

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

2007

***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 First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the congregation of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."
- C1.11. This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

- *C2.01. This congregation confesses the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02. This congregation confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- *C2.03. This congregation accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04. This congregation accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of this congregation.
- *C2.05. This congregation accepts the Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

- *C2.06. This congregation accepts the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- *C2.07. This congregation confesses the Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- *C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under his rule and authority.
- *C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations and from its inherent nature as an expression of the broader fellowship of the faithful. In length, it acknowledges itself to be in the historic continuity of the communion of saints; in breadth, it expresses the fellowship of believers and congregations in our day.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this congregation as a part of the Church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.
 - b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, 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 to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their

Christian calling, and to use the gifts of the Spirit for their life together and for their calling in the world.

f. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.

***C4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.

b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.

c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.

d. Teach the Word of God.

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.

f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with churchwide policy.

***C4.04.** This congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational groups and shall review their actions. [Such description shall be contained in continuing resolutions in the section on the Congregation Council.]

***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 deacon ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
 - d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16;
 - e. approve the annual budget;
 - f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
 - i. elect its officers, and Congregation Council, boards, and committees, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions; and
 - j. terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as provided in Chapter 6.
- *C5.04. This congregation shall choose from among its voting members laypersons to serve as voting members of the Synod Assembly as well as persons to represent it at meetings of any conference, cluster, coalition, or other area subdivision of which it is a member. The number of persons to be elected by the congregation and other qualifications shall be as prescribed in guidelines established by the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C5.05. This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's [(bylaws) (continuing resolutions)]. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

Chapter 6.

CHURCH AFFILIATION

- *C6.01. This congregation shall be an interdependent part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor, and of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C6.02. This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.
- *C6.03. This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:
- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
 - b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.

- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or with the constitution of the synod.

***C6.04.** Affiliation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be terminated as follows:

- a. This congregation takes action to dissolve.
- b. This congregation ceases to exist.
- c. This congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to the procedures for discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- d. This congregation follows the procedures outlined in *C6.05.

***C6.05.** This congregation may terminate its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the following procedure:

- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be terminated.
- f. Notice of termination shall be forwarded by the synodical bishop to the secretary of this church and published in the periodical of this church.
- g. Since this congregation was a member of the Lutheran Church in America it shall be required, in addition to the foregoing provisions in *C6.05., to receive synodical approval before terminating its membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- *C6.06. If this congregation considers relocation, it shall confer with the bishop of the synod in which it is territorially located before any steps are taken leading to such action. The approval of the Synod Council shall be received before any such action is effected.

Chapter 7.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C7.01. If this congregation ceases to exist, title to undisposed property shall pass to the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.02. If this congregation is removed from membership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America according to its procedure for discipline, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation.
- *C7.03. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a regularly called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to transfer to another Lutheran church body, title to property shall continue to reside in this congregation. Before this congregation takes action to transfer to another Lutheran church body, it shall consult with representatives of the Northern Illinois Synod.
- *C7.04. If a two-thirds majority of the voting members of this congregation present at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation vote to become independent or relate to a non-Lutheran church body, title to property of this congregation shall continue to reside in this congregation only with the consent of the Synod Council. The Synod Council, after consultation with this congregation by the established synodical process, may give approval to the request to become independent or to relate to a non-Lutheran church body, in which case title shall remain with the majority of this congregation. If the Synod Council fails to give such approval, title shall remain with those members who desire to continue as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C7.05. Notwithstanding the provisions of *C7.02. and *C.7.03. above, where this congregation has received property from the synod pursuant to a deed or other instrument containing restrictions under provision 9.71.a. of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this congregation accepts such restrictions and:
- a. Shall not transfer, encumber, mortgage, or in any way burden or impair any right, title, or interest in the property without prior approval of the Synod Council.
 - b. Shall—upon written demand by the Synod Council, pursuant to S13.23. of the constitution of the Northern Illinois Synod—reconvey and transfer all right, title, and interest in the property to the synod.

Chapter 8.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C8.01. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted

thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

*C8.02. Members shall be classified as follows:

- a. *Baptized* members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. *Confirmed* members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
- c. *Voting* members are confirmed members. Such confirmed members, during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation.
- d. *Associate* members are person holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation, or persons who wish to retain a relationship with this congregation while being members of other congregations. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Congregation Council of this congregation.

