

**GOVERNING DOCUMENTS  
FOR  
ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Missoula, Montana**

Base Document:  
Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, 2007 Edition

Adopted by the congregation on January 27, 2008

Constitution  
Bylaws  
Amendments and  
Continuing Resolutions  
Atonement Lutheran Church  
Missoula, Montana

Approved: January 24, 1993

Ratified: January 23, 1994

Amended: January 21, 1996

Continuing Resolutions approved April 14, 1997

Continuing Resolution C9.03.A02 Rescinded on December 10,  
2007

Last Amended: January 27, 2008

Note: the amendment changes in blue were approved by a majority vote at the January 27, 2008, annual meeting but will only become effective 120 days after receipt by the Synod, if they are approved by a 2/3 majority vote at the 2009 annual meeting C17.03.

## CODIFICATION EXPLANATION

The provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together for clarity in use. A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaw provisions, and continuing resolutions.

All provisions in the Constitution for the Congregation are prefaced with "C" to distinguish these provisions from comparable ones in the synodical and church wide constitutions.

Major sectors are designated as chapters. The chapter designation becomes the first number in the codification sequence and is followed by a period. Thus provisions in "Chapter 8. Membership" are preceded by "8."

Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers: the chapter number and a two-digit number preceding the second period in the codification. Thus one constitutional provision relating to the Membership is codified C8.02. Constitutional provisions are printed in bold letters.

Bylaw provisions are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number, the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. Thus one bylaw provision related to Membership would be codified C8.02.01. Bylaws are printed in italic letters.

Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus a continuing resolution might be numbered C13. to designate the chapter; C13.07. to designate the subject matter within the chapter; and the third set might be numbered A90. in the codification C13.07.A90. to indicate by the "A" that it is the first continuing resolution regarding that subject and by the "90" that was adopted in 1990.

When many related provisions are parts of a unit that are considered inseparable, they are normally lettered "a," "b," "c," etc. When related provisions are part of a unit but considered separable, such as a list of duties, they are normally numbered in sequence. If the related provisions cannot be clearly judged to be separable or inseparable, preference will be given to a number sequence.

If chapter numbers are considered the major sequence number, constitution numbers as a fraction of the chapter number, and bylaw numbers as a fraction of the constitution number, then the codification can be said to provide a progressive sequence. Thus C5.01. will precede C5.03.10., and C9.II.16. will precede C9.13.

In these governing documents, "Church" with a capital letter is used in references to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. In references to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the words "church" and "this church" in lower case letters are employed.

## **CONSTITUTION FOR ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MISSOULA, MONTANA**

Date Ratified: 01-23-94

Date of Synodical Approval: 01-08-93

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Continuing Resolutions: approved 04-14-97

Continuing Resolutions: Resolution C9.03.A02 rescinded on December 10, 2007

Revision to bylaws, amendments, and clauses to bring into line with Model Constitution: 01-27-2008

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**\*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 Atonement Lutheran Church of Missoula, Montana.

**C1.02.** For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying bylaws, the Atonement Lutheran Church of Missoula, Montana congregation is hereinafter designated as "this congregation."

**C1.03.** This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Montana.

**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 witnesses 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 church wide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relationships consistent with church wide policy.

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

**C4.04.01.** *The Congregation Council shall review, at least annually, the organizational structure and the continuing resolutions providing the descriptions and responsibilities of each committee, Board, or other organizational group.*

**\*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 appointment of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers in conformity with the applicable policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;
- d. adopt amendments to the constitution, as provided in Chapter 17, and amendments to the bylaws, as specified in Chapter 16.
- e. approve the annual budget;

- f. acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
- g. hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
- h. sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;
- i. elect its officers, boards and committees -and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions;
- 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 Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**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 Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This congregation is subject to the discipline of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**\*C6.02.** This congregation accepts the Confession of Faith and agrees to the Purposes of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and shall act in accordance with them.

**\*C6.03.** This congregation acknowledges its relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in which:

- a. This congregation agrees to be responsible for its life as a Christian community.
- b. This congregation pledges its financial support and participation in the life and mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
- c. This congregation agrees to call pastoral leadership from the clergy roster of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with its call procedures except in special circumstances and with the approval of the bishop of the synod.
- d. This congregation agrees to consider associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal

ministers for call to other staff positions in the congregation according to the procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

- e. This congregation agrees to file this constitution and any subsequent changes to this constitution with the synod for review to ascertain that all of its provisions are in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and with the constitution of the synod.

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

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

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

- a. A resolution indicating the desire of this congregation to terminate its relationship must be adopted at a legally called and conducted special meeting of this congregation by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present.
- b. The secretary of this congregation shall submit a copy of the resolution to the synodical bishop and shall mail a copy of the resolution to voting members of this congregation. This notice shall be submitted within 10 days after the resolution has been adopted.
- c. The bishop of the synod shall consult with this congregation during a period of at least 90 days.
- d. If this congregation, after consultation, still desires to terminate its relationship, such action may be taken at a legally called and conducted special meeting by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present, at which meeting the bishop of the synod or an authorized representative shall be present. Notice of the meeting shall be mailed to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the meeting.
- e. A certified copy of the resolution to terminate its relationship shall be sent to the synodical bishop, at which time the relationship between this congregation and ELCA 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.

**\*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 Montana 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 Montana 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.

## **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 maintained their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

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

- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations or by affirmation of faith.
- b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran 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 or shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation. Members of this congregation who have satisfied these basic standards shall have the privilege of voice and vote at every regular and special meeting of the congregation.
- d. **Associate** members-are persons holding membership in other Christian 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.

**C8.02.01.** *A former member, whose name has been removed from the membership roll due to inactivity, shall be reinstated when a desire to resume active participation in the life and worship of this congregation has been demonstrated by communing or making a contribution of record to 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.

