BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1 MEMBERSHIP

A. Reception

1. By Baptism

All those who have received Christian Baptism and are under the spiritual care of this congregation shall be included as "Baptized Members."

2. By Profession of Faith or Confirmation

All those who are baptized in the Christian faith and instructed in Lutheran Doctrine shall give evidence of their faith before this congregation. Such persons shall be received as "Communicant Members."

3. By Transfer

All those who indicate their desire to transfer their membership from another Lutheran church shall present a letter of transfer to the pastor of this congregation. They shall be received in a public worship service.

4. By Reaffirmation of Faith

All those who were once members of this congregation but whose membership was terminated may again become members by indicating their desire to the pastor and by reaffirming their faith before this congregation.

B. Voting Membership

Voting members are confirmed members who have attended at least six (6) worship services in the last twelve (12) months or are homebound and maintain a communicate relationship with the Church, and who have accepted the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation.

C. Termination

1. Transfer to Other Congregations

Members, upon their request, shall be granted a transfer and their membership terminated in this congregation.

2. Joining Other Churches

Members who have joined a non-Lutheran congregation, shall be considered to have terminated their membership in this congregation.

3. Whereabouts Unknown

 Members whose whereabouts are unknown and cannot be established after one year shall have their membership terminated in this congregation.

 4.Self-Exclusion

Members who refuse to fulfill the duties of membership as provided in Article V of the Constitution despite attempts by the Pastor and the Board of Spiritual Life to effect reconciliation shall have excluded themselves from membership and shall be declared by the Voters' Assembly as having been excluded from the membership of this congregation.

5. Excommunication

Members who persist in living as a manifest and impenitent sinner, all the while claiming membership in this congregation, shall be excommunicated. This action shall be taken only after the erring members have been pre-advised by the Pastor and two or three members of the Board of Spiritual Life on the charges preferred against them and have been given an opportunity to answer such charges.

6. Status

Any person whose membership has been terminated forfeits all rights as a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of this congregation so long as they are not reinstated into membership.

ARTICLE 2 CALL PROCESS

At the time of vacancy in the office of a called professional, the congregation shall notify the District President and the Circuit Visitor and request the suggested guidelines for the call process.

1. Called Workers

Once authorized by the Voters' Assembly, the Church Council shall appoint a Call Committee. The Call Committee shall consult with the District in which the congregation is geographically located as part of their efforts to secure the names of candidates. The Call Committee will present a list of candidates to the Voters’ Assembly for voting. Candidates may be proposed by members from the floor. If no protest is entered and sustained, the persons nominated shall stand as recognized by the entire congregation, and nominations shall be closed. The election shall be held by secret ballot at a subsequent call service. Voting will continue until a single candidate receives a two-thirds majority of the votes cast. The candidate so affirmed by the voters shall be regarded as elected by the congregation. The Recording Secretary will issue the formal written call within a week after the call service.

1. Removal from Office of Called Workers

Called workers are subject to removal from office by the Voter’s Assembly because of: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, neglect of duties, or inability to perform the duties of the office. Before any disciplinary action is taken, the congregation will notify and consult with pastoral leaders of the Circuit and District, and will follow the advice of such leaders in the resolution of any issues. A three fourths majority vote of the Voters’ Assembly is required to remove any called worker.

ARTICLE 3 MEETING OF THE VOTERS’ ASSEMBLY

The Voters' Assembly shall meet at least once each calendar year. The day and hour of the annual meeting shall be set by the Church Council and publicized in writing at least two weeks in advance. The notification shall contain an agenda of items to be considered as well as the slate of nominees for election and the proposed annual budget. The President, Vice President, or their designated Church Council member shall preside at all Voters’ Assembly meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the President and shall be called by the President to be held within 10 days of receipt of a written request of at least ten voting members. Notice of any special meeting shall be publicized as far in advance as possible but no less than one week in advance.

A quorum of 20 voting members must be present to conduct the business of the Voters’ Assembly. If a quorum is not present, the President will suspend the meeting for a period of not less than one week. When the meeting is resumed, the quorum shall be all those in attendance at the resumed meeting. Absentee ballots may be authorized at the discretion of Council.

In all meetings a majority of the votes cast shall decide the action, unless specifically stated otherwise in the Constitution or By-Laws of this congregation.

The suggested order of business for regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly shall include the following:

 1. Opening prayer

 2. Recognition of new voting members

 3. Review of minutes of previous meeting

 4. Report of the Treasurer

 5. Reports of Boards and Committees

 6. Unfinished business

 7. New business

 8. Pastor’s report

 9. Adjournment with prayer

Except where special rules and procedures are provided by the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation, all meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

A. Qualifications

1. All voting members of this congregation shall be eligible to hold an office.

2. No person may hold more than one office at a time. An officer may serve in ex officio capacity on any appointed committee. No principal officer or Board member may be elected to more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

B. Term of Office

1. The term of office for each principal officer shall be one year. Members of the congregational Boards shall be elected for a term of two years.