*C8.03. All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Congregation Council.

*C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran church; and
- c. support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

*C8.05. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:

- a. death;
- b. resignation;
- c. transfer or release;
- d. disciplinary action by the Congregation Council; or
- e. removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the bylaws.

Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 9.

THE PASTOR

*C9.01. Authority to call a pastor shall be in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of members present and voting at a meeting legally called for that purpose. Before a call is issued, the officers, or a committee elected by the

Congregation Council to recommend the call, shall seek the advice and help of the bishop of the synod.

- *C9.02. Only a member of the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or a candidate for the roster of ordained ministers who has been recommended for the congregation by the synodical bishop may be called as a pastor of this congregation.
- *C9.03. Consistent with the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
 - a. Every ordained minister shall:
 - 1) preach the Word;
 - 2) administer the sacraments;
 - 3) conduct public worship;
 - 4) provide pastoral care; and
 - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
 - b. Each ordained minister with a 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 Congregation Council; and
 - 4) with the council administer discipline.
 - c. Every pastor shall:
 - 1) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;
 - 2) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
 - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
 - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and of the Northern Illinois Synod of the ELCA.
- *C9.04. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- *C9.05. a. The call of a congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only following consultation with the synodical bishop and for the following reasons:
 - 1) mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;

- 3) inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) the physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;
 - 6) the dissolution of the congregation; or
 - 7) suspension of the congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
- b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations the voting members of the congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one layperson.
 - c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee, shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod together with the committee described in *C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.
 - e. If, in the course of proceedings described in *C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of the synod.
 - f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in *C9.05.b. or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation without prejudice and with pay provided through a

joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation.

- *C9.06. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.
- *C9.07. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- *C9.08. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- *C9.09. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C9.11. With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop, shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such a call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of *C9.05.a.
- *C9.12. The pastor of this congregation
 - a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
 - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod; and
 - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
- *C9.13. The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the synod Assembly.
- C9.20. Ecumenical pastoral ministry
- C9.21. Under special circumstances, subject to the approval of the synodical bishop and the concurrence of this congregation, an ordained minister of a church body with which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America officially has established a relationship of full communion may serve temporarily as pastor of this congregation under a contract between the congregation and the ordained minister in a form proposed by the synodical bishop and approved by the congregation.

Chapter 10.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C10.01.** The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws.
- C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of fifty of the voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all (voting) members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C10.04.** Ten percent of all 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 of those members present and voting, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C10.07.** Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation.
- C10.08.** By Law 1 The Annual Meeting of the Congregation shall normally be held on the fourth Sunday of January at a time called by the Congregation Council.

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.
 - d. If the Congregation Council elects its officers, the president, vice president, and secretary shall be selected from the elected membership of the Congregation Council.
- C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.
- C11.02.01** By Law 1 The President and Vice President must be members of the Congregation Council. Other officers, if not members of the Council, shall be accorded the privilege of voice without vote.

C11.03. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. The President, Vice-President and Secretary shall not be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

C11.03.01 By Law 1 The president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the church council. In the event of the president's inability to serve, the vice president shall preside.

By Law 2 The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the council in a volume provided by the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.

By Law 3 The financial secretary, if an office is activated, shall receive and keep record of all income from contributing members and other sources.

By Law 4 The treasurer(s) shall keep the books of account of the congregation; and shall receive (from the financial secretary) all funds and disburse them on proper orders, making regular remittance of benevolence receipts to the treasurer of the synod.

By Law 5 The treasurer(s) (and the financial secretary) shall make written report of all financial transactions to the church council monthly and to the congregation together with a satisfactory audit, at its annual meetings. All financial officers shall give corporate surety, in amounts determined by the church council, for which the premium shall be paid by the congregation Fidelity coverage provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America shall be deemed a fulfillment of this requirement.

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of the congregation, and not more than 14 members of the congregation. Any voting members of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member (a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or (b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, the congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

C12.02. The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for 2 years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than three full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the annual meeting at which they are elected.

C12.03. Should a member's place on the Congregation Council be declared vacant, the Congregation Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served less than one-half of a regular term shall be eligible for nomination and possible election to a full term.

