

P R E A M B L E

WHEREAS, The Apostle Paul sets forth, I Corinthians 14:40, that all things in the Church shall be done "decently and in order," and

WHEREAS, The history of the Christian Church of all times shows that certain agreements and regulations are helpful properly to fulfill the purpose and attain the objectives of congregations; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That we, a congregation of Lutherans of the greater Syracuse area, of New York do herewith, in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and by subscribing our names hereto, adopt the following CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

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CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this congregation shall be CROSS OF CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH of SYRACUSE, NEW YORK

ARTICLE II ARTICLES OF FAITH

Section 1.

This congregation accepts and confesses all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the verbally inspired Word of God, not only as it applies to such statements as speak directly of Christ, but also to such as may seem very remote (e.g. in the field of history, geography and nature) and submits to this Word as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life (II Timothy 3:15-17, I Thess. 2:13).

Section 2.

This congregation accepts and confesses all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as true statements of Scriptural doctrine. They are:

- A. The Three Ecumenical Creeds:
 - 1) The Apostles'
 - 2) The Nicene
 - 3) The Athanasian

- B. The six Lutheran Confessions:
 - 1) Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism
 - 2) Dr. Martin Luther's Large Catechism
 - 3) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession
 - 4) The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
 - 5) The Smalcald Articles
 - 6) The Formula of Concord

Section 3.

This congregation accepts and confesses these symbolical books without reservation, not insofar as, but because they are the presentation and explanation of the pure doctrine of the Word of God and a summary of the faith held by the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Section 4.

Hence, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated in this congregation which is in any way at variance with these symbolical books and the Holy Scriptures (Romans 16:17).

Section 5.

Likewise, all controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be decided and adjusted according to this norm of doctrine and practice (I John 4:1).

ARTICLE III PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Section 1.

The continuing purpose of this congregation, as a gathering of Christians, is to serve all people in God's world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ on the basis of the Holy Scriptures (Mt. 28:18-20).

Section 2.

The primary objective of this congregation shall be:

To proclaim the Law and the Gospel, to lead sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ for life and salvation. (II Tm. 4:2, Lk. 24:46-48).

To strengthen believers in faith and sanctification through the means of grace.

To equip believers as disciples, stewards and witnesses for sharing the Gospel of Jesus with our fellowmen.

ARTICLE IV SYNODICAL AFFILIATION

This congregation shall affiliate itself only with a synod that holds to all the truths of God's Word in doctrine and practice and is bound to the confession of faith as set forth in Article II, if, and as long as, such a synod exists (II Thes. 3:6, I Cor. 1:10).

ARTICLE V CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Classification

- A. Baptized members of the congregation are those who have been baptized into the Christian faith in the name of the Triune God.
- B. Communicant members are those baptized souls who confess the chief parts of Christian doctrine as written in Dr. Luther's Small Catechism and who have declared their adherence to all the canonical books of the Old and the New Testaments, without qualification, as the only rule and norm of faith and life.
- C. Voting members are those male communicant members (I Corinthians 14:34, I Timothy 2:12) who have declared their agreement with this constitution by affixing their signatures hereto, and who have been accepted by the voters' assembly of the congregation.

Section 2. Privileges and Responsibilities

"God is love" (I John 4:8), and His love ever moves Him to bless the members of His Church with innumerable physical and spiritual gifts (I John 3:1, James 1:17). In return for all of these undeserved blessings, we can do nothing less than to love Him with all our heart (I John 4:19) and to show that love with the works that we do. The giving of such expressions we acknowledge as both a privilege and a responsibility. Some of the privileges and responsibilities to be noted are the following:

- A. Our God has given us His Word, the one thing needful (Luke 10:42), which alone can save our souls and tell us how to live a God-pleasing life (II Timothy 3:15-17). Consequently, a member of His Church will consider it a distinct privilege and a responsibility to
- 1) Hear and receive the Word of God diligently;
 - 2) Provide and promote opportunities for Christian education;
 - 3) Bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).
- B. Our God has given us two Sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, which are means that our Lord uses to bring His grace to us. Consequently, a member of His Church will
- 1) Have his children baptized early in life, for "Baptism doth also now save us" (I Peter 3:21);
 - 2) Frequently partake of Holy Communion (I Corinthians 11:23-26), if he is recognized as one who can properly examine himself (I Corinthians 11:28). Only those in the confessional fellowship of faith are permitted to commune at our altar. (Close Communion--II Corinthians 6:14-15; Romans 16:17).
- C. Our God has given us the privilege of being stewards over a certain portion of His estate and of receiving the steward's rich reward of grace (Matthew 25:14-30). Consequently, a member of His Church will
- 1) Continually remember that all his property, time, and talents really belong to God;
 - 2) Conscientiously determine which part of his money, time, and talents shall be devoted to that which the congregation has made its concern, not omitting the work of the Synod (Mark 16:15; I Corinthians 9:14; 16:2; I Peter 4:10);
 - 3) If he is a voting member, regularly attend the voters' meeting and lend the congregation his counsel and aid.
- D. Our God has implanted within us who are Christians the New Man, who desires to live righteously (II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:24). Consequently, a member of His Church will
- 1) Not live in manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21), but lead a Christian life (Galatians 5:22-25);
 - 2) When he has erred, permit himself to be fraternally admonished and corrected in the spirit of Matthew 18:15;
 - 3) Be free from involvement in organizations expressing religious views at variance with the articles of faith such as lodges which espouse false religious ideas and contradict the Truth that salvation is by grace alone through the merit of Christ (John 5:23; John 8:31-32; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Matthew 5:34-37; I Corinthians 10:20-21).

Section 3. Church Discipline and Excommunication

Christian discipline shall be exercised in this congregation in the spirit of Matthew 18:15-20 toward those who err from the faith or who in other ways have given offense. At all times this shall be done in the spirit of the Gospel, namely, to regain the erring

as brethren. Those members who finally must be excommunicated, and those who have excluded themselves from the congregation by evading Matthew 18:15-20 lose all their rights in the congregation and in its property. For excommunication a unanimous vote at a voters' assembly is required from all members present other than the member under consideration for excommunication.

Section 4. Reinstatement

When an excommunicated or self-excluded member by the grace of God repents of his sin, and again publicly confesses his faith in agreement with God's Word and this congregation, he is to be reinstated with all former rights and privileges of this congregation (II Corinthians 2:6-8; Luke 17:3-4).

