

**MNO SYNOD CONSTITUTION  
FULL TEXT OF AMMENDMENTS GIVEN 2<sup>nd</sup> READING APPROVAL  
BY 2016 MNO CONVENTION**

**Approved by NCC (September 2016) pending minor revisions**

**Approved by SC with minor revisions suggested by NCC (April 2017)**

**CONSTITUTION**

**MANITOBA/NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SYNOD  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN CANADA**

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## **ARTICLE I**

### **Name and Incorporation**

- Section 1. The name of the synod functioning under this constitution shall be Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (referred to as “this church”).
- Section 2. The synod shall be incorporated under the laws of Manitoba.
- Section 3. The seal of the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Inc. shall consist of water, a ship, sails and a cross. The bishop shall have custody of the seal.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Geographic Boundaries**

- Section 1. The geographic boundaries of this synod shall be as described in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **Confession of Faith**

- Section 1. This synod confesses the Triune God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—as the one true God. It proclaims the Father as Creator and Preserver; His Son, Jesus Christ, as Redeemer and Lord; and the Holy Spirit as Regenerator and Sanctifier.
- Section 2. This synod confesses that the Gospel is the revelation of God's saving will and grace in Jesus Christ, which He imparts through Word and Sacrament. Through these means of grace, the Holy Spirit creates believers and unites them with their Lord and with one another in the fellowship of the Holy Christian Church.
- Section 3. This synod confesses the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, through which God still speaks, and as the only source of the Church's doctrine and the authoritative standard for the faith and life of the Church.

- Section 4. This synod subscribes to the documents of the Book of Concord of 1580 as witnesses to the way in which the Holy Scriptures have been correctly understood, explained and confessed for the sake of the Gospel, namely
- a. The Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds as the chief confessions of the Christian faith.
  - b. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession as its basic formulation of Christian doctrine;
  - c. Luther's Small Catechism as a clear summary of Christian doctrine;
  - d. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Large Catechism, the Smalcald Articles with the Treatise, and the Formula of Concord as further witnesses to the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### Mission

- Section 1. The mission of this church, as an expression of the universal Church and as an instrument of the Holy Spirit, is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people in Canada and around the world through proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments and through service in Christ's name.
- Section 2. As the regional expression of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, in faithfulness to the Lord of the Church, this synod shall facilitate and advance the mission of this church within its territory.
- Section 3: This synod shall faithfully support the common work of this church and its international and ecumenical partners.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Membership**

- Section 1. The membership of this synod consists of congregations and synodically recognized ministries that are recognized by this synod in the manner described in the bylaws of this church. Baptized individuals who are members of a congregation or a synodically recognized ministry shall exercise their privileges and responsibilities through participation in the congregation or synodically recognized ministry in which they are members.
- Section 2. Congregations and synodically recognized ministries may be recognized by this synod acting on behalf of this church in the manner described in the constitution and bylaws of this church.
- Section 3. This synod may revoke its recognition of any congregation or synodically recognized ministry in the manner described in the constitution and bylaws of this church.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Congregations**

- Section 1. Every congregation which is recognized by this synod shall have a constitution which, in the judgment of the Synod Council, is in harmony with the constitution and bylaws of this church and of this synod.
- Section 2. Every congregation shall support faithfully, with prayer, personal service and offerings, the common work of this church and of this synod.
- Section 3. Every congregation of this synod shall choose a delegate or delegates to represent it at conventions of this synod and at meetings of the area to which the congregation is assigned in accordance with procedures as defined in the bylaws of this synod.
- Section 4. The alignment of congregations in parishes shall be subject to approval of Synod Council.
- Section 5. Congregations shall have the right to petition this synod, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.
- Section 6. In case of strife and division in a congregation, the congregational council shall seek the advice of the bishop of this synod.

- Section 7* When a rostered minister resigns, the Congregational Council shall receive the resignation, report it to the congregation and notify the bishop of the synod.
- Section 8. A congregation desiring to withdraw from this church must comply with the procedures for withdrawal set out in the bylaws of this church.
- Section 9. A congregation which has ceased to exist or whose membership has so diminished in numbers as to render it impossible or impractical for the congregation to function according to its constitution and bylaws shall, after consultation with any remaining members, be deemed by the synod of which it was a part to be defunct. This synod through this Synod Council shall appoint trustees, including where feasible former members of the congregation, who shall take charge and control of the property of said congregation to hold, manage and convey the same on behalf of this synod.
- Section 10. A lay member of any congregation who is under discipline by his/her congregation, may appeal to this synod in the manner described in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Synodically Recognized Ministries**

- Section 1. This synod shall maintain a roster of synodically recognized ministries as described in the bylaws of this church.
- Section 2. Each synodically recognized ministry is entitled to choose a representative to conventions of this synod in accordance with procedures as defined in the bylaws.
- Section 3. Every synodically recognized ministry which is recognized by this synod shall have a constitution which, in the judgment of the Synod Council, is in harmony with the constitution and bylaws of this church and of the synod.
- Section 4. Every synodically recognized ministry shall support faithfully, with prayer, personal service and offerings, the common work of this church and of the synod.
- Section 5. The alignment of synodically recognized ministries in parishes shall be subject to approval of Synod Council.
- Section 6. Synodically recognized ministries shall have the right to petition this synod, according to procedures set forth in the bylaws.