- C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
 - c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
 - f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
 - h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well as cooperation with other congregations, both Lutheran and non-Lutheran, subject to established policies of the synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - i. To recommend and encourage the use of program resources produced or approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
 - j. To seek out and encourage 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 directors 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 Illinois, 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 may enter into contracts of up to \$15,000 for items not included in the budget.
 - d. The Congregation Council shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this congregation, shall supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur obligations more than \$5,000 in excess of the anticipated receipts only after approval by a Congregation Meeting. The budget shall include this congregation's full indicated share in support of the

- wider ministry being carried on in partnership with the synod and churchwide organization.
- e. The Congregation Council shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this congregation are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer.
 - f. The Congregation Council shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws and the continuing resolutions are carried out. The Congregation Council shall elect the Treasurer and Financial Secretary of the congregation.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the appointment and supervision of the salaried lay workers of this congregation.
- C12.09.** The Congregation Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this congregation at the annual meeting.
- C12.11.** The Congregation Council shall normally meet once a month. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the president, 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.
- C12.12.** A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Congregation Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to the agenda for a particular regular or special meeting, which shall be the only business considered at that meeting. Chronic or repeated absence of the pastor or interim pastor who has refused approval of the agenda of a subsequent regular or special meeting shall not preclude action by the Congregation Council, following consultation with the synodical bishop.

Chapter 13.

CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES

- C13.01.** A *Cabinet* shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Pastor(s), and three (3) other members of the Congregation Council. The non-officer members shall be elected by the Congregation Council at the same meeting at which officers are elected and shall serve for a term of one year.
- C13.02.** A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive reelection.
- C13.03.** An *Audit Committee* of three voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Audit Committee members shall not be members of the Congregation Council. Term of office will be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.

- C13.04. *Mutual Ministry Committee* (in the absence of a mutual ministry committee, the duties shall be fulfilled by the executive committee) shall be appointed jointly by the president and the pastor. Term of office shall be two years, with three members to be appointed each successive year.
- C13.05. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of six voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.
- C13.06. Other committees of this congregation may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.
- C13.07. Duties of committees of this congregation shall be specified in the continuing resolutions.

Chapter 14.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C14.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. This congregation at its meeting shall determine their policies, guide their activities, and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C14.02. Special interest groups, other than those of the official organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Congregation Council (and specified in a continuing resolution).

Chapter 15.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION

- *C15.01. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- *C15.02. The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by members(s) the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation

Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation, at least ten days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

- *C15.03. Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
 - a. censure before the council or congregation;
 - b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 - c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- *C15.04. The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.
- *C15.05. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.
- *C15.06. For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.41.04. in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*.
- *C15.07. No member of a congregation shall be subject to discipline for offenses that the Congregation Council has previously heard and decided, unless so ordered by the Synod Council after an appeal.
- *C15.10. **Adjudication**
- *C15.11. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the synodical bishop for consultation after informing the chair of the Congregation Council of their intent. If the consultation fails to resolve the issue(s), the Consultation Committee of the synod shall consider the matter. If the Consultation Committee of the synod shall fail to resolve the issue(s), the matter shall be referred to the Synod Council, whose decision shall be final.

Chapter 16.

BYLAWS

- *C16.01. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.
- *C16.02. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this congregation with a quorum present by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- *C16.03. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by any voting member provided, however, that such additions or amendments be submitted in writing to the Congregation Council at least 60 days before a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose and that the Congregation Council notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the Congregation Meeting.
- *C16.04. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod.

Chapter 17.

AMENDMENTS

- *C17.01. Those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least 50 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 a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the members by mail of the proposal together with the recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- *C17.02. An amendment to this constitution, proposed under *C17.01., shall:
 - a. be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting; and
 - c. have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.
- *C17.03. Any amendments to this constitution that result from the processes provided in *C17.01. and *C17.02., shall be sent by the secretary of this congregation to the synod. The amendment shall become effective within 120 days from the date of the receipt of the notice by the synod unless the synod informs this congregation that the amendment is in conflict with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or the constitution of the Northern Illinois Synod of the ELCA.
- *C17.04. Whenever the *Model Constitution for Congregations* is amended by the Churchwide Assembly, this constitution may be amended to incorporate any such amendment by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent meeting of the congregation without presentation at a prior meeting of

the congregation, provided that the Congregation Council has submitted by mail notice to the congregation of such an amendment or amendments, together with the council's recommendations, at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Following the adoption of an amendment, the secretary of the congregation shall submit a copy thereof to the synod. Such provisions shall become effective immediately following a vote of approval.