ARTICLE VI POWERS AND RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 1.

In all matters of Christian faith and life, the Word of God is supreme (Deuteronomy 12:32; Psalm 119:105; John 8:47; I Timothy 6:3-4; II Timothy 3:16-17).

Section 2.

In all matters not decided by the Word of God, the congregation alone, represented by its voting members, shall have the right of decision (Acts 15:22; Romans 12:10; 14:19; Ephesians 5:21).

Section 3.

The church council, any other elected committee or organization within the congregation, and any of its elected or appointed officers shall have no power or authority beyond that conferred upon them by the congregation. However, in rare occasions of emergency, the church council may act in the name and welfare of the congregation. Such action must be fully explained at the next voters' meeting and submitted for approval.

Section 4.

No group or society may be organized within the congregation without the approval of the congregation. The congregation shall be assured that the aims of such a group are in complete harmony with the congregation's aims before it grants its approval (Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 1:10; 12:25; II Corinthians 6:14-15).

ARTICLE VII THE MINISTRY

Section 1.

The congregation has the exclusive right to call pastors and teachers and to elect other officers (John 20:21-23; Acts 13:2-3; Romans 10:14-15; ~~I Corinthians 3:21~~; I Peter 2:9).

Section 2.

The pastorate of this congregation shall be conferred only upon such ministers or ministerial candidates as unqualifiedly and

publicly profess their acceptance of and adherence to Article II of this Constitution; and such acceptance and adherence shall be required of them in the call or vocation extended by the congregation (Colossians 4:5-6; I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).
Ephesians 4:11-16 (added)

Section 3.

The teachers called by the congregation shall be such as are in accord with the confessional standard of the congregation (Article II) and are qualified for this field of work (Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:6-8; I Corinthians 14:40).

Section 4.

In case of a vacancy in the ^{office}~~position~~ of pastor or teacher the congregation shall notify the president of the local district of the Synod that he may assist in temporarily filling the vacancy and in giving his good counsel in regard to the calling of a new pastor or teacher.

ARTICLE VIII OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 1.

The first New Testament congregation at Jerusalem chose men of "honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" (Acts 6:1-6) to aid the Apostles in the administration of its temporal affairs. Likewise shall this congregation choose officers and committee members with like qualifications to aid the pastor in administering its affairs (I Timothy 3:8-13).

Section 2.

The listing of the officers and their duties is given in the By-laws.

Section 3.

These officers shall be given the ^{Cooperation}~~respect and esteem~~ of the congregation in the performance of their duties and they shall conduct themselves in a manner befitting their responsible office (I Timothy 3:8-13).

ARTICLE IX REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

Section 1.

If anyone who holds an office in the congregation willfully neglects his duty and upon due admonition does not amend, the congregation has the right and eventually the duty to remove him from office and to elect another in his place (I Timothy 3:8-13).

Section 2.

Sufficient and urgent causes for removing a pastor or a teacher

are persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect of duty, or established inability to perform the duties of his office. In such case the counsel of a District Official shall be sought. (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

ARTICLE X MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

Meetings of this congregation shall be held at such times and in such manner as stated in the By-laws. The meetings shall give the voters of this congregation the opportunity to hear, discuss, and take necessary action in matters pertaining to the welfare of this congregation and of the church at large.

ARTICLE XI SEPARATION OR DISSOLUTION

Section 1.

If at any time a separation should occur in this congregation-- may God graciously prevent it--the property and all equipment of this congregation shall remain with that portion of the membership which adheres to this Constitution, regardless of number.

Section 2.

In the event of the dissolution of this congregation, after making payments of all the liabilities of the congregation, or making provisions for such payments, all assets, real estate and personal property shall be transferred to (and only to) the synod with which it was affiliated, and which qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501 (a) + (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future U.S. Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE XII REPEALS AND ALTERATIONS

Section 1.

Articles II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, IX, XI, and XII, Section 1 of this Constitution shall be and remain unalterable and irrevocable, inasmuch as they express clear, Scriptural teachings.

Section 2.

Proposals to alter or repeal any alterable or repealable article of this Constitution, or to add an article, shall be submitted in writing to the church council and shall be publicly announced on two Sundays immediately preceding the regular business meeting of the congregation, and posted in the church during that period. A copy of such a proposal shall be mailed to all communicant members at least two weeks prior to the next regular meeting of the voters' assembly.

Section 3.

Such a proposal shall be discussed in the meeting in which it is presented and voted on in the next regular meeting of the congregation.

Section 4.

A majority vote, consisting of not less than two-thirds of the voting members present at such a constitutional meeting, shall be required to alter or repeal any alterable or repealable article of this Constitution, or to add an article thereto.

B Y L A W S

ARTICLE I MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 1.

At, or shortly following, the beginning of each quarter of the calendar year, a regular meeting of the congregation's voters shall be held.

Section 2.

The church council shall set the exact date, time, and place of the meetings, unless otherwise specified by the voters' assembly. Announcement of the meetings shall be given in print and/or orally on at least two different dates prior to the time of the meeting.

Section 3.

Special meetings of the voters' assembly may be called by the church council, or the pastor, or upon written request of three voting members. Such meetings must be announced according to the general rule set forth in Section 2, in so far as possible, with the purpose clearly stated. ~~Emergency meetings can be called by the council within twenty-four hours notice.~~ ~~The business of the special and emergency meetings shall be limited to the stated purpose.~~ ~~Emergency meetings can be called by the council within twenty-four hours notice.~~ ~~The business of the special and emergency meetings shall be limited to the stated purpose.~~

Section 4.

The January meeting shall be designated as the annual meeting.

Section 5.

The order of business for the regular meetings shall be as follows:

- A. Opening with a devotion
- B. Reading and approval of minutes of previous regular and special meetings.
- C. Reception of new members; transfer, release or removal from membership

* If a reasonable effort has been made to contact each voting member or the meeting has been announced in a regular worship service

- D. Unfinished business
- E. Reports of officers and committees
- F. Recommendations of the church council and new business
- G. Elections
- H. Adjournment with prayer

Section 6.

The meetings shall be conducted according to good Christian order. Robert's Rules of Order may be followed for parliamentary procedure.

Section 7.

No one shall bring to any meeting a charge or complaint against any member, or against a pastor or a teacher, unless he has first admonished him in a Christian manner according to Matthew 18:15-20.

