



**The Constitution and Bylaws
All Saints Lutheran Church
Bowie, Maryland**

As Amended Through January 28, A.D. 2007

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INTRODUCTION

The *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* originally was adopted by the Constituting Convention of this church in Columbus, Ohio, on April 30, 1987. This current edition of the Constitution of All Saints Lutheran Church contains changes adopted by the 1989, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, and 2005 Churchwide Assemblies and subsequently adopted by this congregation.

Sections of this constitution marked by an asterisk [*] are required when a congregation amends its governing documents. These sections must be used without alteration or amendment of the text in any manner (neither additions nor deletions).

This edition of the Constitution and By-Laws contains additional changes adopted by this congregation on January 30, 2005; January 29, 2006; January 28, 2007.

This document was reformatted in 2007.

Nathan Rich, editor
April 9, 2008

* 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 All Saints Lutheran Church.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, All Saints Lutheran Church congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.03. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Maryland.
- C1.04. The seal of this congregation presents a cross, signifying Christ, and three crowns, signifying all saints. This emblem is encircled with the words, "All Saints Lutheran Church, Bowie, MD."

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 Scriptures 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, reserving 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 groups 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 continuing resolutions; 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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- C5.05.** This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C., 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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. 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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. 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.
- C7.05.** Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02 and *C7.03, above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to +S13.23. of the constitution of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod—re-convey and transfer all rights, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

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 made a contribution of record to this congregation.

- d. **Associate** members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran 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 as specified in the bylaws;
 - 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 this congregation 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 congregation 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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C., 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.

CHAPTER 10. — CONGREGATION MEETING

C10.01. The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.

C10.02. A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be at the written request of one-tenth of the voting members of this congregation. 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. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.

C10.04. Twenty-five percent of the voting members of this congregation shall constitute a quorum.

C10.05. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.

C10.06. 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.

C10.07. *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, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and a financial secretary.

a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.

b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.

c. The president, vice president, and secretary shall be elected from the elected membership of the congregation council. The treasurer and the financial secretary shall be elected by the Congregation Council and shall not be members of the Congregation Council. The treasurer and the financial secretary shall have voice but not vote at the meetings of the Congregation Council.

- C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected in accordance with the bylaws.
- C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. The president and vice president of the Congregation Council shall not serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

CHAPTER 12. — CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), and the number of lay members of the congregation specified in the bylaws. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A 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. is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause; or
 - c. submits a written letter of resignation.

Consistent with the laws of the state in which the congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

- C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot, as specified in the bylaws and serve a three year term. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C12.03.** Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.
- C12.04.** 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 pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - 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.
 - 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 recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To encourage and support members of the congregation, particularly the youth, to enter into the professional leadership of the Church.
- C12.05.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
- a. The Congregation Council shall be the board of trustees 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 Maryland.
 - 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 may enter into contracts of up to the amount specified in the bylaws for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations in excess of receipts only after approval by a Congregation meeting. The budget process shall include through consideration to the congregation's full synod-indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
 - e. 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.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.

- C12.06. The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.
- C12.07. The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09. The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11. The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, or at the request of at least one-half of its members. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C12.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting.

CHAPTER 13. — CONGREGATION COMMITTEES AND MINISTRY TEAMS

- C13.01. Duties of committees and ministry teams shall be specified in the bylaws. Other committees and ministry teams may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.02. This congregation shall establish **Congregation Committees**.
 - a. A **Nominating Committee**, consisting of membership as specified in the bylaws, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
 - b. An **Audit Committee**, consisting of membership as specified in the bylaws, shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office shall be two years. Members shall be eligible for reelection.
 - c. A **Call Committee** of six voting members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
 - d. A **Mutual Ministry Committee** shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. The term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.06. This congregation shall establish **Congregation Council Committees** and **Ministry Teams**.
 - a. An **Executive Committee** shall be established as specified in the bylaws.

- b. **Ministry Teams** shall be established as specified in the bylaws. Duties of the Ministry Teams shall be specified in the bylaws.
- C13.08.** The pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation. The president of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation, except the Nominating Committee.

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. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- 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 a 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 to the synod.

