

GOVERNING BYLAWS OF NEW CREATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHAPTER 1: POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. The powers of New Creation Lutheran Church (NCLC) are vested in the congregation as determined by the congregation at the congregation meetings.
- B. Only such authority as is delegated to the Board of Spiritual Guidance, the Board of Administration, or other organizational units is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the congregation. The congregation is authorized to:
 - 1. Call a pastor;
 - 2. Terminate the call of a pastor;
 - 3. Approve the annual operating expenses;
 - 4. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - 5. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer or dispose of its property; and
 - 6. Elect and terminate its boards and ministries

CHAPTER 2: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- A. The Annual Meeting of the congregation shall be held in September.
- B. A special meeting of the congregation may be called by petition of at least ten percent (10%) of voting members or by the Board of Spiritual Guidance. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held, and no other business shall be transacted.
- C. Notices of all meetings of this congregation shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by mail to all voting members at least ten (10) days in advance of the date of the meeting.
- D. A quorum for any regular or special meeting of the congregation shall be 10% of voting members.
- E. Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted. Electronic attendance will be acceptable.
- F. All actions by the congregation shall be by simple majority vote unless otherwise noted.
- G. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all congregational meetings.

CHAPTER 3: MINISTRIES

A. Purposes:

- 1. To be the "body of Christ".
- 2. To fulfill the Great Commandments and the Great Commission.(Ex.20:1-17, Matt. 22:34-40 and Matt. 28:19-20)
- 3. To accomplish the "purposes" of the church as determined by the Board of Spiritual Guidance. (See Chapter 4A)
- 4. Ministries will be formed or dissolved as the needs arise or no longer serve a purpose as determined by the Board of Spiritual Guidance and/or the Board of Administration.

5. It is recognized the governing structure of New Creation Lutheran Church hereafter called NCLC exists to train, equip, support, encourage, and build-up lay people directly involved in ministry.

B. Current Ministries at New Creation Lutheran Church:

1. A listing of all current ministries which exist at NCLC is attached to these Bylaws
2. At the annual meeting of the Congregation, the Board of Spiritual Guidance will report and individually list all ministries which have been approved and are in existence at the time of the report. The report will also list and identify the leader(s) of the team responsible for that ministry.
3. A person must be a member of NCLC in order to be the team leader of a ministry and must be approved for that position of leadership by the Board of Spiritual Guidance.
4. Ministry Team Leaders shall not be paid staff.

C. Starting New Ministries:

1. Any new idea for starting a new ministry **must** meet the following qualifications:
 - a. The ministry idea must be biblically sound.
 - b. The ministry idea must be consistent with the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of NCLC.
 - c. The ministry idea must not involve in the independent raising of funds (which may compete with the church stewardship) unless expressly approved by the Board of Spiritual Guidance.
 - d. The ministry idea must be “transferable” to other churches (in other words, does not depend upon specific personalities or locations).
 - e. The new ministry must be lead by a leadership team. The leader(s) of the ministry team must be a member of NCLC. (See Chapter 8)
2. All requests for approval of new ministries shall be submitted to the Board of Spiritual Guidance for consideration at the next regular meeting.
3. In order for requests for new ministries to be considered, the leader(s) is responsible for providing the Board with a completed Ministry Development Proposal Form describing the plan to implement the ministry, including the answers to the following:
 - a. What is the purpose of the ministry?
 - b. Who is the target for the ministry?
 - c. What needs will your ministry meet?
 - d. How will you meet these needs?
 - e. What resources (space, financial, etc) are required?
4. Once a new ministry plan has been approved by the Board of Spiritual Guidance the new ministry leader is responsible for working with the church staff to build the ministry action plan so the ministry can be assimilated into the church body.

CHAPTER 4: THE BOARD OF SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

A. Purposes:

1. To be accountable to **God** for the effectiveness of all ministries of NCLC.
2. To lead the congregation in its accomplishment of its mission and vision, conducting long range planning, and evaluating its activities in light of its mission and goals;
3. To exercise general guidance of the life and activities of the congregation by encouraging, equipping, and supporting those who are directly involved in the ministry of the church;
4. To exercise overall regular decision-making responsibility for the church, with

ratification by the congregation at annual meetings and other specially called meetings.

