

**CONSTITUTION OF
TRANSFIGURATION LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA**

Effective June 1, 2009

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PREAMBLE

We, baptized members of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01.** The name of this congregation shall be Transfiguration Lutheran Church of Bloomington, Minnesota.
- C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of Transfiguration Lutheran Church of Bloomington, Minnesota is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01.** This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02.** This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
- a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
- c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- C2.03.** This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- C2.04.** This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- C2.05.** This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- C2.06.** This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.

C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scripture and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.

C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:

a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.

b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.

c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.

e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.

c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.

d. Teach the Word of God.

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

C4.04. This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.

C4.05. This congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

C5.01. The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

C5.02. The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregation Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Council or other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:

- a. call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- b. terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9;
- c. call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16.
- e. approve the annual budget;
- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its Congregation Council and require the members of the council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws; and
- j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.

C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C5.05. This congregation shall have a foundation that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.

d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

C6.04. Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:

a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.

b. This congregation ceases to exist.

c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in C6.05.

C6.05. This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.

b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.

c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.

d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.

e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.

f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.

g. Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America, it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title

to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Minneapolis Area Synod.

- C7.04.** If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01.** Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

- C8.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:

a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.

b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

c. **Voting** members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.

d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

- C8.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

- C8.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

- C8.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9.
THE PASTOR

- C9.01.** Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.
- C9.02.** Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- C9.03.** Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
 - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
 - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
 - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
 - c. Every pastor shall:
 - 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA.
- C9.04.** The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- C9.05.**
- a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
 - b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his

or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.

c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.

d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop, who may bring charges in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.

f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.

C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.

C9.12. The pastor of this congregation:

a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;

b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and

c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.

C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.

C9.14. The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry

C9.21. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the Congregation Council.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. A regular Congregation Meeting shall be held annually on a date specified in the bylaws. The congregation shall adopt an annual budget and take such other actions as are required under this constitution. There shall be no limitation on the business that may be brought before the meeting other than it be in conformance with this constitution.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of at least 50 of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

C10.03. Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. Mail shall be via the U. S. Postal Service or electronic mail. The advance date for such notice counts calendar days from the date the mail is delivered to a post office or the date the electronic mail is sent. Use of the last known address of a member shall be sufficient for this notice.

C10.04. Fifty voting members shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. All actions approved by the congregation shall be by majority vote of those voting members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.

C10.06. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C10.07. *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

C11.01. The officers of this congregation shall be a president, secretary, and treasurer.

C11.02. The officers shall be elected by the Congregation Council from among its elected members at its organizational meeting.

C11.03. The term of office shall be one year, ending at the close of the following annual meeting. No person shall hold more than one office at a time. Eligibility shall be limited to no more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

C11.04. Should a vacancy occur in any office, the Congregation Council shall elect another person from among its elected members to fill the office for the remainder of the term. Should the office of president become vacant, the senior pastor shall serve in that capacity until the successor is elected.

C11.05. The president shall preside at Congregation Meetings and shall chair the Congregation Council. The secretary shall keep or cause to be kept minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the Congregation Council. The minutes shall be preserved in the congregation archives. The treasurer shall keep or cause to be kept accurate records of all financial transactions and of the properties of the congregation. Any duties of the officers, other than those called out specifically in this constitution, shall be specified in the bylaws.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The Congregation Council shall comprise nine elected members and the senior pastor.

C12.02. The elected members of the Congregation Council shall be elected by written ballot at the annual meeting. The term of office shall be two years beginning at the close of the annual meeting and ending when a successor's term begins. A member elected to fill a vacancy shall serve only the one unexpired year of the term. Eligibility requirements are to be a voting member of this congregation and not a member of the paid staff of this congregation. Additionally, eligibility shall be limited to no more than three consecutive full terms.

C12.03. An elected member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) takes a position on the paid staff of this congregation or c) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with state law, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council may elect, by majority vote, a successor whose term shall last until the close of the next annual meeting.

C12.04. The senior pastor may designate another person to attend any meeting of the Congregation Council in his or her place and act as a proxy in all respects including voting and counting toward a quorum.

C12.05. The Congregation Council shall meet to organize itself immediately following the annual meeting. The senior pastor shall preside at this meeting until the president is elected.

C12.06. The Congregation Council shall meet regularly, normally once a month.

