



# **Constitution & Bylaws**

**Canadian Association of Lutheran  
Congregations**

The Constitution & Bylaws were last amended at the 2009 General Convention and subsequently ratified by the congregations of CALC.

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## **CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **PREAMBLE**

We unite in confident reliance upon the Holy Spirit by whom we are drawn to God and to one another. We believe in one, holy universal (the Church, militant and triumphant), and apostolic Church of which Jesus Christ is the Head. We are mindful of our own inadequacies, but we have unwavering confidence in the destiny and duty of the one true Church of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, we, the Congregations approving this Constitution, in order to serve more effectively the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, do now enter into this fellowship to express the unity of faith which exists among us. Moreover, we dedicate ourselves anew to proclaim in word and deed, on this Continent and throughout the world, the Gospel of forgiveness and life everlasting through Jesus Christ our Lord.

May God give us grace to accomplish His will through the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations.

### **PRINCIPLES OF FORMATION**

#### 1) Call to Commitment

This Constitution is intentionally a call and exhortation to serve Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord in His Church.

#### 2) Scriptural, Confessional, and Evangelical

This Association and its Constitution are designed to be Scriptural, Confessional and Evangelical. The inclusion of citations is intended to illustrate and facilitate this principle.

#### 3) “Confession” and “Purpose”

Because of our intention to build upon the Sacred Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, the Confession of Faith (Article 3) and the Statement of Purpose (Article 5) are fundamental in this Constitution with its Bylaws. The Constitution and Bylaws do not consist of a series of unrelated statements. The whole is intended to be an explanation of the Confession and Purpose.

#### 4) Congregational Autonomy

We believe that the Lord of the Church has created two expressions of His Church: The local Congregation and the “Una Sancta” (the one, holy, universal, and apostolic Church or “body” of Jesus Christ in and throughout the world).

With this in mind, we have composed this Constitution to recognize, enhance, protect, and assist local Congregations, so that such local Congregations may voluntarily, enthusiastically, and effectively enter into the work of the one, holy, universal, and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ.

#### 5) Emphases on Freedom

A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.

Because of our appreciation of congregational autonomy, this Constitution with its Bylaws aims to enable members of this Association to be at all times candid, free, and open.

Our intention on the one hand is to provide checks and balances to guard against an oligarchy and on the other hand to promote freedom of speech, open meetings, broad representation, free flow of ideas and concerns, and consideration of the rights of those who may stand in the minority at one time or another.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE ONE - NAME**

The name of this Church fellowship shall be the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (Abbreviated the CALC), herein known as the "Association".

### **ARTICLE TWO - HEADQUARTERS**

The headquarters of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall be in Kamloops, British Columbia.

### **ARTICLE THREE - CONFESSION OF FAITH**

#### 1 The Bible

The Association accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God, and joyfully submits to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of life and faith.

#### 2 Faith in the Triune God

The Association is built upon faith in the ever-living Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as revealed in the Holy Scriptures to Whom be the glory for ever and ever (see the three Ecumenical Creeds).

#### 3 God the Father

3.1 Almighty God, Creator of the universe, Who formed man in His own image, Who from the beginning loved goodness and hated evil, desires that the children of His creation live in eternal fellowship with Him. We hold to the creation and fall of humanity as described in the first chapters of Genesis, not as myth, but as historic facts.

3.2 Therefore, the Creator gave His only begotten Son (John 3:16) to be the Savior of the world, that people might be set free from the bondage of sin, and become joint heirs with Jesus Christ of eternal life.

#### 4 Jesus Christ, God's only Son and our Savior

4.1 At the heart and centre of this faith is confidence in Jesus Christ and love for Him, the Eternal Word of God, true God (only Son of the Father from eternity), and true man (born of the Virgin Mary), and the only Savior of the world.

4.2 The reason for our being the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations is to proclaim salvation solely by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ.

#### 5 Dependence upon the Holy Spirit

We also acknowledge dependence upon the Holy Spirit working solely through the Means of Grace to call unbelievers into saving faith in Jesus Christ, to empower believers to grow in faith, to bestow His gifts for the ministry of the Church locally and universally, to inspire love for one another, and to bring glory to the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church.

#### 6 Symbols: Basic and Required

As brief and true statements of the doctrines of the Word of God, this Association accepts and confesses the following Symbols, subscription to which shall be required of all its members, both congregations and individuals:

- 6.1 The ancient Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian;
- 6.2 The Unaltered Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism.

#### 7 Book of Concord: Normative

As further elaboration of and in accordance with these Lutheran Symbols, this Association also receives the other documents in the Book of Concord of 1580: the Apology, Luther's Large Catechism, the Smalcald Articles (including the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope) and the Formula of Concord; and recognizes them as normative for its theology.

#### 8 Pure Doctrine

The Association accepts without reservation these symbolic books of the Lutheran Church not insofar as but because they are the presentation and explanation of the pure doctrine of the Word of

God and a summary of the faith of the evangelical Lutheran Church.

#### **ARTICLE FOUR - THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

- 1 Jesus Christ is the living Lord and head of the Church, His Body in the world.
- 2 The Church is the assembly of saints in which the Gospel is taught purely and the sacraments are administered rightly. This one holy, Christian and apostolic church is to continue forever
- 3 Through the Word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the Gospel.
- 4 We believe that through these Means of Grace the Spirit of God produces His fruit, bestows His gifts, and unites the whole Christian Church on earth with Jesus Christ.
- 5 This proclamation and the Holy Spirit's activity, rather than organizational union, constitute the true unity of His Church. We believe that this true Church eagerly identifies such unity and promotes and rejoices in fellowship and cooperation with all members of Jesus Christ's Body everywhere. "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace....and He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Jesus Christ: Until we all attain the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, to of the measure of the stature of the fullness of Jesus Christ:" Ephesians 4:3,11-13

#### **ARTICLE FIVE - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

- 1 Witness to the Christian Faith

The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregation is a fellowship of congregations to which the Gospel of reconciliation has been given. It seeks to focus and coordinate the purposes and resources of these Congregations so that the Triune God may be more fully known among all people through a faithful ministry of God's Word and the Sacraments. The Association dedicates itself to bear witness to the eternal Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in its fullness and purity, and to preserve and extend the unity of that faith as revealed in God's Holy Word.

