

CONSTITUTION FOR ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GRIFFINS MILLS  
WEST FALLS, NEW YORK

**Feb. 14. 2022**

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 St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills, West Falls, New York.
- C1.02           For the purpose of this Constitution and the accompanying Bylaws, the congregation of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Griffins Mills is hereinafter designated as "this congregation".
- C1.03           This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.

CHAPTER 2

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- C2.01           This congregation believes, teaches and confesses the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- C2.02           This congregation believes, teaches and 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 creations, 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 believes, teaches and accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the sole authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith and life.
- C2.04 This congregation accepts the Apostles, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the scriptural faith of this congregation.
- C2.05 This congregation believes, teaches and accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Word of God 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 believes, teaches and 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 a further valid exposition of the Holy Scriptures.
- C2.07 This congregation believes, teaches and 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 This congregation affirms the priesthood of all believers. It commits itself in function and structure to the equipping and supporting of all members of its congregations for their ministries within and outside of the household of faith.
- C3.03 This Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as a local congregation 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. This congregation, therefore, derives its character and power both from the sanction and representation of its members and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

CHAPTER 4  
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- C4.01 The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying activity in the world.
- C4.02 To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the Sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness and service.
  - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier of all.
  - d. Serve in response to God's love in meeting 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 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 Holy 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 Holy 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 needs, 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 Church.

- h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide policy.

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

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

**CHAPTER 5  
POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

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

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

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

- a. Call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9,
- b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9,
- c. Call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers as needed by congregation,
- d. Approve the 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 officers, Congregation Council, boards and committees and require them [the members of the council] to carry out their duties in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws and continuing resolutions, and
- i. Terminate its relationship with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC), as provided in Chapter 6.

C5.04 This congregation shall choose from among its voting members persons to serve as voting delegates at the National Convention of the LCMC, 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 LCMC.

## CHAPTER 6 CHURCH AFFILIATION

C6.01 This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the LCMC or its successor. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the LCMC.

C6.02 This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith of the LCMC and shall act in accordance with it.

C6.03 This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the LCMC in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation agreed to call pastoral leadership in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with LCMC call guidelines.
- c. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses and diaconal ministers as needed by the congregation.

C6.04 Affiliation with the LCMC 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 procedures for discipline of the LCMC.
- d. 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.
- e. The secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the LCMC.

## CHAPTER 7 PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

C7.01 If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to a charitable or worthy organization determined by the Congregation Council at that time.

C7.02 If this congregation is removed from membership in the LCMC for any reason, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.

## CHAPTER 8 MEMBERSHIP

- C8.01 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 maintained 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 congregation, or baptized persons received by Affirmation of Faith.
  - c. VOTING members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year.
  - d. ASSOCIATE members are persons holding membership in other 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 Council of this congregation.
- C8.03 All applications for confirmed membership shall be subject to congregational affirmation.
- 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 Sacrament.
  - b. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teaching of the Lutheran church; and
  - c. Support the work of this congregation through contributions of their time, abilities and financial support as biblical stewards.
- C8.05 Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. Death,
  - b. Resignation,
  - c. Transfer or release,
  - d. Disciplinary action by the Congregation Council, or
  - e. Removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the Bylaws. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

CHAPTER 9  
THE PASTOR

- C9.01 Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting regularly called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers or a committee elected by the Congregation Council to recommend the call shall seek the advice and help of the association to which it belongs.
- C9.02 Consistent with the faith and practice of the congregation.
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
    - 1) Preach the word,
    - 2) Administer the Sacraments,
    - 3) Conduct public worship,
    - 4) Provide pastoral care; and
    - 5) Speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
  - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) Offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed and bury the dead,
    - 2) Supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation,
    - 3) Install regularly elected members of the Congregational Council at the worship services immediately following the election (absent members will be installed as soon as practical); 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 thru other media; and
    - 4) Endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the further work of the Body of Christ.
- C9.03 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.