CHAPTER 17. — AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01.** 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 any voting member 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. Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of *C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

- *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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C., Synod of the ELCA.
- *C17.04. Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to incorporate any such amendment by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent 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. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provision shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

CHAPTER 18. — CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C18.01. 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 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.

BY-LAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH BOWIE, MARYLAND

STATEMENT OF MISSION

The mission of All Saints Lutheran Church is to gather all people in a community immersed in God's Word through worship and learning that equips us to serve the world in the name of Jesus.

By-laws to Chapter 8 - MEMBERSHIP

- B8.01.** Voting members of this congregation must be 18 years of age.
- B8.02.** This congregation shall transfer membership to another Lutheran congregation or issue a certificate of release to another evangelical congregation at the request of the transferring member(s).
- B8.03.** Members who move from the community which All Saints serves are encouraged to transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve them more effectively. This congregation shall notify Lutheran congregations in the member's new community of the move.
- B8.04.** When members of this congregation have failed to commune or make a contribution of record with this congregation for the current and preceding year, they may be removed from the roll of membership by action of the Congregation Council and upon the recommendation of the Pastor. This action shall take place only after such members have been counseled about the matter by the Pastor or his/her representative. This procedure shall take place only when there is a pastor under call to serve this congregation or with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
- B8.05.** Inactive confirmed members, who have not communed or made a contribution of record for the current or preceding year, but who desire to remain on the congregation roll may do so per their request to either the Pastor or the Congregation Council.

By-laws to Chapter 9 - THE PASTOR

- B9.01.** In order that a pastor of this congregation may be devoted fully to the duties of the office, an adequate salary shall be provided. Expenses incident to attendance at convention of the synod, except for travel, and attendance at meeting of the district shall be defrayed by the congregation.
- B9.02.** When a pastor of this congregation desires to terminate his/her ministry, a letter of resignation shall be submitted to the Congregation Council for report to the congregation. Unless specified in the letter of call, the resignation shall normally become effective two months after the date on which it was submitted.

By-laws to Chapter 10 - CONGREGATION MEETING

- B10.01.** The Annual Meeting of this congregation shall be held on the last Sunday of January.
- B10.02.** Notice of all congregation meetings shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least ten days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient. A special letter or the newsletter mailing shall be considered to be in compliance with this procedure.

By-laws to Chapter 11 - OFFICERS

- B11.01.** A special Congregation Council meeting to elect officers shall be called immediately following the annual congregation meeting. At this meeting, the Congregation Council shall elect from its members a president, vice-president, and secretary. The Congregation Council shall also elect a treasurer and financial secretary, who shall not be members of the Congregation Council. The treasurer and financial secretary shall be elected for one-year terms. There shall be no term limits for the treasurer and financial secretary.
- B11.02.** The duties of the elected Congregation Council officers are:
- a. The **president** shall preside at meetings of the congregation and Congregation Council, chair the Executive Committee, and be an ex officio member of all Ministry Teams and Congregation Committees.
 - b. The **vice president** shall assume the duties of the president in the event of the president's inability to serve.
 - c. The **secretary** shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the Congregation Council in a volume provided by the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives. The secretary shall be responsible for archives and records management and make written summary report of council activities to the congregation at its annual meetings.
 - d. The **treasurer** shall keep the books of account of the congregation; and shall receive from the financial secretary all funds and disburse them on proper order, making quarterly remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod. The treasurer shall make written report of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation at its annual meetings. The treasurer shall serve as an ex officio member of the Budget and Finance and Stewardship Ministry Teams.
 - e. The **financial secretary** shall receive and keep records of all income from contributing members and other sources, provide quarterly statements to contributing members, make written report of all financial receipts to the Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation at its annual meeting, and serve as ex officio member of the Budget and Finance and Stewardship Ministry Teams.

- B11.03.** The treasurer and financial secretary shall provide all necessary financial data so that an annual audit of this congregation's financial transactions can be performed and the results of the audit reported to the congregation at its annual meeting.

By-laws to Chapter 12 - CONGREGATION COUNCIL

- B12.01.** Nine (9) lay members of this congregation shall be elected to the Congregation Council.