- 2 Proclamation and Propagation

Through the Means of Grace, the Association specifically purposes to proclaim and propagate this eternal Gospel to the lost and weary of this world, and to provide for daily renewal and sanctification of the members of its congregations.

- 3 Emphases

The emphases of the Association shall be evangelism, missions, prayer, the study of the Holy Scriptures, and the application of these to daily living within congregations and caring ministries.

#### 4 Statement of Mission

The mission of this Association is to:

4.1 Assist Associate and Member Congregations and Individual members in coordinating joint efforts for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Church.

4.1.1 These shall include the emphases of the Association. These may also include (but are not limited to) other areas such as: conferences and seminars; exchange visits; lay activities; distribution of Bibles and other literature; children's homes, Bible camps, Bible schools, ministries to women, men, youth, singles, families; chaplaincy work; and other caring ministries.

4.1.2 Assist the congregations involved with the Association in the nurture of the children, youth, and adults in the covenant of their Baptism that they may grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ and in their life of loving and obedient faith in Him.

4.1.3 Study the problems of contemporary life and society in the light provided by the sacred Scriptures in order to bring to bear as Christian understanding of human nature, Law and Gospel, and Dr. Martin Luther's insight concerning the two kingdoms, in order to enter effectively into society and government to help in dealing justly and mercifully with such problems.

4.1.4 Develop, produce, and broadcast programs to communicate the Gospel using various communication media such as radio, television, audio and video tapes, motion pictures, etc.

4.1.5 Establish pension, medical, and disability plans in order to provide assistance for the pastors, eligible laity, and their families.

4.2 Assist Member Congregations on the roster of this Association to:

4.2.1 Establish congregations and missions throughout the world as centres for the proclamation of God's Word and proper administration of the Sacraments, Christian evangelism, ministries of outreach and mercy, and Christian fellowship and growth.

4.2.2 Train and discipline an ordained ministry for the administration of the Means of Grace.

4.2.3 Provide theological and parish education and ministry to those involved in higher education.

4.2.4 Establish and maintain cooperative relationships and support with other denominations, groups, and independent movements, who are in doctrinal agreement, so that together we may effectively minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole

world.

## **ARTICLE SIX - POWERS**

### **1 ORIGIN AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY**

1.1 All authority and power in the Christian Church belong to the Lord Jesus Christ as Head of the Church.

1.2 The Lord of the Church has committed to the individual congregation the ministry of God's Word and Sacraments and with this ministry the authority of the Office of the Keys(Matthew 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23) and to each believer of each congregation the Priesthood of all believers.

1.3 Member Congregations in associating themselves with the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations delegate to it the authority and power essential to carry out the Statement of Purpose of the Association (Article 5).

1.4 As a functioning fellowship established by and for its Member and Associate Congregations and individual members, the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall use its delegated authority only to fulfill the responsibilities of its Members in the areas where those Congregations and individuals cannot act effectively alone.

1.5 Thus there exists a mutuality of both responsibilities and rights between the Congregations and individual members, and the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations.

### **2 THE JURISDICTION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

#### **2.1 RESPONSIBILITIES**

This Association shall:

- 2.1.1 Conduct its affairs in accordance with the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, and Resolutions of the conventions of this Association;
- 2.1.2 Carry out the purpose for which the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations is organized, as set forth in this Constitution (Article 5 in particular);
- 2.1.3 Develop financial procedures to assure the efficient fulfillment of its purposes;
- 2.1.4 Have its own corporate name and seal;
- 2.1.5 Pay its debts, settle its claims, and provide means by which member and Associate Congregations and individuals may support the ministry of the Association;
- 2.1.6 Have authority to enter into contracts; sue and be sued; acquire real and personal

property by gift, devise, bequest, purchase or other lawful means; hold and buy its property for any and all purposes aforementioned and not in conflict with them; and sell mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by lawful means whenever necessary or expedient to carry out the purposes allowed by its Articles of Incorporation;

- 2.1.7 Require all Officers and Boards to conduct all their affairs in a Christian spirit according to the Constitution, the Bylaws, the Articles of Incorporation, Resolutions of the General Conventions of this Association.

## 2.2 RELATIONSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION TO THE CONGREGATION

- 2.2.1 The local congregation calls its own pastor upon review of the Pastoral Review Panel, owns its property, provides for its maintenance, and conducts its own program.
- 2.2.2 The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations, has no claim to a local congregation's property.
- 2.2.3 Freedom in Jesus Christ is freedom to work in God's Kingdom according to the measure of faith God has given. In accordance with this principle, the right of Member Congregations of the Association to cooperate with other Lutherans in establishing and maintaining agencies and institutions for mutual edification, for work of mercy, or for missionary endeavor shall be preserved.
- 2.2.4 The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall, however, recommend such an agency or institution for support only if it has been approved by the Association.
- 2.2.5 The jurisdiction of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations over Individual congregations or groups of congregations shall be strictly limited to the following:
  - 2.2.5.1 To insure faithful adherence to the doctrinal position as confessed by this Association (see Article three);
  - 2.2.5.2 To apply discipline when disloyalty to this Association's doctrinal position is evident;
  - 2.2.5.3 To enlist wholehearted cooperation with the programs approved by the conventions of this Association.

## 2.3 A CONGREGATION'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE ASSOCIATION

- 2.3.1 According to the Word of God, the Kingdom of God is correctly expressed through the local congregation, and the congregation is the correct form of the Kingdom of God on earth.