**C8.05.01.** *The name of a member who has apparently moved permanently from the community served by this congregation shall be removed from the active membership roll unless that member provides a record of Communion participation in another Lutheran congregation or continues to support this congregation with offerings.*

**C8.05.02.** *A member who for a period of one year, does not partake of Holy Communion, and support this congregation with a contribution of record or in other ways does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of this congregation shall be contacted by a member of the Congregation Council or appropriate Board or committee and encouraged to become actively involved in the life and worship of this congregation. If, during the second year, the member does not commune or make a contribution of record, that member's name shall be removed from the active membership roll of this congregation, but remain as one who is in special need of this congregation's prayer and concern.*

**C8.05.03.** *The name of a child not yet confirmed, neither of whose parents or guardians is an active member of this congregation, may be removed from the roll of active members if that child fails to participate in the life and worship of this congregation.*

## **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 and this congregation,
- a. Every ordained minister shall:
    - 1) preach the Word;
    - 2) administer the sacraments;
    - 3) conduct public worship;
    - 4) provide pastoral care; and
    - 5) speak publicly to the world in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, calling for justice and proclaiming God's love for the world.
  - b. Each ordained minister with a congregational call shall, within the congregation:
    - 1) offer instruction, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
    - 2) supervise all schools and organizations of this congregation;
    - 3) install regularly elected members of the Congregation Council; and
    - 4) with the council, administer discipline.
  - c. Every pastor shall:
    - 1) strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad;
    - 2) seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel
    - 3) impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications; and
    - 4) endeavor to increase the support given by the congregation to the work of the ELCA church wide organization and of the Montana 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 the letter of call, which shall be attested by the bishop of the synod.
- \*C9.05.**
- a. The call of this 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 this congregation; or
    - 7) suspension of this congregation as a result of discipline proceedings.
  - b. When allegations of physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or ineffective conduct of the pastoral office have come to the attention of the bishop of the synod, the bishop in his or her sole discretion may, or when such allegations have been brought to the synod's attention by an official recital of allegations by the Congregation Council or by a petition signed by at least one-third of the voting members of this congregation, the bishop shall, investigate such conditions personally in company with a committee of two ordained ministers and one lay person.
  - c. In case of alleged physical or mental incapacity, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the bishop of the synod with the advice of the committee shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a disabled pastor to health, the bishop of the synod shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry, either in the congregation last served or in another field of labor.
  - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the congregation, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the bishop of the synod

together with the committee described in C9.05.b. shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the congregation. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the synod. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor at a legally called meeting after consultation with the bishop, either (a) by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee did not recommend termination of the call, or (b) by a simple majority vote of the voting members present and voting where the bishop and the committee recommended termination of the call.

- e. If, in the course of proceedings described in C9.05.d., the committee concludes that there may be grounds for disciplinary action, the committee shall make recommendations concerning disciplinary action to the synodical bishop who may bring charges, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the constitution of this synod.
- f. If, following the appointment of the committee described in C9.05.b or d., it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the congregation(s) being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the bishop of the synod may temporarily suspend the pastor from service in the congregation(s) without prejudice and with pay provided through a joint synodical and churchwide fund and with housing provided by the congregation(s).

**\*C9.06.** At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the bishop of the synod with the consent of this congregation or the Congregation Council.

**\*C9.07.** During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the congregation of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the bishop of the synod and this congregation or Congregation Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.

**\*C9.08.** This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation before beginning service in a call to another congregation or employment in another ministry setting related to the Evangelical Lutheran

Church in America.

- \*C9.09.** When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, the Congregation Council, and the bishop of the synod. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- \*C9.11.** With the approval of the bishop of the synod, the congregation may depart from C9.05.a. and call a pastor for a specific term. Details of such calls shall be in writing setting forth the purpose and conditions involved. Prior to the completion of a term, the bishop or a designated representative of the bishop shall meet with the pastor and representatives of the congregation for a review of the call. Such call may also be terminated before its expiration in accordance with the provisions of C9.05.a.
- \*C9.12.** The pastor of this congregation:
- a. shall keep accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communicants, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation;
  - b. shall submit a summary of such statistics annually to the synod.; and
  - c. shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.;
- \*C9.13.** The pastor(s) shall submit a report of his or her ministry to the bishop of the synod at least 90 days prior to each regular meeting of the Synod Assembly.
- \*C9.14** The parochial records of this congregation shall be maintained by the pastor and shall remain the property of the congregation. The secretary of this congregation shall attest in writing to the bishop of this synod that such records have been placed in his or her hands in good order by a departing pastor before the installation of that pastor in another field of labor or the granting by the synod of retired status to the pastor.

**C9.21** 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 regularly scheduled meetings of this congregation shall be held at a time specified in the bylaws. The congregation shall meet at least once each year.

**C10.01.01.** *The Annual Meeting of this congregation shall be held in the month of January each year at a location, date, and time specified annually by the Congregation Council.*

**C10.01.02.** *The agenda of the Annual Meeting shall include but not be limited to:*

- a. Opening worship.*
- b. Approval of the prior meetings minutes.*
- c. Reports written or oral from the Pastor(s), Congregation Council or president, Boards, committees, all organizations, and all treasuries of the congregation and its organizations.*
- d. Consideration of the Mission Statement.*
- e. Elections.*
- f. Approval of budgets.*
- g. Unfinished Business,*
- h. New business.*
- i. Closing Prayer.*

**C10.01.03.** *In the following matters voting shall be by ballot:*

- a. Election of Congregation Council members.*
- b. Adoption of, or amendment of the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of this congregation.*
- c. To call a pastor or request a pastor's resignation.*
- d. To remove a member from membership on the Congregation Council or remove a*

*member from office in this congregation.*

- e. To sever membership from the ELCA.*
- f. To dispose of, encumber, or purchase real property.*
- g. When requested by ten or more voting members present.*

**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 at the written request of fifty voting members. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

**C10.03.** Notice of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and 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.** Fifty voting members shall constitute a quorum.