Section 8.

Only voting members present at the meeting shall have the right to vote at that meeting. The pastor and the officers of the congregation, present at that meeting, also have the right to vote at that meeting.

Section 9.

Voting membership shall be restricted to male communicant members who have reached the age of 21.

Section 10.

The church council by majority action may call a congregational meeting of all communicant members to disseminate information of general concern ~~for to seek the guidance and opinion from all members on any church matter the council deems appropriate for such interchange.)~~ ~~SECRET~~

NOTE! The business of the church shall be conducted only by a properly called meeting of the voters' assembly.

Section 11.

Congregational voters' assembly meetings must be permanently adjourned during the calendar day in which they were called.

ARTICLE II QUORUM

One third of the voting members of the congregation shall constitute a quorum of a properly announced meeting of the voters' assembly. In the event no quorum exists, a second meeting shall be duly called. At this meeting, those voting members present shall constitute a quorum.

for Article III see page 9a

ARTICLE III CALLING OF A PASTOR OR TEACHER

Section 1. Nominations

At a properly convened meeting of the voters' assembly, the list of candidates received from the District President shall be placed into nomination. Also any voter is entitled to make additional nominations of qualified candidates from the floor. A qualified candidate will be those individuals listed as qualified to receive a call within the synod with which the congregation is affiliated. *and has the approval of the*

Section 2. Elections

The election of a pastor or a Christian Day School teacher from the list of candidates chosen by the voters' assembly shall be by ballot. The candidate receiving the majority of all votes cast shall be considered elected. The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous by a rising vote, and the Call shall be sent to the pastor or the Christian Day School teacher. *District President.*

ARTICLE IV THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1. Board of Trustees

In accordance with the law of the State of New York the voters' assembly shall elect by ballot at its annual meeting, specified in the By-laws, Article I, a board of trustees consisting of three or more members, which board of trustees shall control the corporate property according to the direction given by the voters' assembly. The term of one third of the members expires at the end of each year, such expired terms to be filled by election at the annual congregational meeting.

Section 2. Board of Elders

The voters' assembly shall also elect a board of elders of three or more members. These elders shall assist the pastor in the spiritual work in the congregation, including cases of admonition and discipline. The board of elders shall be specifically charged with the ~~congregational~~ responsibility for the purity of doctrine preached and taught in the church. ~~The board of elders shall formally review and approve, with regard to doctrine, all general materials used as teaching aids or references in the Sunday School, Bible Classes, or any other teaching ministry.~~ (Matthew 18:15-16). ~~STRIKE~~

Section 3. Personnel of Council

The board of trustees and the board of elders together with the pastor shall constitute the church council. The president of the congregation shall serve as chairman of the church council.

Section 4.

The term of office for each council member shall be three years.

It shall be the policy of the voters' assembly that a council member serve no more than two consecutive terms and that he again be eligible for re-election to the council one year after the expiration of his term of office.

Section 5. Organization

The voters' assembly shall elect ~~from its voting membership~~ a president, a secretary, a treasurer, and a financial secretary. The voters' assembly shall elect from its voting membership a committee on education, a committee on stewardship, and a committee on evangelism, all to hold office for one year.

Section 6. Committee on Education

The committee on education shall consist of three or more members. The president and an elder of the congregation shall become members of this committee and shall serve as chairman and secretary respectively. The other member(s) shall be elected by the voters' assembly.

Section 7. Committee on Stewardship

The committee on stewardship shall consist of three or more members. The treasurer and financial secretary of the congregation shall become members of this committee and shall serve as chairman and secretary respectively. The other member(s) shall be elected by the voters' assembly.

Section 8. Committee of Evangelism

The committee on evangelism shall consist of three or more members. The two senior members of the board of elders shall become members of this committee. The other member(s) shall be elected by the voters' assembly.

Section 9. Vacancies

Vacancies occurring on any of these committees shall be filled through election by the church council at its next meeting and be subject to ratification by the voters' assembly at its next meeting.

Section 10. Number of Members

The number of members on the church council and the respective committees may be increased by resolution of the voters' assembly. Temporary or permanent offices and committees, in addition to those heretofore mentioned, may be established or dismissed by the voters' assembly as existing needs may warrant.

Section 11. Responsibilities

The members of the church council shall adorn their high office with an honest way of life and be good examples to the congregation

(I Timothy 3:8-12). They shall aid the pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. They shall be accountable for good order in the services. They shall particularly care in love for the poor, the sick, the widows, and the orphans (Galatians 6:9-10). The members of the church council shall consult together concerning the total spiritual and physical well-being of the congregation, giving due attention also to the work of the Lord in the church at large. They shall implement resolutions of the voters' assembly and carry out such assignments as are directed to them by the voters' assembly.

Section 12. Installation

As soon as possible, after the election of new members and organization, the church council shall be installed into office in a regular service and shall thus be presented to the congregation.

Section 13. Dismissal

If any member willfully neglects his duty, and upon due admonition does not amend, the voters' assembly has the right, and eventually the duty, to remove him from office and elect another to take his place. Such a removal shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those voters present.

Section 14. Meetings

The church council shall meet regularly once each month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president. The church council shall never convene to transact business without the knowledge of the pastor.

ARTICLE V DUTIES OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1. President

The president shall preside as chairman of all business sessions of the congregation and shall perform such other duties as may be assigned to him. He shall have general supervision of the affairs of the corporation subject to the regulations of the board of trustees, sign all deeds, mortgages, notes, leases, and/or all legal documents directed to be executed by the corporation and conduct all its business affairs according to established good order.

In the temporary absence of the president, the treasurer shall act in his stead. ~~or in the temporary absence of the president~~

Section 2. Secretary

The secretary shall record accurately the proceedings of all meetings of the voters' assembly, the church council, and the committee on education. He shall be responsible for the legal

records of the congregation. He shall have the authority to countersign all deeds, mortgages, notes, leases, and/or legal documents executed by the corporation and assist in the orderly conduct of its business affairs according to established good order. He shall maintain the current list of all voting members and have the list available for voter inspection at all voters' assembly meetings. He shall also perform such other duties as may be assigned to him by the voters' assembly.

