

The
HOLY CROSS

**Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Missouri Synod**

Constitution & By-Laws

2010

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Philosophy of Ministry

Holy Cross Lutheran Church Cary, Illinois

Holy Cross is a Lutheran Congregation (Missouri Synod) and is led by the Word of God, guided by the Lutheran Confessions, and committed to God's mission (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15).

We are committed to bringing the "peace of God" (John 14:27) to those within and without the congregation.

We love our district and our synod and we are committed to strong district and synod support so that Christ's kingdom may continue to come beyond our parish borders.

We are also committed, therefore, to recruiting people, especially the young, for ministry as pastors, teachers, Directors of Christian Education, and other church-related ministries in the church at large.

We are committed to grow to whatever size God wishes and we will accept whatever size He gives us as a blessing to be used to His glory and honor. Growth requires good planning. An important part of good planning is the coordination of program with staffing expansion, striving always to have personnel in place as needs surface. We are committed to looking and planning ahead, always keeping our minds and hearts open to whatever God wants us to do.

Our goal is to respond to every scripturally authentic need of the people whom Christ came to redeem.

We, as the people of God, can be used by God in the growth of His Church, and are expected as stewards of God to be involved in Christ's mission and ministry.

There is a natural and normal diversity of gifts, insights, perspectives, and abilities within the congregation which need to be identified, recognized, treasured, protected, and used.

We seek to do the Father's will through prayer, study of the Scriptures, weekly worship, participation in Holy Communion, and by using our gifts in His service.

We will seek to bring all people to the awareness of Christ's mission through Bible Study, Sunday School, organizations of the Church, and every other Christ-centered and responsible way.

We will seek the unity of our members through a personal and caring ministry.

We will ask God's blessing upon all we do as we pledge ourselves to be His people in this place and at this time.

Constitution

Preamble

Whereas, according to the Word of God (1 Cor. 14:40; Col.2:5), in a Christian Congregation, all things shall be done decently and in order; therefore, we, a number of Lutherans residing in this town and vicinity, have united, and in this document set forth our Constitution.

Article I

Name

The name of this congregation shall be **HOLY CROSS EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CONGREGATION OF CARY, ILLINOIS.**

A r t i c l e I I

Confessional Standard

In this congregation, all the canonical books of the Old and New Testament are accepted and acknowledged as the divinely inspired and revealed Word of God, and the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church are accepted as being in full agreement with God's Word. According to these books, all

doctrine shall be taught and examined, and all controversies which may arise, judged, and decided. These Symbolical Books are the following: The Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creed; the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; the Apology of the same, the Smalcald Articles; the Small and the Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Article III

Membership

The membership in the congregation includes the following:

A. Baptized Membership

We become members of the Christian Church by our Baptism. A baptized member shall be a person who has received a Christian Baptism, worships regularly, does not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), and participates in the educational program of the church.

B. Communicant Membership

No one shall become, or remain a communicant member of this congregation, much less hold an office, or enjoy and exercise the rights & privileges of membership, but such as

- a) are baptized;
 - b) declares their acceptance of, and adherence to, the Bible as God's Word;
 - c) are familiar with the Lutheran teachings as set forth in Luther's Small Catechism, and declare their acceptance thereof;
 - d) do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), but lead Christian lives;
 - e) attend public worship and partake of the Lord's Supper with due frequency;
 - f) submit to the rules and resolutions of the congregation, provided these are not at variance with the Divine Word, and are willing to accept brotherly admonition and correction when they have erred;
 - g) are not members of a secret society, or any other organization in conflict with the Word of God.
- h) Each member is in duty bound to contribute according to his means toward the maintenance of church and school as well as toward the liquidation of any debts of the congregation.

C. Voting Membership

All communicant members who have reached their 18th birthday are voting

members of the congregation.

Members who have reached their 21st birthday may be elected an officer of the Governing Board or hold an office as listed in the Policy Based Governance document.

Members under 21 years of age are not eligible to be elected to offices. Only males may be nominated/selected to the position of elder.

It shall be the obligation of every voting member to attend the meeting of the congregation. By failing to attend a meeting, the member waives his right of casting his vote during such meeting. However, absent members shall have the privilege to send their ballots in writing whenever an officer of the congregation is to be elected, or when unalterable changes or amendments to the Constitution are proposed (see By-laws 2.4.2).