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

**C10.06.** All actions by the congregation shall be by majority vote except as otherwise provided in this constitution.

**C10.07.** *Robert's Rules of Order*, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation, ~~except in cases where the constitution and bylaws of this congregation provide otherwise.~~

## **Chapter 11. OFFICERS**

**C11.01.** The officers of this congregation shall be a President, Vice President, and Secretary.

- a. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the bylaws.
- b. The officers shall be voting members of the congregation.

**C11.01.01.** *The President of this congregation shall preside over the meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council. The President shall act as Chairperson of the Executive*

*Committee and shall be an advisory member of all Boards. The President is authorized to sign contracts, agreements, and other documents in the name of and on behalf of this congregation.*

**C11.01.02.** *In the absence of the President or in the event of his or her inability or refusal to act, the Vice President shall perform the duties of the President, and when so acting, shall have all the authority of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. The Vice President shall serve as chairperson for the Board for Personnel.*

**C11.01.03.** *The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of this congregation and the Congregation Council and see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation. The Secretary is authorized to sign contracts, agreements, and other documents in the name of and on behalf of this congregation.*

**C11.02.** The Congregation Council shall elect its officers from the elected membership of the council and shall include the President, Vice President and Secretary; and they shall be the officers of the congregation. The officers shall be elected by consensus or by written ballot and shall serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected and end at the close of the meeting at which their successors are elected or when the office is declared vacant.

**C11.03.** No officer shall hold more than one office at a time. No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

## **Chapter 12. CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

**C12.01.** The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the officers of this congregation, and not more than eighteen nor less than nine members of the congregation. Any voting member of the congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation, b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause, or c) resigns from the Congregation Council.

**C12.01.01.** *The Congregation Council shall consist of:*

- a. The pastor (s),*
- b. Twelve elected Council members, including the officers, and*
- c. The treasurer as an ex officio, member with voice but not vote.,*

**C12.02.** The members of the Congregation Council except the pastor(s) shall be elected by written ballot to serve for three years or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the close of the meeting at which they are elected and shall end at the close of the meeting their successors are elected or when the member's place on the council is declared vacant.

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

**C12.04.** The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The duties of the Congregation Council shall include the following:

- a. To lead this congregation in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
- b. To seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support.
- c. To oversee and provide for the administration of this congregation to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission.
- d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
- e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all baptized persons.
- f. To promote a congregational climate of peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, to endeavor to foster mutual understanding.

- g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor.
- h. To emphasize partnership with the synod and church wide units 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 trustees of this congregation, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the State of Montana, 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 2% of the approved budget 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 2% of the approved budget 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 church wide 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.
- g. The Congregation Council shall appoint a Treasurer for the Congregation.

- C12.05.01.** *The Treasurer shall have custody of and be accountable to this congregation for all of its funds. The Treasurer shall disburse or cause to be disbursed funds in accordance with the decisions of this congregation and the Congregation Council. The Treasurer shall present a report to the regular congregation meetings, meetings of the Congregation Council and any other reports as requested by the Congregation Council.*
- C12.05.02.** *The Treasurer shall be bonded.*
- C12.05.03.** *The Treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks on behalf of this congregation to pay its obligations and commitments.*
- C12.05.04.** *An Endowment Fund and a Memorial Fund, whose purpose, governance, and operational procedures shall be defined by special resolution adopted by the congregation, shall be established. (01/21/96)*
- C12.06.** The Congregation Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, its bylaws, and the continuing resolutions are carried out.
- C12.07.** The Congregation Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C12.08.** The Congregation Council shall be responsible for the 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 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(s) or interim pastor(s), except when such person requests or consents to be absent and has given prior approval to an agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of the meeting.

### **Chapter 13. CONGREGATION COMMITTEES**

**C13.01** The officers of this congregation and the ~~senior~~ pastor(s) shall constitute the Executive Committee.

#### **C13.01.A97 THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Executive Committee is to expedite the work of the Congregation Council by directing its deliberations, relieving it of trivial duties, and making sure its Boards are functioning well. To accomplish this purpose the Executive Committee shall:

- a. Periodically review Atonement's MISSION STATEMENT to determine how the Council and Boards can best serve this congregation in carrying out this mission.
- b. Coordinate and actively support the efforts of the Council and Boards to ensure proper functioning and communication.
- c. Mediate conflicts between and within Boards.
- d. Periodically review the responsibilities of the Council as listed in the Constitution and Bylaws and educate or remind the members of the Council of these obligations as necessary.
- e. Prepare the agenda for the monthly meeting of the Congregation Council.
- f. Have authority to act on -minor business items to free the Council for focus-on more crucial items of business.
- g. Assist the Pastor (s) in planning workshops for Atonement's congregational leaders to be held at least annually.
- h. Annually suggest to the Council the name of at least one person qualified and willing to serve as Treasurer of the Congregation.
- i. Supervise the Treasurer in the performance of the their responsibilities.
- j. Ensure that the financial records of the congregation are-maintained in good order, and that obligations are met in a timely fashion.
- k. Assist the Treasurer to -establish policies and priorities that will guide their work.
- l. Monitor income, disbursements & current fund balances and advise the Council and the Boards regarding purchases and other expenditures.

- m. Establish and enforce policy regarding the handling of the offerings following worship to include -the counting, recording and depositing of the ~~church~~ offerings.
- n. Annually review the insurance needs of the church.
- o. Oversee the publication of Atonement's Monthly Newsletter- and any information posted on the church website.
- p. Establish and maintain effective communication between the congregation, pastor, Council and Boards.
- q. Perform the Public Relations work on behalf of the congregation.
- r. As a minimum, meet annually with the pastor(s)-and church staff for visioning and long-range planning.

**C13.02.** A Nominating Committee of up to 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 shall be three years, with one member elected each year. Members shall be eligible for reelection.

**C13.04.** A ~~Staff Support Mutual Ministry~~ Committee (in the absence of a ~~staff support mutual ministry~~ committee, their 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, three members to be appointed each successive year. Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term.