Section 3. Treasurer

The treasurer shall receive from the financial secretary a report of all monies and credit the same to the proper accounts. He shall make disbursements according to instructions from the church council. He shall make a quarterly report and also special reports whenever the board of trustees shall so request. He shall submit his records to the voters' assembly annually for audit, or at any time the voters' assembly so desires. In the absence of the secretary, he shall have the authority to countersign legal documents. In the event the treasurer is unable to carry out his duties, the president or secretary have the authority to carry out his obligations.

Section 4. Financial Secretary

The financial secretary shall receive and deposit all contributions for the congregation, shall keep an accurate account of the same and deliver a report of them to the treasurer, indicating the proper account to be credited. He shall make a report for the regular meetings of the voters' assembly and submit his books for audit annually or at any time the voters' assembly so desires. He shall also prepare reports of contributions for the membership of the congregation as directed by the voters' assembly.

Section 5. Committee on Stewardship

The committee on stewardship shall supervise the stewardship of time, talents, and treasures in the congregation. It shall prepare the annual budget and present it, by way of the council, to the voters' assembly for approval. It shall be responsible for the counting of contributions and preparing of proper bank deposits. It shall formulate all policies of sound Christian stewardship and implement them on the congregational and family levels.

Section 6. Committee on Education

The committee on education shall formulate all policies to be followed in the educational phases of the congregation's work, such as Sunday School, Christian Day School, Vacation Bible School, Instruction Classes, and the like, and present them, by way of the church council, to the voters' assembly for ratification. In a similar manner it shall prepare budgets for its departments, make appointments, select courses of study and engage in such other activities as it may deem necessary for the successful operation of this function of church work.

Section 7. Committee on Evangelism

The committee on evangelism shall aid the congregation in establishing and maintaining an active evangelism program.

Section 8.

The pastor is, by virtue of his office, a member of all boards and committees.

ARTICLE VI ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL

Section 1.

The church council shall present to the October meeting of the voters' assembly for ratification a committee of three voting members to serve as a nominating committee.

Section 2.

The nominating committee shall select from the voting membership a slate of candidates for each vacant office and shall publish the names prior to the annual meeting.

Section 3.

The voters' assembly at their annual meeting shall hear the recommendations of the nominating committee, add to the list, if it so desires, and proceed to elect by ballot. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary for election.

ARTICLE VII RECEPTION INTO MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Persons who wish to be received into membership in this congregation other than through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism or the Rite of Confirmation, shall bring their request to the attention of the pastor or the church council. The council shall honor the request when accompanied by a letter of transfer or other recommendation from a sister congregation, or when qualifications for membership, as specified in Article V of this Constitution, have been met. Such action of the council shall be ratified by the regular meeting of the voters' assembly and notice of such receptions reported to the congregation.

Section 2.

Since reception into membership signifies acceptance of and submission to this Constitution and By-laws, each family shall be given a copy of the same prior to their reception so that they may become familiar with its provisions.

Section 3.

Notice of reception of new members shall be made to the congregation at large. It is desired, but not mandatory, that all new members be received or acknowledged in the public worship service.

ARTICLE VIII TRANSFER OR RELEASE FROM MEMBERSHIP

Section 1.

Those desiring a transfer, or release from membership, shall bring their request to the attention of the pastor or the church council for action, to be ratified at the next meeting of the voters' assembly.

Section 2.

Transfer of membership shall apply only to those who desire membership in a congregation which is in agreement with this one in doctrine and practice. Release from membership shall apply when affiliation is sought with those denominations not in agreement with our congregation in doctrine and practice.

Section 3.

Release from membership shall automatically be given to anyone who seeks affiliation with those denominations not in agreement with our congregation in doctrine and practice, or who wishes to withdraw from membership in this congregation for any reason. The release shall be given by the pastor who will report to the next voters' assembly meeting. In every case, the reason for the release must become a part of the permanent record of the congregation..

Section 4.

Members released or transferred relinquish all rights in this congregation.

Section 5.

The board of elders shall prepare and present to the voters at the annual voters' assembly meeting the current list of all those individuals considered communicant members of the congregation. Deletion of any names from the list over that presented the previous year, other than those otherwise released or transferred as the result of proper request (or excommunication), shall be presented to the voters for majority action. Just cause for release from membership (other than by request or excommunication) shall be extended indifference with regard to worship attendance and failure to support without reasonable cause.

The board of elders shall exercise both Christian charity and proper church discipline with regard to release from membership action. The board of elders shall make a reasonable effort to contact and counsel with an individual regarding his church membership before release from membership action is taken. The good counsel, advice and guidance of the pastor shall be specifically sought in all membership actions.

The church council shall make every reasonable effort to notify, in writing, any individual of his ~~release~~ removal from membership.

ARTICLE IX WHEN MANPOWER IS NOT AVAILABLE

During the early years of this congregation, since there may not be enough voting members in the congregation to fill all of the offices, individuals may hold more than one office, and restrictions concerning minimum numbers of committee members and additional terms in office shall become ineffective. However, the available church workers shall always carry out all aspects of the congregation's work as specified in this constitution.

ARTICLE X REPEALS AND AMENDMENTS OF THE BY-LAWS

Any and all By-laws may be repealed or amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at any quarterly meeting, provided that public notice of this proposed action shall have been given the voters on at least two Sundays prior to the time of the meeting and provided that the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the church council for its study and recommendation.

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CROSS OF CHRIST EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Kenneth A. Kappel, Pastor
7426 Henry Clay Blvd.
Apartment 61
Liverpool, New York 13088
Tel. No. (315) 457-3270

Tuesday September 13, 1977

Dear Pastor Brenner,

On a Saturday afternoon shortly before our Synod's convention in New Ulm (August 3-10) I received a phone call from President Zarling pertaining to our congregation's proposed Constitution. During our conversation, which centered around the latest copy of our Constitution and its accompanying letter (dated July 18, 1977) President Zarling mentioned only two "problems" with our most recent draft. The two points still in question were the matters of "emergency" voters' assembly meetings and our article in the By-Laws which speaks about the calling of a pastor or teacher.

Concerning the first matter, I pointed out to President Zarling that there is at least one congregation within our Synod, which I know of, that has this kind of a clause in their Constitution. If you have access to King of King's Constitution (Clifton Park, N.Y.) look at Article IV (Meetings) in their By-Laws. Paragraph "C" under Article IV provides for "emergency" meetings. In our phone conversation President Zarling admitted to me that it would be arbitrary to insist that we remove this clause from our Constitution when it had been approved and passed in another constitution.