C12.07. Special meetings of the Congregation Council may be called by the senior pastor or the president, and shall be called by the president at the request of a majority of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all of its members.

C12.08. A majority of members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

C12.09. All actions taken shall be by majority vote of those present and voting except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.

C12.11. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.

C12.12. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.

b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.

c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.

d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastors and staff.

e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.

f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor(s).

h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

i. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

C12.13. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.

a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of directors of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Minnesota, except as otherwise provided herein.

b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.

c. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget and propose it for adoption at the annual meeting. It shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance with the budget adopted. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.

d. The Congregation Council may incur total obligations of more than 10 per cent in excess of the anticipated receipts of the annual budget only after approval by a Congregation Meeting.

e. The Congregation Council may enter into individual contracts of up to five per cent of the anticipated receipts of the annual budget for items not included in the budget, subject to the provision of C12.13.d.

f. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.

g. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

C12.14. The Congregation Council shall have ultimate authority for the employment of the paid lay staff of this congregation. The direct responsibility for employment, supervision and evaluation may be delegated to a Personnel Team.

C12.15. The Congregation Council shall provide for periodic review of the membership roster.

C12.16. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report, including membership totals, to this congregation at the annual meeting.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION TEAMS

C13.01. A *Nominating Team* shall consist of six voting members of this congregation, three of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, and the remaining members shall be from the congregation at large. The method of selection of the team shall be specified in the bylaws. The term of office shall expire at the end of the annual meeting. The team shall endeavor to find at least one candidate for each position that this constitution and its bylaws direct to be elected at the annual meeting. The team's selected candidates shall become nominees for those positions when the elections take place.

C13.02. An *Audit Team* of three voting members of this congregation shall be elected at the annual meeting. Audit Team members shall not be members of the Congregation Council nor shall they have any direct involvement in administering the financial affairs of the congregation. The term of office shall be two years, with members elected to staggered terms. Members shall not be eligible to serve more than three consecutive terms. The Audit Team shall perform an audit of the financial statements of this congregation and shall present its opinion at the annual meeting. Upon request of the team, members of the Congregation Council and staff shall assist the team as is needed to carry out its duties.

C13.03. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a *Call Committee* of at least six voting members of this congregation may be elected by the Congregation Council. The term of office shall expire upon the installation of the newly called pastor. The committee shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the

synod before it recommends a call to the Congregation Council. The Congregation Council shall make the final recommendation of a pastoral candidate to the congregation.

- C13.04.** Any further duties of the foregoing teams shall be specified in the bylaws.
- C13.05.** Other teams or committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises.
- C13.06.** Duties of other teams or committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions when appropriate.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. They shall operate within the mission and vision of this congregation. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction.
- C14.02.** Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.
- C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
 - a. censure before the council or congregation;
 - b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

- C15.06.** For disciplinary actions in this congregation, “due process” shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- C15.07.** No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- C15.10. Adjudication**
- C15.11.** When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.
BYLAWS

- C16.01.** This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- C16.02.** Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- C16.03.** Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the congregation’s members by mail of the proposal with the council’s recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- C16.04.** Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.
AMENDMENTS

- C17.01.** Unless provision C17.04. is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least five voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation’s members by mail of the proposal together with the council’s recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- C17.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under C17.01., shall:
- a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- C17.03.** Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in C17.01. and C17.02. shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or the constitution of the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA.
- C17.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*—as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly—by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together

with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Upon the request of five voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- C18.01.** The congregation in a legally called meeting or the Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.
- C18.02.** Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

- C19.01.** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

BYLAWS OF
TRANSFIGURATION LUTHERAN CHURCH OF BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA
Effective June 1, 2009

Introduction: These bylaws are organized within the structure set by the constitution. The paragraph numbering matches that document so that the bylaws elaborate on and can be considered subparagraphs of the corresponding paragraphs in the constitution, which should be referred to when reading this document.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Organizational Structure

C4.04.01. Besides the Congregation Council and officers, pastors and lay staff, the congregation operates through constitutional teams, core teams, ministry teams, service teams, project teams, and auxiliary corporations. These groups may form ordinary parliamentary or task oriented subcommittees/subteams as they see fit.

C4.04.02. Constitutional teams are teams or committees called for by the constitution: Nominating Team, Audit Team, and Call Committee.