**C13.04.A97 THE MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE**

The purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to affirm and strengthen the ministry of Atonement's staff: a)help Atonement's Staff build and maintain a pleasant, productive workplace, b) encourage cordial, mutually beneficial work relationships among the staff members, c) offer counsel and support for staff members.

To accomplish this purpose the Mutual Ministry Committee shall:

- a. Listen and offer emotional and spiritual support to staff during times of personal or professional stress and congregational crisis.
- b. Advocate for the staff as necessary.
- c. Act as a liaison between staff and Council, Boards, or Congregation as necessary.
- d. Respect confidentiality.
- e. Report to the Council and Congregation in general terms so as to protect confidences and maintain the trust of the employees.
- f. Interview staff to gather information regarding their personal goals, dreams, interests, education, family and personality. Seek to determine obstacles or frustrations that hinder job fulfillment and work to alleviate or remedy problems.
- g. Become familiar with staff responsibilities and formal job descriptions and suggest changes as necessary. Interview staff to become familiar with their employment history and job experience. Obtain their suggestions to improve job fulfillment and further the church's mission.
- h. Communicate congregational expectations, visions and frustrations to staff as necessary.
- i. Meet with staff to discuss changes in work schedules, conditions, behaviors, decorum to encourage a more pleasant and productive work place.
- j. Meet with staff to mediate disagreements when requested or as necessary.:-

**C13.05.** When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a Call Committee of between six and nine voting members shall be elected by the Congregation Council. Term of office will terminate upon installation of the newly called pastor.

**C13.05.01.** *The Congregation Council shall elect members to the Call Committee who reflect the diversity of this congregation as much as possible..*

**C13.06.** Other congregational committees may be formed as the need arises, by decision of the Congregation Council.

**C13.07.** Duties of the congregation committees shall be specified in the bylaws and continuing resolutions.

- C13.07.01.** *The Boards of this congregation shall be elected by the Congregation Council by a majority vote of its membership unless otherwise provided in the constitution or bylaws.*
- C13.07.02.** *Board membership shall normally be for a three-year term. Exceptions to this provision may be made by the Congregation Council.*
- C13.07.03.** *There shall be at least three and not more than twelve members on each Board, including at least one representative from the Congregation Council. The Council shall determine the optimum size for each Board.*
- C13.07.04.** *No one shall serve more than two consecutive terms on any one Board except a person who has served all or part of those terms as a Council representative or as an ex officio member.*
- C13.07.05.** *The Pastor (s) and Congregation President shall serve as advisors to all Boards.*
- C13.07.06.** *A Board may appoint other advisory members by a majority vote of its membership.*
- C13.07.07.** *No one shall serve on more than one Board at any one time, except as may be necessary to ensure Council representation on each Board. Other exceptions to this provision may be made as deemed good and advisable by a majority vote of the Congregation Council.*
- C13.07.08.** *The Congregation Council may add numbers to or fill vacancies on a Board, designate the length of term, and remove a person from membership on a Board effective "immediately" or at a time set by the Council. This action can be done at any meeting of the Council by a majority vote of its members*
- C13.07.09.** *Associates members and youth may be elected to serve on a Board provided that a two-thirds majority of the Board are voting members of the congregation.*
- C13.07.10.** *Each Board shall normally meet monthly at a time and place chosen by its members.*
- C13.07.11.** *The Congregation Council may designate the chairperson of any Board or instruct the Board to elect its own chair. The Board shall organize itself in a way deemed most*

*appropriate to effectively fulfill its duties and responsibilities.*

**C13.07.12.** *Each Board shall:*

- a. make a written or oral report of all its meetings and activities monthly to the Congregation Council,*
- b. make recommendations to the Council, and*
- c. carry-out any instructions given to it by the Council.*

*A written report from each Board shall be submitted for inclusion in the Annual Report.*

**C13.07.13.** *The Boards of this Congregation as a minimum will encompass the ministries of: Church in Society, Education, Fellowship, Care of Members, Worship and Music, Property and Maintenance, Stewardship, Youth, Personnel, Preschool, and the Endowment and Memorial Funds.*

**C13.07.14.** *Descriptions and responsibilities of the Boards shall be detailed in continuing resolutions.*

**C13.07.A97. THE BOARD FOR EDUCATION**

The purpose of the Board of Education is to plan and implement the educational programs and activities of the congregation and advise other boards, organizations, and individuals involved in education, so that knowledge of the Holy Scriptures and the Christian Faith as taught by the Lutheran Church might be strengthened and deepened among Atonement's members of all ages.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Education shall

- a. Oversee the Education Program of Atonement and work in cooperation with the Staff to carry out its responsibilities.
- b. Establish objectives and set policy for the Education Program at Atonement.
- c. Assure itself that following are accomplished:
  - 1) Recruit, train, and supervise teachers and aids for Sunday School program: pre-school through sixth grade.
  - 2) Recruit, train, and supervise teachers and aids for Vacation Bible School.
  - 3) Recruit, train, and supervise teachers for high school and adult education programs.
  - 4) Schedule, plan, and carry out special programs, such as: Christmas Pageants, Advent Festival, Musicals, dramas, and Biblical/Theological seminars.