B. Responsibilities:

1. To regularly review all activities and programs of the church, to ensure that the church pursues balance in the areas of ministry.
2. The Board of Spiritual Guidance will review with the leader of each ministry a minimum of once per year.
3. Members of the Board of Spiritual Guidance may not chair any ministry of NCLC with the exception of the Chairperson of the Board of Administration.
4. To constantly assess the overall spiritual condition of the church, as guided by the NCLC Core Values, using regular, two-way communication with ministry leaders and NCLC staff;
5. To actively pursue knowledge of the current programs and curriculum used at NCLC, and to regularly search for and recommend new materials which will enable ministries to be more effective;
6. To regularly meet and pray for all ministries of the church;
7. To encourage and help equip ministry leaders (paid and unpaid) to become more effective in their areas of ministry, by locating and coordinating necessary training;
8. To encourage and equip people in their spiritual growth, by coordinating regular spiritual gifts training.
9. To recommend to the congregation annual operating expenses, new staff positions, new ministry proposals, changes to by-laws and similar matters that have a church-wide impact. [During the monthly meeting, this Board will address specific issues which arise during the year, such as new positions, capital expenditures and other financial matters which fall outside of the annual operating expenses and may amend the operating expenses accordingly. Operating expenses amount greater than 10% shall be approved only by a majority congregational vote at an annual or special congregational meeting. All financial and property matters which fall within the operating expenses previously approved at the annual Congregational meeting (or as amended by the Board of Spiritual Guidance) will be delegated to, and the responsibility of the Board of Administration.]
 - **Although the Board will be responsible for meeting as often as is necessary, it is expected that the Board will regularly meet at least monthly.**
10. To regularly communicate with the congregation as to the status of ministries, including an annual report to be provided at the annual congregational meeting which summarizes the accomplishments of the year and provides long-range plans of ministries.
11. To exercise overall responsibility for appointment and supervision of salaried employees, annual review of the membership roster, and ensuring that the provisions of these Bylaws are carried out.

C. Organization of the Board:

1. The Board of Spiritual Guidance will consist of seven persons, five voting regular members who have completed *Discovering Membership Class 101*, *Maturing Your Faith Class 201* and *Spiritual Discovery Class 301*, the senior pastor, and the chairperson of the Board of Administration. Each of the seven will have one, equal vote.
2. The Board will conduct all meetings as open meetings, except for closed sessions which are necessary to consider confidential matters, including personnel issues and hiring staff.
3. The chairperson and vice chairperson shall be selected annually by (and from) the five regular members of this board at the first meeting following the annual congregational meeting.
4. The chairperson of the Board of Spiritual Guidance will also serve as Chairperson of the Congregation, and will be responsible to:
 - a. Sign all legal documents of the congregation; preside at all meetings of the

- congregation and the Board of Spiritual Guidance.
 - b. Deliver an annual report to the congregation;
 - c. Execute Letters of Call on behalf of the congregation; and
 - d. Meet with the pastor/s regularly, and determine the agenda for the meetings of the congregation and this Board.
5. The Vice-Chair will fulfill all responsibilities of the chair in His absence.

D. Selection of Regular Members of the Board:

- 1. All vacancies will be filled by nomination and recommendation by the Nomination Review Ministry Team (Chapter 6, below) with election by congregational vote at the next annual meeting.
- 2. The selection of nominees will consider, as a primary factor, the intention that this Board will be determined by qualifications and experience

E. Term of Members

- 1. The member’s terms will be staggered, with two new members being selected each year, in order to avoid a turnover of the entire board within one year.
- 2. If appointment by the chairperson of the Board of Spiritual Guidance to serve a partial, existing term, then that board member is able to be nominated to serve a subsequent full term.
- 3. After having served two consecutive three year terms (or a period of five years or more) that Board member will not be able to be nominated for another term until two years have passed.

CHAPTER 5: THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

A. Purpose and Responsibilities:

- 1. The Board of Administration is primarily responsible for the physical and financial needs of NCLC.
- 2. To regularly receive information relating to ministries requiring physical and financial support of space supplies and/or finances. Make decisions within pre-existing (As set out in the operating expenses) and delegated parameters.
- 3. To assist in preparation of the annual operating expenses for the annual meeting.
- 4. To communicate monthly with ministry leaders on financial matters.
- 5. Provide guidance and coordination to enhance the effectiveness of Ministries.
- 6. Members of the Board of Administration may not chair any ministry of NCLC.
- 7. Determine if whether all current ministries needs are being met;
- 8. Determining new (proposed) ministry needs are being met with the current operating expenses and resources.
- 9. Determine what issue/issues are brought to the attention of the Board of Spiritual Guidance.

