

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF WATERTOWN

Constitution and Bylaws of the Congregation



Updated January 26, 2025

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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CONGREGATIONAL CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the 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 in its purity and as the norm for faith and life, administering the sacraments, and carrying 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.

Article A1 Name and Incorporation

- A1.01 The name of the congregation shall be Peace Lutheran Church of Watertown.
- A1.02 For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, Peace Lutheran Church of Watertown is hereinafter designated as "this congregation".
- A1.03 This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

Article A2 Confession of Faith

- A2.01 This congregation confesses the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- A2.02 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 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.
- A2.03 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.
- A2.04 This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- A2.05 This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as 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.
- A2.06 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.

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A2.07 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.

A2.08 Our Faith Based Policy on Marriage and Human Sexuality

Without hesitation, Peace loves and welcomes all people. We are all children of God. Whether we are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender – we are sinners in need of God's grace. As a church, we stand against the oppression and bullying of God's people. We know, at times, self-righteous and legalistic Christians can be judgmental, and such behavior is both outrageously unfaithful and a gross misrepresentation of Christ's love. Peace welcomes and loves all people regardless of their sexuality. At the same time, we reject the assumption that love comes with the qualifier of full agreement with all behavioral choices. We believe that – according to Scripture, and in unity with nearly twenty centuries of Christian teaching – God established marriage as a holy union to be shared between one man and one woman.

While we recognize and respect the laws of our government that extend civil marriage privileges to same-gender couples, as a church we are bound to the laws of God, and therefore cannot in good conscience step outside those boundaries to host a same-gender wedding in our church building, or preside at a same-gender wedding offsite.

PEACE POLICY REGARDING SEXUALITY

We believe that Christian marriage is a sacred institution ordained of God for the happiness of mankind and the propagation of the race. It is the spiritual and physical union of one man and one woman (as they were born); this is the only legitimate sexual relationship and, according to the scriptural ideal, is to be broken only by death. Accordingly, this Church, its Pastors, staff and members, will not recognize any other union as a legitimate marriage. Our Church and staff shall not perform or participate in any same-sex marriage or unions of any kind. Church facilities shall not be used for such purposes or any function which may be perceived as "Celebrating the Sin".

Church Practices Derived from This Policy

Applicants for weddings performed by church staff:

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by the Pastor of Peace or to use the church facilities for their wedding shall affirm the statement of faith regarding marriage and human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall participate in premarital counseling by the Pastor employed by this church or other persons who, in the sole opinion of the pastoral staff of the church have the appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling. All pastoral staff, counselors or other persons providing premarital counseling shall affirm the Statement of Faith of this church on Marriage and Human sexuality.

Use of Facilities

1. Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by an ordained or duly licensed member of the clergy. Any officiant not employed by the Peace Lutheran Church shall serve at the discretion of the pastor or Ministry Board.

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2. Clergy assisting in marriage ceremonies on church premises, and not employed by the church, shall not be required to affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith on Marriage and Human sexuality adopted by this church. Yet we require that they conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful of the statement.
3. Clergy and staff assigned by the church to implement the procedures contained in this Marriage Policy may, in his or her discretion, decline to provide church facilities for, and/or decline to officiate at a ceremony when in his or her judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.

Membership, Leadership and Staff:

1. Every Pastor, board member, or employee, hired by the church shall affirm their agreement with Peace's Statement of Faith on Marriage and Human sexuality and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. The Ministry Board will be asked to affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith on Marriage and Human sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
3. Church leaders, teachers and members are expected to teach and live in a manner that is consistent with this policy.

Article A3 Nature of the Church

- A3.01 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.
- A3.02 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. It acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints and it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Article A4 Statement of Purpose

- A4.01 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.
- A4.02 To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministries with global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.

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- 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, standing with the poor and powerless and committing it to their needs.
- e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith, 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 love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity in which the spirit gives.

