

Constitution of  
The North Eastern Ohio  
Mission District of the  
North American Lutheran  
Church

## **Article 1 – Name and Incorporation**

1.01 The name of this Mission District shall be the North Eastern Ohio Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church (herein after designated as, “this Mission District”). (For the purposes of this document, the North American Lutheran Church herein after shall be designated as, “NALC”).

1.02 This Mission District shall be a recognized geographical subdivision of the NALC.

1.03 This Mission District will be incorporated in the State of Ohio.

## **Article 2 – Confession of Faith**

This Mission District accepts and agrees to honor the constitution of the NALC in its confessional statement [Constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (2011), Article 2].

## **Article 3 – Nature of the Church and the Ministry**

3.01 This Mission District acknowledges and accepts the description of the Nature of the Church and its Ministry described in the Constitution of the North American Lutheran Church (2011), Article 3.

3.02 As this Mission District reflects on and makes decisions regarding its mission, all ordained ministers, elected lay delegates, as well as congregations of this Mission District shall participate in the decision-making process of this Mission District.

## **Article 4 – Ordained Ministry**

4.01 This Mission District recognizes that ordination, and reception of ordained clergy, shall be a function of the NALC, according to Article 4 of the NALC Constitution.

## **Article 5 – Commissioned Lay Ministry**

5.01 This Mission District recognizes that commissioning and reception of lay ministers shall be a function of the NALC, according to Article 5 of the NALC Constitution.

## **Article 6 – Membership**

6.01 This Mission District is a member region of the NALC made up of NALC congregations and ordained ministers within the north eastern region of the State of Ohio. This Mission District subscribes to the constitution of the NALC.

6.02 This Mission District shall have no right to or interest in the property of any congregation or any property within its territory, unless a congregation has expressly conveyed such a right or interest to this Mission District.

6.03 The work of this Mission District shall be done in consultation with the Bishop of the NALC, the NALC Executive Council and other leaders of the NALC.

## **Article 7 – The North Eastern Ohio Mission District Annual Convocation**

7.01 A convocation of this Mission District shall be held annually, in conjunction with the annual Convocation of the Ohio Mission Council.

7.02 Delegates with voting privileges at a convocation of this Mission District shall be the ordained ministers of this Mission District and the official lay delegates who are members of NALC congregations within its geographical jurisdiction. Each congregation of this Mission District shall have the same number of delegates as were assigned to their congregation at the last NALC convocation. New congregations which have never officially attended a convocation shall be represented by their pastor(s) and one (1) lay delegate.

7.03 All voting members of the convocation are delegates and as such represent their congregations.

7.04 The responsibilities of the annual convocation of this Mission District shall include: election of the Dean, the Officers, the Mission District Executive Council, one lay representative from this Mission District to the Ohio Mission Regional Council, and any other position requiring election; adoption of a budget for the subsequent fiscal year (to be defined as July 1 - June 30) by a majority vote; consideration of mission and ministry needs of the Mission District; reception of reports; and other items of business as may be determined by the Mission District's Executive Council, the Dean, or by the Convocation.

7.05 Special convocations may be called for specified purposes by the Dean or by a majority vote of the Mission District Executive Council.

7.06 Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the business of a convocation, absent the approval by the convocation of alternative rules of procedure by at least two-thirds of the votes cast.

7.07 A quorum for the convocation shall be those present. The Dean or the Dean's designee shall preside over the convocation.

## **Article 8 – Dean**

8.01 The Dean shall be an ordained minister who is a member of this Mission District. Pursuant to article 11.03 of the NALC Constitution, the Dean shall be accountable to the Bishop and shall support the work of the Bishop by conducting similar functions in this Mission District. Deans shall serve as pastor to pastors, their families, and congregations and will conduct a ministry of teaching and visitation with ordained ministers and congregations. The Dean may continue to serve under the call of a congregation.

8.02 The convocation shall elect the Dean from a ballot consisting of any candidates submitted by the nominating committee and nominated from the floor. Any convocation delegate may nominate a candidate for Dean, whose name shall be added to the ballot if the candidate is eligible and agrees to serve if elected.

8.03 On any ballot, any candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast shall be elected. If no candidate receives a majority on the first ballot, all but the top four candidates by votes received, including ties, shall be eliminated. Thereafter, if no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the fewest votes, plus ties, shall be eliminated until two candidates remain. When two candidates remain, voting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority.

8.04 The term of office for the Dean shall be three (3) years. The Dean may serve up to three (3) consecutive terms.

8.05 The dean shall serve as a member of the Ohio Mission Regional Council.

8.06 In the event of a vacancy in an unexpired term, the Mission District Executive Council, after consultation with the Bishop, may appoint any eligible person to complete that term of the office of Dean, and that person may then be eligible to be elected.

8.07 After consultation with the NALC Bishop and the Court of Adjudication, the Executive Council of this Mission District is empowered to suspend the Dean by a three-quarters (3/4) vote of all members of the Executive Council, excluding the Dean, for cause as outlined in the provisions for discipline in the NALC Constitution. The next annual convocation of this Mission District may remove the suspended Dean by a two-thirds (2/3) vote and elect a successor.

#### **Article 9 – Officers**

9.01 In addition to the Dean, the other officers of this Mission District shall be a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer. The Recording Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected by the annual convocation through the nominating and election process and may serve a term of two (2) years, and may serve three (3) consecutive full terms.

9.02 The Recording Secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years, and the Treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years.