- 5) Approve curriculum and purchase materials, supplies, and equipment as needed to carry out the educational programs.
- 6) Oversee the Confirmation program of Atonement.
- 7) Church book and video library maintained.
- d. Work with the Pastor(s) in organizing and teaching Bible Classes and Christian Education Programs for adults during the week.
- e. Encourage and plan trans-generational educational and social opportunities.
- f. Promote and advertise Atonement's programs of religious education and encourage attendance at these programs and events.
- g. Coordinate planning of education activities with the Board of Youth. (4-14-02)

**C13.07.B97. THE BOARD FOR FELLOWSHIP**

The purpose of the Board for Fellowship is to create and encourage opportunities for Christian fellowship so that Atonement's members experience the unity they share in Christ, new members are properly welcomed into the community of faith, and visitors experience the warm hospitality that ought to characterize our congregation.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Fellowship shall

- 1. Seek ways to promote and increase a general atmosphere of friendliness among our members.
- 2. Plan and organize family potlucks and other luncheons and dinners for congregational fellowship.
- 3. Organize the Sunday morning coffee fellowship including the making of the coffee and clean-up.
- 4. Work in cooperation with other of our congregational organizations and Boards when planning events initiated by them.
- 5. Initiate and/or encourage events which bring members together, such as game nights, talent shows, picnics, outings, camp-outs, and the like.
- 6. Promote and organize the graceful dining groups.
- 7. Support and organize church sponsored athletic teams
- 8. Assign each family of the congregation to one of twelve Serving Groups (one for each month) and secure those who will serve as chairperson(s) for each of the groups.
- 9. Assist in the planning and serving of meals or coffee-fellowship when Atonement is asked to host visitors (e.g. Habitat Advisory Board, Five Valleys Lutheran Cluster,

Lutheran Student Association, and the like).

10. Assist in providing ministry to the bereaved by hosting luncheons or coffee receptions for family members and close friends.
11. Welcome new members into the congregation by hosting Atonement's traditional new member WELCOME TO ATONEMENT dinner. *4-14-07*

### **C13.07.C97.THE BOARD FOR CARE OF MEMBERSHIP**

The purpose of the Board for Care of Membership is to enhance Atonement's ministry to the stranger and visitor, the new member, the inactive, those who have moved without transferring membership, and to assist the Pastoral Staff in caring for those in need; so that our Community of Faith might be mutually beneficial and supportive to all in their journey of faith.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Care of Membership shall:

1. Keep a current list of prospective members and develop procedures to welcome them to worship and to other church sponsored events.
2. Encourage prospective members to join an Inquirers (Membership) Class.
3. Devise a strategy for the follow-up of visitors at worship.
4. Plan procedures to properly welcome new members of Atonement.
5. Plan strategy to integrate new members into the life of the congregation including securing and training sponsors for new members and follow-up through the sponsors.
6. Monitor the new member for an extended period of time evaluating at every step the integration progress and needs of the member.
7. Make contact with those who have become members of the congregation within the last two years to see how things are going.
8. Devise ways of tracking the level of activity of all members.
9. Make contact with those members who are becoming less active.
10. Submit annually to the Congregational Council by the December Council meeting a list of members who should be removed from the active roster and placed on the responsibility list.
11. Make contact with those members who have moved from Missoula and have not transferred their membership and help them find a new church home.
12. Encourage members to become involved in small groups. Recruit volunteers as need for this ministry and assist in their training.

13. Keep in regular contact with the membership of this congregation through visitation, a "tele-care" system, or other method to keep apprised of needs.
14. Study the annual Time and Talent sheets to identify the gifts of our people and to assure that these gifts are used.
15. Keep current list of Atonement's older adults and make sure their gifts are being employed by the congregation and their needs are being met.
16. Initiate or develop programs, organizations or service projects to meet unmet needs of the members of the congregation and to utilize the gifts of members of the congregation.
17. Encourage members to witness to the Gospel in their homes, work, and social contacts.
18. Work with Pastor(s) and, as necessary, other Boards to foster special seminars and workshops whose purpose is to promote spiritual renewal and growth, evangelical outreach, faith in life issues, and the like.
19. Work cooperatively with the pastoral staff in identifying and ministering to those in need and with the Board of Church and Society when appropriate.
20. Oversee the operation of the Sunday morning nursery care provided by our congregation for children of members and visitors.
21. Work cooperatively with and under the guidance and direction of the Board for Personnel in finding replacements for the Nursery Attendants.

**C13.07.D97.THE BOARD FOR WORSHIP AND MUSIC**

The purpose of the Board for Worship and Music is to assist the Pastor(s) plan, guide, and conduct the worship life of Atonement Lutheran Church in such a way that the stranger and visitor are warmly welcomed, the worshippers of all ages are edified, and God is glorified.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Worship and Music shall:

1. Recruit, train, schedule, and supervise those who will be assisting ministers at worship.
2. Properly protect and care for church owned musical instruments and provide for their periodic maintenance, tuning, replacement, and upgrading.
3. Assure itself that musical instruments are properly insured under the congregation's general coverage or with special rider if necessary.
4. Properly protect and care for the chancel of the worship area and all its furnishings, also the baptismal font, Easter/Christ Candle, and the corn union ware, linens, paraments, and banners.
5. Organize, file, and properly care for church-owned sheet music and books for choir,

organ, and piano.

6. Be responsible for the changing of paraments seasonally.
7. Encourage the establishment and foster the perpetuation of choirs and other vocal and instrumental groups.
8. Obtain permission from copyright holders before making copies of music protected by law, and inform musicians and choirs of the policy of this congregation to conform to applicable copyright laws.
9. Instruct the Congregation in the meaning of hymns and liturgies and rehearse worshippers as necessary to do and sing liturgy and hymns more reverently and meaningfully.
10. Work with the Board of Property and Maintenance to make the worship facility comfortable, accessible, functional and "friendly" to those worshippers with a handicapping condition.
11. Work with appropriate Boards and organizations to teach our children how to worship.
12. Encourage the use of Church facilities for recitals, concerts, and other such occasions that bring visitors into our church building.
13. Work in cooperation with the Pastors to make sure that the regular services in God's House are conducted reverently and properly and in accordance with the policies and traditions of Atonement Lutheran Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
14. Assist the Pastors in the planning and leading of the worship services at Atonement.
15. In the absence of the Pastor(s), prepare the worship area for the services and meet the guest Pastor and orient her/him to the building and order of worship.
16. During times when no Pastor or interim Pastor is serving Atonement, be prepared — under the direction of the Congregation Council — to plan and lead worship, secure pulpit supply (ordained or not), and secure those who will preside at Holy Communion and Baptisms (ordained).
17. Work cooperatively with, and under the guidance and direction of, the Board for Personnel in finding replacements for choir director, head organist, assistant organists, worship coordinator and any other paid positions that would fall under the responsibility of the Board for Worship and Music.
18. Assist the Board for Personnel in the writing and revising of job descriptions for organist, choir director, and any other paid positions that would fall under the

responsibility of the Board for Worship and Music.