A4.03 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 suffering and participate responsibly in society.
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and other benevolences.
- h. Foster and participate in cooperative relationships with other congregations.

A4.04 This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Ministry Board shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force or other organizational groups and shall review their actions.

A4.05 This congregation shall adopt a mission statement which shall provide specific direction for its programs and shall be reviewed as necessary.

Article A5 Powers of the Congregation

A5.01 The powers of this congregation are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.

A5.02 The powers of this congregation are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.

A5.03 All matters before the Congregational Meeting shall be decided by a simple majority vote of members present and voting unless otherwise specified by this constitution or bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided solely on the basis of the Word of God.

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- A5.04 Only such authority as is delegated to the Congregation Ministry Board or other organizational units in the congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
- a. Call a pastor(s) as provided in Article A9.
 - b. Terminate the call of a pastor(s) as provided in Article A9.
 - c. Call or terminate the call of rostered program staff.
 - d. Approve the annual budget.
 - e. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase or other lawful means.
 - f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose.
 - g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means.
 - h. Elect its Congregation Ministry Board and require it to carry out its duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.
- A5.05 This Congregation Ministry Board shall choose laypersons from among its voting members, to serve as delegates to National Conventions, as seen necessary, as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster 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 of said conventions/meetings.

Article A6 Meetings

- A6.01 The annual Congregational Meeting shall be held on the last Sunday in the month of January of each year.
- A6.02 Announcements of regular meeting dates shall be made available two previous Sundays.
- A6.03 Announcements of special meeting dates shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays or in the services of the previous Sunday when accompanied by notification by mail or e-mail. Such special meetings may be called at the request of the pastor(s), president, church Congregation Ministry Board or 20 voting members or 10% of the voting members, whichever is greater.
- A6.04 Twenty voting members or 10% of the voting members, whichever is greater, present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- A6.05 Voting by proxy shall not be permitted for any matter. Voting by absentee ballot shall be permitted under the following conditions A OR B.
- a. The member, in good standing, is out of the state of Minnesota at the time of the congregational meeting.
 - b. The member must notify the Ministry Board at their regular meeting prior to the congregation meeting of their reason for wanting an absentee ballot. The Ministry Board will either approve or deny the request.
- A6.06 Absentee Ballott Return

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- a. Submit the approved and sealed Absentee Ballot at least four (4) days prior to the meeting to the church office during regular office hours. The sealed ballot shall be opened and counted with the ballots during the congregational meeting.
- b. Absentee ballots can only cover elections and ratifications that cannot change during the congregational meeting.

A6.07 All actions by the congregation shall be by a simple majority vote of members present and voting.

A6.08 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.

Article A7 Property Ownership

A7.01 If this congregation ceases to exist, title to un-disposed property shall be distributed by the remaining members to the non-profit organization(s) of their choice.

A7.02 If a majority of the voting members of this congregation present and voting at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent, transfer to another Lutheran church body or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to remain with the majority vote of this congregation.

Article A8 Membership

A8.01 Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the 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.

A8.02 Voting members are confirmed members who have been instructed in the Lutheran faith and have made a monetary contribution of record during the current or preceding year. Membership classifications are addressed as specified in the bylaws.

A8.03 It shall be the duty and privilege 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.
- c. Support the work of this congregation through contributions of their time, talents, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

A8.04 Refer to Congregational Bylaws Article B8 for additional information.

Article A9 Pastoral Staff

A9.01 Authority to call a pastor(s) shall be in this congregation by a majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting called legally for that purpose.

A9.02 The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the services of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call.