- C9.04 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 death of the pastor, shall be terminated only 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 of which it was submitted,
  - 3) Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection of 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) Dissolution of the congregation, or
  - 7) Suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. Pastor's term of call can be terminated at a specially called Congregation meeting by a two-thirds vote of members present.
- C9.05 At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor, if needed, shall be appointed by this congregation or the Congregation Council in accordance with the procedures setout in C9.01 & C13.01.
- C9.06 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.
- C9.07 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 and the Congregation Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- C9.08 The congregation may depart from C9.04a and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such a call shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.04a.
- C9.09 The pastor shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation and shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the congregation.
- C9.10 The pastor is a member of the congregation that has extended the letter of call.

- C9.11 Installation of pastor will be within six (6) months of accepting the call.
- C9.12 The pastor's spouse shall become a member of the congregation within six (6) months of installation.

## CHAPTER 10 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- C10.01 The annual and semi-annual meetings of the 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 called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of at least 10 of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03 Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and via this congregation's monthly newsletter mailed at least 30 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The newsletter containing the notice of the congregational meeting will be mailed according to our normal nonprofit bulk mailing rate. The council may vote to send a letter of notice with first class postage affixed for a particularly important congregational meeting.
- C10.04 Presence of a minimum of 25 voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- C10.05 Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C10.06 All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.
- 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 and treasurer.
- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the Bylaws.
  - b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.
  - c. Officers of this congregation shall serve similar offices of the Congregation Council and shall be voting members of the Congregation Council.

- C11.02 The congregation 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 a term of two years or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.03 No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. Elected officers may 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), the officers of the congregation, four Elders, four Lay-Deacons, four Trustees, the Financial Secretary, the Mission Chairman, the Sunday School Superintendent, the assistant Sunday School Superintendent, and two Youth Representatives elected by the League.
- A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant by the Council if the member:
- a. Ceases to be a voting member of this congregation; or
  - b. Is absent for four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause.
  - c. 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.
  - d. Expresses the desire to resign in writing to the Congregation Council prior to the expiration of their term.
- C12.02 The members of the Congregation Council, except for the pastor(s), the Mission Chairman and league representatives, shall be elected by written ballot to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. 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.
- 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 congregation. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, 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 a supportive relationship with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling or employment by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.
- 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 church wide organizations including the LCMC, as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran.
- i. To seek out and encourages qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel.

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 New York, except as otherwise provided herein.
- b. The Congregation Council shall not have the authority to buy, sell or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by a meeting of the congregation.
- c. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption and may incur obligations of more than \$1,000.00 in excess of the anticipating receipts, only after approval by a Congregation Meeting.
- d. The Congregation Council may enter into contracts of up to \$4,000.00 per calendar year for items not included in the budget.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payments of all obligations.
- 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, its Bylaws and the continuing resolutions 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 employment 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.
- C12.10 The full Congregation Council is to meet at least once on every odd-numbered month. (6 yearly)  
 The following Council sub-groups are to then to meet at least once on every even-numbered month with their respective minutes to be published in the Monthly Star.
- Elder's meeting to include The Council president
  - Trustee's meeting to include Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Vice President
  - Lay-Deacon's meeting to include the Mission Team chair and a Stephen Ministry representative
  - Christian Ed meeting to include the Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Assistant Superintendent, Luther League representatives, and safety committee representatives.
- Special meetings may be called by the pastor 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.
- C12.11 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

CHAPTER 13  
 CONGREGATION COMMITTEES

- C13.01 When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a call committee of seven voting members shall be selected by this congregation. The call committee shall make its recommendation to the Congregation Council and the Congregation Council shall make a recommendation to the Congregation for the calling of a pastor pursuant to C9.01. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.02 Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

C13.03 Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the Bylaws.

#### 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 report concerning their membership, work and finances.

C14.02 Special interest groups may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council.

#### CHAPTER 15 DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

C15.01 Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent troublemaking 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.
- c. Citation to appear before the Congregation Council.
- d. 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 A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written notice, at least 10 days prior to the meeting, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member.

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 definite period of time,

- c. Exclusion from membership in this congregation,
- d. Disciplinary action 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 full congregation.

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.