Chapter 18.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

*C18.01. The Congregation Council may enact continuing resolutions. Such continuing resolutions may not conflict with the constitution or bylaws of this congregation.

*C18.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

*C18.03. There shall be a Ministry known as Worship and Music.

C18.03.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Worship and Music Ministry may include:

a. Weekend Worship Services

- 1) recruit and train ushers;
- 2) recruit and train lectors;
- 3) recruit and train acolytes;
- 4) provide for liturgical variety;
- 5) provide and care for hymnals and other devotional materials;
- 6) arrange for the care of paraments and vestments;
- 7) review worship schedule;
- 8) train and enable communion assistants;

b. Special Services

- 1) develop plans for the three major festivals in the church year;
- 2) develop plans for special events such as Advent, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Lent, Holy Week and summer outdoor worship;
- 3) develop plans for an annual whole congregational celebration;

c. Fine Arts

- 1) arrange for the care of existing banners;
- 2) create new banners for festivals and seasons of the church year;
- 3) develop a brochure describing liturgical expressions;
- 4) decorate sanctuary for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter;
- 5) design bulletin covers for some of the special services;

d. Music Expression

- 1) arrange for development of Bell Choir(s);
- 2) furnish music supplies appropriate for use in the worship of a congregation of an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America after Consultation with the pastor(s), choir director(s), and organist;
- 3) provide for broad based music ministry utilizing all age groups of the congregation;

- 4) encourage new membership of the various choir programs of the congregation;
- 5) develop an annual Choir Festival Sunday;
- 6) encourage the use of ensembles, groups, and instrumental variation to augment the worship life.

C18.04. There shall be a Ministry known as Social Ministry.

C18.04.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Social Ministry may include:

- a. Local community needs
 - 1) study social conditions in order to bring the cleansing and healing light of the Christian truth to be upon critical problems through thoughtful Christian discussion of facts and issues;
 - 2) support the local Food Pantry through financial and commodity contributions;
 - 3) encourage membership participation in local needs such as Blood Donor, clothing, household goods, transportation for needy, and household repairs;
- b. National and World-wide issues and needs
 - 1) support LSSI agencies and institutions;
 - 2) support Bethphage Mission;
 - 3) bring the work of the World Hunger Appeal to the attention of the congregation;
 - 4) develop educational and responsive measures to issues of global perspective;
- c. Tape Ministry
 - 1) develop a survey to determine specific needs and interests of the congregation for audio and video tapes;
 - 2) provide tapes for those desiring them;
 - 3) develop the equipment necessary to produce quality tapes;
- d. Health/Wellness Ministry
 - 1) evaluate the Parish Nurse Program and the effectiveness of the individual Parish Nurse;
 - 2) serve as a resource and support group for the nurse and the program;
 - 3) help identify the health and wellness needs of the congregation.

C18.05. There shall be a Ministry known as Evangelism.

C18.05.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Evangelism Ministry may include:

- a. Congregational Fellowship
 - 1) develop four congregation wide events for members and friends;
 - 2) create a fellowship group for members and friends;
 - 3) enable sharing groups to emerge which will be supportive and enhancing of individuals' ministry;
- b. New Member/Membership Care
 - 1) assist in development of classes for new members which meets needs of new Christians and those transferring from Lutheran and other congregations;
 - 2) assist new members to be integrated into the life and mission of the Church through active personal contact with the congregation;

- 3) identify and utilize the personal skills of new members entering the congregation;
- 4) plan, organize and administer programs to maintain active membership and to encourage inactive members to re-enter their life in the church;
- c. Communication/Publicity
 - 1) promote a better understanding among newcomers and visitors of First Lutheran and its ministry;
 - 2) strengthen the outreach of the Church in the community through increased use of the media;
 - 3) develop printed and audio/visual resources;
- d. Evangelism
 - 1) plan, organize and administer a parish witness program designed to reach others for Christ;
 - 2) expand the evangelism effort of the Church by developing training on witnessing, calling and telling;
 - 3) support the mission emphasis of our Church.

C18.06. There shall be a Ministry known as Stewardship.

C18.06.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Stewardship Ministry may include:

- a. educate the congregation as to our stewardship needs and responsibilities;
- b. stress percentage giving;
- c. conduct a formal stewardship campaign each year;
- d. develop a stewardship brochure for our local situation;
- e. develop an endowment fund.