- B12.02.** Procedures for electing Congregation Council members are as follows:

- a. A written ballot shall be used for the election of Congregation Council members. Names of all Congregation Council nominees including those nominated from the floor shall be included on the initial ballot. Congregation voting members may vote for as many nominees as there are vacancies on the Congregation Council by placing an X or check mark by the names of the nominees voted for. Ballots improperly marked shall be disregarded and not counted in the voting. After all votes have been counted, the nominees who receive the most votes consisting of a majority of the votes cast shall be elected to the existing vacancies on the Congregation Council.
- b. Of the nominees elected to the Congregation Council, the number who receive the most votes shall serve full three year terms. Nominees not elected to three year terms shall fill remaining one or two year vacancies on the Congregation Council, should any exist, based upon the number of votes the nominee receives.
- c. After the initial voting, if the number of nominees receiving a majority of the votes cast is not equal to or greater than the number of vacancies existing on the Congregation Council, a second ballot shall be required. Nominees receiving majority votes on the first ballot shall serve terms as specified previously and their names shall not appear on the second ballot. All nominees from the first ballot not receiving a majority vote on the first ballot shall be placed on the second ballot.
- d. Nominees who receive a majority vote on the second ballot shall fill the existing vacancies on the Congregation Council with the nominees receiving the most votes filling the longest term vacant.
- e. Should a third or more vote be required, the procedures for the second ballot shall apply. In all subsequent balloting after the third ballot, the number of Congregation Council nominees shall be limited to twice the number of positions to be filled. Names remaining on the ballot after the third vote shall be those names receiving the most votes without receiving a majority.
- f. Should a tie occur between nominees as to the length of term or as to who shall serve on the Congregation Council, a special ballot shall be used to break only the specific tie. Only the nominees' names involved in the tie shall be included on the special ballot. Voters may vote for the number of nominees on the special ballot equal to the number of Congregation Council vacancies existing affected by the tie.

- B12.03.** In making interim appointments to vacancies on the Congregation Council, the Council shall first consider for appointment those nominated but not elected at the most recent congregation meeting. Additional names for appointment may be made by the Congregation Council and those receiving the highest majority vote in order, within the Council, shall be offered the chance to serve on the Council.
- B12.04.** The Congregation Council shall not incur obligations of more than five (5) per-cent of the congregationally approved annual budget without the approval of this congregation at a congregation meeting.
- B12.05.** Continuing policies for the Congregation Council shall be maintained in the Policy and Procedures Handbook.

By-laws to Chapter 13 - MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

- B13.01.** There shall be an Executive Committee of the Congregation Council. The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the president of the Congregation Council. The congregation shall have nine (9) Ministry Teams. Ministry Team leaders shall be members of the congregation and shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Ministry Team leaders shall be invited to serve by the Executive Committee. Ministry Team leaders shall be asked to serve for a one year term, and may be asked to continue their service in subsequent years. The treasurer and financial secretary shall not chair a Ministry Team.
- a. The **Evangelism Ministry Team** shall stimulate and lead all members and ministries of the congregation in continuous and concerted endeavors to reach out and welcome those in the community who are not yet members of Christ's Church, and to encourage people of all ages and cultures to be committed disciples in the community. This ministry shall nurture leadership so that all can be faithful to God's call.
 - b. The **Fellowship Ministry Team** shall develop and implement programs to meet the Christian social needs of the congregation. This ministry shall be the point of coordination for fellowship activities that fall under the purview of other ministries.
 - c. The **Youth Ministry Team** shall foster and nurture Christian spiritual and social values in our youth through the development and implementation of programs that increase spiritual awareness and understanding, minister to God's people, and encourage outreach and fellowship.
 - d. The **Worship and Music Ministry Team** shall ensure that the worship services of the congregation are conducted regularly and in accordance with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America worship practices.
 - e. The **Christian Education Ministry Team** shall develop and implement an education program whose purpose is to teach the Word of God.

