

**CONSTITUTION Of Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church  
1605 Van Buren Avenue Fayetteville, North Carolina**

**Preamble**

The Word of God demands that a Christian Congregation not only conform to the Word of God in doctrine and in practice:

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path” – Psalm 119:105

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.” – Galatians 1:6-8

“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at[a] His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.” – 2 Tim. 4-5

but also, that “Let all things be done decently and in order.” – 1 Cor. 14:40

Accordingly, we, the undersigned Members of Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, Fayetteville, North Carolina, set forth hereby our Constitution in accordance with which our Congregational affairs, spiritual and material, shall be conducted.

**Article I. Name and Incorporation**

The name of this Congregation shall be OUR REDEEMER EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, hereafter referred to as Our Redeemer (ORLC), of Fayetteville, North Carolina. This Congregation shall be incorporated in the state of North Carolina. The corporate trustees shall be the Church Council of this Congregation whose duties are specified in Article VIII.

**Article II. Purpose**

The purpose of this Congregation shall be to assemble under the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by religious instruction for youth and adults, according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III).

**Article III. Confessional Standard**

This Congregation and every member accepts without reservation the Scriptures, i.e., the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice; the three Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian; accepts all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the word of God, such as the unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Power and Primacy of the Pope, the Smalcald Articles, Dr. Martin Luther's Small and Large Catechisms and the Formula of Concord.

#### **Article IV. Synod Affiliation**

This Congregation shall hold Membership in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, hereafter LCMS, so long as the teachings of said synod remain true to the Word of God and the Lutheran confessions. This Congregation shall, to the best of its ability, support said synod and assist it in effecting all sound measures intended for the extension of the kingdom of God.

#### **Article V. Membership**

##### **1. Types of Membership**

- a. Baptized Membership. All Members of the Congregation who are baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and who are under the spiritual care of the Pastor of this Congregation, including children who have not yet been confirmed.
  - b. Communicant Membership. Includes all who:
    - i. Have been baptized in the name of the Triune God.
    - ii. Have been confirmed in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.
    - iii. Are familiar with at least the contents of Luther's Small Catechism.
    - iv. Are not Members of lodges or orders whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.
  - c. Associate Membership: Are Members of an LCMS church located elsewhere, but who worship at Our Redeemer and who subscribe to the confessional standard of Article III.
  - d. Voting Membership: This privilege and responsibility will be limited to Communicant Members of the Congregation who have reached the age of eighteen (18), who have signed the Constitution of ORLC in agreement with its contents, and whose membership in the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod is held by Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- ##### **2. Reception: Baptized, communicant, and associate Members are received through:**
- a. the Sacrament of Holy Baptism,
  - b. the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian Congregation,
  - c. the rite of confirmation,
  - d. transfer from a sister LCMS Congregation,
  - e. profession of faith.
  - f. eligible Communicant Members may be received as Voting Members upon requesting this privilege and signing the Constitution.

3. Duties: Members of the Congregation shall conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word and, to that end, make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent.
4. Termination of Membership
  - a. Membership shall be released by transfer to a sister LCMS Congregation, by death, by joining a Congregation outside the fellowship of the LCMS, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion.
  - b. Communicant Members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20; if they remain impenitent after proper admonition from the Pastor, there shall be a public Rite of Excommunication by the Pastor.
  - c. Members who, without cause, absent themselves from worship for more than six (6) months shall, at the discretion of the Pastor and Board of Elders, be placed on a mission list. They will be sent a letter offering spiritual encouragement and a request to rejoin the active ranks of the church. Those who request release will be dropped from Membership through self-exclusion. A letter confirming this will be sent.

#### **Article VI. Called Church**

1. This Congregation has the exclusive right to call ordained Pastors and appoint Teachers. The Pastoral office shall be conferred only on such a Pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in this Constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member of the Synod. The same shall apply to any commissioned Teachers. The right of calling Pastors and appointing Teachers shall be vested in the Voting Members of the Congregation with guidance from Article II of this Constitution, the Constitution of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and the administrative procedures of the Southeastern District.
2. Any ordained Pastor or commissioned Teacher may be removed from office by the Voter's Assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for any of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office.
3. In case of a vacancy in the office of an ordained Pastor or commissioned Teacher, the Congregation shall notify the president of the District so that he may assist in temporarily filling the vacancy and give assistance regarding the calling of a new Pastor or Teacher.

#### **Article VII. Governing Authority**

1. The Voter's Assembly shall be the secular governing body of this Congregation and shall empower the Church Council to administer and manage all secular affairs. The Church Council, elected annually, will be empowered by the Voter's Assembly to conduct the secular business of the Congregation. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the

Congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the approval of the Voter's Assembly and supervised by the Church Council.