C18.07. There shall be a Ministry known as Finance.

C18.07.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Finance Ministry shall include:

- a. to ensure solid financial base and fiscal responsibility;
- b. oversee fiscal policy and procedures;
- c. establish an on-going goal for benevolence;
- d. define our budget and allocation process and review our auditing procedures.

C18.08. There shall be a Ministry known as Property and Grounds.

C18.08.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Property and Grounds Ministry may include:

- a. sure that all church properties are maintained in excellent condition;
- b. monitor the needs of our church in terms of space and equipment and recommend action when necessary;
- c. work to reduce energy costs through replacement and/or repair.

C18.09 There shall be a Ministry known as Christian Education.

C18.09.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Christian Education Ministry include:

- a. Sunday Church School
 - 1) provide for the selection and review of curriculum;
 - 2) develop leadership in the Sunday Church School;
 - 3) offer enrichment activities on part of the Sunday Church School;
 - 4) utilize our physical resources to the optimum use;

- 5) promote and encourage regular attendance;
 - 6) establish learning standards for students in Sunday Church School;
 - b. Vacation Church School
 - 1) conduct a Vacation Church School during the summer time;
 - 2) foster an ecumenical community wide participation in Vacation Church School;
 - 3) develop a resource bank of members and friends;
 - 4) investigate options of variety and format of Vacation Church School;
 - c. First Communion/Confirmation
 - 1) offer First Communion preparation to youth and parents at an age set by Congregational Council and Christian Education Ministry;
 - 2) create systems for those who have not participated or who are new to the congregation who are older than fifth grade;
 - 3) develop opportunities for parents to be involved in the learning process;
 - 4) conduct a meaningful confirmation ministry program for seventh-eighth grade youth;
 - 5) develop standards of learning and participation;
 - 6) provide avenues for parental participation;
 - 7) develop both a learning and application process for Confirmation students;
 - 8) create opportunities for Confirmation students to participate in the life of the Church;
 - d. Adult Education
 - 1) provide and encourage participation in a comprehensive Adult Education program;
 - 2) develop opportunities for retreat and learning experiences;
 - 3) cooperate with community and area churches to develop ecumenical learning opportunities;
 - 4) create forums and arenas to discuss and debate issues and concerns pertinent to the congregation;
 - 5) to nurture and equip parents through classes and workshops;
 - e. Milestone Ministry
- C18.10.** There shall be a Ministry known as Youth Ministry.
- C18.10.01** Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Youth Ministry may include:
- a. to provide for an intentional program for youth of the congregation;
 - b. seek to encourage the participation of youth in all dimensions of the ministry of the congregation;
 - c. develop leadership of youth and adults;
 - d. maintain and enhance the attitude of openness and support of youth ministry;
 - e. create opportunities to express a servanthood posture to the congregation, community, and world;
 - f. enable fellowship and support groups for youth and adults who work with youth;
 - g. encourage participation in events of the larger expression of the Church through Coalition, Conference, Synod and ELCA;

- h. foster a consideration of vocation planning and encourage full-time work in the Church;
 - i. to monitor, build and promote community assets as growing resources for teens.
- C18.11.** There shall be a Ministry known as Congregational Life.
- C18.11.01** Continuing Resolution 1 The duties of the Congregational Life Ministry may include:
- a. to promote fellowship through organized activities and events;
 - b. to develop several learning, growth, and fellowship opportunities through small groups;
 - c. to support couples through Couple Care ministries and Marriage Festivals;
 - d. to provide fellowship and worship opportunities for Seniors (Keenagers);
 - e. to manage the Parish Nurse Program.
- C18.12.** There should be a Ministry known as Global Mission.
- C18.12.01** Continuing Resolution 1 The companion relationship shall include the following:
- a. A formal agreement, signed to by both parties recognizing our commitment to one another for the sake and growth of the gospel and God’s mission in the world.
 - b. Together with our partner we shall grow in our understanding of what it means to be part of the body of Christ together in the world.
 - 1) We will participate—in our own contexts and when traveling to visit one another—in worship, sharing in the word and sacrament.
 - 2) We will share in study of scripture, at all age levels and through a variety of means.
 - c. Together with our partner we shall participate with each other in the life and ministry of our congregation.
 - 1) We will pray together for our members and our communities, that each may grow in faith and love and that we may lift each other up in times of joy and sadness.
 - 2) As we gather in worship, together and in our own communities, we will share in remembrance of our baptism and as we come forward to participate in the Lord’s Supper.
 - 3) We will identify at least one Sunday a year as our partnership Sunday.
 - d. Together with our partner we will broaden our understanding of the challenges facing each other as we work to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in our context.
 - 1) We will endeavor to learn about each other’s countries, communities, congregations and faith practices.
 - 2) We will come to know one another through letters, email and visits, engaging in regular and faithful contact.
 - 3) We will advocate for each other, lifting up the least, speaking out for the poor, raising up the downtrodden and calling for justice and peace for all the world’s people. We particularly highlight the crisis of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