The second matter: President Zarling indicated his concern about the way our Constitution was worded in Article III of the By-Laws. In a regular voters' meeting we investigated and rewrote Article III of the By-Laws. I will attach a copy of the revision at the end of this letter. I might point out that Article XI (page 40) of our Synod's Constitution (Constitution for the Districts) carefully refrains from using the phrase "approval of the district President" but expressly states the "counsel" of the president with regard to this matter.

Unless I am mistaken this final revision will make our proposed Constitution acceptable to the review committee. We will be waiting patiently to hear from the committee so that we can proceed with our requirements for membership in the Wisconsin Synod.

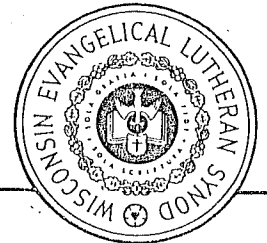
Thank you for your time and co-operation.

In the name of our Savior,

Kenneth A. Kappel
Kenneth A. Kappel, Pastor
Cross of Christ Ev. Lutheran Church

CC: Zarling

Wisconsin EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN Synod



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October 1, 1977

The Rev. Kenneth Kappel, Pastor
Cross of Christ Ev. Lutheran Church
7426 Henry Clay Blvd. Apt. 61
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Dear Pastor Kappel:

The District Constitution Committee met on Sept. 15th and 29th, 1977. Your letters of July 18th and Sept. 13th, 1977, were given considerable consideration.

As we studied your letters we felt it would be helpful for both you and your members if we would pass on some explanatory statements which would help you understand us and our assigned duties.

First of all, our committee serves the District President in his work of watching over the doctrine and practice of the constituent congregations of our Michigan District. We are charged with the duty to see that all things are done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40), and that the constitutions of our congregations, the instruments by which they conduct the Lord's Work, are totally in harmony with the Scriptures and the spirit of the Gospel.

Secondly, the chairman and secretary of our committee each have thirty-four years of experience in the ministry which began in the midst of the Wisconsin - Missouri doctrinal controversy. During this period we had to deal with long time members of our respective congregations who had been former LCMS members. Each of us have held district offices and had to deal with Wisconsin Synod congregations that left us to join LCMS and members and congregations that left LCMS to join us. The youngest member of our committee is pastor of a new congregation and has had to deal in these matters constantly. We are fully cognisant of all the heartaches and trials that your members have experienced.

With these explanatory statements in mind, we would like to give our considerate counsel concerning certain sections of your proposed constitution.

P. 7, Art. I, Sec. 3, your letter of July 18th, 1977, 1st page, 5th and 6th paragraph and your letter of Sept. 13th, 1977, 2nd paragraph, re: emergency meetings. We checked our files and found that we did not catch this provision in the constitution of the congregation to which you referred. The chairman and secretary of your committee recall that there were other pressing problems that this particular constitution posed that necessitated a special meeting with the pastor. In the process, this particular section to which you refer was overlooked. In more than fifteen years on this committee, this and your constitution are the only ones that carried such a provision. We do not feel that we wish to compound our oversight in the case of the constitution to which you refer.

In your letter of July 18th, you suggested that you would change the wording to read, "if a reasonable effort has been made to contact each voting member, or the meeting has been announced in a regular worship service." Since your constitution is to be a permanent instrument, you will also be looking into the future when your congregation has grown beyond the present small number.

The words "emergency" and "reasonable effort" are rather nebulous and become indefinable in the midst of heated debate when feelings are running high. Decisions within a congregation should always be made with the opportunity for calm reflection, deliberate study and thorough study of both the issue and the Scriptures. Hasty action and precipitous decisions are usually found to be ill advised and rarely if ever settled in a God pleasing manner.

When calling a meeting every voting member must be notified. Brotherly love demands that not a mere "reasonable" effort be made, but that a very clearly defined, orderly procedure be followed. Most congregations now go beyond the public announcement on two successive Sundays and give further notification by mail to the home of each voting member. By the procedure that you suggest in your wording you are actually opening the door wide to that which you think you are preventing. As an example we can cite the case of an LCMS Church in which those faithful to the

Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions lost all the property by one vote simply because not all who protested the unscriptural practice in the congregation were properly notified (this was a larger congregation!!). Our counsel in this matter then is not arbitrary but is founded on the basic principle of evangelical, brotherly procedure.

P. 9, Art. III, Sec. 2, of the proposed revision of Art. III, titled nominations. We appreciate the attempt to correct the original section. Voters have the right to make nominations from the floor and, again, will seek the good counsel of the District President regarding such nominations for the same reason (and in keeping with the Constitution of the District!) that we gave in our letter of June 22, 1977. Your interpretation of the word "qualified" as applying to all pastors and teachers listed on the membership roster of the Wisconsin Synod is correct in so far as they are fit for the ministry, apt to teach, not a novice and in doctrinal fellowship with us.

However, when it comes to the calling to a specific congregation, other factors enter in, special gifts, talents, age, health, and other related factors. Few, if any voting members are privy to such information. For that reason the good counsel of the District President is sought before a man is finally nominated. This is the general practice within our Wisconsin Synod.

The experiences you related that took place in LCMS congregations and with their officials was due to the fact that both congregations and the Synod did not properly discipline erring pastors and officials. We take for granted that in applying for membership in the Wisconsin Synod and desiring fellowship with Synod, you have no reservations regarding our doctrine and practice.

Finally, regarding the authority of the local congregation in such matters, it seems to us that in joining in fellowship with some 1,000 other congregations of our Synod, you will recognize that you are not an island unto yourself. It is out of brotherly love and trust that we operate as a Synod. Contrary to the LCMS doctrine of the "Church", we believe and teach that our Synod is also "Church" of which we are all members. United in doctrine, practice and confession, we have mutual faith and confidence in one another throughout Synod.

In the case of this section on Nominations, we do not believe that

a congregation is surrendering any "authority" when it seeks the wisdom, knowledge and counsel of those who have been elected to guide us, especially as it relates, in this case, to men from whom a pastor is to be chosen.

Proposed Art. III, Sec. 3, Elections, the last sentence, "The election shall, if possible, be made unanimous by a rising vote....." The condition, "if possible" disturbs us greatly. We feel that these words should be stricken. When a group of Christian brethren have through an orderly election chosen to call a man by majority vote, then it follows that all will agree by making it a unanimous decision. If there are certain that refuse to make the vote unanimous, then those few are declaring that they are not accepting the called man as their pastor. If you should insist that the words, "if possible" remain, then you would be compelled to add a further statement ruling that the called pastor or teacher be advised that the vote was not made unanimous and that those persons are not participating in the call extended to him. I do not believe that a person so called would be inclined to accept.

