

Bylaws
Northwest District
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC)

Section 1 - Membership

- 1.01 Northwest District is a district of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ. Northwest's member congregations will be voting members. As such, they are subject to the provisions of the Constitution of Northwest and these bylaws.
- 1.02 A congregation is a Christian community that gathers around the Word and Sacraments. It serves as God's people in the world, nurturing its members and reaching out in witness and service to the world. Each member congregation of Northwest shall adopt governing documents and govern itself in such a way as to involve its members in fulfilling their congregational purpose and function. All authority not specifically granted to the District Council shall be retained by the individual congregations.
- 1.03 Northwest shall recognize, receive and maintain a list of member congregations. By their practice and their governing documents member congregations shall:
- a. Preach the Word and administer the sacraments in accord with the Augsburg Confessions;
 - b. Uphold and subscribe to Northwest's constitution;
 - c. Agree to call pastors who actively uphold and subscribe to Northwest's constitution; and
 - d. Support the life and work of Northwest by their practice, their governing documents, financially, and by written commitment to this district.
- 1.04 A congregation may terminate its membership in Northwest by:
- a. Following such internal congregational procedures as are required by that congregation and giving notice to Northwest that it no longer desires to be a member of Northwest;
 - b. Ceasing to exist;
 - c. Taking action to dissolve itself as a congregation.
- 1.05 Northwest may terminate the membership of a congregation, by a two-thirds majority vote of the members of the District Council present and voting, and by taking the following action;
- a. The District Council shall give at least 60 days written notice of its intent to seek termination of membership; and
 - b. Such membership terminations shall be ratified by the next Northwest convention.

This action shall be taken only after all reasonable efforts to remedy the underlying cause for termination shall be deemed exhausted, and shall be in conformity with these bylaws.

- 1.06 To provide for individual persons who do not belong to a member congregation, but who nonetheless desire to participate in Northwest's affairs, one or more chapters may exist. A chapter may organize itself according to such internal procedures as it deems desirable and may provide delegates with voice and vote at Northwest's conventions. Members of the chapter may be elected to Northwest's District Council and may serve on any Northwest task force or committee. Northwest may revoke the membership of the chapter in the manner set forth Paragraph 1.05 of these bylaws. For purposes of these bylaws, chapters shall have all the rights and privileges of a Northwest member congregation. No person who is a member of a Northwest member congregation may be a member of the chapter.

Section 2 - Ministry

- 2.01 Member congregations of Northwest are authorized to call and ordain ministers pursuant to such standards as Northwest's convention may adopt from time to time. Congregations are reminded that they are responsible for the call process as it pertains to them.
- 2.02 All ordained ministers of Northwest shall subscribe to Northwest's statement of faith and such ministry standards as shall be established by Northwest. Ordained ministers shall be subject to discipline as provided for in these bylaws or as otherwise provided for in a discipline plan adopted by the District Council.
- 2.03 Ministry standards, once adopted by Northwest may be amended only by Northwest's convention with such amendments being ratified by an affirmative vote of a majority of Northwest's member congregations. Any amendment to Northwest's ministry standards shall first be made in writing to the District Council for review and comment, and shall thereafter be submitted to the Northwest annual convention for approval or disapproval. Following approval by the convention, any amendment to the ministry standards shall, within one year of the date of approval by the convention, be ratified by a majority of Northwest's member congregations. Any amendment not so ratified shall not be effective. Northwest may establish ministry standards, which complement, supplement or enhance the ministry standards of LCMC, provided the ministry standards of Northwest are not in conflict with those of LCMC. The ministry standards of LCMC shall serve as

the interim ministry standards of Northwest until such time as Northwest has adopted ministry standards of its own. The secretary shall notify member congregations in a timely manner of ratification or rejection.

- 2.04 Called and ordained pastors of Northwest may belong to the clergy lists of other associations or denominations.