- e. Together with our partner we will deepen our commitment to be disciples of Christ and workers together in the kingdom of God.
 - 1) In our partnership we will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, supporting one another in our call to be a priesthood of believers, sharing in ministry and seeking after God's call for each person.
 - 2) When and if difficulties arise we will seek to address them as soon as possible—speaking the truth in love—while exercising patience, trust and forgiveness as we live in relationship together.

C.18.13. There shall be a Committee known as Personnel Committee.

C.18.13.01 Continuing Resolution 1 The Personnel Committee is commissioned by, and responsible to, the Congregational Council to assume the responsibility for advising it on matters pertaining to personnel administration and staffing.

- a. Appointments of the Chair and members of the Personnel Committee shall be made annually by the President of the Council with the advice and consent of the Council in accordance with the By-laws.
- b. The Committee shall include the Senior Pastor and four members in good standing of the congregation.
- c. The members from the congregation shall be appointed to alternating two-year terms, with no member to serve more than three consecutive terms. Terms shall begin on April 1 of each year.
- d. All members of this committee shall be subject to the conditions stated in the By-laws.
- e. Responsibilities
 - 1) Provide overall policy guidance for personnel matters in the organization.
 - 2) Submit, for final approval, recommendations on personnel policy matters to the Congregational Council.
 - 3) When requested by the Council President, Senior Pastor or Congregational Council, provide policy advice to the Council President and Senior Pastor in the areas of training, employee benefits, employee relations, legal issues relating to employees, recruitment, interviewing, selection procedures, and the like.
 - 4) Review, with the Council President and Senior Pastor, the staffing pattern for the coming year.
 - 5) Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
 - 6) Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Congregational Council.
 - 7) Report to the Congregational Council on a regular basis in a manner determined by the Council.

C.18.14 There shall be a Fund known as Building Fund.

C.18.14.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church – Building Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operation procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation council, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Building Fund

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all God's gifts; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the constitution governing this congregation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this council approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Church Building Fund (hereafter called the "FUND") of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the sole purpose of this FUND is to provide for the "Care" of the physical church and ground. The physical church shall include all structures and land owned by First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that "Care" shall be limited to the upkeep and maintenance of the structure(s) and land of the church.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for capital improvements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation.

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Disposition of Assets

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Church Building Fund.

B. Disposition or transfer of Fund

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Building Fund obligations."

C.18.15 There shall be a Fund known as Memorial Fund.

C.18.15.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church - Memorial Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation council, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Memorial Fund

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all God's gifts; and

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

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this council approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Church Memorial Fund (hereafter called the "FUND") of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the purpose of this FUND is to enhance the ministry of First Lutheran Church apart from the general operation of the congregation; that no portion of the FUND shall be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that monies entrusted to the FUND in memory of a friend or loved one must be used as designated by the donor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that monies entrusted to the FUND without designation be used by the Finance Ministry as they deem suitable. Money paid out in this fashion may be used for any purpose that Finance feels "Church Appropriate."

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for capital improvements.

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Disposition of Assets

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Church Memorial Fund.

B. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

"BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation

with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Memorial Fund obligations.”

C.18.16 There shall be a Fund known as Mission Endowment Fund.