2. All matters shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the Voter's Assembly unless otherwise specified by this Constitution, excluding matters of doctrine and practice, which shall be decided only based on the Word of God.

### **Article VIII. Officers**

The leadership structure of the Congregation shall be the Officers of the Church followed by the Chairperson of the Boards, as listed below.

1. Officers: no one person may hold more than one position as an Officer of the Church in the same year.
  - a. A Chairperson shall conduct the meetings of the Voter's Assembly and Church Council; Execute on behalf of the Congregation any deeds, mortgages, bonds, notes, contracts, or other instruments which the Congregation shall have authorized; Appoint any special committees as may be needed, unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution; Act as direct-line supervisor of paid church staff, Recommend pay and benefit levels and changes; Recommend and request budget for continuing education of paid church staff as required; Resolve any disputes as to scope of duties and chain of responsibility.
  - b. A Vice-Chairperson is to fill the role in the Chairperson's absence or inability to act as well as to accomplish other assigned duties or projects.
  - c. A Council Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Voter's and Council meetings.
  - d. A Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial records of the Congregation; Disburse the funds of the Congregation in accordance with the budget of the church council; Keep an accurate account of all moneys; Prepare the Annual Budget and Financial Reports; Receive results of offerings collected and deposited; Prepare and submit to the church council a statement of receipts and disbursements of the preceding month; As directed by the Council, submit the books together with all receipts and other papers pertaining to the office for auditing and assist in making an audit of such books.
  - e. A Financial Secretary shall oversee the receipt of all monies and deposit the same in an account established in the name of the Congregation.
2. Boards
  - a. A Board of Elders, consisting of a Head Elder and other Elders, which shall assist the Pastor in the worship service.
  - b. A Board of Maintenance, consisting of a Trustee and other designees, which shall be responsible for the physical properties of the Congregation.
  - c. A Board for Christian education, consisting of a Chairperson and other designees, which shall be responsible for Sunday School.
  - d. A Board for Evangelism, consisting of a Chairperson and other designees, which shall lead the Members of the Congregation in outreach to others in the community.
  - e. A Board for Finance consisting of the treasurer, financial secretary, and other designees, which shall be charged with encouraging the Congregation to financially support the activities of the Church.

3. Removal from Office. Any Officer or board member may be removed from office by the Voter's Assembly with a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for any of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office.
4. All elective Officers and Board Chairperson shall be Voting Members of this Congregation, will serve for renewable one-year terms and will comprise the Church Council.

#### **Article IX. Property Rights of the Congregation**

This Congregation shall have all the rights and powers that are granted to religious corporations by the State of North Carolina. In the event the Congregation should separate on account of doctrine, the property and all rights connected therewith shall remain with those Members who continue to adhere to Article III above, or, should Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church cease to function, then property and rights shall be transferred to the Southeastern District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod.

#### **Article X. Amendments**

Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted at a Voter's Assembly provided that:

1. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the Voter's Assembly, published by posting in a conspicuous place in the Church, or electronically to all Communicant Members of the Congregation prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon.
2. With a quorum of the Voting Members being present, an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority is secured.

#### **Article XI. Procedures for Calling Ordained and Commissioned Teachers**

1. When an ordained Pastor is called or a Teacher is to be appointed, every Member of the Congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The Congregation shall also ask the President of the Southeastern District for recommendations. In the case of a Pastoral call, the Chairperson of the Church Council shall appoint a Call Committee.
2. In the screening process the respective board or committee shall submit all names to the respective District President for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the District President, the respective board or committee shall present to the Congregation by means of a public announcement, at least four (4) preferred candidates, together with a biographical sketch of each.
3. At the Voter's Assembly, called for the purpose of electing a new Pastor or Teacher, the preferred list may be amended by means of a two-thirds vote of those present, as necessary, to present a more manageable list of candidates. Once a final selection list has been presented, the Voter's Assembly shall be told by the Chairperson of the Church Council that the final selection

made by a simple majority of the Voting Members is the binding decision for Our Redeemer, a Divine Call will be sent to the successful candidate.

### **Article XII. Voters' Assembly**

Regular meetings of the Voter's Assembly shall be held, as a minimum, semi-annually. Announcement of all meetings shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays and electronically. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Pastor, Chairperson, Church Council, or ten (10) voting Members. Voting Members who also hold paid staff positions with Our Redeemer shall abstain from voting on all matters pertaining to the functions, duties, responsibilities, and rate of compensation for their paid positions.