P. 9, Art. IV, Sec. 2. We still feel that this sentence should be stricken because it goes far beyond what you wish or intend. The previous sentence says everything that you wish to have the Elders responsible for, namely, the doctrine and practice within the congregation. The reasons mentioned in our letter of June 22, 1977, still hold true. All textbooks, i.e., catechism, Sunday School lessons, Bible Class lessons, teacher's manuals certainly should be carefully reviewed. But, as little as the pastor has the authority to become a "spiritual detective" going about his members homes to find out what they are reading, so little has the board of elders such authority.

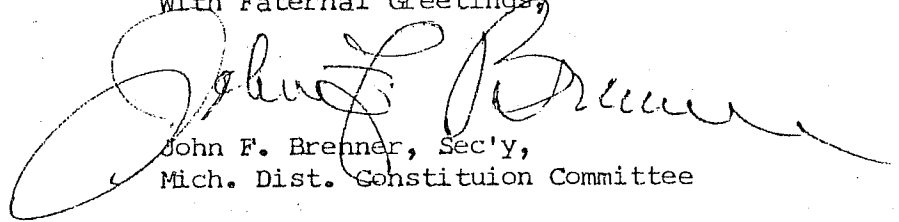
If a pastor or a teacher proclaims false doctrine, then the congregation must deal with that person on the basis of his teaching. There is little point of asking from which reference book the pastor or teacher gained his heresy. The point of procedure is always, "What does the Bible say or teach?" That individual's teaching must be examined on the basis of the Bible and only the Bible. In the case of heresy, you are not dealing with the heretic's reference material, you are dealing with his misuse and corruption of God's Word and it is with God's Word that he must be admonished and corrected, 2 Timothy 3:16.

These are our expanded reasons for the counsel given by us and the corrections which we propose. They are given in accord with our

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assigned duty of striving for faithfulness to the Scriptures in doctrine and practice within our District. When the corrections, as set forth, have been made, please send us three (3) copies for our final review and approval.

With Fraternal Greetings,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John F. Brenner".

John F. Brenner, Sec'y,
Mich. Dist. Constitution Committee

CC: Zarling
Sauer
Seifert



Cross of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Plan of Ministry 2010-2011

Ephesians 2:19-22 – Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

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Our Mission: Why Does Cross of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church Exist?

▪ To Connect People to God

We are here to help people get connected to God, their Savior, through the faithful use of the Gospel in Word and Sacraments, by which we are able to bring him glory in all we do;

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. – Colossians 3:16-17

Areas of Ministry: Worship, Elders

▪ To Connect People to God's Word

We are here to help people get connected to God's Word by providing opportunities for young and old to continually grow and mature through personal and group study of that Word;

From infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. – 2 Timothy 3:16-17

Area of Ministry: Education

▪ To Connect People to God's World

We are here to help people get connected to God's world by taking every opportunity to share that Good News of Jesus Christ with the lost souls in our community;

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. – Matthew 28:19-20

Area of Ministry: Evangelism, Cross of Christ-North

▪ To Connect People to God's People

We are here to help people get connected to God's people by providing opportunities to grow together and gather together in Christian fellowship;

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. – Acts 2:42

Area of Ministry: Fellowship

▪ To Connect People to God's Work

We are here to help people get connected to God's work by involving every member in the body ministry of our congregation and in service to others.

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. – Ephesians 4:11-13

Areas of Ministry: Stewardship, Property

What is the Plan of Ministry?

Our congregation exists to help people get connected with God, his people, and his work by connecting them with God's Word to his world. This Plan of Ministry is intended to help us plan to do God's work and meet the needs of our congregation and community, while informing our members of what we hope to accomplish with God's help in 2010-11.

Here at Cross of Christ, our ministry centers around the Gospel of Jesus Christ and putting that Gospel to use among ourselves and our community. With God's help, we strive to build on the strengths of our congregation and better focus our ministry efforts on the opportunities the Lord is providing in our community at present, while being mindful of the weaknesses in our current ministry and potential challenges to carrying out that ministry.

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who participated with the process of assembling our plan of ministry: Evelyn Barg, Dick & Maruta Bassett, Howard & Lisa Blank (Garret, Tanner, & Gunnar), Frans DeBoer, Mary Jane Detwiler, Lisa Gumm, Joy Higuchi, Crista Kautz, Thelma Kelly, Ruben Martinez, Clayton & Jean Matthew, Vickie McAllister, Peter Metzger, Jody & Jessica Sasse, Mark Schwartz, Danny & Kara Sleeth, Dzidra Terpstra, Herb Terpstra, Mike Terpstra, Bert Toensing.

Above all, we give thanks to our gracious God for giving us the opportunity and privilege to carry out his mission and ministry here in the greater Syracuse and North Country regions. To God alone be the glory!

Area of Ministry: Worship

▪ Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

Our worship and preaching is centered on Christ and his means of grace—the Gospel in Word and Sacraments. We offer variety in worship, yet consistency in the services we use. Holy Communion is offered twice a month and on certain designated festivals (Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Easter Dawn). Our members are flexible when it comes to variety in worship and young and old love to sing and sing well. We are blessed with at least two organists and regularly have the kids and choir participate in worship. In worship, our members are very willing to help guests with the service. All but one set of paraments have been replaced through personal and Ladies' Guild gifts.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

A lack of consistency, communication, and ample practice time for the choir often makes it seem to participants that the usage of our choir is a "picked-up" thing. This can result in the quality of our choral music in worship being less than the excellence for which we strive in worship. At present we lack a director for the choir and a set schedule for choir singing, which leads to a lack of ample preparation time. Hand-in-hand with this is the need for long-range worship planning, which has been lacking.

