

**GOVERNING BYLAWS
WORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH
of FAIRFIELD, IOWA**

CHAPTER 1: POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. The powers of the congregation are vested in the congregation meeting called and conducted as provided in the Constitution and these bylaws.
- B. Only such authority as is delegated to the church council, or other organizational units is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation.
The congregation is authorized to:
 - 1. Call a pastor.
 - 2. Terminate the call of a pastor.
 - 3. Appoint or terminate the appointment of employees and others serving in ministry.
 - 4. Approve the annual budget.
 - 5. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose.
 - 6. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer or dispose of its property; and
 - 7. Elect and terminate its Council and ministry teams.

CHAPTER 2: CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- A. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in January or February.
- B. A special meeting of the congregation may be called by petition of at least ten percent (10%) of the voting members or by the church council. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C. A quorum for any regular or special meeting of the congregation shall be those voting members present.
- D. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- E. All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote unless otherwise specified in these bylaws. Abstaining votes will not be included in the calculation to determine whether or not the proper affirmative majority has been attained.
- F. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all congregational meetings.

- G. A two-thirds majority vote of those voting members present is required for decisions involving the assumption of new debt or expenditures in excess of \$10,000.
- H. Notices of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and/or by written notice to all voting members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting.

CHAPTER 3: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time that these Bylaws are adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and these Bylaws.
- B. Members shall be classified as follows:
 - 1. **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, or by affirmation of faith through the new member process of this church;
 - 2. **Confirmed members** are baptized persons who have confirmed their faith as a result of Confirmation instruction, those who have been received by adult baptism, or by affirmation of faith through the new member process of this congregation;
 - 3. **Voting members** are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a monetary contribution of record in each of the preceding four quarters.
 - a. Exceptions will be at the Council's discretion;
 - b. Dual members who desire voting privileges will request authorization from the Council
- C. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
 - 1. Make regular use of the means of Grace, both Word and Sacraments;
 - 2. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God
 - 3. Support the work of this congregation through contribution of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- D. 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 Council;

CHAPTER 4: DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- A. Denial of the Christian faith as described in these bylaws, 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:
 - 1. Private admonition by the pastor or his/her designee;
 - 2. Admonition by the pastor (or his/her designee) in the presence of two or three witnesses; and
 - 3. The member may be requested to appear before the Council
- B. In the case there is no pastor, the Council President or designated member of the Council shall administer such admonitions.
- C. If the above-mentioned process does not result in either reconciliation or resignation, the person charged with an offense shall appear before the Council after having received a written notice that specifies the exact charges that have been made against the member at least ten days prior to the meeting to resolve the question of membership.
- D. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Council upon receipt of:
 - 1. Evidence that injustice has been done; or
 - 2. Evidence of repentance and amendment
- E. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the Council will seek help from agencies that specialize in resolving conflict within a congregation. After consultation, the matter will be referred back to the Council who shall call a special congregational meeting and present recommendations accordingly.

CHAPTER 5: THE PASTOR

- A. The authority to call and/or terminate a pastor shall be in the congregation, and shall be accomplished by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of those voting members present at a meeting called for that purpose. Abstaining votes will not be included in the calculation to determine whether or not the proper affirmative majority has been attained.
- B. The call of the 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 for the following reasons:
 - 1. Mutual agreement to terminate the call;
 - 2. Completion of a call for a specific term of years;

3. Resignation 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; or
 6. The dissolution of the congregation
- C. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included a letter of call.

CHAPTER 6: STAFF

- A. the need and selection of staff will be directed by the council.
- B. The responsibilities of the staff will be directed by the council or their designees.
- C. Any contracts of services for the church will be directed by the council or their designees.

CHAPTER 7: PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- A. The property of Word of Life Lutheran Church belongs to the members of the congregation.
- B. If this congregation ceases to exist, the property and assets shall be sold, all debts retired and if there are funds remaining, they shall be given away to honor the cause of Christ and shall be accomplished by at least two-thirds majority ballot vote of the members remaining at time of dissolution.

CHAPTER 8: THE CHURCH COUNCIL

- A. Responsibilities
 1. To be accountable to God for the effectiveness of the complete ministries of Word of Life Lutheran Church
 2. To lead the congregation in pursuing its mission, conduct long range planning, and evaluating its activities in light of its mission and goals
 3. To exercise general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation by encouraging, equipping, and supporting those who are directly involved in the ministry of the church

4. To exercise overall regular decision-making responsibility for the church, with ratification by the congregation at annual meetings
5. To regularly receive information relating to ongoing operations of the church building, property, staff, and finances, and make decisions within pre-existing and delegated parameters
6. To prepare the annual budget with assistance from the teams
7. To recommend to the congregation annual budgets, new staff positions, new ministry proposals, changes to bylaws, and similar matters that have a church-wide impact.
8. To form special teams, such as strategic planning teams, pastoral call teams, building teams, and nominating team, for a specific purpose. Such teams will be terminated at the end of their assigned purpose.
9. To appoint a Treasurer and oversee all financial matters of the church.

B. Members:

1. The Church Council shall consist of 9 members, each serving a three-year term.
2. Each council member shall be a current voting member of the congregation and have the reputation of, and consistently exhibit the biblical qualifications of Godly leaders.
3. The member's term will be staggered, with three new members being selected each year, in order to avoid a turnover of the entire board within one year.
4. A Council member may serve 2 full consecutive terms and will not be able to be nominated for another term until two years have passed with the exception of additional time spent filling a vacancy.
5. In the event a vacancy occurs the Council shall appoint a voting member to serve until the next annual meeting whereupon the remainder of that term shall be filled by election.

C. The Council President:

1. The Council President shall be a member of the council and shall be selected by a majority of the council members.
2. Council President shall serve for a one-year term and may be selected to serve a subsequent term.
3. The Council President shall also serve as President of the Congregation, and will be responsible to:
 - (a) Sign all legal documents
 - (b) Preside at all meetings of the congregation and Council meetings
 - (c) Execute Letters of Call on behalf of the congregation;
 - (d) And meet with the pastor regularly, schedule meetings and determine the agenda for the council meetings and congregational meetings

D. The Council Vice President:

1. The Council Vice President shall be a member of the council and shall be selected by a majority of the council members.
2. The Council Vice President shall serve for a one-year term and may be

selected to serve a subsequent term.

3. The Council Vice President shall preside at meetings of council and congregation in the absence of the President.

E. The Council Secretary:

1. The Council Secretary shall be a member of the council or congregation, and selected by a majority of the council members.
2. The Council Secretary is responsible for keeping minutes of council and congregation meetings.

F. Council Meetings:

1. Although the Council will be responsible to meet as often as necessary, it is expected that the Council will regularly meet at least monthly.
 - (a) A majority of the council members must be present in order to conduct business.
2. Council minutes shall be written and distributed to the congregation after Council approval.

CHAPTER 9: MISCELLANEOUS

A. Teams

1. Word of Life Lutheran Church Team members will prepare their annual budget proposals and present them to the Word of Life Lutheran Church Council by December 1st of each year. Council members will review and approve the Annual Budget at their December meeting. This budget will be used for financial purposes; re: payroll, purchases, etc. beginning in January of the following year and then be subject to revision and/or approval at the congregation's Annual Meeting in January or February.

REVISED NOVEMBER 2017. APPROVED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION ON JANUARY 24, 2018.