- 2.3.2 The congregation is the local assembly “among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel”, and consists of believers who use the means of grace, and the spiritual gifts given them as directed by the Word of God. Such congregations may take a variety of forms such as the traditional, this association, parish Groups, Chaplaincy ministries, house churches, Christian Communities, etc.
- 2.3.3 According to the New Testament, the congregation needs an external organization with membership roll, election or appointment of officers, states times and places for its gatherings, and other similar provisions.
- 2.3.4 Members of the organized congregation are not, in every instance, believers, and such members often derive false hope from their external connection with the congregation. It is therefore the sacred obligation of the congregation to purify itself by the quickening preaching of the Word of God, by earnest admonition and exhortation, and by disciplining the openly sinful and perverse.
- 2.3.5 The congregation directs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word and the Spirit of God, and acknowledges no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself. Congregations voluntarily bind themselves as members of this Association according to the categories provided elsewhere in this constitution and bylaws.
- 2.3.6 A congregation esteems and cherishes all the spiritual gifts which the Lord gives for its edification, and seeks to stimulate and encourage their use.
- 2.3.7 A congregation gladly accepts the mutual assistance which congregations can give one another in the work for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.
- 2.3.8 Such assistance consists partly in the mutual sharing of spiritual gifts among the congregations through conferences, exchange visits, lay activities, etc. whereby congregations are mutually edified, and partly in the voluntary and Spirit prompted cooperation of congregation for the accomplishing of such tasks as exceed the ability of the individual congregation.
- 2.3.9 Among such tasks may be mentioned specifically the training of pastors, distribution of Bibles and other literature, home and foreign missions, children’s homes, Bible school, Bible camps and other works of mercy.
- 2.3.10 Congregations have no right to demand that other congregations shall submit to their opinion, will, judgment, or decision; therefore, domination by a majority of congregations over a minority is to be rejected.
- 2.3.11 Agencies found to be desirable for conducting the joint activities of congregations, such as conferences, committees, officers, etc. cannot in this Association, impose any

obligations or restrictions, exert any compulsions, or lay any burden upon the individual congregation, but have the right only to make recommendations to, and requests of, congregations and individuals.

- 2.3.12 Every free congregation, as well as every individual believer, is constrained by the Spirit of God and by the privileges of Christian love to do good and to work for the salvation of souls and the quickening of spiritual life, as far as its power and abilities permit. Such free spiritual activity is limited neither by parish nor by synodical bounds.
- 2.3.13 According to Scripture, each believer and each congregation including CALC has a duty of obedience to Jesus Christ Alone. Each is to remain an obedient sinner before God until the last day and is holy only in Christ the savior through Grace and the forgiveness of sins. Justified, each is one with Jesus Christ and with one another and each is part of the body of Christ. As part of the community, each suffers with one another and bears the burdens of one another. The task of Love includes serving each other, as Christ is our example
- 2.3.14 Nevertheless, as Holy Scripture does not countenance arbitrary modes of procedure or behaviour, but commands us to do all things in Christian love and good order, nor abusing our Christian liberty (Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 14:40), all members of the Association and those in our fellowship shall be expected to cooperate in accordance with the Constitution and the other resolutions of the Association within the Scriptural limitations set forth above.
- 2.3.15 Any objections to official resolutions and procedures of the Association shall be filed with the President, and the reasons therefore should be clearly stated, so that complete brotherly understanding can result, and any necessary corrections or alterations be made. Should no satisfactory result be obtained through the efforts of the President, the objections should next be laid in accordance with the procedures detailed in the Bylaws.
- 2.3.16 No public circulation of the association regarding disputes or objections should be made, except after the procedures detailed in section 2.3.15 of this article, with due patience, have been exhausted and with no satisfactory resolution.
- 2.3.17 Should any congregation of whatever membership category deem it to be in its best interest and in harmony with God's Word to discontinue its membership in the Association, it has the Christian liberty to do this in a Christ like manner, in accordance to this Constitution and Bylaws giving the reasons for withdrawal in writing. Such withdrawal shall be effective upon receipt by the President.

### 3 Liability of Members

The Liability of members is limited.

#### 4 Income and Property

4.1 All income and property of the Association shall be applied toward the furtherance of the objects of the Association, and no portion of such income or property shall be paid or transferred or be made available directly or indirectly for the benefit of any member or members of the Association, except as remuneration for employees of the Association.

4.2 If upon winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains, after satisfaction of all its debts, liabilities and obligations, any property or assets whatsoever, the same shall not be paid or distributed generally among the members, but it shall be paid or transferred to such other charitable organization in Canada, the objects of which, in the opinion of the officers of the Association, most closely resemble those of the Association.

### **ARTICLE SEVEN - CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

1 There shall be two forms of membership, membership as a member congregation and associate membership.

2 Membership as a member congregation

2.1 The Member Congregations of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall consist of congregations that apply and are received.

2.2 The requirements for membership as a Member Congregation shall be the following:

2.2.1 Subscription to the Confession of Faith (Article 3) and the statement of Purpose (Article 5);

2.2.2 Acceptance of this Constitution and its Bylaws;

2.2.3 Participation in the programs of activity approved by the Conventions and determined individually by the local Congregation.

2.3 Action taken by the congregation to become a Member Congregation shall be at least by a simple majority vote at a legally called and conducted meeting of the Congregation.

3 Associate membership

A believer or congregation who accepts the Confession of Faith (Article 3) and statement of Purpose (Article 5) of this constitution may apply to become an Associate member . An Associate member has voice but no vote.

4 Termination

4.1 Membership in the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations may be terminated by action of a Member Congregation or Associate member by action of the Association.

4.2 Should a Member Congregation or Associate member no longer desire to continue membership in the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations, such a member may terminate its membership in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the constitution of the congregation involved. If no procedure is prescribed, a simple majority vote at a legally called and conducted meeting of the congregation shall terminate membership in the Association.