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- A9.03 The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment. Every ordained minister shall:
- Be a member of this congregation.
 - Preach and teach the Word in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions.
 - Administer the Sacraments.
 - Conduct public worship.
 - Provide pastoral care.
 - Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead.
 - Pray for the congregation and its members.
 - Strive to extend the Kingdom of God, by word and deed, in the community and beyond.
 - Keep accurate parochial records of baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, members received, members leaving, and shall submit a summary of these statistics annually to the congregation.
- A9.04 In the event of congregational conflict, in which the pastor is involved, if efforts by the Executive Committee to resolve the issues fail, the Congregation Ministry Board shall by a majority vote, determine a means of resolution.
- A9.05 The call of a pastor shall be terminated for the following reasons:
- Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term.
 - Resignation of the pastor.
 - The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor.
 - Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty.
 - The dissolution of the congregation.
- A9.06 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.
- A9.07 Called church workers, as defined in the bylaws, shall be chosen through a search and call process.
- A9.08 Called pastor(s) and called church workers and their respective spouses are not permitted to hold any elected congregational offices.
- A9.09 At the time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the Congregation Ministry Board.
- A9.10 During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor or any other matters

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that affect the congregation.

- A9.11 The Congregation Ministry Board, and not the Call Committee, shall determine the employment terms provided in the letter of call, except as otherwise provided by the constitution, bylaws or resolutions of the congregation.

Article A10 Congregation Ministry Board

- A10.01 The Congregation Ministry Board members shall be elected by written ballot at the Annual Meeting of the congregation.
- A10.02 Refer to Congregational Bylaws Article B3 for additional information.

Article A11 Officers

- A11.01 The officers of this congregation shall be a president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer.
- A11.02 Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- A11.03 The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
- A11.04 The president (elected by the congregation), vice president, and secretary/treasurer shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Ministry Board.
- A11.05 No officer shall hold more than one (1) office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive one-year (1) terms in the same office.
- A11.06 Refer to Congregational Bylaws B4, B5 and B6 for additional information.

Article A12 Congregation Committees

- A12.01 The officers of this congregation, the immediate past president and the pastor shall constitute the Executive Committee.
- A12.02 A Nominating committee and Call Committee are defined in the bylaws. Refer to Article B7.03 Page 15.
- A12.03 Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Ministry Board.
- A12.04 The pastor(s) of this congregation shall be a non-voting ex officio member of all committees and boards of the congregation.

Article A13 Organizations within the Congregation

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 shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive written annual reports submitted to the Annual Congregation Meeting concerning their membership, work and finances. The Congregation Ministry Board shall provide ongoing oversight.

Article A14 Indemnification

This congregation indemnifies and holds harmless its past, present and future officers,

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Congregation Ministry Board members, committee members, employees and staff against actions or threatened actions to be made party to threatened, pending or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration or investigative proceeding while carrying out their Congregational duties. This indemnification does not extend to an individual's liability from fraudulent or illegal activity.

Article A15 Division

A15.01 If at any time a division of the congregation should take place for any reason, the following principles shall govern: The property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with the majority of voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the confessional standards set forth in this constitution.

Article A16 Discipline of Members

Discipline of members, staff and employees is addressed in the bylaws. Refer to Article B8.

Article A17 Amendments

A17.01 This constitution may be amended in the following manner:

- a. Amendments may be proposed by at least twenty (20) voting members or 10% voting members, whichever is greater, or by the Congregation Ministry Board.
- b. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Ministry Board 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose.
- c. The Congregation Ministry Board shall notify the congregation's members by mail or e-mail of the proposal together with the Congregation Ministry Board's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

A17.02 Amendments to Articles A2, A3, and A4 shall not destroy their essential meaning.

A17.03 Amendments to this constitution, proposed under A17.01 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 majority vote of those present and voting.
- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution.

Article A18 Bylaws

This Congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with any provisions of this constitution.

Adopted: 26 January 2014
(Day, Month, Year)

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CONGREGATIONAL BYLAWS

Article B1 Holy Communion

- B1.01 This congregation invites all of its members, who have been prepared to receive the Sacrament, to participate regularly in Holy Communion.
- B1.02 Preparation for Holy Communion shall normally be provided for baptized persons as young as ten years of age, as an option for parents and children.
- B1.03 Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to members of other congregations who sincerely confess that Jesus Christ is their Lord.

