



Bylaws of
Evangelical Lutheran Church Trinity
(Trinity Lutheran Church)
Dover, New Jersey

123 East Blackwell Street
Dover, New Jersey 07801

Revised: June 2, 2019

Table of Contents

Preamble	3
Chapter 4: Mission Statement.....	3
Chapter 8: Membership.....	3
Chapter 10: Congregation Meeting.....	4
Chapter 11: Officers.....	4
Chapter 12: Congregation Council	5
Chapter 13: Congregation Committees.....	5

PREAMBLE

The following bylaws have been adopted for the proper conduct of church business. These bylaws shall supersede all previous bylaws, written or expressed; however, previous bylaws may be incorporated into this current set of bylaws. Note: Chapter numbers are consistent with the chapter numbers of the congregation's Constitution.

CHAPTER 4

Mission Statement

C4.01.01. The mission of Trinity Lutheran Church is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ by:

- a. Providing a Christian environment which enhances the active participation of all members in worship, education and fellowship.
- b. Responding with Christian love, care and support both in our congregation and in our community.
- c. Inviting and encouraging all those to whom we minister to share in this mission.

Jesus said, “ ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’ ”

Matthew 22:37-39

CHAPTER 8

Membership

C8.01.01. All members in the classifications (as defined in the Constitution of the congregation) of baptized, confirmed, voting and associate members shall be listed in the parish register. Members shall also be categorized as either active or inactive.

C8.02.01. The congregation values the contributions, fellowship and opportunities to share its ministry with non-member adults and children who participate in the church life of the congregation. It is the desire and intent of this congregation to include such individuals as fully as possible in all aspects of the congregation's church life.

C8.02.02. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated for inactivity when an individual has been inactive for two consecutive calendar years or has been inactive for one calendar year and no longer resides in the area.

C8.02.03. If a member, without requesting a transfer of membership, becomes a member of another congregation, such action shall be considered *a priori* a request for release from membership in this congregation.

C8.02.04. Individuals who were formerly members may be returned to membership upon the recommendation of the pastor and the concurrence of the Congregation Council consistent with membership requirements set forth in the Constitution of the congregation.

C.8.02.05. In November of each year, letters shall be sent to Active members who have not communed or made a contribution of record during the current year. (Note shall be made of the implication to their status as active members if they did not commune and make a contribution of record during the previous calendar year as well).

CHAPTER 10

Congregation Meeting

C10.01.01 The annual meeting of the congregation shall be the first Sunday in December unless otherwise specified by the Congregation Council. C10.01.02 The general order of business for the annual meeting of the congregation shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Devotions
- b. Determination of a quorum. (A quorum is fifteen [15] percent of the voting members.)
- c. Reading and adoption of minutes of previous meeting or meetings
- d. Election of Council members
Votes:
 1. Nominations by the Nominating Committee
 2. Nominations from the floor
 3. Voting by written ballot
 4. Election of a council member requires a majority vote
- e. Adoption of budget
- f. Unfinished business
- g. New business
- h. Adjournment with prayer

C10.01.03 Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law, to all members at least ten days in advance of the date of the meeting.

CHAPTER 11

Officers

C.11.02.01 Election of officers. At its December meeting, the Congregation Council shall elect a president, vice president and secretary, and appoint a treasurer and assistant treasurer, as needed, who will serve both the Congregation Council and the congregation in their several capacities. Voting shall be done by newly elected and continuing members. Voting shall be done in writing and conducted as an ecclesiastical ballot. Election shall be by a majority vote.

- a. The first ballot shall be considered a nomination ballot. If a person receives $\frac{3}{4}$ or more of the total vote, he or she shall be considered elected.
- b. If no one is elected on the first ballot, the two people receiving the most votes on the nomination ballot shall be placed on the second ballot.
- c. Balloting and voting continue until one person receives a majority vote.

C.11.02.02 The Congregation Council shall appoint a financial secretary. The financial secretary shall be a voting member of the congregation. The term of office for the financial secretary shall be established by the Congregation Council and may be of indefinite duration. Regardless of the term of office, the incumbent shall serve until a successor is named.

CHAPTER 12

Congregation Council

C.12.01.01 Continuous service of Congregation Council members shall not exceed six (6) years. A member may not run for re-election until one year has elapsed. See also C12.02, C12.03 and C12.04 in the Constitution.

C12.05.01 The fiscal year of the congregation shall be from January 1 to December 31.

C12.06.01 The Congregation Council shall meet on the second Monday of each month unless circumstances necessitate a change, at which time agreement of the majority of council members is required to make the change. Complete annual reports will be distributed prior to the February meeting of the Congregation Council. The congregation is invited to attend the February meeting of the Council to discuss the annual report. At its February meeting the Congregation Council will accept the annual report of the church.

CHAPTER 13

Congregation Committees

C.13.06.01 The chairperson and members of committees and other groups shall be appointed by the pastor and the Executive Committee unless otherwise specified.

C.13.06.02 For the purpose of fulfilling any other functions necessary to the church, the Congregation Council may establish a task force or appropriate group charged with that function through a continuing resolution. The duration shall be until the task is finished or until the next election of council officers, at which time the task force committee may be continued.