4.3 The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations may exclude a Member Congregation or Associate member from its membership because of violation of the conditions of membership stated in this Article. Such former members, whether Individual or Congregations shall have no rightful claim upon the property or upon the financial assets of the Association, notwithstanding an appeal. An appeal against expulsion shall be made to the President in writing. The President shall then appoint a Board of Appeals and Adjudication . This Board in turn, having met with the appellant, shall bring its findings and recommendations to the next regular convention, whose decision shall be final.

## 5 Roster of Congregations

All member congregations and Associate members shall be listed appropriately on the Roster of Congregations of this Association

## **ARTICLE EIGHT - THE PASTORS OF THIS ASSOCIATION**

### 1 Definition

1.1 The Call of a congregation of this Association or of the Board of Elders acting for all the congregations provides the authority for ordination.

1.2 The ordained pastors of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations and of each congregation constitute its Pastors, to whom is committed the public administration of the Means of Grace.

1.3 The pastor and believers constitute the membership of the congregation, the pastor's status differing only as to function.

### 2 Roster of Pastors

2.1 All ordained Pastors of this Association shall be listed on the Roster of Pastors of this Association.

2.2 All pastors of this Association shall be subject to the discipline of the Association.

2.3 The Association reserves the right to suspend, discipline, or dismiss any pastor on the Roster of Pastors.

### 3 Suspension and Dismissal

3.1 The Board of Elders shall exhort Congregations to suspend or dismiss Pastors for reasons of doctrinal defection or moral failure. If a congregation should decide not to suspend or dismiss, then the Board of Elders shall suspend or dismiss such persons from the Roster of Pastors.

3.2 Pastors suspended or dismissed by the Board of Elders may appeal their case to the Board of Appeals and Adjudication and then to the General Convention whose decision shall be final.

3.3 A pastor cannot appeal the decision of his congregation to suspend, or dismiss him. The congregation's decision shall be final.

#### 4 Continuance without a Parish

A pastor may continue on the Roster of Pastors only as long as he or she serves a parish of the Association or continues as a "Pastor in Extended Ministry".

#### 5 Ministerial Acts

5.1 Ministerial acts shall be performed only under the auspices of a congregation. Such acts shall be entered by the pastor of the congregation in its official records.

5.2 However, those properly called to serve as chaplains in the armed forces or in institutions or agencies may perform such ministerial acts as come within the scope of their work, and such acts are to be recorded and reported periodically to this Association.

5.3 No ordained minister of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure given in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, except with the express permission of the person involved or in order to prevent the commission of a crime.

### **ARTICLE NINE - THE GENERAL CONVENTION**

#### 1 Highest Delegated Authority

The highest constitutional authority delegated by the congregations to the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall be vested in the General Convention, which shall meet in regular sessions annually by call of the President in consultation with the National Council.

#### 2 Flow of Concerns

Any Member Congregation, or any group of Member Congregations, or Associate member is encouraged to prepare and present a resolution of concern to the General Convention, which the President shall place on the agenda.

### 3 Responsibilities

The General Convention shall:

3.1 Adopt or approve its own rules of order and agenda. Worship and inspiration shall be of the highest priority;

3.2 Adopt a program of activity for this Association, and take the steps necessary to provide for its accomplishment. This program shall clearly reflect the Confession of Faith and statement of Purpose of this Association;

3.3 Elect officers, councils, boards, committees, etc. in accordance with this Constitution;

3.4 Require reports of the work of its officers, councils, boards, jurisdictional units, commissions, committees, etc., review their works, and act on matters presented by them;

3.5 Adopt a budget for the work of this Association;

3.6 Establish disciplinary procedures not otherwise provided for in this Constitution and its Bylaws;

3.7 Recommend or suggest, upon the National Council's advice, hymnals, forms of worship, and forms for performance of pastoral acts, etc.;

3.8 Approve proposed amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws for submission to the Member Congregations for ratification;

3.9 Appoint a nominating committee.

3.10 Uphold the faith confessed by this Association (Article Three), pray for and promote peace and order in this Association, and seek to further the Purpose (Article Five) of this Association.

### 4 Limitations

4.1 The powers of the General Convention shall be limited by the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation or Charter, this Constitution and its Bylaws, and resolutions of this Association's Conventions.

4.2 However, questions involving doctrine shall not be ultimately determined by vote of the General Convention, but on the basis of the Word of God and the Confessions of the Church.

### 5 Composition of Conventions

5.1 The General Convention shall be composed of voting members, advisory members, and

official visitors.

5.2 The voting membership of the General Convention shall consist of delegates who represent the congregations of this Association and other delegates as prescribed by the Bylaws.

5.3 The voting delegation of a Special Convention shall be elected in the same way as that prescribed for the General Convention.

5.4 Challenges to representation or election shall be referred to the National Council and decided by the approved delegates to the General Convention.

## 6 Advisory Members

6.1 Advisory members shall be those, other than voting members, who are required to attend. They shall have voice, but no vote.

6.2 They include the President (who shall vote only in the event of a tie), the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and those named in the Bylaws.

## 7 Official Visitors

Official Visitors, whose presence and participation are desired, shall be invited by the President and seated by vote of the Convention. They shall have voice but no vote.

## 8 Quorum

A majority of the registered and approved delegates shall constitute a quorum.

## 9 Business Sessions

The President shall seek to order business on the agenda in such a way that issues relating solely to Member Congregations and pastors on the roster of this Association are separated from issues relating to Associate members

## **ARTICLE TEN - THE NATIONAL COUNCIL**

### 10 Membership

The National Council shall be composed of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and the Board of Elders and the Board of Trustees. The President shall serve as chairman, and the Secretary of this Association as Secretary.

### 11 Election

11.1 Each member of the National Council shall be elected from the Roster of Pastors of this Association, or be a believing member of a member congregation or an associate member chosen for

the Priest's:

- 11.1.1 commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and to the divine inspiration, revelation, and inerrancy of the Scriptures;
- 11.1.2 evidencing the fruit of the Spirit in life suitable to the function of the office;
- 11.1.3 Spirit-bestowed gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and administrative ability;
- 11.1.4 and full intention to uphold this Association's Confession (Article Three), Purpose (Article Five), and Constitution.