C.18.16.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church - Mission Endowment Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund

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

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

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

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

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this congregation in annual meeting assembled on January 22, 1995, approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund (hereafter called the “FUND”) of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the First Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund Committee (hereafter called the “COMMITTEE”) shall be the custodian of the FUND;

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

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Committee Membership

- A.1 “The committee shall consist of five members/all of whom shall be voting members of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, Except as herein limited, the term of each members shall be three (3) years. Upon adoption of this resolution by the congregation, it shall elect five (5) members to the COMMITTEE: two (2) for a term of three (3) years; two (2) for a term of two (2) years; and one (1) for a term of one (1) year. Thereafter, at each annual meeting, the congregation shall elect the necessary number for a term of three (3) years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three (3) year terms. After a lapse of one (1) year, former COMMITTEE members may be re-elected. The senior pastor and the president/vice president of the Church Council shall be advisory members of the COMMITTEE. The Church Council of the congregation shall nominate for the COMMITTEE and report at the annual congregational meeting in the same manner as for other offices and committees. In the event of a vacancy on the COMMITTEE, the Church Council shall appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next Annual meeting of the congregation, at which time the congregation shall elect a member to fulfill the term of the vacancy.
- A.2 The COMMITTEE shall meet at least quarterly, or more frequently as deemed by it in the best interest of the FUND.
- A.3 A quorum shall consist of three (3) members. When only three (3) members are present a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution.
- A.4 The COMMITTEE shall elect from its membership a chairperson, recording secretary and financial secretary. The chairperson, or member designated by the chairperson, shall preside at all committee meetings.
- A.5 The recording secretary of the COMMITTEE shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings and supply a copy thereof to each member of the committee. Each member shall keep a complete copy of the minutes to be delivered to his or her successor. The recording secretary shall also supply a copy of the minutes to the Church Council.
- A.6 The financial secretary of the COMMITTEE shall work with the congregation’s treasurer in maintaining and coordinating complete and accurate accounts for the FUND and shall sign checks and all other necessary

documents on behalf of the congregation in furtherance of the purposes of the FUND. The books shall be audited annually by the Audit Committee of the congregation.

- A.7 The COMMITTEE shall report on a quarterly basis to the Church Council and, at each annual or duly called special meeting of the congregation, shall render a full and complete audited account of the administration of the FUND during the preceding year.
- A.8 The COMMITTEE may request other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members upon approval of the Church Council, (and, at the expense of FUND income, may provide for such professional counseling on investments or legal matters as it deems to be in the best interests of the FUND.)
- A.9 Members of the COMMITTEE shall not be liable for any losses which may be incurred upon the investments of the assets of the FUND except to the extent such losses shall have been caused by bad faith or intentional misconduct. No member shall be personally liable as long as he/she acts in good faith and with ordinary prudence. Each member shall be liable only for his/her own intentional misconduct, or omissions, and shall not be liable for the acts or omissions of any other member. No member shall engage in any self dealing or transactions with the FUND in which the member has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the FUND.
- A.10 All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund.
- A.11 Recommendations to hold, sell, exchange, rent, lease, transfer, convert, invest, reinvest, and in all other respects to manage and control the assets of the FUND, including stocks, bonds, debentures, mortgages, notes, or other securities, as in their judgment and discretion they deem wise and prudent, are to be made by the COMMITTEE for approval by the Church Council, with subsequent execution by the delegated member of the COMMITTEE.”
- B. Distribution of Income**
- B.1 “The committee shall determine what is principal and income according to accepted accounting procedures. Gifts and bequests to the fund shall accumulate until principal amount of \$10,000 is achieved, after which the income generated from the Investment of the principal shall be expended, except as otherwise provided herein.
- B.2 Income from the FUND shall be distributed annually and at such times as deemed necessary and/or feasible to accomplish the following purposes:

No less than 20% nor more than 60% for outreach into the community and synod, including, but not limited to, grants to ELCA seminaries, colleges, or students attending such schools, social service agencies, institutions and agencies to which this congregation relates, and to special programs designed for those persons in our parish area who are in spiritual and/or economic need.

No less than 20% nor more than 60% for missions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in this continent or worldwide, including, but not limited to, grants to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for new congregational development in North America, professional leadership, educational ministries, global mission, ecumenism, evangelism, social ministries, and capital financing.

No less than 20% nor more than 60% for capital improvements, debt reduction, or a building program of First Lutheran Church.

B.3 Programs for support shall be recommended by the COMMITTEE and approved by the Church Council for funding according to the guidelines established by the congregation.

B.4 Disbursement of income from the FUND need not occur annually in the event causes and programs have not been approved by the COMMITTEE sufficient to utilize total income available, or if in the judgment of the COMMITTEE total annual disbursement of income is not recommended.