Article B2 Called Church Workers

- B2.01 Called Church workers are Pastor(s) and Visitation Pastor(s).
- B2.02 The individual to be called must be affirmed by a majority vote of members present and voting at a legally called congregational meeting.

Article B3 Congregation Ministry Board

- B3.01 Any voting member of the congregation may be elected to the Congregation Ministry Board (Ministry Board), limited to two (2) consecutive terms with a two (2) year hiatus before eligibility for election again.
- B3.02 The members of the Ministry Board except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three years. The initial Ministry Board shall be filled by two individuals elected to a one-year term, two individuals elected to a two-year term and two individuals elected to a three-year term. Initial Ministry Board members elected to a one or two-year term shall be eligible to serve two additional full terms.
- B3.03 The voting membership of the Ministry Board shall consist of the seven elected members of the Ministry Board.
- B3.04 Newly elected Ministry Board members shall be installed at a Sunday worship soon after the election.
- B3.05 A member's place on the Ministry Board shall be declared vacant if the member:
 - a. Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation.
 - b. Is absent from three regular meetings of the Ministry Board in the current year.
- B3.06 Should a member's place on the Ministry Board be declared vacant, the Congregation shall elect, by majority vote, a successor to fill out the remainder of the term being vacated.
- B3.07 The Ministry Board shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything is done in accordance with the Word of God.

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- B3.08 The duties of the Ministry Board shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in annually 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 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 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 seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.
- B3.09 The Ministry Board:
- a. Shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation.
 - b. Shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs.
 - c. Shall not have the authority to buy, sell or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
 - d. May enter into contracts not to exceed \$2000.00 to address emergency situations not included in the budget.
 - e. 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 of more than 5% in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting.
 - f. Shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations.
 - g. Shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- B3.10 The Ministry Board shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws are carried out.
- B3.11 The Executive Committee shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster and shall do an annual evaluation of all employees, review and recommend adjustments to wage and salary levels of all employees to the Ministry Board.
- B3.12 The Ministry Board shall be responsible for the employment and supervision of the hourly waged lay workers of this congregation and employees specifically listed in the bylaws.

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- B3.13 The Ministry Board shall submit a comprehensive report to the congregation at the annual meeting.
- B3.14 The Ministry Board shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor(s) or the president, and shall be called by the president 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.
- B3.15 The Ministry Board shall “take into consideration” providing 10% of the annual budget for missions and outreach.
- B3.16 A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of the Ministry Board members present at the time of the vote.

Article B4 Officers’ Duties

- B4.01 **President** - The President shall, when present, preside over all meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Ministry Board. The President or designated agent shall represent the congregation at all official functions.
- B4.02 **Vice President** - The Vice President shall preside at all functions in the absence of the President.
- B4.03 **Secretary/Treasurer** - The Secretary/Treasurer shall:
- a. Keep the minutes of the Congregation Ministry Board and the congregational meetings.
 - b. Present Financial reports to the Congregation Ministry Board as may be required.
 - c. Attend meetings of the Finance Investment Committee.
- B4.04 **Immediate Past President** – The Immediate Past President shall:
- a. Serve on the Executive Committee for a term of six (6) months following their term to be a resource to the Executive Committee for the incoming President on personnel issues, church issues that may not have been completed in the transition and other identified items by the Executive Committee.
 - b. Be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee.

Article B5 Financial Administrator

- B5.01 A Financial Administrator shall be appointed by the Congregation Ministry Board. The Financial Administrator shall:
- a. Disburse all funds in accordance with the decisions of this congregation or the Congregation Ministry Board
 - b. Complete tasks related to payroll, payroll taxes, filing tax returns and reports.
 - c. Assist the Congregation Ministry Board in formulating the Annual Budget of the congregation.
 - d. The Financial Administrator shall be a signatory on this congregation’s bank accounts.