1. The Voter's Assembly shall consist of all Voting Members of the Congregation as defined in Article V.1.D of this Constitution.
2. Duties of the Voter's Assembly
  - a. Electing Church Council members.
  - b. Voting on the annual operating budget and amendments.
  - c. Calling Pastors and Teachers.
  - d. Voting on amendments to the Constitution.
  - e. Voting on non-budgeted purchases, sales of real property, on loans, and gifts.
  - f. Voting on other issues as required.
3. Twenty percent (20%) of the recorded Voting Membership held by Our Redeemer Lutheran Church present at a properly called Voter's Assembly shall be a quorum.

### **Article XIII. Church Council**

1. Membership
  - a. The Church Council shall consist of the Church Officers and Chairpersons of the Boards as designated in Article VIII, and the Pastor of ORLC. The Church Council shall be elected at the January Voter's Assembly meeting. Council Member terms of office will take effect 1 February and shall last for one year. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall be elected according to Article XIV.
  - b. Vacancies on the Church Council shall be filled by an appointment made by the Chairperson with approval of the Council. A vacancy in the office of the Chairperson shall be filled by the Vice-Chairperson.
  - c. All Council Members are eligible to serve more than one term.
2. Elections
  - a. The Chairperson may appoint a nominating committee who shall select at least one willing candidate for each office and/or chairperson of the Church Council. A list of those persons nominated shall be included with the written notification for the January voters' assembly meeting. Additional nominations of willing Members can be made from the floor at the January meeting of the Voters' Assembly. Each Voting Member is eligible to vote for each office. Those persons receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected to the Church Council.

- b. All voting for positions with more than one nominee shall be done by winning a simple majority by secret ballot vote.
3. Meetings
  - a. The Church Council will generally meet monthly, at least ten (10) times per year.
  - b. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or any Council Member. An attempt to notify all Council Members shall be made.
  - c. No official business shall be conducted without a quorum of Officers.
  - d. A quorum of Church Council shall be a minimum of three (3) attending Officers.
4. Voting Recusal: Members of the Church Council who also hold paid staff positions with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church shall abstain from voting on all matters pertaining to the functions, duties, responsibilities, and rate of compensation for their paid positions.
5. Duties of the Church Council
  - a. On behalf of the Voter's Assembly, the Church Council will ensure the necessary day to day business of the Church and Congregation is properly conducted. The Council will serve as good and prudent stewards of the Church's resources. While an individual Board Chairperson has the authority to make all decisions necessary to discharge the responsibilities of his position, the Council, as a group, shall retain the right to exercise, as it may deem necessary, final authority over all matters with which it is empowered.
  - b. The Church Council shall prepare a budget with goals and objectives for the Congregational year in time for Voters' Assembly approval prior to the beginning of the budget year. Once the budget is approved, the Council is responsible to execute it. At all times, the Council shall disburse the Congregational budgeted monies with the utmost prudence.
  - c. The Church Council, in coordination with the Pastor, shall define roles and responsibilities of all paid Church employees.
6. All financial expenditures and/or encumbrances on the Church require prior approval of the Church Council.
7. Council is required to get Congregation approval for expenditures above the current approved budget.
8. Check signing Authority.
  - a. Local checks shall be signed by the Council Chairperson and others as authorized by the Council.
  - b. Lutheran Church Extension Fund checks shall be signed by the Treasurer, Vice Chair and others as authorized by the Council.

#### **Article XIV. The Board of Elders**

1. Objective: The Board of Elders supports the Office of the Holy Ministry of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in accordance with the doctrine, guidance, and confessional standard of the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. The Elders also assist the Pastor in the performance of his duties.
2. Qualifications, Composition, Election/Appointment, and Constitutional Authority.

- a. Qualifications: Elders are men who should possess Christian knowledge, zeal, and maturity. They should be at least twenty-one (21) years old, and be either an Associate or Voting Member as defined in Article V.
  - b. The Head Elder shall be elected by the current Board of Elders with a simple majority and the concurrence of the Pastor after the January Voter's Assembly and shall serve for that calendar year. The Head Elder will also serve as a member of the Church Council during his term. If the Head Elder's position becomes vacant, the Board of Elder's shall elect a replacement for the remainder of that calendar year.
  - c. Constitutional Authority: The Board will work within the doctrine and guidance of the LCMS and the Constitution of Our Redeemer.
3. Responsibilities of the Head Elder and the Elders.
- a. Assist the Pastor in the preparation of worship services by assisting with the distribution of Communion or other parts of the service as appropriate.
  - b. Serve as an example to other Members of the Congregation through regular worship, participation in Bible Studies/devotions, and support of Church activities.

