

**THE BYLAWS OF  
KOUNTZE MEMORIAL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OMAHA, NEBRASKA**

**ARTICLE I. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

B1.01 In its Congregational Meetings, the Church discerns, through prayer and deliberation, God's direction for faithful service. There are two Meetings to be held regularly each year.

**ANNUAL MEETING:** The congregation shall meet during January or February. This Annual Meeting is to look back and thank God for God's work through the Staff, Council, Committees, Organizations, and other ministry efforts. Written reports are to be available a full week ahead of the meeting, on the website and in the printed booklet of reports.

This Annual Meeting also seeks God's guidance for the new year, specifically including, but not limited to, a proposed spending plan (budget). This proposed spending plan shall, in tentative form, be available for consideration and discussion in an Adult Forum, the week prior to the Annual Meeting. A revised form shall be made available on line in the week prior to the Annual Meeting and in print form at the meeting.

The Annual Meeting offers opportunity for congregational members to bring forward various ideas and questions for discussion by the congregation. So that all may participate thoughtfully and faithfully, Congregational members may present any matter to the Congregation Council at its December meeting. At its discretion, the Council shall include these matters in the agenda of the Annual Meeting. This agenda is to be approved at its January meeting and made available on line at least 10 days before the Annual Meeting. For matters that seem extraordinary, the Council is encouraged to give opportunity for discussion in additional forums before the Annual Meeting.

**ELECTION MEETING:** A meeting to affirm members for the Congregation Council, Endowment Fund Board, DeFreese Manor Board, and other offices as specified in the Constitution, shall be held in August.

To prepare for open discernment of Congregational leaders: The Congregation Council, by its July meeting shall determine which positions need to be filled and if current holders are eligible and willing to serve. The nominating committee shall publicize this list in the print and electronic newsletters, inviting congregational members to submit suggestions. The Nominating Committee shall then prepare a list of persons willing to serve – one name for each position needed – along with helpful biographical information. This listing shall be available to the congregation on line, through electronic communication a full week before the meeting.

Other items for consideration may be included in the agenda provided they are presented for the Council's approval and in time for information regarding the matter to be sent to the congregation a full week before the meeting.

Congregational Meetings may be scheduled between Sunday morning services, with the morning planned to give adequate time for prayers, celebration and deliberation.

**ARTICLE II. MINISTRY COMMITTEES**

At its first meeting following the Election Meeting, the Council shall (prepare to) organize working groups [also known as committees, task-forces, etc] to ensure that the purposes of the congregation, as defined in Chapter 4 of the Constitution, are faithfully served according to discernment of God's guidance for that purpose in the present life of the Congregation. At this meeting, Council members will be appointed to serve as liasons to each of these ministry areas.

These areas of ministry include, but are not limited to:

Worship (and Music);

Witnessing to those not presently in the congregation;

Serving the needs of neighbors – within the congregation, in our community, and beyond  
Forming and Nurturing Faith– for all stages and situations of life  
Stewardship of our lives, so that we can live faith every day  
Connecting with communities of faith – Lutheran, Christian, other – locally and throughout the world

The appointed Council liaison will work with persons committed to this specific area, to organize so the area ministry is faithfully served.

With the guidance of the Senior Pastor, staff members will be assigned to work with each ministry area.

### **ARTICLE III. CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEES**

#### **B3.01 FINANCE COMMITTEE** (moved from standing committees)

The Finance Committee shall prepare a draft budget for the succeeding year, including this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on in its behalf by the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA and the Synod, and shall submit such draft budget to the Congregation Council for its action and later presentation to the Congregation Meeting. The Committee shall exercise oversight of all the financial affairs of the congregation to make sure that they are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the regular forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer. It shall, subject to the approval of the Congregation Council, be responsible for the congregation's investments and its total insurance program. It shall also provide audits of the accounts of the treasurer and the financial secretary, if there be one, as well as of the accounts of the schools and organizations within the congregation. The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member.

#### **B3.02 PROPERTY COMMITTEE** (moved from standing committees)

This committee shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation and shall take care that same is kept in good repair.

**B3.03 A PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** shall consist of six voting members of this congregation and the Vice-President of the Congregation Council. Each of the six members shall be appointed by the Congregation Council for a two year term with three members to be appointed each year. This committee shall provide evaluations and compensation recommendations of all staff. The Vice-President of the Congregation Council shall serve as chairperson of this committee.

**B3.04 A NOMINATING COMMITTEE** of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be appointed by the Congregation Council for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election.

**B3.05 ARCHIVES COMMITTEE** shall direct the filing and maintenance of the documents, records, minutes and important papers and archives of the congregation when they are no longer of current operational value. The members of this committee shall be appointed to terms of four years and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive four year terms. The Chair is elected by the committee for a one year term without limit to succession. The Auditing Committee of the congregation shall make an annual audit of the files and records.

## **ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

- B4.01 The pastor shall be the ex-officio president of the congregation and the Congregation Council. The president shall preside at meetings of the congregation and the Congregation Council. In the absence of the president, the vice-president shall preside.
- B4.02 The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings of the congregation and of the Council. Such minutes shall be preserved permanently in the congregation archives.
- B4.03 The treasurer shall keep the books of accounts of the congregation and shall disburse them on proper orders, making monthly remittance of benevolence payments to the synod treasurer. The treasurer shall make written report of all financial transactions to the Congregation Council monthly and to the congregation at its annual meeting.

## **ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP**

- B.5.01 A member who, for a period of one year, does not partake of Holy Communion and does not make a contribution of record, shall be contacted and encouraged to participate in the life and worship of the congregation. If during the second year, the member does not so participate, that member's name shall be presented to the Congregation Council for consideration for placement on the inactive rolls of the congregation. Upon this recommendation by the Congregation Council, such member shall, if possible, be notified in writing.

~~ADOPTED, 11 OCTOBER 1997 — AMENDED, 06 MAY 1990 — AMENDED, 17 NOVEMBER 1991  
AMENDED, 25 JANUARY 1997 — AMENDED 31 OCTOBER 1999~~