11.2 Each member shall be elected by majority vote of the registered delegates at the General Convention for a term of four years and may only hold the same office for two consecutive terms, holding office until a successor is elected and assumes office. The member takes office upon election.

11.3 A believing member of a member congregation not on the Roster of Pastors must be elected to the following positions:

- 11.3.1 either the President or the Vice President
- 11.3.2 either the Secretary or the Treasurer
- 11.3.3 a majority of the positions on the Board of Elders
- 11.3.4 a majority of the positions on the Board of Trustees

11.4 If elected from the Roster of Pastors of this Association, the member should first of all be a "pastor". With this in mind, it is recommended that the member maintain contact with the parish ministry by serving at least part time on the staff of a congregation of this Association

11.5 If the President dies, resigns, or is unable to serve, the Vice President shall serve until the next General Convention. If any other member dies, resigns, or is unable to serve, a temporary replacement shall be elected by the National Council to serve until the next General Convention

## 12 Meetings

The National Council shall meet at least once a year as called and publicized by the President. Additional meetings may be called by the President of this Association and must be called when requested by at least one-third of the Board Elders or by at least one-third of the Board of Trustees. Meetings may be held by telephone conference or internet conference.

## 13 Duties and Responsibilities

13.1 The National Council shall function as the legislative agency of this Association in the interim between General Conventions in order to deal with situations which necessitate action before the next General Convention. Legislative acts by the National Council shall require a majority vote of all its members and must be presented to the next General Convention for review.

13.2 The National Council shall receive reports and resolutions prepared by the various

officers, jurisdictional units, councils, boards, and committees of this Association and shall, after consideration, transmit them to the General Convention with its recommendations.

13.3 The National Council shall consider disagreements which may arise and shall endeavour to resolve differences.

13.4 The National Council, after seeking proper counsel, shall determine whether any officer is unable to serve. If such a decision is challenged, it shall be referred immediately to the Board of Appeals and Adjudication whose decision shall be final.

13.5 The National Council, as the interim legislative agency of this Association, shall when requested, interpret the Constitution and Bylaws. Its interpretation shall be reported to the next General Convention for final decision.

13.6 Additional duties of the National Council shall be those stated in the Bylaws and elsewhere in this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN - OFFICERS OF THIS ASSOCIATION**

### **1 PRESIDENT**

1.1 The president shall serve primarily as spiritual leader of this Association and shall witness enthusiastically to his faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, promise to uphold our Confession of Faith (Article Three), promote the Purpose (Article Five), and endeavor to promote truth, peace, and order within the fellowship of this Association.

1.2 The President shall also be responsible for the effective administration of this Association.

1.3 The President shall preside at all meetings of the General Convention, Special Convention, National Council, and Board of Elders.

### **2 THE VICE PRESIDENT**

2.1 The Vice President shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees

2.2 The Vice President particular responsibility shall be to assist the President to facilitate resolutions and motions passed by the General Convention, National Council, Board of Elders and Board of Trustees.

### **3 THE TREASURER**

3.1 The Treasurer shall serve as a member of National Council and act as secretary to the Board of Trustees.

3.2 The Treasurer shall:

- 3.2.1 Keep such financial records, including books of account, as are necessary to comply with Revenue Canada;
- 3.2.2 Render financial statements to National Council and General Convention;
- 3.2.3 Perform any additional duties prescribed in this Constitution, Bylaws and resolutions of this Association.

**4 THE SECRETARY**

4.1 The Secretary shall:

- 4.1.1 Conduct the correspondence of the Association;
- 4.1.2 Issue notices of meetings of the Association, National Council and Board of Elders;
- 4.1.3 Keep minutes of all meetings of the Association, National Council and Board of Elders;
- 4.1.4 Have custody of all records and documents of the Association except those required to be kept by the treasurer;
- 4.1.5 Have custody of the common seal of the Association;
- 4.1.6 Maintain the register of members and Roster of Pastors
- 4.1.7 Perform any additional duties prescribed in this Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of this Association.

**5 Authorized Signatures**

The President and the Secretary of this Association shall sign all documents on its behalf, except those pertaining to financial and legal transactions in the business affairs of this Association, which shall be signed by The Treasurer and any one other member of the Board of Trustees.

**ARTICLE TWELVE - THE BOARD OF ELDERS**

**1 Membership**

1.1 The Board of Elders is composed of the President of this Association serving as chair person and tie-breaker, the Secretary, and not less than three nor more than nine other members. This Board shall consist of three (3), five (5), or seven (7), members, as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

**2 Meetings**

The Board of Elders shall meet at least twice each year. Additional meetings shall be called by the President of the Association serving as chair as often as the business of the Association may require, or at the request of one-third members of the Board. Meetings may be held by telephone conference or internet conference

### 3 Duties and Responsibilities

3.1 The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the leadership and supervision of this Association in all spiritual matters not otherwise assigned by this Constitution, Bylaws, or the General Convention. To this end the Board of Elders shall periodically review the work of this Association and make such recommendations to any jurisdictional unit, board, committee, standing committee, etc. of this Association, as it deems wise.

3.2 The Board of Elders shall consider all matters regarding extra-church and inter-synodical relationships which have been recommended by the appropriate jurisdictional unit or committee and shall make necessary recommendations to the General Convention. When a change in relationship with other Churches or groups of Churches is to be considered, procedures similar to those prescribed in Article Eighteen (Amendments) of this Constitution shall prevail.

3.3 The Board of Elders shall recommend to the General Convention candidates and policies of commissions, standing committees, etc.

3.4 The Board of Elders shall be authorized to give ecclesiastical endorsement and issue calls, where necessary, to pastors serving in specialized ministries.