- f. The **Social Ministry Team** shall promote faith in action by responding to the essential needs of the congregation, local, national, and international communities. This ministry shall provide direct and indirect assistance to congregation members, and encourage, enable, and expand service to the immediate and broader community.
- g. The **Stewardship Ministry Team** shall strengthen and support members of the congregation in their knowledge and understanding of their role as God's stewards. This ministry shall provide leadership in developing programs that give all members of the congregation an opportunity to offer their time, talent, and monetary resources in thanksgiving to God and to carry out the ministries of the church.
- h. The **Budget and Finance Ministry Team** shall have oversight responsibility for the financial affairs of the congregation.
- i. The **Property Management Ministry Team** shall ensure that the physical assets of the congregation are properly maintained and protected; and that the appropriate equipment and/or contracts are available to perform this function.
- j. The **Executive Committee** shall be composed of the officers of the Congregation. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Executive Committee with voice and vote. The president of the Congregation Council may appoint one voting member of the congregation (council member or not) as member of the Executive Committee with voice and vote. The function of the Executive Committee is to support the Congregation Council and its activities by ensuring that the business of the Congregation Council flows in an even and scheduled fashion; to provide a forum for consultation relative to special topics and Congregation Council meeting agendas; and to conduct performance evaluations and make salary recommendations for all paid staff.
- k. The **Policy and Procedures Committee** shall be a sub-committee of the Executive Committee. The Policy and Procedures Committee is responsible for reviewing policy, making recommendations on proposed policy to the council and making recommendations on changes to the constitution and by-laws, consulting with other ministry teams and committees relative to functions and policy proposals, and providing presentations and/or briefings to the congregation forums relative to the adoption of changes to the constitution and by-laws. The Policy and Procedures Committee shall review, update, and maintain this congregation's operating handbook of policies and functions.

- B13.02. There shall be eight (8) Congregation Committees whose membership and duties include:
- a. The **Nominating Committee** shall consist of four voting members of the congregation. The Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Nominating Committee with both voice and vote. One member of the Nominating Committee shall be an outgoing member of Congregation Council. The Nominating Committee shall choose candidates for vacancies on the Congregation Council, the Nominating Committee, the Mission Endowment Fund Committee, and the representatives to the annual Synod Assembly.
 - b. The **Audit Committee** shall consist of three voting members of the congregation. The Audit Committee shall perform the annual audit of the records of the treasurer, financial secretary, and all accounts of this congregation. The Audit Committee shall see that all financial transactions of this congregation are conducted according to generally accepted accounting and cash management practices. The Audit Committee shall submit a written report of their findings and recommendations to the Congregation Council and to the congregation at the annual congregation meeting. An annual audit of the preceding year's financial records shall be performed no later than June 30 of each calendar year.
 - c. The **Call Committee** shall perform the necessary activities, including seeking the advice and help of the bishop of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod, to nominate, for Congregation Council and Congregation approval, a qualified candidate to fill an existing or anticipated pastoral vacancy. Responsibilities of the Call Committee include drafting the letter of call and facilitating the candidate's visit/interview.
 - d. The **Memorials Committee** shall consist of three voting members of the congregation and be responsible for expenditures from the account(s) to which members and friends of All Saints Lutheran Church may make contributions to remember or honor someone. The committee shall acknowledge gifts, recommend items for purchase or projects for support, maintain the Memorials Book in the narthex, and, in consultation with other Council Committees, publicize a list of desired items and projects. Members shall be appointed jointly by the Congregation Council president and the Pastor and may serve for three years. The Pastor and Congregation Council president shall be ex officio members of the committee. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.
 - e. The **Scholarship Committee** shall consist of three voting members of the congregation and be responsible for expenditures from the account(s) to which members and friends of All Saints Lutheran Church may make contributions to the Scholarship Fund. The committee shall acknowledge gifts, establish the scholarship application process, set eligibility requirements, publicize the process, determine selection criteria and award scholarships. Members shall be appointed jointly by the Congregation Council president and the Pastor and may serve for three years. The Pastor and the Council president shall be ex officio members of the committee. Members shall be eligible for reappointment.