9.03 The Recording Secretary shall assure that proper records are made and retained.

9.04 The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of this Mission District, overseeing the receiving and disbursing of all funds and keeping accurate accounts of all transactions. Further, the Treasurer shall make complete and accurate reports for review by all members of this Mission District.

9.05 The Recording Secretary and the Treasurer shall have voice and vote in meetings of the Mission District Executive Council.

9.06 In the event of a vacancy in an unexpired term of an officer, the Dean of this Mission District, together with the Mission District Executive Council, may appoint any eligible person to fill the unexpired term, and that person may then be eligible to be elected.

#### **Article 10 – Mission District Executive Council**

10.01 The Executive Council of this Mission District shall consist of the Dean, the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer, and three (3) ordained ministers and three (3) lay members. The three ordained ministers and the three lay members of the Executive Council shall be elected for three-year terms and may serve up to two (2) consecutive full terms. The Dean of this Mission District shall preside at all meetings of the Mission District Executive Council. If the Dean is unavailable, the Executive Council shall choose one of its members to preside for that meeting.

10.02 Between convocations, the Mission District Executive Council shall implement the work and policies of this Mission District, and shall act for this Mission District, subject in all matters to review of its actions by subsequent convocations.

10.03 The duties and function of the Mission District Executive Council shall be to:

- a. Act as Board of Directors for this Mission District.
- b. Establish policies and procedures to guide the Executive Council and Mission District.
- c. Ensure financial integrity and solvency.
- d. Develop long-range planning for this Mission District to be presented at the annual convocation.
- e. Prepare the proposed fiscal-year budget, including an estimate of the percentage of congregational income required to fund the budget, set financial standards and provide for fiduciary oversight for this Mission District.
- f. Approve a proposed agenda and program for each convocation.
- g. Create and oversee committees and task forces (appointed) as needed to assist the Executive Council in carrying out its duties.
- h. Report all actions to the next annual convocation.

10.04 The election of members of the Mission District Executive Council shall be one (1) ordained minister and one (1) lay member. They shall be elected each year at the Mission District Convocation.

10.05 After consultation with the NALC Bishop and the Court of Adjudication, the Executive Council of this Mission District is empowered to suspend a member of the Executive Council by a three-quarters (3/4) vote of all members of the Executive Council, excluding the member being removed, for cause as outlined in the provisions for discipline in the NALC Constitution. The next annual convocation of this Mission District may remove the suspended member by a two-thirds (2/3) vote and elect a successor.

10.06 A quorum for executive council shall be a simple majority of all voting members.

### **Article 11 – Indemnification**

11.01 Any person who at any time shall serve or shall have served as an officer or a director of this Mission District, or of any other enterprise at the request of this Mission District of the NALC, and the heirs, executors, and administrators of such person shall be indemnified by this Mission District in accordance with, and to the fullest extent permitted, by the State of Ohio Statutes, as they may be amended from time to time.

11.02 Nothing contained in this Article 11 shall affect any rights to indemnification to which the elected leaders of this Mission District may be entitled under law.

## **Article 12 – Amendments to the Constitution**

12.01 The Mission District Executive Council may propose amendments to this Constitution no less than 90 days prior to the next annual Mission District Convocation, which shall be distributed to ordained ministers and congregations of this Mission District prior to the Convocation. The adoption of such changes shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present and voting at such convocation.

12.02 A minimum of five (5) delegates to the convocation of this Mission District may propose an amendment to the Constitution, in writing, at the Mission District Convocation. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the delegates present and voting at such convocation as well as at the subsequent annual Convocation.

12.03 Within thirty (30) days after the conclusion of a Convocation, the Secretary shall give written notice to all ordained ministers and all congregations of this Mission District of any constitutional amendment(s) approved by the convocation. Ratification of any amendment to this Constitution, prior to becoming effective, must be ratified by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of congregations (a) which belonged to this Mission District at the close of the Convocation that approved the amendment, and (b) which have voted on ratification in and through properly called congregational meetings, and (c) given written notice to the Secretary of the results of their voting within six months of the close of the convocation. For ratification to be valid, at least fifty percent (50%) of all eligible congregations must have voted on the question.

12.04 Upon ratification of any amendment to this Constitution, and after the period to receive votes from eligible congregations has ended, the Secretary shall give written notice of the approved amendment to the ordained ministers and all congregations within this Mission District.

12.05 Notwithstanding the foregoing, any amendment to Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of this Constitution, or affecting the subject matter thereof, is contingent upon a corresponding change in the NALC Constitution articles of the same number. Upon final ratification of such changes in the NALC Constitution (see Art. 17), an equivalent amendment to this Constitution will occur as a matter of course.

12.06 By-laws not in conflict with this Constitution may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of this Mission District's convocation.

12.07 No amendments shall be made to this constitution that are in conflict with the Constitution of the NALC.

## **Article 13 Re-Formation**

13.01 In the event that the NALC restructures this Mission District, this constitution shall be in effect for all successor entities until such time as the new entity adopts its own constitution.

## **Article 14 Provisional deans and elections**

14.01 As this Mission District comes into existence, a provisional Dean shall be appointed by the Bishop, in accordance with the NALC Constitution.

14.02 The provisional Dean shall serve until the Mission District Convocation elects a Dean. That initial election shall be held in the year designated by the Bishop, no more than three years since the appointment of the provisional Dean.

14.03 The provisional Dean shall be eligible for election.

14.04 Once the Convocation has elected a Dean, this Article 14 shall no longer be needed, and shall be removed from the Constitution.