3.5 The Board of Elders shall act on the application of a pastor to serve any designated inter-synodical or non-synodical Lutheran or non-Lutheran institution, agency, or activity and shall determine by vote whether or not he may serve in this capacity and continue on our Roster of Pastors. The application shall be submitted through the President of this Association.

3.6 The Board of Elders shall appoint a Pastoral Review Panel (PRP) who shall: receive, review, and act on applications from a Member or Associate Member congregation of this Association to:

- (a) interview and assist Member or Associate Member congregations of this Association with their process of calling a pastor;
- (b) mentor seminary students and those students completing Pastoral training under any program administered by this Association;
- (c) interview and assist seminary graduates and graduates of any Pastoral Training Program administered by this Association for call;
- (d) interview and recommend to the Board of Elders and the National Council pastors considered by the Association for call to an extended ministry; and
- (e) interview and recommend pastors emeriti to the Board of Elders and the National Council.

Six of the members of the PRP shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, each of whom will be given a specific role in the discussions with each candidate based upon his/her defined job descriptions (which must be approved by the Board of Elders). These include (a) a member of the National Council, (b) a lay member of CALC or one of CALC's Member congregations and not on National Council, (c) a theologian, (d) one who can assess the psychological development of the candidate, (e) CALC's Pastoral Personnel Director, and, as appropriate (f) a traveling mentor.

In addition the PRP would have one or two temporary members, who would be appointed by the host congregation requesting the PRP's assistance in the call, training or mentoring of a candidate. The temporary members will serve for as long as it takes for the PRP to mentor, train or assess a candidate for call. The congregation requesting assistance would have access to the expertise of the PRP's permanent members and would participate in every phase of the assessment of their candidate. A quorum for the transaction of business of the PRP shall be a majority of its members.

3.7 This Board shall have the high task of maintaining loyalty to the Confession of Faith (Article Three) and of guiding implementation of the purpose (Article Five) in and through all officers, councils, boards, commissions, committees, etc.

3.8 The Board of Elders shall be responsible for arranging and supervising the referendum for the Member Congregations.

3.9 This Board shall be expected to bring concerns of loyalty to the National Council and/or the General Convention as such concerns seem appropriate.

3.10 Additional duties of the Board of Elders shall be those stated elsewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE THIRTEEN - THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **1 Membership**

1.1 The Board of Trustees is composed of the Vice President as Chairperson as tie breaker and Treasurer, and not less than three nor more than nine other members. This Board shall consist of three (3), five (5), or seven (7) members, as determined by the General Convention in the year of election.

### **2 Meetings**

2.1 The Board of Trustees shall meet at least once each year as called and publicized by the Vice President. Meetings may be held by telephone conference or internet conference

2.2 Additional meetings shall be called by the Vice President as often as the business of this Association may require, or at the request of the President of this Association or of one-third of the members of this Board.

### **3 Duties and Responsibilities**

The Board of Trustees shall have charge of the general management and business affairs of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations.

#### **3.1 Property Transactions**

3.1.1 In the performance of these duties this Board is authorized and empowered to purchase or otherwise acquire title to real estate for and on behalf of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations; to act on behalf of the various jurisdictional units, committees, etc., after receiving their recommendations, in the buying and selling of property; to borrow money on behalf of this Association or any of its jurisdictional units, boards, committees, etc.

3.1.2 This Board shall be responsible for the investment of the endowment and other investment funds of this Association; to buy and sell bonds, stocks and other securities; to receive gifts, legacies, and devises on behalf of this Association or manage, or dispose of them; to have full power to manage, in accordance with this Associations Statement of purpose (Article Five) all properties entrusted to it; and to secure and defend the property rights of this Association by the process of law.

3.1.3 It shall be the policy of this Association not to borrow money, unless approved in the same manner as a constitutional amendment.

### 3.2 Procedures and Relationships

Procedures in performing these duties, delegation of responsibilities, and relationship of the Board of Trustees to separately owned institutions, irrespective of type of ownership, shall be as defined in the Constitution and Bylaws.

### 3.3 Periodic Review

The Board of Trustees shall periodically review the financial condition, policies, practices, and operations of all components of this Association. If in the judgement of the Board of Trustees any such policy, practice, or operation is detrimental to the Purpose of this Association (Article Five), it shall, in writing, point out such matters to those concerned. In the event agreement cannot be reached, those involved may submit the matter to the National Council.

### 3.4 Financial Control

The Board of Trustees shall require jurisdictional units, boards, standing committees, etc. which receive budgetary support to make such adjustments in their programs as maybe necessary to insure that expenditures for current operations shall not exceed receipts for the current fiscal month.

### 3.5 Auditors et al

The Board of Trustees shall make arrangements for auditors and other necessary employment and, as needed, prepare job descriptions.

### 3.6 Salaries

The Board of Trustees shall recommend to the National Council the remuneration of the officers

and other employees of this Association, provided such remuneration is deemed necessary, subject to approval by the General Convention.

#### 4 Authorized Signatures

The Treasurer and any one other member of the Board of Trustees shall sign on behalf of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations all documents pertaining to the management and control of the business affairs of this Association.

### **ARTICLE FOURTEEN - THE BOARD OF APPEALS AND ADJUDICATION**

#### 1 Membership

1.1 This Board shall consist of no less than two, nor more than three highly qualified Members (not pastors) of the Member Congregations and no less than two nor more than three highly qualified ordained Pastors.

1.2 This Board shall be selected by the President in consultation with the appellant and he shall strive to select individuals satisfactory to all involved parties.

1.3 This Board shall elect from its members a Chairman.

1.4 These shall be chosen for their dedication to Jesus Christ, their commitment to the inerrancy of the Scriptures, their support of the principle of congregational authority and autonomy, and their gifts of wisdom, justice and mercy.