▪ Our Goals for Worship in 2010-2011

1. The choir will sing on the following dates/events to allow us ample time for preparation so we can strive for excellence in our choral music in worship:
 - a. Back to School Sunday (9/12/2010)
 - b. Cross of Christ 35th Anniversary (10/17/2010 – Afternoon Service)
 - c. Christmas Eve (12/24/2010)
 - d. Mission Festival (1/2/2011)
 - e. Maundy Thursday (4/21/2011)
 - f. Good Friday (4/22/2011)
 - g. Easter Day (4/24/2011)
 - h. Spring Festival of Friendship (5/22/2011)
 - i. Confirmation Sunday (6/26/2011)
2. To improve ease of use and consistency for our worship services, our monthly rotation of liturgies will generally go as follows:
 - a. 1st Sunday of the month: Service of Word and Sacrament
 - b. 2nd Sunday of the month: Service of the Word or a form of it
 - c. 3rd Sunday of the month: Common Service or Divine Service II (Revised)
 - d. 4th Sunday of the month: Matins or Morning Praise or Service of the Word
 - e. 5th Sunday of the month: Matins or Morning Praise
3. Starting in September, a long-range plan for our next six months of worship will be implemented. God-willing, and this plan is updated, we will continue to keep our worship planned six months in advance.

Area of Ministry: Elders

▪ Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

By God's grace, God's Word is taught in its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered faithfully. Our elders have years of experience of serving God's people here at Cross of Christ. On a semi-annual basis, the Pastor has visited all or most member households, while shut-ins are visited regularly by Pastor and other members. Communication has continued to improve as print, online, and verbal means are being used to keep members informed of what is going on with the ministry of Cross of Christ. We have an active ministry to the military at Fort Drum. Youth are willing to serve with older members in all areas of ministry.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Regularly scheduled meetings of the elders are not taking place at this time. Our communication to the entire congregation in certain areas needs to be improved, especially the work of the church council and voters of the congregation, so all have opportunity to know and take part in the mission and ministry of Cross of Christ. We continue to be challenged with a congregation that is located over a very large region.

▪ Our Goal for the Elders in 2010-2011

1. Starting at the end of June, the elders and Pastor will begin meeting monthly or every other month to oversee the shepherding of the members of Cross of Christ, especially those who are straying, to encourage members to use their God-given gifts and keep them well-informed, and to strive to carry out the Gospel ministry given to us.

Area of Ministry: Education

▪ Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

Christian education has been an area of strength for our congregation since the beginning. At present, the Lord has blessed our Sunday School and Vacation Bible School efforts from early childhood (ages 2-4) to teens, as well as consistently edifying Bible studies for adults. Our Cradle Roll materials are regularly distributed to families with children under 4 to encourage them and help them grow. Our Youth Confirmation curriculum has been adapted for parents and Pastor to work hand-in-hand for the Christian education of our youth. Our Bible Information Classes are flexible and offered regularly to member and prospect alike. Pastoral suggestions and member input lead to variety in our adult Bible studies, as well as organized, limited-length midweek Bible studies or Family Night Bible studies. A Campus Bible Study was started at Syracuse University, was received well, and will re-start September 2010.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Only one Family Night was offered in 2009-2010, even though the concept has been received very well. Besides the teen class on Sundays, there is little other opportunity for confirmed teens to continue growing in their faith. At present, there is no teen group. There is a need to provide opportunities for grade school age children as well through possibly a youth group of their own or a Lutheran Boy & Girl Pioneer program. A challenge with this is that most member kids who would participate in a group/program like this are still near preschool/kindergarten age. The same Sunday School teachers have been teaching for a long time and could potentially face burnout. Our space limitations pose a challenge as the Sunday School continues to expand. Attendance at all levels seems to consistently drop in the last month (June) of each school year leading some to wonder if the school year is too long.

▪ Our Goals for Education in 2010-2011

1. Offer at least three Family Night Bible studies over the course of 2010-11 in the following months: September, January/February, June. The theme will be "Adventures in Faith: A Closer Look @ Familiar Bible Stories".
2. With an eye towards eventually creating a Grade School Youth Group or Lutheran Boy/Girl Pioneer program, we will hold four seasonal youth events (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer) for the children of the congregation ages 4-12. Coordinator(s) for such a group will need to be identified with teens and parents assisting. (For more about the teen group, please see "Our Goals for Fellowship in 2010-2011")
3. Due to the success of and strong positive reaction to the Heart in Focus: Faith-Focused Finances course in Fall 2009, a similarly formatted Bible study with meals and child care will be offered from October to November on the subject of either marriage or parenting will be offered for our members and people in the community.

Area of Ministry: Evangelism

▪ Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

We give thanks that God's inerrant and effective Word is still proclaimed in its truth and purity, not just in our congregation but in our synod. The Lord has richly blessed our outreach and evangelism efforts, especially to families with kids. The Lord has blessed our children's events and programs, such as Christmas for Kids, Easter for Kids, and Little Treasures Playgroup. This has led to a positive identity in our local neighborhoods as "the church that does stuff for kids". We are regularly contacting and inviting our prospects, while consistently trying to reach the lost in our communities, especially our neighbors and friends. Our website is a great tool for outreach and our location is great for advertising. (Our neighbors have noticed!) Guests for worship find our congregation generally warm and friendly and we have plenty of opportunities to invite friends. We continue to look for every opportunity to reach the lost.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

The limited size of our congregation leads to more work placed on a smaller number of people, which can potentially lead to burnout. Our smaller size can also limit us financially as to what we are able to do or how much we can do in regards to outreach. For this reason, we need to increase and improve our friendship evangelism and the need to remember it is better to do a few things well than to do lots of things poorly or in a mediocre way. Our signage is aging or can be difficult to see. We are also faced with the challenge of connecting prospects to our congregation so they want to become members.

▪ Our Goals for Evangelism in 2010-2011

1. Offer one new summertime community outreach event or program for Summer 2011, whether a community event early in the summer with Vacation Bible School later in the summer or revamped version of Vacation Bible School (A camp of some kind?). Advised by the current canvassing efforts, initial decisions will be made by early fall.
2. During the summer/fall, have a booth at the Regional Farmers' Market or another location to share information about our church and make contact with people from throughout our area. Initial information and a plan about this will be put together this summer and depending on cost, we can try a test run in late summer.
3. Due to the changes in our ministries in Liverpool and Watertown and because we are nearly out of fliers from 2007, with free help from graphic designer Dwayne Coryell and our Student Assistant Peter Metzger, a new or revised flier that can be used in both the Syracuse and North Country regions will be developed.