- f. The **Mutual Ministry Committee** shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. The term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall act as a personnel interface between the congregation and the pastor, employees, council officers, and the committees and ministry teams of the congregation. This interface will afford any member of the congregation a direct avenue to discuss their concerns and suggestions to improve conduct of service, congregation activities, responses to members, and pastoral support. By listening, interpreting, advising, conferring, evaluating, and if necessary, recommending Congregation Council action, the committee will facilitate collaboration in areas of membership, service, and pastoral support. In the area of conflict resolution, the committee shall provide a forum where members and employees of the congregation may voice their concerns and reach a mutually acceptable settlement of these concerns. The committee shall provide the pastor and other paid staff with the opportunity to apprise the committee of their activities. The committee chair shall serve as a member of the performance evaluation team for the pastor.
- g. The **Capital Improvement Committee** shall assume responsibility for planning and providing recommendations to the Council to improve the physical facilities of the congregation. The Capital Improvement Committee shall prepare and maintain a long-range plan to improve and upgrade the facilities of the congregation. This plan will be updated and reviewed by the Council for potential inclusion into the finance and budget system. This committee shall work closely with the Property Management Ministry Team. The committee shall implement approved plans to obtain the capital improvement with the aid of the appropriate ministry teams, committees, and officers of the council.
- h. The **Mission Endowment Fund Committee** shall consist of seven (7) members, all of whom shall be voting members of All Saints Lutheran Church and elected to three (3) year terms by the annual Congregation Meeting. The Pastor and Congregation Council president, vice president, treasurer, financial secretary of the congregation and the leaders of the Budget and Finance and Stewardship Ministry Teams shall be ex-officio members of the committee.

BY-LAWS of the MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND

WHEREAS, the Congregation Council of All Saints Lutheran Church on retreat September 13, 1997, envisioning the congregation's future ministry in the year 2002, directed the Budget and Finance Committee to develop a program of planned/deferred giving in order to adequately fund its visions for expanded ministry; and

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to humankind - the created world, the gospel, life, time, abilities, money, including accumulated, inherited, and appreciated resources; and

WHEREAS, the Scriptural principle of proportionate giving, to return to the Lord a portion of the gifts God has first given to his beloved children, is both a privilege and an appropriate response, in all times and circumstances; and

WHEREAS, Christians can give to the work of the church through bequests in wills, assignment of life insurance, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder and other trusts, assignment of certificates of deposit or bank accounts, and transfers of property (cash, stocks, bonds, real estate); and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of All Saints Lutheran Church to encourage, receive, and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to our Lord expressed by the donors and in accord with the policies of this congregation:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that this congregation in Annual Congregation Meeting assembled on January 25, 1998, approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as *The Mission Endowment Fund* (hereafter called *Fund*) of the All Saints Lutheran Church, 16510 Mount Oak Road, Bowie, Maryland 20716; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the purpose of this *Fund* is to enhance the mission outreach of All Saints Lutheran Church apart from the general operation of the congregation; that no portion of the income generated by the *Fund* shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that *The Mission Endowment Fund Committee* (hereinafter called the *Committee*) shall be the custodian of the *Fund*; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that from this date forward all bequests and planned gifts of any kind or in any amount which are received from the estates of persons who have named All Saints Lutheran Church shall be deposited into the *All Saints Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund* unless otherwise restricted by the donor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Congregation Council and congregation commend the Budget and Finance Committee for its work in developing this proposal for the Mission Endowment Fund, and express appreciation to its consultants, Phillip Woodruff of this congregation and the Reverend Arlyn Saathoff of The Lutheran Planned Giving Consortium of our synod; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the following Plan of Operation set forth the administration and management of the *Fund*.

Plan of Operation

a. Committee Membership

- a.1. The Committee shall consist of seven (7) members, all of whom shall be voting members of All Saints Lutheran Church and elected to three (3) year terms by the Annual Congregation Meeting. The Pastor and Congregation Council president, vice president, treasurer, financial secretary, and Budget and Finance and Stewardship Chairs shall be ex officio members of the *Committee*.