- Section 7. A lay member of a synodically recognized ministry, who is under discipline by his/her synodically recognized ministry may appeal to this synod in the manner described in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### Rostered Ministers - Ordained

- Section 1. This synod shall maintain a roster of ordained ministers.
- Section 2. The standards of admission and continuance on the roster of ordained ministers shall be defined in the bylaws of this church.
- Section 3. An ordained minister shall conduct himself/herself in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and policies of this synod and of this church.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### Rostered Ministers - Diaconal

- Section 1. This synod shall maintain roster of diaconal ministers.
- Section 2. The standards of admission and continuance on the roster of diaconal ministers shall be defined in the bylaws of this church.
- Section 3. A diaconal minister shall conduct himself/herself in accordance with the constitution, bylaws and policies of this synod and of this church.

## **ARTICLE X**

### Full Communion Provisions

- Section 1. Ordered ministers of churches with which this church has a full communion agreement, who are serving in this church under the provisions of the full communion agreement, shall have the same rights and privileges as the equivalent order of the ministry of this church.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### Areas

- Section 1. This synod shall be organized into areas whose number and boundaries shall be determined by Synod Council, in consultation with congregations.
- Section 2. The role of the areas shall be defined in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### Electoral Regions

- Section 1. This synod shall be organized into electoral regions whose number and boundaries shall be determined by the synod upon recommendation by the synod council.
- Section 2. The purpose of the electoral regions shall be defined in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### Conventions

- Section 1. The convention of this synod shall be its highest legislative authority.
- Section 2. Conventions of this synod shall be held in accordance with the bylaws and policies of this synod.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### Synod Council

- Section 1. Synod Council is the governing body of this synod and shall carry out all normal functions and responsibilities on behalf of this synod in accordance with the constitution, the bylaws and resolutions of this synod in convention.
- Section 2. Synod Council shall consist of the officers of this synod, and members, all of whom shall be members in good standing of congregations or synodically recognized ministries of this synod, elected according to procedures defined in the bylaws of this synod.

## **ARTICLE XV**

### Officers

- Section 1. This synod shall have a minimum of three officers, one of whom shall be the bishop of the synod who shall be its chief pastor and chief executive officer. At least fifty-percent of the officers shall be lay members of this synod. All officers shall serve as officers of the synod council.
- Section 2. The number of, procedures for electing, length of terms of office and duties of the officers shall be defined in the bylaws of this synod.
- Section 3. The recall or dismissal of an officer of the synod shall follow the procedure set out in the constitution and bylaws of this church.
- Section 4. The bishop shall be on the roster of ordained ministers of this church or serving as an ordained minister in this church under the provisions of a Full Communion agreement.

## **ARTICLE XVI**

### Committees

- Section 1. Synod Council shall have authority to establish such committees deemed necessary for the mission of this synod.
- Section 2. Terms of reference for, and membership on, any committee shall be defined in the bylaws of this synod or in a policy manual approved by Synod Council.

## **ARTICLE XVII**

### Theological Institutions

- Section 1. This synod acknowledges its responsibility to support theological education so that rostered leadership is formed within the guidelines of this church. It may also maintain a theological seminary and strengthen it spiritually and academically and provide for its financial support.

- Section 2. The Board of Governors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan shall control and manage the seminary and determine its academic and administrative affairs.
- Section 3. Terms of reference for, and membership on, the Board of Governors of the Lutheran Theological Seminary shall be defined in the bylaws of this synod or in a policy manual.

## **ARTICLE XVII**

### Bylaws

- Section 1. This synod may adopt such bylaws, not in conflict with this constitution, as may be necessary. Such bylaws may be amended at any convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting. At least one day shall elapse between first presentation and convention action unless unanimous consent to amend is given.
- Section 2. Bylaws relating to convention procedure may be suspended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting.

## **ARTICLE XIX**

### Amendments to the Constitution

- Section 1. The Confession of Faith as stated in Article III shall be that of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.
- Section 2. Amendments to this constitution shall be in writing and may be proposed by
- a. The National Church Council,
  - b. The Synod Council,
  - c. A congregation of the synod, if such proposals were first approved at a duly called and conducted congregational meeting; or
  - d. Ten convention delegates.
- Section 3. Full text of all proposed amendments shall be sent to the ordained ministers and diaconal ministers on the roster, congregations and synodically recognized ministries of this synod at least three months before the opening of the convention at which those amendments will be given first reading.

- Section 4 All proposed amendments must be reported to the convention no later than the first full day of business. The Synod Council shall make a report and recommendation during that convention on all proposed amendments.
- Section 5 Adoption of an amendment shall require two separate readings separated by at least twenty-four hours. Each reading shall require passage by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting. Amendments proposed following first reading approval for consideration at the time second reading must obtain unanimous consent of the delegates present and voting.
- Section 6 Amendments shall be effective upon ratification by the National Church Council.