#### **C13.07.E97. THE BOARD FOR PROPERTY AND MAINTENANCE**

The purpose of the Board for Property and Maintenance is to properly care for the buildings, furnishings, and grounds belonging to Atonement Lutheran Church through routine inspection, custodial care & upkeep, repair, and improvement so that a safe, warm, comfortable, beautiful facility is maintained for use by the congregation for welcoming the stranger and for worship, learning, planning, and fellowship.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Property and Maintenance shall:

1. Provide for the routine cleaning of the worship, education, food preparation, fellowship, office, storage, hallway, and rest room areas of the church building.
2. Check the buildings routinely to discover the need for maintenance and repair.
3. Properly store and care for the blue prints of the buildings, the mechanical and electrical OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE MANUALS for the buildings, and owners manuals, warrantee information, and service agreements for church owned equipment.
4. Maintain a log for the recording of damage, repairs, remodeling, insurance claims, and other important information regarding the history of the buildings.
5. Assure itself that at all times the building and those who use it are in conformity with all safety codes and practices.
6. Check routinely with those who use the building most (staff members including Preschool teacher) to ascertain if these people have discovered things that should be brought to the Board's attention.
7. Encourage members of the congregation to place printed suggestions in the Board's box.
8. Provide for repair and maintenance that falls outside the duties of custodian or assigned volunteers.
9. Secure the assistance of a Low Pressure Boiler Operator to inspect periodically our heating systems and to post his/her boiler operator's license in the two boiler rooms.
10. Inform the Council of the need for major renovation and capital improvements.
11. Recruit, train, and supervise volunteers.
12. Secure professional help when necessary for special tasks (e.g. lawn care, snow removal, carpet cleaning, glass replacement, electrical, plumbing, heating maintenance & repair, etc.)
13. Determine those tasks which are not to be done by unskilled volunteers because they are

- deemed too unsafe or require a certain amount of expertise.
14. Compile an inventory of church-owned furnishings and other church-owned items and keep such inventory current.
  15. Make arrangements for special congregational work days as necessary.
  16. Respond expeditiously to calls for help in times of imminent threat to buildings and furnishings.
  17. Communicate regularly with custodian and volunteers as to job expectations and job performance.
  18. Be responsible for the proper storage, care, maintenance and repair of custodial equipment.
  19. Be responsible for purchasing cleaning supplies & materials, paper supplies, garbage bags, solvents and waxes, and the like.
  20. Working with the Treasurer and Executive Committee assure itself that the buildings have adequate insurance coverage.
  21. Work with the Board for Worship and Music to provide for the proper care of musical instruments.
  22. Work with the office secretary to provide for the proper care of office furnishings and equipment.
  23. Work in cooperation with the Board for Personnel when the need to hire someone in the area of maintenance arises.
  24. Establish policy with Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp (FLBC) regarding the use of the Van on loan to Atonement Lutheran Church.
  25. Assure itself that the FLBC Van is properly insured & licensed and periodically inspected for safety.
  26. Be responsible for the proper care and maintenance of the FLBC Van.

#### **C13.07.F97. THE BOARD FOR STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION**

The purpose of the Board for Stewardship Education is to educate the congregational members, defining the Christian life as a daily exercise of stewardship in which we are responsible to God for the proper care and use of the gifts he entrusts to each of us as individuals, as citizens of this earth, and as a Christian congregation. The Board seeks to identify and use the gifts of congregational members in the worship, learning, serving, outreach, and administrative areas of the work and ministry of Atonement congregation.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Stewardship Education shall:

1. Work with the Pastor(s) in developing a year-'round ministry of stewardship education.
2. Educate Atonement's members regarding the ministry and mission of Atonement Lutheran Church, The Montana Synod, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
3. Review and revise annually the information requested on the Time and Talent Inventory Sheets.
4. Study the responses given on the Time and Talent Inventories, have the responses entered in the Church's computer programs so they can be easily accessed.
5. Assure itself that the gifts identified on the Time and Talent Sheets will be used in this congregation, by making available this information to the proper staff people and church Boards
6. Develop and conduct an annual emphasis on the stewardship of financial resources where people are encouraged to adopt biblical concepts of first fruits giving, giving in proportion to the way God has blessed them, and giving joyfully with a sense of fulfillment.
7. Develop this annual emphasis so that people are asked to offer their time and talents in the work of the church as well as asked to pledge a dollar amount for the work of the church.
8. Periodically emphasize through education the stewardship of creation, health, relationships, and other stewardship areas that might be over-looked.
9. Publicize opportunities for "second mile" giving.
10. Encourage people to consider giving from their accumulated wealth as well as current income.
11. Work in cooperation with the Board of Directors for Endowment and Memorial Funds in planning ways to advertise and promote the variety of 'nontraditional' gifting available to our people.
12. Order annually the offering envelopes to be used the following year, making changes as deemed appropriate and helpful.
13. Be responsible for the accurate recording of the gifts of all those making donations, designated and undesignated, to Atonement Lutheran Church and making available periodic reports of gifts to the donors. [The Financial Secretary will ordinarily be given this task.]

14. Recruit, train and supervise the work of the Financial Secretary and provide this person with a job description. [The name of the Board's nominee for Financial Secretary should be given to the Congregation Council for approval prior to the Annual Meeting.]

