

**TRINITY EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

MISSOURI SYNOD

THE CONSTITUTION

The original constitution of Trinity Lutheran Church was revised in June of 2003. This document is that revision. This revised Constitution, Bylaws and Officers Manual was approved by the Constitution Approval Committee of the Mid-South District of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in February of 2004. The approval letter is on file in the church office.

**THE CONSTITUTION
TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

720 Lock Four Road
Gallatin TN 37066

PREAMBLE

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Therefore, we, the members of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Gallatin, Tennessee.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation shall be to seek the honor and glory of God, to carry out His will, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to spread the kingdom of God and to foster Christian fellowship and love, by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members, according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Article III).

ARTICLE III

CONFESSIONS

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed and inerrant Word of God, verbally inspired, and submits to them as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life; we acknowledge and accept all the Confessional Writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are the three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV

MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

A. BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP: Baptized members are all members who have been baptized, "in the name of the Triune God", including the children on the membership rolls who have not yet been confirmed.

B. COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP: Communicant members are those:

1. Who are baptized in the name of the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit;
2. Who accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and standard of faith and life;
3. Who are familiar, at least, with Luther's Small Catechism and declare their acceptance of it;
4. Who attend divine services faithfully;
5. Who lead Christian lives and do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21);
6. Who partake of the Lord's Supper frequently after their confirmation;
7. Who contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, toward the building of Christ's Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world;
8. Who devote their time and talents to the extension of the Kingdom of God;
9. Who permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred; and,
10. Who are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

C. MEMBERSHIP BY TRANSFER: Transfer members are those members who transfer their communicant membership from another sister congregation and meet all requirements of the Bylaws of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

D. REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH: Members who wish to be reinstated into Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church will reaffirm their vows to the confessions of the church and God, as stated in Article III of the Constitution and Bylaws of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church.

E. VOTING MEMBERSHIP: Voting members are those members who have been confirmed, are at least eighteen (18) years of age, have been accepted by the Voters' Assembly, and have read and signed the Constitution and Bylaws of the congregation. A voting member shall be entitled to hold an elected office, vote in Voters' Assembly meetings, and serve on boards and committees.

ARTICLE V

THE OFFICES OF PASTOR AND CALLED WORKERS

The pastoral office of this congregation as well as that of teacher in the parochial school shall be conferred upon such ministers, teachers, and candidates only as profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of the Constitution, and are well qualified for their work. Pastors, teachers, and called workers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard. It shall be noted that all called workers must be certified by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE VI

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A. GENERAL: The congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have the power to administer and manage all its internal affairs. The voting members shall constitute the Voters' Assembly. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as the parochial school, Sunday School, youth societies, ladies societies, choir, etc., shall at all times be subject to approval and supervision of the Voters' Assembly. The Voters' Assembly shall, however, not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article III), and any such decisions shall be null and void.

B. RIGHT OF CALLING: The right to call pastors, teachers and called workers shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly and shall never be delegated to a smaller body or to an individual.

C. DECISIONS: Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God; other matters shall be decided by the Voters' Assembly by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution and Bylaws.

D. POWERS OF OFFICERS: Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them. Whatever power may have been delegated to them may be altered or revoked by the voters.

E. REMOVAL FROM OFFICE: Any officer, pastor, or teacher may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly, by ballot, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following causes: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, inability to perform their official duties, and/or willful neglect of those duties.

F. CORPORATE POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION: The Voters' Assembly shall exercise the corporate power of the congregation granted by the

ARTICLE VII

State of Tennessee. The President and Recording Secretary of the congregation shall represent the Voters' Assembly in all matters required by the Articles of Incorporation of the congregation

ARTICLE VII

OFFICERS

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as the Bylaws of this congregation may prescribe.

ARTICLE VIII

PROPERTY RIGHTS

A. If at any time a separation should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall remain with those voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this constitution.

B. If at any time a separation should take place on an issue other than doctrine, property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected will be determined and awarded according to the Reconciling Procedures of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

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

ARTICLE IX

DOCTRINAL LITERATURE

Only such hymns, prayers and liturgies shall be used in the public service of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article III. Likewise, in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine only such books shall be used as conform to this standard.

ARTICLE X

SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

A. This congregation shall hold membership in The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod as long as this Synod remains true to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. It shall send its pastor and lay delegate to the district conventions.

B. It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of the Synod, since thereby they support their own Christ-appointed work.

ARTICLE XI

BYLAWS

This congregation may adopt such Bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purposes.

ARTICLE XII

CHANGING THE CONSTITUTION

A. **UNALTERABLE ARTICLES:** The following articles of the Constitution or sections thereof shall be unalterable and irrevocable: I, II, III, V, IX, and X.

B. **AMENDMENTS:** Amendments to this Constitution and the Bylaws may be adopted at a Voters' Assembly meeting, provided:

1. That they do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article III or with any section of any other article that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice; and
2. That the proposed amendment(s) has/have been submitted in writing and published at a previous Voters' Assembly meeting. A quorum of the voting membership, as defined in the Bylaws, must be assembled. The affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the quorum of the voting membership present at the Voters' Assembly meeting shall be required for the adoption of the amendment(s).