B. Organization of the Board:

- 1. The Board of Administration shall consist of six voting members who have completed *Discovering Membership Class 101, Maturing Your Faith Class 201 and Spiritual Discovery Class 301* and the senior Pastor who does not have a vote except in the case of a tie vote.
- 2. The chairperson and vice chairperson shall be selected annually by the six voting regular members.
- 3. The Chairperson of the Board of Administration shall be responsible for:
 - a. Signs all legal documents;
 - b. Relays issue information and actions from BOSG meetings to the BOA meetings;
 - c. Relays information and actions from the BOA meetings to BOSG meetings;

- d. Develops meeting agenda; and
 - e. Presides over the Board of Administration meetings.
4. Vice Chair will fulfill all responsibilities of the chair in His absence.
- C. Selection of Members of the Board:**
- 1. All vacancies will be filled by nomination and recommendation by the Nomination Review Ministry Team (Chapter 6, below) with election by congregational vote at the next annual meeting.
 - 2. The selection of nominees will consider, as a primary factor, the intention that this Board will be determined by qualifications and experience.
- D. Term of Members:**
- 1. The member's terms will be staggered, with two new members being selected each year, in order to avoid a turnover of the board within one year
 - 2. If appointed by the chairperson of the Board of Administration to serve a partial, existing term, then the board member is able to be nominated for another term to serve a subsequent full term.
 - 3. After having served two consecutive three year terms (or a period of five years or more) that Board member will not be able to be nominated for another term until two years have passed.

CHAPTER 6: THE NOMINATION REVIEW MINISTRY TEAM

A. Members of the Team:

- 1. The membership of the Nomination Review Ministry Team will change following each annual meeting so that the members of the Board of Spiritual Guidance and Board of Administration whose terms have just ended will become members of the Nomination Review Ministry Team.
- 2. All members of the Nomination Review Ministry Team shall be voting members of NCLC.
- 3. The seven members of Nomination Review Ministry Team are:
 - a. The two (or one every third year) Board of Spiritual Guidance members whose terms most recently ended;
 - b. The two Board of Administration members whose terms most recently ended;
 - c. Two (Three every third year) voting member elected at large at the most recent annual meeting. See Chapter 8 re: Membership.
 - d. The Senior Pastor.
 - e. Should any of the board members of either board that are to serve on the nominating review ministry team be nominated and choose to seek a second term, their position in the nominating review ministry team will be filled by a person on the respective board that is on the second of a three year team.
 - f. The facilitator will be determined among the 6 voting members. The Pastor can not be the facilitator.
 - g. Should any of the board members of either board that are to serve on the nominating review ministry team be nominated and choose to seek a second term, their position on the nominating review ministry team will be filled by a person on the respective board the second of a three year term.

B. Qualifications for Nomination:

- 1. Nominees for the boards must be voting members of NCLC and have the reputation of, and consistently exhibit the biblical qualifications of, Godly leaders (as defined in I

- Timothy 3:1-4 ,6, 7; Titus 1:6-9; and I Peter 5:1-4).
2. Consideration for vacancies on the Board of Spiritual Guidance and the Board of Administration shall be based upon nominations from the congregation and/or staff using the Nomination Form which summarizes the spiritual maturity requirements of the nominee.
 3. Nominees must submit a Ministry and Experience Form which addresses the nominee's prior experience of service within the church.
 4. Nominees must have completed *Discovering Membership Class 101, Maturing Your Faith Class 201*. (If not completed 201, they will commit to take the class at the earliest opportunity.)

C. The Nomination Process

1. Vacancies on the Board of Spiritual Guidance and the Board of Administration will be filled by nomination and recommendation by the Nomination Review Ministry Team, with approval by congregational vote at the next annual meeting.
2. The Nomination Review Ministry Team will receive the completed nomination forms, which shall be available from the church office.
3. After receiving the nomination forms, the Nomination Review Ministry Team will contact the nominee to confirm their interest in serving on the board. If the nominee confirms their interest in serving on the board a letter will be sent including a Ministry Experience and Availability Form which will be returned to the senior Pastor and three Candidate Recommendation Forms to be sent to three individuals of the nominee's choosing. These individuals can be members of the church, or individuals outside of New Creation including co-workers, boss, or spouse.
4. After the Nomination Review Ministry Team receives and reviews all of the Candidate Recommendation Forms and the Ministry Experience & Availability Forms, the Committee may interview the nominees and prepare a slate of nominees to be presented 21 days prior to the election at the next annual congregational meeting.
5. All completed Candidate Recommendation Forms shall be treated as confidential by the members of the Nomination Review Ministry Team. Within thirty days after the election, all copies of the Candidate Recommendation Forms shall be destroyed.