C. Distribution of Principal

When, in the opinion of the COMMITTEE circumstances are so dire and of such an emergency nature that the future of the congregation is at stake, and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the FUND principal, the COMMITTEE may, upon a two thirds majority vote, recommend to the congregation that monies from the FUND be used for the benefit of the congregation.

D. Amending the Resolution

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any amendment to this resolution, which will change, alter or amend the purpose for which the FUND is established shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of the members present at an annual meeting of the congregation or at a special meeting called specifically for the purpose of amending this resolution.”

E. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time.

Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable For continuation of Mission Endowment Fund obligations.”

F. Adoption of Resolution

“This resolution, recommended by the Church Council and accepted by the congregation at legally called congregational meeting, is hereby adopted.”

C.18.17 There shall be a Fund known as Organ and Bell Fund.

C.18.17.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church - Organ and Bell Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation council, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Organ and Bell Fund

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all God’s gifts; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the constitution governing this congregation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this council approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Church Organ and Bell Fund (hereafter called the “FUND”) of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the sole purpose of this FUND is to provide for the “Maintenance and Upkeep” of the church organ(s) and bells of the bell choir.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that “Maintenance and Upkeep” shall be limited to the organ(s) and all of their workings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that “Maintenance and Upkeep” shall be limited to the bells of the bell choir.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for capital improvements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation.

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Disposition of Assets

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Church Organ and Bell Fund.

B. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Organ and Bell Fund obligations.”

C.18.18 There shall be a Fund known as Sanctuary Renovation Fund.

C.18.18.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church - Sanctuary Renovation Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation council, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Sanctuary Renovation Fund

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all God’s gifts; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the constitution governing this congregation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this council approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Church Sanctuary Renovation Fund (hereafter called the “FUND”) of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the sole purpose of this FUND is to provide for the renovation of the church sanctuary. The sanctuary for purposes of this FUND may include any adjoining rooms effected by renovation to the sanctuary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the FUND shall be terminated at the end of the renovation and any remaining balance be transferred to the Building Fund.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for capital improvements outside of the sanctuary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation.

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Disposition of Assets

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Church Sanctuary Renovation Fund.

B. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Sanctuary Renovation Fund obligations.”

C.18.19 There shall be a Fund known as Scholarship Fund.

C.18.19.01

A. Amendment to Congregational Bylaws

First Lutheran Church - Scholarship Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation council, shall be established.

B. Resolution to Implement First Lutheran Church Scholarship Fund

WHEREAS, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all God’s gifts; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the constitution governing this congregation:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that this council approve and establish on the records of the church a new and separate fund to be known as First Lutheran Scholarship Fund (hereafter called the “FUND”) of the First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the purpose of this FUND is to provide financial assistance to members of the congregation pursuing a college education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, only the interest earned on the principal may be used for scholarships.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the committee can choose not to award any scholarships.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any unused earnings will be added to and considered to be principal henceforth.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for capital improvements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the assets of the FUND shall not be used for the annual operating budget of the congregation.

BYLAWS TO IMPLEMENT A PLAN OF OPERATION

A. Disposition of Assets

All assets are to be held in the name of the First Lutheran Scholarship Fund.

B. Guidelines for Awarding Scholarships

Those interested in the Christian Ministry and associated fields.

Those who have demonstrated their care about faith and life in their Church and community.

Those who have reasonable financial need.

Those who plan to attend or are attending Lutheran Colleges.

Those who may have interest in service careers such as teaching, nursing, etc.

Future careers will not be the only guideline as all applications will be considered.

C. Qualifications for Application

Applicant must be accepted to the school he or she wishes to attend.

Applicant is a member of First Lutheran Church and a high school graduate.

D. Applicant Requirement

Application form must be returned to the Scholarship Committee at First Lutheran Church on or before April 30 of each year.

All applications will be screened by a committee from the church.

Awards will be announced at the regular Worship Services on Baccalaureate Sunday.

E. Committee

The committee shall consist of three members of the congregation in good standing chosen by the nominating committee and elected by the congregation at the annual meeting.

F. Disposition or Transfer of Fund

“BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in the event First Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois, ceases to exist either through merger or dissolution, disposition or transfer of the FUND shall be at the discretion of the Church Council in conformity with the approved congregational constitution and in consultation

with the bishop of the synod to which this congregation belongs at such time. Consultation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America may be desirable for continuation of Scholarship Fund obligations.”

Chapter 19.

INDEMNIFICATION

***C19.01** Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Council members, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.