#### 2 Response to Pastor's and/or Congregation's Appeal.

2.1 This Board shall respond with justice and mercy to an appeal by a pastor who has been suspended or dismissed by the Board of Elders.

2.2 This Board has no jurisdiction in the discipline exercised by local Congregations, but Congregations may choose to appeal grievances to this Board for its judgement.

#### 3 Stages of Appeals and Adjudication

3.1 Charges of deviation from doctrine, morals, or approved and necessary practice shall first be treated locally according to Matthew 18:15-20.

3.2 If such local attempts fail, the matter may be directed to representatives chosen by the congregations of the Association.

3.3 If local attempts to resolve grievances fail, the matter may be referred to the Board of Elders.

## **ARTICLE FIFTEEN - DECLARATION OF FAITH**

- 1 This Association has adopted a Declaration of Faith, which are statements that clarify the policy and position of this Association. Such statements shall be normative for this association.
- 2 Each statement is Scripturally and Confessionally based, making no statement directly or indirectly contrary to this constitution, specifically Article Three, Confession of Faith, and Article Five, Statement of Purpose.
- 3 The Declaration of Faith shall be a part of this constitution. Adoption or amendment of such statements subsequent to the constituting convention shall be conducted the same as for the amendments to the constitution of this Association.

## **ARTICLE SIXTEEN - BYLAWS**

- 1 Necessity and Agreement

The Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations may adopt such bylaws as may be found necessary. No bylaw shall conflict with this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE SEVENTEEN- CONSTITUTIONAL AND BY-LAW AMENDMENTS**

- 1 Confession of Faith

The doctrinal basis and confessional subscription of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (Article Three) shall be unalterable. No amendments and no interpretive footnotes shall be added. Moreover no amendments to this Constitution shall conflict with Article Three or Article Five or Article 17.1.

- 2 Basic Principles of Organization and Operation

This Constitution is based on certain fundamental principles of organization and procedure. These principles shall be preserved in amendments to this Constitution and its Bylaws. They are:

2.1 The representative character of legislative assemblies shall be preserved.

2.2 Effective checks and balances between and within the agencies of this Association shall be maintained.

2.3 The functions of officers, National council, and convention shall be clearly defined by the Constitution and Bylaws, which shall also guarantee that responsibility and authority are commensurate.

2.4 There shall at all times be clear and direct channels for all officers, jurisdictional units,

councils, boards, standing committees, etc. of this Association to bring recommendations before legislative assemblies.

2.5 There shall also be clear and direct channels for each congregation or group of congregations to bring recommendations before legislative assemblies.

2.6 The legislative authority shall rest in the Conventions of this Association, and between the Conventions in the National Council.

2.7 Supervision of administration, including the determination of policy in executing approved legislation, shall be the responsibility of officers, councils, boards, jurisdictional units, and committees of this Association.

### 3 Proposed Amendment

3.1 A proposed amendment to this Constitution or the by-laws shall be presented in writing to the President of this Association at least ninety days before the General Convention and must have the authorization and signatures of the representatives of at least one Member Congregation or of the National Council.

3.2 The President shall have the proposed amendment prepared in proper form with the approval of those proposing the amendment (concerning the wording and intent of the amendment). The President shall arrange to publish the Proposed amendment in the official publication(s) of this Association at least thirty days prior to the General Convention.

#### 3.3 Convention Procedure

3.3.1 The proposed constitutional amendment shall be presented for consideration by the convention at a time designated by the President

3.3.2 At least one recess shall elapse between its first presentation and convention action.

3.3.3 A simple majority of the Registered Delegates shall be required to approve amendments to present before the Congregational Referendum.

3.4 If the proposed amendment receives the favorable majority vote of the total number of the registered delegates, it shall be referred with a full and open disclosure of relevant information to each voting congregation of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations.

3.5 Each congregation shall have one ballot, due at a reasonable date, stated in the information accompanying the ballots. Following a properly called and conducted congregational meeting, the ballot shall be marked, sealed, and sent to the Secretary of this Association. After all returns have been received, a committee of three (elected by the National Council) shall count the ballots and report in writing the results to the President.

3.6 If a three quarters majority of the ballots cast in favor of the amendment, the President shall immediately declare it adopted through notice in the official Association periodical(s), whereupon the amendment shall become effective. The President shall include notice of its adoption in his report to the next General Convention of this Association.

3.7 If the proposed amendment is not adopted, the President shall so state in a notice published in the official Association periodical(s) and in his report to the next General Convention of this Association.

## **ARTICLE EIGHTEEN - RELATIONSHIP TO ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION**

Wherever a provision of this Constitution appears to conflict with the “Articles of Incorporation of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations” and/or the “Bylaws of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations”, this Constitution shall prevail until the matter is clarified. The National Council shall, as soon as feasible, present the conflict to the General Convention for a decision.

## **BYLAWS**

### **PART ONE - MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES**

#### **1 Member Congregation**

The full voting Members of the General Convention shall include delegates representing the Member Congregations of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations.

#### **2 Member Pastors**

The full voting Members of the General Convention shall also include Member Pastors which shall consist of those individuals on the Roster of Pastors of this Association.

#### **3 Associate members and Other Pastors**

Associate members and other Pastors have voice but no right to vote. Each annual convention has the right upon motion to give selective or full voting rights to Associate members and other Pastors.

#### **4 Observer Groups**

Congregations in the process of withdrawing from another Lutheran judicature, mission fellowships, unincorporated mission congregations, and congregations in the process of forming and incorporating shall be termed “Observer Groups “ with voice but no vote.

## **PART TWO - GENERAL CONVENTION**

### 1 Meetings

The General Convention shall meet annually, time and place to be determined by the previous General Convention and publicized by the National Council.

### 2 Representation

Member Congregations are entitled to one representative per 50 confirmed members or greater fraction thereof to a maximum of three representatives, plus one pastor serving Member Congregations. A Member Congregation of more than 600 confirmed members shall be entitled to have a maximum of four representatives, plus one pastor serving the Member Congregation. All member and Associate Congregations are entitled to at least one delegate.

