

**Christ Memorial Lutheran Church**  
**St. Louis County, Missouri**  
**September 17, 2009**

**Constitution**

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

**PREAMBLE**

Created by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and called by the Holy Spirit, this congregation exists as a community of baptized Christians gathered around God's Word and the precious sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ. This congregation gratefully receives the new life and salvation from our Lord that we may share this gift with each other and with all people throughout the world. Motivated, encouraged, and empowered by the Gospel message of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, we thankfully acknowledge the countless blessings our Triune God has given this congregation in the past. We commend our future to His care, knowing that our Lord will never leave us or forsake us, but He will be with us always, even unto the end of the age. May His ever-present grace continue to embolden us to live courageous lives of Christian witness and to reach out with His love to a non-believing world.

**ARTICLE I**

**Name of the Congregation**

The name of this congregation shall be "Christ Memorial Lutheran Church" of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, of the County of St. Louis, Missouri.

**ARTICLE II**

**Vision and Mission**

The vision of Christ Memorial Lutheran Church is to be a *21<sup>st</sup> Century Mission and Discipling Center*. The mission of this congregation is to communicate, foster, and support the true saving Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to its members, to its neighbors, to the community, and throughout the world, and to do so in an ongoing and expanding manner.

**ARTICLE III**

**Confessional Standard**

This congregation acknowledges and accepts without reservation:

A. All the canonical books of the Old and the New Testament as the divinely inspired Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;

B. All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church from the Book of Concord as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God. These are:

1. The three Ecumenical Creeds—the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian
2. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession
3. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
4. The Smalcald Articles
5. The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
6. The Large Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther
7. The Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther
8. The Formula of Concord

#### **ARTICLE IV Doctrinal Literature**

Hymns, prayers, liturgies, books, Bible studies, and all audiovisual materials shall be used in a manner, which conforms to the confessional standard in Article III in

- A. all worship services of this congregation;
- B. all ministerial acts;
- C. Confirmation, Sunday school, Bible studies, and all other instruction in Christian doctrine for children and adults.

#### **ARTICLE V Congregational Membership**

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

- A. Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation.
- B. Communicant members are those baptized members who are admitted to communicant membership in accordance with Article I of the bylaws, and are not members of any organization whose principles and conduct conflict with the Confessional Standard expressed in Article III of this constitution.
- C. Voting members are communicant members who are admitted to voting membership in accordance with Article I of the bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE VI Called Ministers of Religion—Ordained and Commissioned**

A. This congregation, through the Voters' Assembly, has the exclusive right to call ordained and commissioned ministers of religion. The pastoral office shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in this constitution, who has been endorsed by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and who is a member of the Synod. The same requirements shall apply to all commissioned ministers of religion.

B. Any ordained or commissioned minister of religion may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office. Removal will only take place after all other attempts for a Christian reconciliation have failed.

C. Prior to extending a call for a senior pastor, the congregation shall notify the president of the Missouri District so that he may assist in the process and, if needed, help in temporarily filling a vacancy.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Authority of the Congregation**

The Voters' Assembly shall delegate to the Church Council, Board of Elders, and staff authority to conduct and perform all acts and affairs of the congregation in its stead, except that such authority shall not include the following:

- A. Amend the constitution or bylaws.
- B. Call or alter the call of any ordained minister of religion.
- C. Call any commissioned minister of religion.
- D. Remove any called, ordained or commissioned minister of religion.
- E. Sell or purchase any real estate or use the current property as collateral.
- F. Enter into any lease of real estate or property if the total amount of lease payments exceeds \$100,000.
- G. Elect and remove members of the Church Council, elders, and other delegates as needed.
- H. Approve the annual budget and its objectives.
- I. Approve all long-term borrowing of money with a term of more than three years.
- J. Approve all short-term borrowing of money, with a term of three years or less, if the amount exceeds \$100,000.
- K. Approve the establishment of endowment funds.
- L. Excommunication of members.
- M. Approve the merger or dissolution of the congregation.

The Voters' Assembly also empowers the Church Council to delegate to the staff the administration of the day-to-day operations of the congregation in accordance with policies and directives established by the congregation and/or the council.

Members of the Voters' Assembly may attend meetings of the Church Council as observers, other than those portions of any meeting where the purpose is to discuss personnel-related matters or any issue or matter where the president determines that such meeting or portion thereof must be closed in order to preserve the privacy of individuals.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Officers and Boards**

This congregation shall have the following officers and boards, in addition to any which the congregation shall authorize from time to time. The specific duties of the officers are outlined in the bylaws.

A. Officers

1. President
2. Vice-president
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

B. Boards

1. A Church Council, which shall be comprised of the four congregational officers, the chairman of the Board of Elders, and four ministry chairs. Designation of the four ministry chairs shall be specified in the bylaws.
2. A Board of Elders, which shall be comprised of male communicant members 23 years old or older, will assist the pastor in the spiritual life of the congregation. The Board of Elders themselves shall determine the number of elders; however, there will be no fewer than 12.

The called, ordained ministers of religion shall be advisory members of the Church Council and of all boards and committees of the congregation.

### **ARTICLE IX Synodical Membership**

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as long as the Synod conforms to the confessional standards set forth in this constitution as determined by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose.

### **ARTICLE X Property Rights**

A. The congregation shall be the sole owner of all funds, personal property, and real property donated to or purchased by or on behalf of this congregation or its organizations. No person or organization of the church shall retain any right, title, or interest in any such funds or property. The congregational banking accounts shall be administered by the officers of the congregation as specified in the bylaws and will be held in the name of and under the management of the congregation's officers.

B. If at any time a division of the congregation should take place for any reason, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to the Confessional Standard set forth in Article III of this constitution, as determined by the dispute resolution process described in the bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

C. In the event the congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Missouri District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Meetings**

Meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall be held and announced as specified in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **Amendments**

The Voters' Assembly may adopt amendments to this constitution, provided that such amendments do not conflict with the Confessional Standard set forth in Article III of this constitution or with any other article that pertains to a scriptural doctrine or practice. The constitution may be amended in the following manner:

- A. The proposed change or amendment must be submitted in writing to the Voters' Assembly.
- B. The proposed change or amendment must be read in two meetings of the Voters' Assembly, at least one of which shall be a regular meeting.
- C. In the second such meeting of the Voters' Assembly, an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths of those voting members present shall be required to effect such change or amendment.