C4.04.03. Core teams perform duties that are important to sustain the operation of the congregation and are established directly by the bylaws or the Congregation Council. The Stewardship and Personnel Teams are among the core teams. Core teams include the participation of a designated staff person. Service on these teams is limited to six consecutive years except for staff and ex officio members. The Council specifies the duties and responsibilities of these teams. The Council may delegate areas of its authority to these teams in order for them to perform their duties. The authority of the core teams described in C4.04.04 and C4.04.05 is in effect when so delegated by the Council.

C4.04.04. Ministry teams are established through a permission-giving philosophy by the Stewardship Team. Ministry teams encompass diverse forms and are generally organized around the passions and interests of members of the congregation. The Stewardship Team maintains procedures for the formation of ministry teams and ensures that they operate in accordance with Chapter 14 of the constitution. The Stewardship Team has authority to revoke permission for a ministry team when it determines that doing so is in the best interest of the congregation. The Stewardship Team maintains descriptions of the ministry teams and their responsibilities.

C4.04.05. The Personnel Team has responsibility for the supervision and evaluation of the staff of the congregation. It has responsibility for the employment of the staff other than the called pastors and rostered laypersons. It makes employment recommendations to the Council regarding rostered laypersons. The team traditionally consists of nine members including the current and past presidents of the congregation.

C4.04.06. Service teams are established by the staff to perform ongoing tasks in service to the congregation.

C4.04.07. Project teams are established by the staff to perform particular tasks or address short term issues.

C4.04.08. The Congregation Council may establish auxiliary corporations to carry out the ministry of the congregation when the Council determines that the structure of a corporation is appropriate. The Council has sole voting control over the directors of these corporations.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Operation of the Congregation Foundation

C5.05.01. The Congregation Foundation shall be an auxiliary corporation of the congregation. It shall be a tax-exempt non-profit corporation controlled by a board of directors and headed by a chairperson elected by the board.

C5.05.02. The foundation shall prudently invest for the benefit of the congregation the monetary gifts that it receives with the goal of permanently preserving the original contributions and distributing the investment proceeds for needs of the congregation. Priority shall be given to mission opportunities, both within and beyond the congregation, and other needs that do not fall within ordinary operating expenses.

C5.05.03. The board of the foundation shall meet periodically during each year to review investment status, discuss and review any potential fund distributions, and determine ways to enhance the visibility of the foundation within the membership of the congregation.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

Criteria for the Removal of Members from the Roll Due to Inactivity

C8.05.01. When members do not partake of Holy Communion, support the church with their offerings, or participate in the life of the congregation for an extended period of time, it is the responsibility of the Congregation Council to ensure that a diligent effort is made to contact them. As an expression of our concern, an effort shall be

made to foster faithful membership and to encourage participation in the life of our congregation.

C8.05.02. If after a time period normally of two consecutive calendar years but depending on the unique situation of the member, such a member has failed to receive Holy Communion and to make a contribution of record, the member may be removed from the roll of members by the Congregation Council. This procedure will take place only when there is a pastor under call to serve this congregation or with the approval of the bishop of the synod. In either case, every effort shall be made to counsel the member about the matter. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

Date of the Regular Congregation Meeting

C10.01.01. Regular Congregation Meetings shall be held on the last Sunday in January.

Chapter 11.

OFFICERS

Other Duties of Officers

C11.05.01. If for any reason, such as lack of a quorum, inclement weather, or other emergencies, a Congregation Meeting cannot be held on the date scheduled, the president shall designate a new date for the meeting. This date shall not exceed four weeks from the date previously scheduled.

C11.05.02. The president shall perform duties usually incident to the office of president. Specifically the president shall

- a. see that orders and resolutions of the Congregation Council are carried into effect;
- b. in the name of the congregation, sign and deliver deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments pertaining to the business of the congregation, except in cases in which the authority to sign and deliver is required by law to be exercised by another person or is expressly delegated by the articles of incorporation, the constitution, the bylaws, or the Council to another officer or agent of the congregation;
- c. when necessary, certify proceedings of the Council and the members.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATION TEAMS

Method of Selection of the Nominating Team

C13.01.01. The Nominating Team shall be elected by the congregation at its regular Congregation Meeting to serve for the upcoming term.