

CONSTITUTION

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH DESOTO, MISSOURI CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

In as much as the Word of God requires a Christian congregation to conform to this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119: 105; Matt. 28: 18-20; Gal. 1: 6-8; 2Tim. 4: 1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (I Cor. 14:40). Therefore we the members of Grace Lutheran Church, located in Desoto, Missouri do hereby adopt this constitution and by laws under which all spiritual and material affairs of this congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Grace Lutheran Church of Desoto, Missouri. The congregation is incorporated under the laws of the State of Missouri.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation shall be to serve its members and to spread the Kingdom of God by the preaching of the word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, by religious instruction of youth and adults according to the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ARTICLE III) and to foster Christian fellowship and charity.

ARTICLE III

CONFESSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation acknowledges and accepts without reservation:

- a. All the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed, verbally inspired and inerrant Word of God.
- b. All the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These confessional writings are:
 - 1) The three Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian.
 - 2) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession
 - 3) The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
 - 4) The Smalcald Articles
 - 5) Luther's Small Catechism
 - 6) Luther's Large Catechism
 - 7) The Formula of Concord

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

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Membership in this congregation shall be:

SECTION 1

Baptized Membership, consisting of those persons who have been received into the fellowship of the Church and this congregation through God's act in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

SECTION 2

Communicant Membership, consisting of:

- a. Those persons who have confirmed their baptismal vows after a period of instructions in the principle teachings of the Word of God as taught by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.
- b. Those persons who have been received into the congregation through a Profession of Faith, signifying their acceptance of the Purpose (ARTICLE II) and Confessional Standard (ARTICLE III) of this congregation. No person may be a communicant member of this congregation who is also a member of an organization having beliefs which conflict with the Word of God.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3

Voting Membership consists of those communicant members who have reached the age of 18 years and who are accepted into the Voter's Assembly of the congregation.

SECTION 4

Additional provisions for admission of communicant members and voting members into this congregation are specified in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE V POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 1: General

The congregation as a body through the Voters' Assembly shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the congregation. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessional Standard of this congregation.

SECTION 2: Right of Calling

The right of calling pastors or other servants shall be vested in the congregation as represented by the Voters' Assembly, and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual. Procedures for the orderly calling of pastors or other servants are included in the Bylaws of this congregation.

SECTION 3: Decisions

Matters of doctrine shall be decided by the Word of God. Other matters shall be decided by the Voters' Assembly by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution or Bylaws.

SECTION 4: Power of Officers , Boards and Committees.

Congregational officers, boards and committees, whether elected or appointed,

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Shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the Voters' Assembly, and whatever power may have been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the Voters' Assembly.

ARTICLE V POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 5: Removal from office

Any officer, pastor or other servant may be removed from office by the congregation as represented by the Voters' Assembly, by ballot in Christian and lawful order for one of the following causes: Persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, and inability to perform official duties or willful neglect of them.

SECTION 6: Church Discipline and Excommunication

Any member whose conduct is persistently in an unchristian manner shall be admonished as prescribed by the Word of God (Matt. 18:15-20). If such member refuses to amend such sinful life after proper admonition – upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Board of Elders – the member may be excommunicated by a unanimous vote of the voting members present at a regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly. When a person shall have been excommunicated from this congregation such person shall have forfeited all rights as a member of this congregation or any part thereof, as long as such person is not again received into membership by the congregation. The same shall apply to such members who refuse to submit to church discipline and who thus separate themselves.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS, CHURCH COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

SECTION 1

The officers of this congregation shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Financial Secretary and a Treasurer.

SECTION 2

The Church Council is an administrative and coordinating agency of the Voters' Assembly, which shall consist of the following members and their assistants:

The President of the Congregation
The Vice-president of the Congregation
The Secretary of the Congregation
The Financial Secretary
The Treasurer
The Elders
The Trustee's

The Chairman of the Stewardship Committee
The Chairman of the Christian Concerns Committee
The chairman of the Youth Ministry Committee

The Vice-President, also serving on the Board of Elders, shall have only one vote.

ARTICLE VI OFFICERS, CHURCH COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

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The President, Vice-President and Members of the Board of Elders shall be male members. All members of the Church Council shall be members of the Voters' Assembly, and shall be at least 21 years of age. Their terms of office and duties shall be prescribed in the Bylaws of this congregation.

SECTION 3

Other members of the other boards or committees shall be selected from among the communicant membership as prescribed in the Bylaws of this congregation.

ARTICLE VII PASTORAL OFFICE

The Pastoral Office of this congregation shall be conferred only upon ministers who profess and adhere to the Confessional Standard set forth in ARTICLE III of this Constitution, and who are certified by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and well qualified for their work. Pastors shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this Confessional Standard. The Pastor shall be an advisory member of the Church Council, the Voters' Assembly, and of all the Boards and Committees of the congregation.

ARTICLE VIII SYNODICAL AFFILIATION

SECTION 1

This congregation shall be a member congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod so long as the confessions of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod are in accord with the Confessional Standard of ARTICLE III of this Constitution.

SECTION 2

This congregation, according to its ability, shall participate in the mission of God as planned and administered by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod with financial support and willing cooperation.

ARTICLE IX PROPERTY RIGHTS OF CONGREGATION

SECTION 1

In the event of schisms, disagreements, disputes, divisions, or separations, all of the property and assets of this church shall go and remain with those members who shall adhere to these articles in their entirety of all members of said church. Those members who fail to adhere to these articles in their entirety shall be expelled from this congregation.

SECTION 2

In the event Synod is broken into splinter groups or synods, this congregation may remain with that group which continues to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution or separate itself completely from any affiliation and continue as its own entity while continuing to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. This will be done by amendment as outlined in Article XI of this

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Constitution.

SECTION 3

DISSOLUTION: In the event of dissolution of this corporation, after all debts and obligations are satisfied, no portion of the assets or financial instruments of any kind shall accrue to the personal benefit of any Director, Officer, Minister, Employee or Member. In the event of dissolution, any assets or financial instruments shall be transferred to such Church, Evangelistic Association, Religious Organization or Charity as shall be determined by the Church Council, so long as such body is a non-profit corporation with identical or similar goal and purposes, and so long as such Church, Evangelistic Association, Religious Organization or Charity has been approved as a Tax-Exempt organization under appropriate Federal (Internal Revenue) Statutes and State Law.

ARTICLE X BYLAWS

This congregation may adopt such Bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of it's purpose.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1

Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted by the Voters' Assembly , provided that they do not conflict with the Confessional Standard of this congregation (ARTICLE III), or with any other Article that pertains to a Scriptural doctrine or practice.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

SECTION 2

This Constitution may be amended in the following manner:

- a. The proposed change or amendment must be submitted in writing to the Voters' Assembly.
- b. The proposed change or amendment must be read in two (2) regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly
- c. In the second regular meeting of the Voters' Assembly, an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of those members present and voting shall be required to adopt such change or amendment.