Section 3 - Statement of Purpose and Objectives

- 3.01 The purpose of Northwest is to support the common mission of its members to bear witness to the good news that sinners are put right with God by faith alone in Jesus Christ.
- 3.02 To serve and support Northwest member congregations in their mission to proclaim the gospel, Northwest will, among other things;
- a. provide assistance to its member congregations in interviewing and calling pastors to the ministry of word and sacrament;
 - b. provide assistance to pastors in obtaining calls to Word and Sacrament ministry;
 - c. Seek opportunities to establish new mission congregations and provide support to missionary ministries;
 - d. Sponsor inspirational and educational gatherings, foster fellowship and worship opportunities for all of God's children;
 - e. Strengthen Christ's body on earth by encouraging worship in Northwest member congregations, pray for one another, and study the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessional writings;
 - f. Support youth events that train young people in the beliefs and teachings of our faith, providing guidance and leadership training necessary to raise up a new generation of theologically and confessionally grounded Christian leaders;
 - g. Support congregational confirmation and other faith building programs by providing guidance to sound theological resources and training.
- 3.03 During the early phase of our development, Northwest shall encourage member congregations to rely upon the resources of LCMC for;
- a. selecting and encouraging local candidates for the ministry of Word and Sacrament;
 - b. providing assistance in matters of seminary training and instruction for those who seek it;
 - c. providing Northwest confessional Lutheran seminarians with mentors and guidance through the educational process;
 - d. extending graduating seminarians their first Call to Word and Sacrament

ministry;

e. endorsing Northwest chaplains for specialized ministry.

3.04 In accordance with the intent of Northwest to look only to the cross of Christ, proclaiming God's Word as Law and Gospel for the redemption of his people today, Northwest shall support theological guidelines and declarations adopted by the larger association of which it is a part.

Section 4 - Organization and Annual Convention

4.01 As an association of congregations, Northwest recognizes a need for checks and balances in its governance and operational procedures.

4.02 The annual convention of Northwest shall be its legislative authority. Such authority is limited only by the provisions of Northwest's articles of incorporation, constitution, bylaws and the convention's own resolutions. The convention shall meet annually in regular session but may meet as called by the District Council. The time and place of the convention shall be determined by the District Council, which shall give at least 60 days written notice to member congregations of the date and place of each convention. For the present, all members of Northwest congregations and chapters who attend conventions shall be granted both voice and vote. Visitors will have voice but not vote at Northwest meetings.

4.03 The annual convention shall have the authority to conduct elections, to establish boards, committees, etc., and to make whatever decisions seem prudent in order to further the ministry of Northwest.

4.04 The annual convention is authorized to adopt rules and regulations in the form of continuing resolutions to assist in governing Northwest's affairs, provided they do not otherwise conflict with and are not prohibited by Northwest's constitution or bylaws.

4.05 The convention shall be convened by the Northwest District Council. The convention shall be held no later than the first Saturday of December of each year. The convention shall serve as Northwest's annual meeting and the agenda may include, but is not limited to, election of the District Council, filling of any vacancies on the District Council, approval of the annual budget, approval of ministry standards or changes to ministry standards, and such other business as may occur from time to time.

4.06 Northwest's District Council shall convene a convention within 60 days of submission of a written petition signed by 25 percent of the then-existing member congregations requesting a convention.

4.07 In addition to the annual convention, Northwest's District Council may convene other Northwest meetings by majority vote of the District Council members, or when a written petition is signed by 25 percent of the then existing member congregations requesting such a meeting. A written notice with date, place and time shall be sent to all member congregations and chapters at least 60 days before the meeting occurs.

Section 5 - District Council

5.01 Subject to the limitations of the constitution and bylaws of this district, Northwest's business and affairs shall be managed by its District Council.

5.02 There shall be no fewer than five (5) members of the District Council and each council member shall hold office until the election of a successor council member. Any person who is a member of a Northwest congregation or chapter shall be eligible for election to the District Council. District Council members shall be elected by a majority of those delegates to the convention who are then present and voting. The number of council members to be elected shall be determined by Northwest's convention upon the advice of the District Council. District Council members shall serve three year terms. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 5.07 of this set of bylaws, no council member shall serve more than two consecutive terms in office.

5.03 There shall be no voting by proxy by members of the District Council.

5.04 Meetings of the District Council may be held at a time and place the District Council may designate. Either the chair or any three members of the District Council may call a council meeting by giving 10 days notice to all of the other council members of the date and time of the meeting. The notice may be given by mail, telephone, electronic mail, facsimile transmission or in person.

5.05 A majority of the council members currently holding office is a quorum for the transaction of any business.

5.06 Any action required or permitted at a meeting of the District Council may be taken by written action, including electronically, signed by the number of council members that would be required to take the same action at a meeting of the District Council at which all council members were physically present. All members of the District Council shall receive notice of the text of the written action at the same time it is furnished to any council member for signature. All members of the District Council shall be notified immediately of the effective date of any such written action that is duly taken.