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Article B6 Financial Secretary

- B6.01 A Financial Secretary shall be appointed by the Congregation Ministry Board. The Financial Secretary shall:
- Keep a record of all pledges of the congregation.
 - Receive all collections, individual contributions and special offerings for current expenses, missions and other purposes.
 - Count and record all contributed funds.
 - Deposit all money received in this congregation's bank account(s).
 - Distribute annual statements to all contributors (when identifiable) detailing their record of contributions. Additional statements may be prepared and distributed at the direction of the Congregation Ministry Board.
 - Prepare for the Congregation Ministry Board, a complete annual statement of collections and contributions.
- B6.02 The Financial Secretary shall not be a signatory on this congregation's bank accounts.
- B6.03 The Financial Secretary shall not "under any circumstance" provide member contributions unless member has given written approval.

Article B7 Committees

- B7.01 **Executive Committee** - The Executive Committee shall meet as required to address any issues that are to come before the Congregation Ministry Board, to consolidate information, and determine the need for additional actions.
- B7.02 A Nominating Committee of six (6) voting members of this congregation shall be elected by written ballot at the annual meeting for a term of two (2) years. The Nominating Committee shall be filled by three individuals elected to a one-year term, and three individuals elected to a two-year term. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election or to run for elected office while serving on the Nominating Committee. The committee shall:
- Meet on an as-needed basis to review:
 - 1) Discernment process for selecting candidates.
 - 2) Submitted names from the congregation, once initial ballot is published, against discernment process.
 - 3) Amend the November recommendations to the Ministry Board, if needed, by January 1st of the election year.
 - Shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled.
 - Secure the consent and short bio of each candidate.
 - Submit their recommendation for ballot to the Ministry Board for adoption:
 - 1) By the November Ministry Board meeting (for the Congregational Annual Meeting elections) for recording into the minutes.
 - 2) Per the Ministry Board guidelines for Special Congregational Meetings to fill vacant elected positions.

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- B7.03 Peace Lutheran Church of Watertown will engage a Certified Public Accounting firm to conduct an annual audit or review of the financial statements of the Church. The firm selected by the Finance Ministry Team must be totally autonomous and have no connection with Peace. The selected firm will conduct the annual audit or review in accordance with standards established by the American Institute of CPA's and will prepare a report of their findings and will present it to the Ministry Board. The report will be included in the "Annual Report to the Congregation". The entire process shall be conducted by the Finance Ministry Team.
- B7.04 When a Pastoral Office is vacant, a **Call Committee** of five (5) members shall be elected by a special meeting of the congregation. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of candidates to a special congregational meeting called to elect the call committee. Nominations may also be accepted from the floor. The term of office shall end upon installation of the newly called pastor. Guidelines and procedures for the Call Committee are included in the **Congregation Policy and Procedures Manual**.

Article B8 Membership

- B8.01 **Baptized Membership:** Baptized members are all persons within the congregation who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God, whether children or adults, and come under the pastoral care of this congregation. It is expected that all baptized members:
- Attend worship services faithfully and regularly.
 - Lead a Christian life as taught in Galatians 5:19-26.
 - Out of Christian love, submit to loving admonition, according to Matthew 18, when having erred or offended.
 - Contribute as God has blessed them of their time, talents and financial gifts toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the church at large.
 - In due time, take a course of instruction in preparation for communicant membership in this congregation.
 - Are not members of any organization conflicting with the Word of God.
 - Submit willingly and cheerfully to the policies already made or still to be made, provided such policies do not conflict with the Word of God.
- B8.02 **Confirmed Membership:** Confirmed members are all persons within the congregation who are baptized and:
- Are admitted to Confirmed membership through preparation and participation in the rite of Confirmation.
 - Apply for membership presenting letters of transfer showing them to be confirmed members in good standing in other Lutheran churches. They shall be admitted to Confirmed membership upon submitting their letters of transfer to the Congregation Ministry Board, and the Congregation Ministry Board reporting their names to the congregation.