### 3 Officers and Committee members

All members of Member and Associate Congregations, Pastors on the roster of this Association, and Associate Members shall be eligible for election in the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (unless otherwise stipulated in the Constitution, Bylaws, or resolutions of the General Convention).

### 4 Bourinot's Rules of Order

Unless stated differently in the Bible (as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life) or otherwise ordered by this Constitution and Bylaws or by resolution of the General Convention, parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with Bourinot's Rules of Order, Revised (current edition).

## **PART THREE - CONFLICTING LOYALTIES**

### 1 Participation

This Association shall not participate in the services or rituals of organizations or lodges, secret or open, which are avowedly religious or practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as True God and True man and only Savior from sin, death, and the power of the devil, or teach salvation by good works, nor shall the buildings of the Association be used for such purposes.

### 2 Pastoral Participation

Those who are on the Roster of Pastors of this Association shall not take part in such services or rituals specified in this Part.

## **PART FOUR - CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

### 1 Admission for membership

1.1 Believers or Congregations desiring membership status as members or Associate members on the congregational roster of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations shall make application to the National Council by way of the President.

1.2 The National Council shall approve or disapprove the application. Until the next General Convention, all applications approved shall be placed on the Roster as Associate members.

1.3 The next General Convention shall act on the applications(s) to approve or disapprove MEMBER CONGREGATION status on the Association's roster of congregations as a member congregation.

1.4 Representatives of congregations applying for MEMBER CONGREGATION status shall not vote on their own application.

1.5 All approved applications for Associate membership shall be placed on the Roster as Associate members.

1.6 Membership as an Associate member may be terminated by National Council if the member fails to participate in the activities of the Association for two years or may be terminated by this Association by action in accordance with the constitution.

## **PART FIVE - NOMINATING PROCEDURES**

- 1 At least four months prior to the General Convention, Member Congregations shall be notified of vacancies to be filled.
- 2 Each Member Congregation shall be encouraged to present to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee names and qualifications of consenting candidates for election.
- 3 The Nominating Committee shall meet as soon as practical and shall elect from its members a Chair and a Secretary.
- 4 The Nominating Committee shall perform such other functions as are generally incumbent upon this position.

## **PART SIX - CLASSIFICATION OF PASTORS**

### **1 THE PASTORS OF THIS ASSOCIATION**

Pastors who are serving under a call from a Member Congregation of CALC shall constitute THE PASTORS OF THIS ASSOCIATION. Their names shall be on the Roster of Pastors of this Association.

### **2 PASTORS IN EXTENDED MINISTRY**

Pastors recommended by the Board of Elders and approved by the National Council, who are serving in non-parish ministries of CALC or ministries approved by the National Council, shall constitute PASTORS IN EXTENDED MINISTRY. Their names shall be on the Roster of Pastors of this Association.

### 3 PASTORS EMERITI

Pastors, at least 62 years of age, who have requested such status, shall be designated and constitute PASTORS EMERITI. Their names shall be on the Roster of Pastors of this Association.

## **PART SEVEN - PASTORAL CARE/DISCIPLINE OF PASTORS**

1 We lament that, due to human frailty, at times the discipline of pastors may become a painful necessity.

2 In all such matters our hearts' desire and prayer are for repentance, reconciliation, and healing, so that peace and good-will may prevail. (Psalm 133:1, Romans 12:18).

3 However, when there are charges of deviation from doctrine, morals, approved and necessary practice or of conduct unbecoming the holy calling of proclaiming the Word of God by word and deed, such charges shall be treated locally according to the Word of God and with prayer. It is recommended that the following Scripture passages, among others, be consulted and practiced when such charges are being handled.

3.1 Deuteronomy 19:15 (the requirement of two or three witnesses).

3.2 Matthew 18:15-20 (one concerned brother meeting with an apparently offending brothers in private; if necessary leading to another meeting with one or two others present; and if necessary, culminating in action by the congregation).

3.3 I Timothy 5:19-20 (the seriousness of such charges, the need for two or three witnesses, and the objective of counteracting sin).

3.4 Luke 17:1-10 (If our brother sins, rebuke is necessary, and if he repents, forgiveness is necessary).

### 4 Definitions:

4.1 "Approved and necessary practice" shall include reasonable cooperation in the affairs and decisions of the Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations as opposed to an uncooperative and/or belligerent attitude.

4.2 "...conduct unbecoming the holy calling of proclaiming the Word of God by word and deed"...shall include financial irresponsibility, insensitivity to authentic needs and concerns of the 'flock', etc.

5 If for the sake of confidentiality, or if attempts by the local congregation fail, the matter may be directed to the President of the Association for counsel (who may follow the same procedure of Matthew 18:15-20, etc.).

6 If the Congregations of the Association are prepared to deal with the matter (through a standing or Ad hoc committee etc.), the concern shall be directed to such appropriate committee or agency.

7 If such counsel fails to resolve the problem it shall be referred to the Board of Elders for hearing who shall take appropriate action (such as exoneration, suspension, or dismissal of the pastor), and the Board of Elders shall act upon such recommendation and report such action to the next General Convention.

8 A pastor who is suspended or dismissed by the Board of Elders may appeal such decision to the Board of Appeals and Adjudication, whose decision shall be final

#### **PART EIGHT - BUDGET**

1 Following consultation with the National Council, Committees and Auxiliaries, etc. the Treasurer and the Board of Trustees shall be responsible for preparing and presenting a Fiscal Budget to the General Convention.

2 The Board of Trustees shall be responsible to keep expenses within income.

3 If income appears to warrant increases, the Board of Trustees may approve as much as ten per cent (10%) increase to the total Fiscal Budget previously approved by the General Convention.

4 The Board of Trustees may re-arrange by as much as ten per cent (10%) the total Fiscal Budget, which was approved by the General Convention.