- 5.07 Vacancies on the District Council resulting from the death, resignation or removal of a council member may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining council members, even though less than a quorum. Each council member elected under this section to fill a vacancy shall hold office until a successor is elected at the next Northwest convention. Any council member elected under this section to fill a vacancy shall hold office until a successor is elected. Any council member elected to fill a vacancy of two years or less shall be entitled to election to two full, three-year terms as a member of Northwest's District Council. In no event shall any person serve more than eight consecutive years as a member of Northwest's District Council.
- 5.08 The District Council may, by resolution, establish committees or task forces to conduct Northwest's affairs and business.
- 5.09 Northwest's meetings shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order except as otherwise provided by the constitution, bylaws, or continuing resolutions.
- 5.10 Nothing in these bylaws is intended to discourage electronic participation in Northwest's affairs, provided such electronic participation is consistent with good order, ballot integrity, and voting and election procedures.
- 5.11 Minutes of all District Council meetings shall be maintained and made available to member congregations in a timely manner.

Section 6 - District Officers

- 6.01 Northwest shall have as its officers a chair of the District Council, a vice-chair of the District Council, a secretary, and a treasurer. Additional District Council members may be added from time to time by recommendation of the District Council followed by an election of such person(s) by Northwest in a properly called and publicized convention/meeting. The District Council may remove any member by a two-thirds majority vote with or without cause.
- 6.02 All officers shall be elected by the council from among the council's members to serve a one-year term. The chair of the District Council shall serve as president whenever a president is needed.
- 6.03 The vice chair shall preside over all meetings of the District Council where the chair is unable to preside.

- 6.04 The secretary shall serve as Northwest's recording officer and shall maintain the minutes, have responsibility for records, rosters, archives and other documents of the district, and such other duties as may be assigned to the secretary by the District Council. All records shall be kept in good order and passed on to the successor to the position.
- 6.05 The treasurer shall propose policies regarding finances, accounting, insurance, property management, investment, and money management systems of the district for review by the District Council.
- 6.06 Should the chair of this district die, resign or be unable to serve, the vice chair shall be charged with the responsibilities of the chair until the election of a new chair or until the chair is able to serve again. Should any other vacancy occur through death, resignation or by inability to serve, the chair, with the approval of the District Council, shall arrange for the election of a new member by the District Council to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.
- 6.07 The names and addresses of delegates to the convention shall be made available upon request to any member of the district.

Section 7 - Conflict Resolution

- 7.01 In matters of conflict each congregation is responsible for determining what is or is not necessary to resolve the matter, if possible. Guidance may be sought from Northwest or any other resource.

Section 8 - Amendment of Bylaws

- 8.01 The bylaws of this district may be amended at any convention or special meeting where the amendment to the bylaws has been presented in writing by the District Council. The District Council shall review and may comment on proposed bylaw changes, and shall submit any proposed bylaw changes to Northwest's convention for action. Any proposed bylaw or amendment to an existing bylaw shall first be approved by a majority of those delegates present and voting at the Northwest convention. Thereafter, member congregations shall have one year from the date of enactment by the convention to reject the proposed bylaw or amendment to existing bylaw. A majority of member congregations is required to accept or reject a proposed bylaw or proposed amendment to an existing bylaw. No amendments to Northwest's bylaws shall become effective until the time period for rejection by member congregations has passed. Rejection by a majority of member congregations terminates all action on the proposed bylaw or amendment.

Section 9 - Transition Provisions

- 9.01 Members of the District Council elected at the May 2004 Northwest convention shall serve staggered terms of office as determined by unanimous agreement of those elected or, failing unanimous agreement, by random draw. Any member of the District Council elected under this provision serving a two-year term or less shall be eligible to serve two consecutive, full, three-year terms on the District Council.
- 9.02 Prior to the adjournment of Northwest's first annual convention, amendments to the bylaws are specifically exempted from bylaw provisions, which would subject them to congregational negative ratification. This paragraph is designed to address transitional issues relating to the adoption of the bylaws and to allow Northwest's member congregations to familiarize themselves with the terms of these bylaws between the time of the constituting convention and the time of the first annual convention; and will be of no further force or effect following adjournment of the first annual Northwest convention.