#### **C13.07.G97. THE BOARD FOR YOUTH MINISTRY**

The purpose of the Board for Youth Ministry is to plan and conduct a ministry with our young people and their families in order that the young people entrusted to our care be drawn into a deeper more meaningful relationship with our Lord and with the members of the community of faith at Atonement.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Youth Ministry shall:

1. Work in cooperation with Pastor(s) in establishing policy and developing a strong ministry with Atonement's young people and their families.
2. Offer counsel, advice, & support and serve as a sounding board to Pastor(s) and others who work with youth and their families.
3. Affirm those congregational members who work with youth and families whether through our congregational programs or in the community.
4. Work in cooperative ways with other Boards who carry on a ministry with young people.
5. Keep an updated list of our young people by grade.
6. Be aware of the accomplishments and activities of our youth which should be noted; find ways to acknowledge that and to congratulate the youth on behalf of the congregation.
7. Encourage young people and their families to participate in the worship life of the congregation.
8. Encourage young people and their families to participate in youth activities including the educational program of the congregation.
9. Assist in the organization of high school, middle school and 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade youth groups and the planning of programs and events. A committee will be appointed for each age group which will plan the group's activities reporting to the Board of Youth Ministry monthly. At least one member of the Board for Youth will be on each committee.
10. Recruit, train, and supervise those volunteers who will be working in areas of youth ministry.
11. Secure parent volunteers for a variety of service tasks needed for the proper functioning

of the youth programs.

12. Recruit chaperones, drivers, sponsors, and others needed for special youth events.
13. Encourage participation in servant events by our youth.
14. Promote and advertise the ministry of our Lutheran Church Colleges and Universities
15. Promote and advertise the ministry of Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp and encourage the young people of Atonement to register for camp.
16. Offer a balanced program among youth and families that would present the church's teachings and encourage discussion on ethical and justice issues of the day, vocation, friendships, love/marriage/family, etc.
17. Schedule dates/times of each youth group session.
18. Set policy which will regulate youth programs.
19. Determine the registration fee for high school and middle school youth groups.
20. Be open to the special needs of the young people and be responsive to their needs.
21. Keep in touch with graduating seniors. Find ways to remain in contact with our college and university students, attending U of M or other institutions. Maintain a list of address and college addresses which will be published in "His People" annually. Report the students' activities/honors in church publications.

**C13.07.H97. THE BOARD FOR LOGOS MINISTRY-NO LONGER OPERATIONAL AT ATONEMENT**

**C13.07.I97. THE BOARD FOR CHURCH IN SOCIETY**

The purpose of the Board for Church in Society is to conduct Christian ministry within the society in which we reside in such a way that the church addresses issues of human injustice and suffering and stands side by side with those who are the victims of poverty, ignorance, violence, addiction, and prejudice.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Church in Society Shall:

1. Be advocates for those in need and seek ways Atonement might minister to them.
2. Hear the needs of those who request assistance and on the basis of assessed need determine how and to what extent Atonement is able to help.
3. Refer those who need assistance to other agencies as this seems helpful and appropriate.
4. Administer Atonement's local benevolence fund in such a way that will be most beneficial to those in need and will demonstrate the love and care of Christ through his

people.

5. Work with the Board for Care of Membership in seeking ways to help our own members when facing financial difficulty.
6. Become acquainted with the helping agencies available in our community, work cooperatively with them, publicize their services, discover ways Atonement might assist them, and encourage support among Atonement's members.
7. Assist Atonement in its ministry to the hungry through the promotion of the ELCA's Hunger Appeal, Bread for the World, and other agencies and causes which work on behalf of the hungry.
8. Select a Hunger Contact Person from the congregation who will act as liaison between local and national efforts to alleviate the suffering of the hungry.
9. Advertise the work of Lutheran World Relief, Lutheran World Federation, ELCA, and Montana Synod in areas of social ministry, disaster response, and the like.
10. Become acquainted with the Social Statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and encourage members to study them
11. Encourage and affirm those in our congregation who work on behalf of those in need.
12. Explore ways to educate our members in areas of Faith and Daily Life (i.e. where church and society meet and the ethical, justice, and faith issues involved).
13. Continue to discover the implications for ministry of being the Church of Christ in Society.

#### **C13.07.J97. THE BOARD FOR PERSONNEL**

The purpose of the Board for Personnel is to oversee this congregation's relationships with its employees so that proper, accepted, and fair procedures are followed in all phases of that relationship from hiring to termination, and all applicable Federal and State laws regulating the employer-employee relationship are observed.

To accomplish this purpose the Board for Personnel shall:

1. Write, review, and revise as necessary job descriptions for all employed personnel of Atonement Lutheran Church with the exception of ordained clergy.
2. Write, review, and revise as necessary a handbook on the personnel policies and procedures for Atonement Lutheran Church.
3. Assure itself that each paid staff person has signed a statement acknowledging receipt of the handbook and understands the nature of employment.

4. Assure itself that this congregation and its employees follow the policies and procedures as set forth in the handbook.
5. Assure itself that each paid staff person has been assigned a supervisor and make such assignments if necessary [the exception: ordained clergy].
6. Train and counsel supervisors and monitor their work.
7. Provide each supervisor with appropriate instruments for the periodic job performance reviews and evaluations.
8. Oversee the hiring process including: writing or reviewing the job description, advertising, collecting resumes & applications, checking references, interviewing applicants, presenting to the Council the recommendation of Board of Personnel and/or other Board, Council deliberation, and offering the position; working with the Council, the Pastor(s), and the appropriate Board.
9. Oversee the "involuntary termination" and "layoff" of personnel.
10. Assure itself that periodic wage and salary review for each employee is performed.
11. Make recommendations to the Council regarding salary adjustments for employees.
12. Make recommendations to the Council regarding continuing education and career development for staff members.
13. Study the feasibility of providing health insurance, pension plans, or other benefits for employees.

**C13.07.K97. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR PRESCHOOL**

The purpose of the Board of Directors for Preschool is to work with the Preschool Teacher in preserving the high quality of Atonement's Preschool as a learning center which provides a safe haven where each enrolled child is accepted as he/she is and where each child's social, spiritual, and educational development is enhanced.