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- c. Apply for membership presenting evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran church, but who do not have letters of transfer. They shall be admitted to Confirmed membership when the Congregation Ministry Board has determined that they meet the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the Constitution and Bylaws.
- d. Are adults from a non-Lutheran tradition who have received instruction in the Lutheran faith.

B8.03 **Voting Membership:** Voting members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have made a monetary contribution of record during the current or preceding year. When such members have failed to make a monetary contribution of record for a period of two (2) consecutive years they may be removed from the voting membership roster by the Congregation Ministry Board. This procedure will take place only after such members have been properly notified, if possible. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of voting members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

B8.04 **Associate Membership:** Associate members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran or Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Ministry Board of this congregation.

B8.05 **Termination of Membership:** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. Death.
- b. Resignation.
- c. Transfer or Release.

B8.06 **Discipline of Members:** Denial of the Christian faith as described in the Constitution and Bylaws, conduct grossly unbecoming of a member, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation shall be attempted following the process specified in Matthew 18: 15-17:

- a. Private admonition by the pastor(s) or Congregation Ministry Board President.
- b. Admonition by the pastor(s) or Congregation Ministry Board President in the presence of two witnesses. The member facing discipline may bring as many as two witnesses to this meeting.
- c. If there is no resolution, the Congregation Ministry Board shall be responsible to conduct a final effort to achieve reconciliation. The member facing discipline may bring as many as two witnesses to this meeting. The decision of the Congregation Ministry Board is final.
- d. The Congregation Ministry Board may either suspend membership for a definite period of time or remove the member from the membership roll. The decision shall be confirmed in writing to the disciplined member.
- e. When there is a 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 Executive Committee of the congregation. The Executive Committee's decision shall be final.

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Article B9 Employed Church Staff

- B9.01 The Congregation Ministry Board shall initiate the hiring process.
- B9.02 The Personnel Committee or a Task Force appointed by the Congregation Ministry Board shall be responsible for an appropriate search. The Executive Committee shall fill the roll of a Personnel Committee.
- B9.03 The committee or task force shall try to include at least one person with expertise in the employment area of the position to be filled.
- B9.04 The pastor shall serve as a consultant in the search and hiring process.
- B9.05 Congregation Ministry Board approval or if time is essential, the executive committee's approval is required for all hires.
- B9.06 Salary or wages are to be determined by the Congregation Ministry Board.

Article B10 The Annual Meeting

- B10.01 Announcement of the time and place of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation shall be made at two (2) public services immediately preceding the meeting, said services to be at least one (1) week apart, and in such publications as the congregation or the pastor(s) may periodically issue; or by written notice and/or e-mail to the voting members mailed at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- B10.02 The current roster of voting members shall be determined prior to each Annual Meeting.
- B10.03 The suggested Order of Business at the Annual Meeting shall be:
 - a. Opening Prayer, Opening Devotion, singing of hymn.
 - b. Adopt meeting agenda
 - c. Approval of minutes of previous Annual Meeting and/or any special congregational meeting.
 - d. Written reports of Pastor(s), Congregation Ministry Board, Financial Administrator and Committees.
 - e. Acknowledge the departed members of past year.
 - f. Elections.
 - g. Approval of Budget.
 - h. Unfinished Business.
 - i. New Business.
 - j. Closing Prayer.

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- B10.04 In the following cases voting shall be by written ballot:
- a. Election of Congregation Ministry Board, Congregation President and Nominating Committee.
 - b. Adoption or Amendment of Constitution or Bylaws.
 - c. Call of a Pastor(s), or requesting a Pastor's resignation.
 - d. Excommunication of a member, or removal of an Officer from office.
 - e. To dispose of, encumber, or purchase Real Property.

Article B11 Amendments

- B11.01 Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation, by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- B11.02 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 Ministry Board at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Ministry Board shall notify the congregation's members by mail and/or e-mail of the proposal with the Congregation Ministry Board's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregational Meeting.

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