## CHAPTER 16 BYLAWS

C16.01 This congregation may adopt Bylaws. No Bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.

C16.02 Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those members present and voting.

C16.03 Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by any voting member, acting independently of the Congregation Council, provided 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. The Congregation Council notifies the members of the proposal with its recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.

C16.04 Approved changes to the Bylaws shall be made available to the congregation upon request.

## CHAPTER 17 AMENDMENTS

C17.01 Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by at least ten voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at its regular or special meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members of the proposal with the Council's recommendation at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

C17.02 A proposed amendment to this Constitution shall:

- a. Be approved and ratified at a legally called meeting according to this Constitution by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting,

- b. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the Constitution.

C17.03 Any approved amendments to this Constitution shall be made available to the congregation upon request.

## CHAPTER 18 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C18.01 The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this congregation.

C18.02 Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a majority vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council present at a Congregation Council meeting.

## CHAPTER 19 OFFICE OR ORDAINED DEACON: AN ORDERED MINISTRY OF WORD & SERVICE

C19.01 This congregation recognizes the office of Ordained Deacon. It shall be conferred on those members who have been recommended by this congregation for training, have completed the selected training program, and have officially been called and ordained to serve in this congregation and the wider Church.

C19.02 The Ordained Deacon's ministry is a ministry of Word and Service. It should not be confused with the Pastoral role of Word and Sacrament.

C19.03 The Deacon will meet regularly with the pastor, work together with the lay deacon's board in an advisory capacity, as well as lead various ministries in keeping with their gifts and the needs of the congregation.

C19.04 Ordained Deacon's shall be removed for three reasons:

- a. adherence to false doctrine,
- b. neglect of duties/incompetence,
- c. immoral lifestyle.

C19.05 The Ordained Deacon's areas of service, include but are not limited to:

- d. assisting the pastor in the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and teaching,
- e. developing outreach ministry programs,
- f. developing stewardship programs,
- g. participating in a care giving ministry including hospital and home visits,
- h. leading education, music or youth ministry programs,
- i. congregational administration.

C19.06 Deacons are encouraged to seek out and engage in continuing theological education on an annual basis.

## BYLAWS -- ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, WEST FALLS, NEW YORK

### CHAPTER 1 OFFICERS AND OFFICE HOLDERS

- 1.01 Officers and Congregation Council members are to be elected by a written ballot at the January/February meeting of the congregation. A majority of votes cast shall be required for election of a candidate to office, as otherwise specified in constitution.
- 1.02 Voting members who are less than 18 years of age may hold the office of Youth Representative.
- 1.03 Voting members who are 18 years old and older and who have been a member of this congregation for 13 months may hold the office of President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Lay-Deacon, Elder, Trustee, Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent or Mission Chairman.
- 1.04 The officers of this congregation shall be elected at the January/February congregation meeting as follows, unless specifically, otherwise noted below:
- a. Four Elders, each for a term of two years with staggered terms, two to be elected and two retiring each year,
  - b. Four Lay-Deacons, each for a term of two years with staggered terms, two to be elected and two retiring each year,
  - c. Four Trustees, each for a term of two years with staggered terms, two to be elected and two retiring each year,
  - d. One Secretary, to serve for a term of two years, to be elected on even years,
  - e. One Treasurer, to serve for a term of two years, to be elected on even years,
  - f. One Financial Secretary, to serve for a term of two years, to be elected on odd years,
  - g. One President of the Congregation Council, to serve a term of two years, to be elected on odd years,
  - h. One Vice-president of the Congregation Council, to serve a term of two years, to be elected on even years,
  - i. One Mission Chairman, to be selected or removed by the pastor and president and approved by the congregation Council,
  - j. Two Youth Representatives who will be elected by the League in August/September, of each year,

- k. The pastor, ex officio, shall always be a member of the Congregation Council,
- l. Sunday School Superintendent, to serve a term of 2 years, to be elected on even years,
- m. Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, to serve a term of 2 years, to be elected on odd years.