To accomplish this purpose the Board of Directors for Preschool shall:

1. Be advocates for and promoters of the Preschool program and recruit and register children to fill its classes.
2. Work with the Preschool teacher to set policy, direction, and goals for the Preschool program.
3. Counsel, advise, and support the teacher in the development of curricula, the daily running of the school, handling behavioral problems, communicating with parents, long range planning, and other matters relating to the administration of the Preschool and its

program.

4. Be a liaison between teacher and parents; teacher and Council; teacher and Congregation as necessary.
5. Be responsible for setting the fee schedule annually, collecting monthly tuition fees and delinquent fees, preparing and overseeing the annual Preschool budget, keeping the financial books, and all other financial aspects of the Preschool.
6. Approve a list of potential substitute teachers.
7. At least annually, arrange for a professional in the area of early childhood development or early childhood education to observe and critique the Preschool teacher in an actual classroom session.
8. Communicate and cooperate with the Board for Property and Maintenance in matters relating to maintenance, repair, painting, remodeling, safety, and the like.
9. Consult with the chairperson of the Board for Property and Maintenance in matters relating to the Board's custodial expectations for the Preschool areas.
10. Take the initiative in asking the teacher about the needs of the Preschool program, room, equipment, etc. and be eager to offer help.
11. Work cooperatively with and under the guidance and direction of the Board for Personnel in finding replacements for the Preschool teacher, Supervising Director, Treasurer, and any other paid position that would fall under the responsibility of the Board of directors for Preschool, including substitute teachers.
12. Assist the Board for Personnel in the writing and revising of job descriptions for Teacher, Treasurer, and Supervising Director of Preschool and any other paid position that would fall under the responsibility of the Board of Directors for Preschool.

**C13.07.A96. THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR THE ENDOWMENT AND MEMORIAL FUNDS**

[See the resolution adopted by the Congregation January 21, 1996 "defining the purpose, governance, and operational procedures of the endowment and memorial funds" and see also the bylaws adopted by the Congregation Council that "set forth the administration and management of the two funds."]

**C13.07.15.** The Congregation Council may charge a Board with duties and responsibilities in addition to those 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.

## **Chapter 15. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- \*C15.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Congregation Council. If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.
- \*C15.02.** The process for discipline of a member of the congregation shall be governed as prescribed by the chapter on discipline in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. If discipline against a member proceeds beyond counseling and admonition by the pastor, charges against the accused member(s) that are specific and in writing shall be prepared by member(s) of the congregation who shall sign the charges as the accuser(s). The written charges shall be filed with the pastor, who shall advise the Congregation Council of the need to issue a written citation to the accused and the accusers that specifies the time and place of the hearing before the Congregation Council. The written charges shall accompany the written citation to the accused. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Congregation Council after having received a written citation, at least 10 days prior to the meeting. If the member charged with the offense fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the Congregation Council may

proceed with the hearing and may pass judgment in the member's absence.

**\*C15.03.** Members of the Congregation Council who participate in the preparation of the written charges or who present evidence or testimony in the hearing before the Congregation Council are disqualified from voting upon the question of the guilt of the accused member. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the Congregation Council who are not disqualified but who are present and voting, and renewed admonition prove ineffectual, the council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:

- a. censure before the council or congregation;
- b. suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
- c. exclusion from membership in this congregation.

Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.

**\*C15.04.** The member against whom disciplinary action has been taken by the Congregation Council shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Synod Council. Such right may not be abridged and the decision of the Synod Council shall be final.

**\*C15.05.** Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Congregation Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

**\*C15.06** For disciplinary actions in this congregation, "due process" shall be observed as specified in 20.14.04 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 or decided, unless or 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 [together](#) with ~~its~~ [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.** Unless provision \*C17.04. is applicable, 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 fifty 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 Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify the congregation's members by mail of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

- \*C17.02.** A proposed 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 <sup>4</sup>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 Montana Synod of the ELCA.-
- \*C17.04.** This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly - by a simple majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any subsequent legally called 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. Upon the request of 50 voting members of the congregation, the Congregation Council shall submit such notice. 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.

4 Such an effective date must be stated in relation to the requirements of \*C17.03. to allow time for synodical review of the amendment.

## **Chapter 18. CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS**

- \*C18.01.** The congregation in a legally called meeting or 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 majority vote of a meeting of the congregation or a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Congregation Council.

**Chapter 19. INDEMNIFICATION**

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

\*Required Provision

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CONGREGATION AT A LEGALLY CALLED MEETING ON JANUARY 21, 1996, ESTABLISHING THE PURPOSE, GOVERNANCE, AND OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES OF THE ENDOWMENT AND MEMORIAL FUNDS.**

Whereas, Christian stewardship involves the faithful management of all the gifts God has given to human 46appreciated resources; and

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

Whereas, it is the desire of the congregation to encourage, receive and administer these gifts in a manner consistent with the loyalty and devotion to their Lord expressed by the grantors and in accord with the policies of the congregation:

NOW THEREFORE, this congregation, in its annual meeting on January 21, 1996, approves and establishes two new and separate funds to be known as THE ENDOWMENT FUND (principal is retained and income plus gain on principal can be use), and THE MEMORIAL FUND (principal and income con be used) to receive and administer bequests, estates, insurance, memorials, cash and other assets;

BE IT RESOLVED, That the income generated by each fund shall be used to enhance the outreach of, and to enable the further growth of Atonement Lutheran Church, its ministries and stewardship opportunities (additional to and apart from the general operation of the congregation ) including, local missions, missions of the ELCA, scholarship grants for attending church related schools/camps, "seed money" to help establish or expand special adult/youth ministries and music programs that will promote the spiritual growth of the congregation;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Congregation Council of Atonement Lutheran Church shall appoint a Board of Directors to administer and manage the two funds and shall adopt policy and bylaws that set forth the admonition and management of the two funds.