CHAPTER 7: THE PASTOR

- A. The authority to call a pastor shall be in the congregation, and shall be accomplished by at least a two-thirds majority ballot vote of voting members present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose.
- B. The call of the congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only for the following reasons:
 1. Mutual agreement to terminate the call;
 2. Completion of a call for a specific term of years;
 3. Resignation of the pastor;
 4. The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 5. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine (as defined by the Book of Concord), morality, or continued neglect of duty, by a 2/3 vote of the congregation; or
 6. The dissolution of the congregation.
- C. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in the Letter of Call.

CHAPTER 8: MEMBERSHIP

- A. Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of the congregation at the time that these Bylaws are adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws. Members shall be classified as follows:
1. ***Baptized members*** are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or, having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God.
 2. ***Confirmed members*** are baptized persons who have confirmed their faith as a result of Confirmation instruction or those who have been received by adult baptism, and by affirmation of faith, through the new member process of this congregation, but will not have voting rights until they have completed *Discovering Membership Class 101 and Maturing your Faith Class 201*. The commitment card will be presented after completion of Maturing your Faith Class 201 and will be patterned after Chapter 8,B 1, 2, and 3.
 3. ***Voting members*** are baptized and confirmed members and/or members by affirmation of faith who have completed *Discovering Membership Class 10 and Maturing your Faith Class 201*. The commitment card will be presented after completion of Maturing your Faith Class 201 and will be patterned after Chapter 8,B 1, 2, and 3.
- B. It shall be the privilege and responsibilities of members of this congregation to:
1. Make regular use of the means of Grace, both Word and Sacraments;
 2. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God committed to:
 - a. Daily Prayer
 - b. Daily Bible reading
 - c. Weekly worship
 - d. Growing toward tithing(10%) of financial resources to God's kingdom
 - e. Growing in God given gifts and calling
 - f. Serving in ministry
 - g. Participating in Christian fellowship/friendship building
 - h. Encouraging spiritual growth in others by sharing their faith stories.
 3. Support the work of this congregation through contribution of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- C. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
1. Death;
 2. Resignation;
 3. Transfer or release;
 4. Disciplinary action by the Board of Spiritual Guidance;
 5. Removal from the roll due to inactivity. Such persons who have been removed from the active membership roster shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern. Inactivity shall be defined as not attending worship services and not making a financial contribution for at least one year.

CHAPTER 9: PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- A. The property of New Creation Lutheran Church belongs to the members of the congregation.

- B. If this congregation ceases to exist, the property and assets shall be sold, all debts retired and if there are funds remaining, they shall be given away to honor the cause of Christ.

CHAPTER 10: DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- A. Denial of the Christian faith as described in these Bylaws, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member.
- B. Discretions will be reviewed by the Board of Spiritual Guidance and if found to have merit prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following **Matthew 18: 15-17**, proceeding through these successive steps:
 - 1. Private admonition by the senior pastor, or his/her designee;
 - 2. Admonition by the senior pastor (or his/her designee) in the presence of two (2) or three (3) witnesses; and
 - 3. The member may be requested to appear before the Board of Spiritual Guidance.
- C. If for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by A and B hereof, the chairperson of the Board of Spiritual Guidance or designated member of the Board shall administer such admonitions.
- D. If the above mentioned process does not result in either reconciliation or resignation, the person member charged with an offense shall appear before the Board of Spiritual Guidance after having received a written notice that specifies the exact charges that have been made against the member at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting to resolve the question of membership. Failure to appear may result in revocation of the charged person's membership status.
- E. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Board of Spiritual Guidance upon receipt of:
 - 1. Evidence that injustice has been done; or
 - 2. Evidence of repentance and amendment.
- F. When there is disagreement among factions within this congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, the Board of Spiritual Guidance will seek help from agencies that specialize in conflict resolution within a congregation. After consultation, the matter will be referred back to the Board of Spiritual Guidance who shall call a special congregational meeting and present recommendations accordingly.
- G. The Board of Spiritual Guidance will communicate to the congregation progress in resolving the conflict in a timely manner.
- H. If the conflict involves a person, that person will be included in all meetings; however the meeting may be closed at the request of the person involved to non board members to protect his or her privacy.

CHAPTER 11: AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

- A. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of the congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.
- B. Changes to the Bylaws may be proposed by any voting member and shall be submitted in

writing to the Board of Spiritual Guidance at its regular monthly meeting at least forty (40) days prior to a regular annual or semi-annual meeting of the congregation. The Board of Spiritual Guidance shall notify the members of the proposal, with its recommendations, at least thirty (30) days in advance of the congregational meeting.

Revised and Approved By-laws September 20,2009 (Annual Congregational Meeting)
This is a living and changing document.