1.05

Duties of officers

- a. The Elders shall see to it that the preaching of the pure Word of God is upheld and proclaimed, that due ample provision is made for the instruction of the youth and that necessary discipline is exercised.
- b. The Lay-Deacons shall see that all monies are faithfully collected, that the poor are provided for, and the sick visited. They shall also have charge of the Baptismal and Communion vessels. The Lay-Deacons shall make provision for ushers and such other reception personnel as the Congregation Council may authorize.
- c. The Trustees shall have the care and management of the physical property of the congregation and shall see that the same is kept in good repair. They shall serve as legal representatives of the congregation for the purpose of entering into binding contracts. Signature of at least two (2) Trustees shall be necessary to enter into a contract. The Trustees shall be responsible for the audit of the treasurer's books annually, prior to the annual meeting.
- d. The Secretary shall keep an accurate record of all proceedings of the Congregation Council and Congregation Meetings.
- e. The Financial Secretary shall be responsible to count and deposit in a bank designated by the Congregation Council all worship offerings within 3 days of the service. He/she shall record all offerings received from the membership and report these offerings to them yearly. He/she shall report total amounts of all funds received to the treasurer so he/she may have them for the monthly and yearly financial reports. Financial Secretary shall be a member of the budget committee.
- f. The Treasurer shall disburse funds on approval of the Congregation Council from the church checking account. At the beginning of each month, he/she shall transfer from the checking account to the appropriate account, all monies deposited by the Financial Secretary. The Treasurer shall keep accurate records of all accounts. The Treasurer is responsible to make FICA deposits for all church employees, and to file the 941 reports quarterly with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). He/she shall issue W-2 forms to all church employees by January 31<sup>st</sup> of each year of the previous year's FICA deposit and submit to the IRS the W-3 report in a timely fashion. Reports shall be supplied monthly to the congregation Council on all financial matters and semi-annually to the church membership. Treasurer shall be a member of the budget committee.

- g. The President of the Congregation Council shall conduct all council and congregation meetings, appoint all committees he/she deems necessary for the good of the congregation, an ex-officio member of all committees and shall discharge all other duties usually pertaining to the office of president.
- h. The Vice-president of the Congregation Council shall assist the president in his duties and assume the office of president of the Congregation Council in the president's absence.
- i. The Mission Chairperson shall lead the mission team. The Mission Team shall lead the congregation in constant and continual evangelistic programs which shall bring all people to the reality of Jesus Christ.
- j. The Sunday School Superintendent shall support the mission of the Sunday School; attend committee meetings; oversee development and implementation of objective and long-range plans for curriculum with elder approval and instructional evaluation and improvement; determine with committee short and long range needs and oversee the implementation of said needs; take necessary steps to assure the safety and welfare of students and staff; maintain open lines of communication with teachers, parents, pastor, committees and students.
- k. The Assistant Sunday School Superintendent shall support the mission of the Sunday School; assist Superintendent, as needed; attend committee meetings; oversee and implement trainings for teachers; keep records of teacher trainings and attendance.

## CHAPTER 2 CONGREGATION MEETING

- 2.01 The annual congregation meeting shall be held in January/February.
- 2.02 The semi-annual congregation meeting shall be held in June/July.
- 2.03 The budget meeting shall be held in November/December.
- 2.04 The pastor or interim pastor shall be present for Congregation meetings, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent.

## CHAPTER 3 MEMBERSHIP

- 3.01 After a 12-month period without taking communion or making a contribution of record, a member's name may be removed from the church roster. Reference C8.05e in Constitution.

## CHAPTER 4 ENDOWMENT FUND

- 4.01 The church shall adopt an Endowment Fund resolution.

**REVISED**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Section Revised</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Revised By</b>
<b>04/26/2009</b>			
<b>06/25/2011</b>			
<b>06/09/2013</b>			
<b>11/10/2017</b>	<b>C12.10</b>	<b>Council meetings changed to every-other-month from monthly</b>	
<b>02/14/2022</b>	<b>C19</b>	<b>New section for Ordained Deacon per Congregation Meeting of 01/30/2022, Changed all elected “Deacon” cases to Lay-Deacon, Modified “Revised” to add Table format.</b>	<b>D. Stoddart</b>