- a.2. The *Committee* shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently if deemed to be in the *Fund's* best interest.
- a.3. A quorum shall consist of four (4) members. When only four (4) members are present a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution.
- a.4. The *Committee* shall elect from its own membership a chairperson, recording secretary, and financial secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all *Committee* meetings.
- a.5. The *Committee* recording secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy thereof to each *Committee* member. Each member shall keep a complete copy of minutes to be delivered to his/her successor. The recording secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Congregation Council.
- a.6. The *Committee* financial secretary shall work with the Congregation Council treasurer in maintaining and coordinating complete and accurate accounts for the *Fund*. The books shall be audited annually by the Congregation Audit Committee in accordance with B13.02.b of the All Saints Lutheran Church By-Laws.
- a.7. The *Committee* shall report on a quarterly basis to the Congregation Council and, at each Annual Congregation Meeting or duly called special Congregation meeting, shall render a full and complete audited account of the *Fund* during the preceding year.
- a.8. The *Committee* may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and, at the expense of *Fund* income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as deemed to be in the *Fund's* best interest.
- a.9. *Committee* members shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the *Fund* except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or gross negligence. No member shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his/her own willful misconduct or omissions, and shall not be liable for the acts or omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any self dealing or transactions with the *Fund* in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interest would conflict with the interest of the *Fund*.
- a.10. All assets are to be held in the name of All Saints Lutheran Church and shall be invested for the benefit of All Saints Lutheran Church through the ELCA Foundation, or the ELCA Mission Investment Fund, or the Thrivent Investment Management Inc. Family of Funds.

- a.11. Upon initial receipt of assets from donors, recommendations to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the *Fund*, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent, are to be made by the *Committee* for approval by the Congregation Council, with subsequent execution by the delegated member of the *Committee*.
- a.12. It shall be the responsibility of the Committee to develop an All Saints Lutheran Church *Mission Endowment Fund* Congregation Educational Program to promote the faithful Christian stewardship of all resources. The program may include, but shall not be limited to, newsletter articles, bulletin inserts, temple talks, target group meetings, quarterly seminars with guest speakers.

b. Distribution of Income.

To enhance the mission outreach of All Saints Lutheran Church apart from the general operating and mission share budget of the congregation, the congregation establishes the following:

- b.1. The *Committee* shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures. Gifts and bequests to the Fund shall accumulate for one (1) year, after which the income generated from the investment of the principal shall be expended.
- b.2. Income from the *Fund* shall be distributed annually and at such other times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes:

One-third (1/3) for new ministry opportunities within All Saints Lutheran Church including but not limited to: scholarships, start up costs of new program ministries and/or staffing; new materials or equipment; or other opportunities within the congregation which will encourage Christian growth in faith, fellowship, service or outreach and/or (on a matching basis with members of the congregation) for capital improvements, debt reduction, or building expansion program.

One-third (1/3) for outreach into the communities of our Metropolitan Washington DC Synod through the serving arms of the church, including but not limited to, grants to Community Family Life Services, Metropolitan Washington DC Synod Endowments for Mission, Fellowship Square Foundation, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, Lutheran Theological Seminary of Gettysburg, National Lutheran Home, N Street Village Shelter Ministries of Luther Place Church, Southeast Outreach Ministries, Lutheran Campus Ministries, and Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp and Conference Center.

One-third (1/3) for missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America on this continent and worldwide including, but not limited to, programs of the ELCA for new Congregation development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, global mission, ecumenism, media evangelism, and capital financing.

- b.3. Programs for support shall be recommended by the *Committee* and approved by the Congregation Council for funding according to the guidelines established by the congregation.
- b.4. Disbursement of income from the *Fund* need not occur annually in the event causes and programs have not been approved by the *Committee* sufficient to use total income available, or, if in the judgment of the *Committee*, total annual disbursement of income is not recommended.
- c. **Distribution of Principal.**

When, in the opinion of the *Committee*, circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of the congregation is at stake, and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the *Fund* principal, the *Committee* may, upon two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, recommend such authorizing action to the congregation, through the Congregation Council.
- d. **Disposition or Transfer of Fund.**

In the event All Saints Lutheran Church ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the *Fund* shall be at the discretion of the Congregation Council in conformity with the approved Congregation constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of *Mission Endowment Fund* obligations.
- e. **Record of Adoption.**

These By-Laws of the Mission Endowment Fund, recommended by the Congregation Council, were accepted by the congregation at a legally called Congregation meeting this 25th day of January, 1998.