C.13.07.01 Responsibilities common to all committees are to:

- a. Meet regularly on a date determined by the committee with a prepared agenda; a report of each meeting's activities shall be prepared.
- b. Include a period of prayer at each meeting.
- c. Report concerns and activities to the Congregation Council through its Council liaison; and schedule with the Executive Committee any items to come before the Congregation Council.
- d. Prepare a proposed annual budget (if applicable) and submit it to the Congregation Council; obtain Congregation Council approval for all expenditures for items or activities more than 10% over the amount budgeted for them, or that cause the total budget for the committee to be exceeded by more than 5%.
- e. Clear all dates for planned activities with the Congregation Council.
- f. Ensure that adequate communication and coordination take place between committees for activities that affect or are of interest to more than one committee.
- g. Ensure that their activities and plans adequately reflect the diversity of our congregation and community, and that they support the commitment of our congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to include all elements of God's creation in our ministry.

C.13.07.02 For the purpose of providing for proper administration of the affairs of the congregation, the following committees and their responsibilities are established:

-
- a. *Executive Committee* – This committee shall prepare the agenda and plan for the items to be considered for the Congregation Council meetings, including recommendations for the action to be taken for each item to be considered. The Executive Committee is also empowered to address issues requiring counsel, but not vote, between meetings.
 - 1. The Executive Committee shall be chaired by the president of the Congregation Council and shall be composed of the elected officers of the congregation. All elected officers shall have voice and vote. The pastor shall be an *ex officio* member of the Committee with voice and vote. The Committee shall meet on the first Monday of each month unless circumstances necessitate a change, at which time agreement of the majority of the Committee members is required to make a change.
 - c. *Church Property Committee* – This committee shall oversee the church property and its upkeep. It shall oversee the grounds, perform repairs on property, support the sexton and provide necessary supplies. It shall see that all town ordinances are adhered to for safety and liability. It shall coordinate work forces on approved tasks and advise the Congregation Council on long-range capital needs. It shall have input into the annual review of the job of the sexton(s) and review and make recommendations to the pastor.
 - d. *Finance Committee* – The treasurer(s) and financial secretary shall be member(s) *ex officio*. This committee shall coordinate budget preparations and shall prepare and submit a draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and later presentation to a congregation meeting. It shall report regularly to the congregation its financial status, such as arrears on commitments. The committee shall review expenses and make necessary recommendations in relation to the budget. It shall work with the Stewardship Committee to plan drives. This committee shall ensure an adequate insurance program for the congregation.
 - e. *Personnel Committee* – This committee shall be responsible for:
 - 1. Developing and maintaining all personnel policies, procedures and job descriptions.
 - 2. Ensuring compliance with all applicable employment laws and regulations.
 - 3. Reviewing and approving all performance evaluations and ensuring they are conducted in adherence with personnel policies and procedures. Recommend appropriate pay increases.
 - 4. Resolving disputes between employee(s) and supervisor.
 - 5. Recommending all qualified candidates for any open staff positions to the Congregation Council.
 - 6. Encouraging staff to participate in appropriate continuing education opportunities.

C.13.07.03 For the purpose of fulfilling the ministry of the Congregation, there shall be the following committees:

- a. *Educational Ministry Committee*– This committee shall oversee, coordinate and provide lifelong educational opportunities for the entire congregation. These opportunities shall be provided within a Christian environment. The committee shall oversee the Sunday School program, including the adult education classes and maintenance of the Cradle Roll. It shall work with the Sunday School superintendent to oversee the goals and approve the curriculum to ensure that the congregation learns the basic tenets of Christian faith and Lutheran theology. This committee shall establish guidelines for the confirmation program and monitor progress of students. It shall also supervise the First Communion preparation and oversee educational

activities including, but not limited to, the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Men's Bible Study Group, and Youth Ministry.

b. *Fellowship Committee* – This committee shall coordinate with the other church committees to facilitate fellowship within the congregation. Areas of responsibility shall include but not be limited to picnics, Advent and Lenten programs, coffee hours, fellowship dinners, game nights, social trips and retreats.

c. *Evangelism and Outreach Committee* – This committee shall provide leadership to encourage the congregation in living out their faith as a witness and making known the church's mission and vision. Primary areas of responsibility shall include, but not be limited to

1. Educating members on ways to share their faith.
2. Providing opportunities to invite non-members to come to the church for events and/or worship and
3. Providing oversight of all church-related forms of media, including word of mouth, newsletters, website, newspapers and social media, and
4. Establishing protocols for welcoming and accepting new members.

d. *Stewardship Committee* – This committee shall educate members on the importance of regular giving, growth in giving habits and proportionate giving. It shall educate members on the need for contributions of time and talent, as well as money. It shall have lead responsibilities for maintaining an effective stewardship program consistent with the directions of the Congregation Council.

e. *Social Ministry Committee* – This committee shall oversee the congregational response in areas of social concern. Its responsibilities shall include the assessment of need, both within the congregation and also in the community. Based on this assessment, the committee is responsible to develop and implement programs designed to meet those needs. These programs can include, but are not limited to, Trinity Food Pantry, Senior Ministry, Family Promise and Habitat for Humanity. The committee shall also take a leadership role in the support of the programs proposed by the Synod in the area of social ministry.

This committee shall have contact with and report to the Congregation Council on Faith Kitchen, Edna's Haven and any other social ministry housed within Trinity.

f. *Worship and Music Committee* – This committee shall plan and schedule worship services with the pastor, including observance of special holy days and other special occasions. It shall develop innovative worship formats, i.e., drama, music, etc. It shall oversee the acolyte, usher, greeter and reader programs. It shall oversee the communion assistant, nursery, memorial and altar guild programs. It shall have input into the annual review of the job performance for church musicians (organist, choir director, bell choir, etc.) and make recommendations to the pastor.