of facilities, procurement of speakers, parish nurse program, and other programs and projects specifically designed to meet the needs of the elderly.

5. Junior High and Youth Endowment:

Income from this endowment shall be dedicated to support the Junior High and Youth ministries of St. John's Lutheran Church. This could include support for attendance at Circuit, District and Synodical Youth Gatherings, the procurement of speakers, and other programs and projects specifically designed to meet the needs of Junior High and High School Youth.

- C. Only the income from these funds, other than the Growth/Capital Improvement Fund, shall be used for the purposes, projects, and programs recommended by the Church Council and approved by a simple majority of the Voter's Assembly, provided that the purposes, projects, and programs shall be consistent with the general reason for which these funds have been established. The list of approved purposes, projects, and programs shall be distributed to the members of the congregation.
- D. The income from these endowments shall be distributed as needed upon approval by a simple majority of the Voters Assembly. None of the income or principal of this fund shall be distributed to the congregation's operating budget.
- E. Gifts and bequests may be made upon special terms or conditions or containing limitations or directions as to the use of the income from the gift provided that such are acceptable to St. John's Lutheran Church. The Church Council shall submit at the next meeting of the Voter's Assembly (or request an emergency meeting), its recommendation on the acceptability of such a gift or bequest. The acceptance of such a gift shall be a simple majority of the voting members present.

III. DURATION

The St. John's Lutheran Church Endowment Fund shall continue in existence and be used as above provided so long as St. John's Lutheran Church in Burt, Iowa shall continue to exist. If St. John's Lutheran Church shall cease to exist, the assets of the endowment funds shall be distributed according to the manner specified in the constitution for the congregation's other assets.

IV. GOVERNING BOARD AND OFFICERS

- A. The Church Council shall promote and manage the fund. The treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible for receipts and disbursements from the fund, shall maintain complete and accurate books of account, and shall provide, at least annually, a written financial report of the fund to the Voter's Assembly.
- B. The Church Council, if it deems it to be in the best interest of the congregation, may recommend that the assets of the fund be delivered to the Lutheran Church Extension Fund for investment. Any agreement entered into for the management of the fund shall be valid only if approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at a duly called and constituted meeting of the Voter's Assembly.
- C. No member of the Council shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the fund in which the member of the council has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the fund.

V. DUTIES

- A. The Church Council shall, at least annually, render a full and complete account of the administration of the fund during the preceding year.

- B. Gifts and contributions from any individual, or groups of individuals including, by way of explanation and not in limitation, direct gifts for the purpose of the fund, gifts in memory of any deceased person or in appreciation or recognition of any living person, gifts in the form of a devise or bequests under will or trust instrument, and gifts or proceeds or portions of proceeds of insurance, annuity, or endowment policies or contracts, may be received by the fund at any time.
- C. The records shall acknowledge the receipt of each gift and contribution.
- D. All funds shall be kept and maintained separate, distinct, and independent from the funds and property otherwise belonging to the church.

VI. AMENDMENTS

Any amendment to these By-Laws that will change, alter or amend the general purpose for which the fund is established shall be adopted only if approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at a duly called and constituted meeting of the Voter's Assembly, the notice of which has stated that such an amendment will be proposed to the Voter's Assembly