A r t i c l e I V

Admonition

Any member committing a sin or a manifest wrong shall be admonished by the person who has seen or heard it; such admonitions shall be in accordance with the Lord's instruction as recorded in Matt. 18:15-20.

Article V

Termination of Membership

A. By Excommunication or Exclusion

When, after fruitless admonition in the various grades prescribed by the Word of God (Matt. 18:15-17), where the observance of these grades has been possible, a member has been excommunicated, such excommunicated person shall then have forfeited all rights of membership and all claims upon the property of the congregation or any part thereof, as long as he has not been restored to membership. The same applies to such as have of their own accord left the congregation.

B. By Transfer or Other Means

When a member of the congregation moves to another area, that member can request that their membership be transferred to a church where they now reside and attend. When a member of the congregation chooses to change to another synod of the Lutheran church or to another denomination, the member can request that their membership be transferred or terminated. This applies to families that move and each individual member of the family need not request a change in their membership. Those members being transferred or

terminated must be listed in the request.

Article VI

Called Workers

Only such can be pastors and other called workers of this congregation as declare their adherence to all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, and consider such the divinely inspired and revealed Word of God, and adhere to the subsequent Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as, considered in Article II, and obligate themselves to conduct their office in accordance therewith.

Article VII

Application for Membership

Whoever wishes, to become a **COMMUNICANT MEMBER** of the congregation shall make application to the Pastor and/or to one of the Elders of the congregation. Having given satisfactory evidence with respect to the tenets of his or her faith to the Pastor, they shall be received as a communicant member of the congregation, after review and approval by the Board of Elders. Confirmation automatically grants a reception into church membership and all who are thus received through the act of Confirmation are communicant members of the congregation without any subsequent approval.

Article VIII

Doctrinal Literature

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article II. Likewise, in all cases for instruction in Christian doctrine, only such books shall be used as conform to this standard. Members are pledged in some manner to provide for their children's instruction in the pure doctrine.

Article IX

Congregational Business

All business of the congregation shall be conducted in the following way:

The congregation shall elect the officers of the Governing Board and adopt the budget. A congregational quorum is necessary at all times to conduct any business or to make any decisions. A quorum for voting in a congregational meeting is defined in Section 2.14 of the Policy Based Governance document.

The consent of the majority of all members present is necessary for any action taken, unless such action touches upon matters of doctrine or conscience, in which case a vote of two-thirds majority is required.

The congregation shall call all called workers and approve expenditures not authorized in the budget to include matters of property.

The final authority/power remains with the members of the congregation.

Article X

Governing Board

The Governing Board shall handle the matters of policy for the congregation and any such matters as are assigned to it by the congregation. A quorum at all times is necessary to carry out the functions of the Board. A quorum shall consist of one-half of Board membership.

Article XI

Separation

Holy Cross Lutheran Church is a member of The Lutheran Church -Missouri Synod. A decision to leave the Synod requires a two-thirds majority vote of all voting members. The procedure for arriving at a decision regarding withdrawal from the Synod shall be as follows:

1. A meeting of the voting members shall be called by the congregation.
2. A notice of this meeting and its purpose shall be published in two Sunday bulletins prior to the meeting.
3. A letter shall be mailed to the voting members advising them of the meeting and the nature of the meeting.
4. Representatives of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod shall be invited to the meeting and shall have ample opportunity to make a presentation and to answer questions.
5. After an opportunity has been given for various viewpoints to be heard, the congregation shall decide by simple majority either to proceed to

vote on the question by secret ballot or to postpone action (indefinitely, or to set a date which satisfies the notice requirements listed above for the calling of such a meeting).

A r t i c l e X I I

Sovereignty

The congregation as a whole shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall have supreme authority in the administration of all matters pertaining to the congregation. However, the congregation shall never have the authority to issue ordinances or decisions contrary to the Word of God and the symbols of the Lutheran Confessions. If this is done, any such ordinances, enactments, or decisions are null and void.

Article XIII

Amendments

Articles or sections may be amended by a vote of two-thirds majority of the members present at a meeting of the congregation. A valid vote requires that a quorum be present, the changes must have been submitted in writing, and a fourteen day notice previously given to members.

The amended Constitution with the Bylaws, as a condition of continued membership in The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, shall be submitted to the president of the district for review by the district's constitution committee and adoption by the district's board of directors before being placed into practice by the congregation.