Area of Ministry: Cross of Christ-North

▪ Strengths/Opportunities of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

The Lord has given us a great opportunity to reach one of the fastest growing areas of New York State in the Watertown/Fort Drum region. There is no conservative Lutheran presence and very little conservative Christian presence up there. Our ministry to the military provides a great opportunity to reach thousands in desperate need of the assurance of the Savior, not to mention the thousands who have moved there from all over the country. We have a growing core of members as military personnel transition in and out of the group, a great rented location for services, and a positive relationship with the chaplain's office at Fort Drum. We are currently advertising in the Fort Drum Mountaineer and on a major northern New York website. We have received gift money from a number of WELS sources, which enable our group to function for an extended time apart from the Cross of Christ budget.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Being the very start of a daughter congregation, our group is very small and very scattered. At present, we are only able to meet twice a month since Pastor is 70+ miles away in Liverpool. Weather can prove to be a challenge in the wintertime. Our biggest challenge at present, however, is getting the word out that we even exist. The mission possibilities are endless, but the challenge before us is where to start, what to do, and how to do it.

▪ Our Goal for Cross of Christ-North in 2010-2011

1. Seek to increase and expand our efforts to spread the word of who we are and what we have to share—the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all its truth and purity. These efforts will begin with the work of Student Assistant Peter Metzger's initial canvassing efforts. Discussions will be had with city planners, school board officials, and military chaplains. God-willing, we would like to expand word of our existence in at least three new ways besides what we are currently doing via newspaper, website, and signage.
2. We will look to hold at least one community event in Summer 2011, whether a kids'/family event or even a booth at the Jefferson County Fair. If possible, we will look for a way to hold another event earlier than that.

Area of Ministry: Fellowship

Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

Fellowship has always been a key component of the life of this congregation. There is definitely a warm sense of community in our congregation that is often nurtured over refreshments or group meals. The number of non-meal fellowship events has increased over the past couple years and those events have been consistently well-attended. Due to the growth of certain age groups, the Lord has presented us with opportunities to minister to teens and seniors, both of which can be carried out through fellowship groups.

Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Our congregation is very spread out regionally and though our numbers are growing, they are still small. This poses a challenge to our fellowship activities. As with evangelism, we need to remember that it is better to do a few things well than overreach so that we do lots of things poorly or in a mediocre way. Communication for our fellowship events both to members of our congregation and community needs to take place earlier for these events. At present, we do not have fellowship groups for teens or seniors and such groups would have to be organized, planned out, and led.

Our Goals for Fellowship in 2010-2011

1. Start a teen group for grades 8-12 that meets on a monthly basis and offers them a combination of Christian education and fellowship with one another. It will be under the guidance/supervision of two adult members. The teenage members of our congregation will be encouraged to provide input and participate in the creation of this teen ministry. In this way, it is our hope that they will see this as one way they can have a stake in the ministry of our congregation and provide something they can invite their friends to attend.
2. In conjunction with education, offer at least three Family Night Bible studies over the course of 2010-11 in the following months: September, January/February, June. The theme will be "Adventures in Faith: A Closer Look @ Familiar Bible Stories". A Heart in Focus-style Bible study series will also be offered from October to November on the subject of either marriage or parenting.
3. The advertising of fellowship events will begin no later than three weeks before the event to provide ample time for members to prepare to attend and to invite their friends to attend.

Area of Ministry: Stewardship

Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

The Lord has given us a surprising number of opportunities to serve with the time, talents, and treasures he has so graciously given to us. At present, 10% of our regular envelope giving is contributed as part of Congregation Mission Offering to support the work of WELS. There are many more talents and gifts in our congregation than meets the eye. A top-notch program to encourage the stewardship of time, talents, and treasures called "Christ's Love, Our Calling" has been created for use in congregations like ours.

Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Unfortunately, we do not hear as much about stewardship in our congregation as could be reasonably done. Biblical equipping needs to be done not just in the stewardship of treasures, but in the stewardship of time and talents. One area where we could improve is in our mutual encouragement of one another and not just from the Pastor. As our ministry expands, a growing challenge is working with the Pastor to share responsibilities so more focus can be put on the mission and ministry of the congregation.

Our Goals for Stewardship in 2010-2011

1. Utilize the "Christ's Love, Our Calling" program starting in May/June 2011 with an emphasis on stewardship of time. This series will continue in Spring 2012, Spring 2013, and Spring 2014.
2. Strive to encourage members in their present service within the congregation, encourage new members to plug into service within the congregation, and if necessary, encourage longer-term members to consider serving in different areas of ministry within the congregation. Encourage all in their service to Christ outside the church.
3. Starting in September with the help of the Church Council, work with Pastor to find out where responsibilities for the ministry of Cross of Christ could be shared, find ways to equip leaders and members to take on this renewed responsibility, and once implemented, follow up with Gospel encouragement and Christian love.

Area of Ministry: Property

▪ Strengths of Our Current Program (What Are We Doing Well?)

We have a very visible property for our church campus and a modest debt on that property. Improvements continue to be made every year on the church campus to beautify it and utilize it for our mission and ministry from the exterior painting of the church to the paved parking lot to the attractive playground. We have space to grow facility-wise and hard working members who like doing things for church. There is much we can do with our current property.

▪ Weaknesses/Challenges of Our Current Program (What Do We Need to Improve?)

Our current facilities (church and parsonage) are aging. The church in particular will need improvements in the short-term for the long-term. Our congregation is quickly outgrowing the size of its facility and the need to build is growing. To get things done on the church body, quite a few members need to travel a considerable distance and we have the challenge of who will coordinate activities and how will we get done what needs to be done. Areas on our property need to be trimmed back to provide improved visibility. Our main signage is aging or difficult to see at times.

▪ Our Goals for Property in 2010-2011

1. In Fall 2010, a Building Committee be formed to begin exploring the process of what it would take to add on to our current facility. The formation of this Committee would take place after a meeting on the subject of building with Pastor Mark Birkholz, our Mission Counselor, on Tuesday, 31 August 2010. The committee's work would likely begin shortly after the celebration of Cross of Christ's 35th Anniversary in mid-October.
2. Continue to improve the visibility of our facility and church signage by removing several more trees, limbs, and bushes. Hard work and much help will be needed to carry this out.
3. An annual walk-through of the church and parsonage be conducted by the property officers to help us be good stewards as a congregation and to be proactive where maintenance or replacement or other work is needed, rather than put in a position to react when in an emergency situation. Ongoing maintenance will continue throughout the year. New additions or replacements will be approved and carried out in conjunction with the church council.

To God Alone Be the Glory!