#### **Article XV. Board of Finance**

1. Objective: Coordinate the Congregation's contributions.
2. Qualifications, Composition, and Election/Appointment.
  - a. Qualifications: Members should have the ability balance checkbooks and understand consumer math.
  - b. Composition and Election/Appointment: The Board will be led by the Financial Secretary, elected during the Voters' Assembly annual elections. The Church Council Chairperson may appoint a Chairperson to fill a vacancy between elections.
3. Responsibilities:
  - a. Receive, account, deposit funds.
  - b. Provide, on request, trends, amounts, and averages in giving.
  - c. Provide contribution reports for each member.
  - d. Manage contribution envelopes.

#### **Article XVI. Board of Evangelism**

1. Objective: The Board of Evangelism serves to welcome all visitors who worship at Our Redeemer.
2. Qualifications, Composition, and Election/Appointment.
  - a. Qualifications: Members should be willing to assist in creating a warm, welcome atmosphere.
  - b. Composition and Election/Appointment: The Board will be led by a Chairperson, elected during the annual Voter's Assembly election. The Church Council Chairperson may appoint a Chairperson if a vacancy occurs between elections. Board Members will be appointed by the Chairperson as per the approval of the Pastor.
3. Responsibilities:



- a. Identify visitors, ensure they are welcomed, and establish contact/provide information following their visit.
- b. Plan and coordinate, with the pastor, special activities, and events throughout the Church year.

#### **Article XVII. Board of Education**

1. Objective: The Board of Education, with the support and guidance from the Pastor, coordinates Christ centered education programs for all groups within the Congregation, identifies and trains Teachers, and promotes the participation of all Church Members and interested visitors. Any parochial school program subsequently developed by Our Redeemer would be governed by a separate governing document and be addressed by the Church Council at such time.
2. Qualifications, Composition, and Election/Appointment:
  - a. Qualifications: Members should be willing to teach, assist, support, and/or administer Our Redeemer's education programs.
  - b. Composition and Election/Appointment: The Board will be led by a Chairperson, elected during the annual Voters' Assembly elections. The Church Council Chairperson may appoint a Chairperson to fill a vacancy between elections, with the approval of the Pastor. Board Members will consist of the appointed Sunday School Superintendent, Teachers, supporting personnel, and others as designated.
3. Responsibilities:
  - a. The Chairperson will:
    - i. Ensure that Teachers and substitutes are selected and trained to teach Sunday School, Bible Classes, Vacation Bible School, and other education programs in which the Congregation becomes involved.
    - ii. Develop the program's time schedule and activities. Establish its calendar (Sunday School) or determine course dates (VBS).
    - iii. Plan for and provide administrative support (obtaining course materials and supplies, keeping attendance records, ensuring appropriate recognition of students, etc.).
    - iv. Coordinate budget needs with the Church Council Chairperson.
    - v. Regularly update the Council Chairperson and the Pastor on all aspects of the program.
  - b. Teachers will:
    - i. Remember how important teaching God's Word is and ensure lessons are carefully prepared.
    - ii. Keep the Chairperson updated on the class.
    - iii. Remain faithful in the Divine Liturgy.

#### **Article XVIII. Board of Maintenance**

1. Objective: Ensures the security, maintenance, and appearance of the Church buildings and grounds by securing the highest quality workmanship through the most cost-effective means with self-help always given primary consideration.
2. Composition, Qualifications and Election/Appointment:
  - a. Qualifications: Members will possess the basic skills required for routine building and grounds maintenance. Such skills include but are not limited to basic carpentry, plumbing, electrical and groundskeeping.
  - b. Composition and Election/Appointment: The committee is led by a Chairperson, hereafter called the Trustee. The Trustee will advise the Church Council on the composition of the committee. The Trustee is elected during the annual Voter's Assembly elections. The Church Council Chairperson may expand the committee by appointing additional Members to the committee. The Church Council Chairperson may appoint a Chairperson to fill a vacancy between elections, with the approval of the Church Council.
3. Responsibilities of the Trustee:
  - a. Participates in Church Council, reports on Committee issues and coordinates on all Maintenance issues.
  - b. Establish the maintenance schedule.
  - c. Maintain consumable supplies required to conduct preventive and routine maintenance.
  - d. Conduct preventive maintenance.
  - e. Establish and maintain service contracts.
  - f. Conduct routine maintenance and effect repairs as needed.
  - g. Schedule and ensure the cleaning of the Church.
  - h. Schedule and ensure the grounds are maintained.
  - i. Prioritize, schedule and coordinate emergency repairs, major repairs and major projects as directed by the Church Council.
  - j. Schedule and coordinate Congregational workdays.
  - k. Identify potential improvements to the buildings, facilities, and grounds.