2. Elected officers shall assume their office on the first of January following their election.

3. The term of office for appointed officers and committees, except as provided in Paragraph G of this Article, shall be established by the Church Council with the consent of the voters.

C. Selection of Officers

1. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Council at least one month prior to the election to develop a slate of candidates for the congregational offices. No more than one current officer may serve on the Nominating Committee. The Committee shall function for one year only. The Senior Pastor shall be a non-voting member of the Nominating Committee.

2. The Nominating Committee shall provide a description of the duties of each officer or board, as appropriate, to potential candidates to consider responsibilities of the office before accepting or declining candidacy.

3. The Nominating Committee shall present its list of candidates to the Council for approval prior to the annual meeting of the Voters’ Assembly. This slate shall remain open for additional nominations until closed by majority vote of the voters at the aforementioned meeting.

4. Any candidate who receives a majority of the votes cast will be elected. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, a second ballot will be held. If further ballots are required, then in each case the candidate receiving the lowest number of votes will be withdrawn from the slate.

5. Officers shall be installed at a regular church service.

D. Duties and Responsibilities of Principal Officers and Trustee(s)

1. The President shall be the executive officer of this congregation and shall preside at all meetings of the voters and the Council. The President shall ensure that resolutions of the voting body are executed and shall perform such other duties as pertain to this office.
2. The Vice-President shall assist the President and shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or inability of the latter to serve.
3. The Recording Secretary shall keep a record of the members present at all meetings of the Voters’ Assembly and Council, determine whether a quorum is present for the transaction of church business, record the minutes of all such meetings, post a copy of the minutes within 15 days following any meeting, and maintain a permanent record of such meeting minutes. The Recording Secretary shall draft correspondence, issue official notifications, and perform such other secretarial duties as the Voters' Assembly may require.
4. The Treasurer shall keep and preserve the accurate records of all receipts and disbursements and submit a written report of them at all regular meetings of the Voters’ Assembly and of the Church Council. The Treasurer shall provide for the timely payment of all bills and indebtedness of the congregation in accordance with the approved budget, and assure the accuracy and propriety of all financial transactions of the congregation.

5. In the discharge of the duties and responsibilities of the aforementioned officers, the Council may appoint or employ persons to assist the Officers as it deems necessary.

E. Trustee

One or more trustees shall be appointed by the Church Council and confirmed by the Voters' Assembly. Trustee(s) shall serve at the pleasure of the Church Council. When so authorized by the Voters' Assembly, the trustee(s) shall make contracts, accept and receive grants and bequests, sign all legal documents, appear in court, and in short, execute all official acts of this congregation in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The trustee(s) shall provide all legal documents to the Recording Secretary and submit a written report of activities annually to the Voters' Assembly.

F. Vacancies

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, in the event of an in-term vacancy in any office, the Council shall designate a person to fill the vacancy. Such person shall serve by designation until the next annual election of officers. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice-President shall become President for the remaining term. In the event of a concurrent vacancy in the office of President and Vice-President, the Recording Secretary shall, within a two week period, call and chair a special Voters’ Assembly meeting to elect members to fill these offices. This election may be conducted without action by a Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE 5 THE CHURCH COUNCIL

A. Organization

1. The Council shall be composed of the Pastor, President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Chairs of the Boards, and Chair of the Christian Day School Committee. The Chair of the Christian Day School Committee shall be a voting member of the congregation. Other called professionals shall be ex officio members of the Council.

2. The President of this Congregation shall be the chair of the Council.

B. Responsibility

1. To the glory of God and for the welfare of the church, the Council shall foster cooperation and unity of purpose on the part of all officers and members of this congregation. The Council shall determine the course of action to be followed on approval of the voters in carrying out the mission and ministry of this congregation.

2. Council members shall meet upon the call of the President. At a minimum, the Council shall be convened in advance of each meeting of the Voters' Assembly to receive the reports of officers, boards, and committees, and to prepare the agenda for the Voters' Assembly. The President, if requested in writing by three members of the Council, shall call a special meeting to be held within ten days of receipt of the request. A quorum, consisting of a majority of Church Council members, shall be required before conducting official business at any Church Council meeting.

3. All Boards answer to the Council. The Council answers to the Voters' Assembly of this congregation.

4. Subject to the approval of the Voters' Assembly, the Council shall appoint individuals to represent this congregation at various meetings and conventions.

 5. The Council may appoint Committees to address specific ministry needs of the congregation. Such Committees should be under the administration of a Board if a budget line item is necessary. Chairs of these Committees may serve as ex officio members of the Council.

 6. The Council shall have oversight of the Christian Day School Committee.

ARTICLE 6 BOARDS

The Pastor and President are ex officio members of each Board. Each Board shall consist of a minimum of three elected members and shall elect one of its members to serve as chair of that Board for a period of one year. The chair shall represent the Board on the Council. The Boards shall consist of a Board of Spiritual Life and such other boards as the Voters’ Assembly shall establish. The responsibilities of each board shall be detailed by the Church Council, subject to approval by the Voters’ Assembly.

[**Board Descriptions are moved to the Policy Manual]**