

**Bylaws of
Salem Lutheran Church of
Orange, California**

**Article 1
Baptized Membership**

Baptized members are all persons within the congregation who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and come under the pastoral care of this congregation. It is expected that all baptized members will:

- A. Attend worship services faithfully and regularly, if at all physically possible;
- B. Strive to lead a Christian life as described in Galatians 5:19-26;
- C. Out of Christian love, submit to brotherly admonition, according to Matthew 18, when having erred or offended;
- D. Contribute, as God has blessed them, of their time, talents and treasure toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the church at large; and
- E. In due time, take a course of instruction in preparation for confirmed membership in this congregation.

**Article 2
Confirmed Membership**

Baptized persons seeking to attain confirmed membership shall make that fact known to the Senior Pastor or any other pastor designated by the Senior Pastor. That pastor shall ascertain the person's understanding of and commitment to the Confession of Faith contained in Article III of the Constitution. That pastor will determine if additional training is needed and the appropriate method for that training. Upon approval by the Board of Deacons/Deaconesses, that pastor is authorized to extend confirmed membership to the person and shall announce that in a public service.

In addition to the duties of baptized members, it is expected of all confirmed members that they:

- A. Accept the Confession of Faith listed in Article III of the Constitution;
- B. Familiarize themselves with the doctrines of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod;
- C. Partake of the Lord's Supper regularly;
- D. Participate in continuing Christian education;
- E. Provide for the Christian training of their children; and
- F. Participate in the life of the Church.

**Article 3
Voting Membership**

All confirmed members 18 years of age or over shall be voting members. It is expected of all voting members that they will accept the Constitution and Bylaws.

**Article 4
Transfer and Termination of Membership**

- A. Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, by self-exclusion or by death. A member desiring transfer to another congregation shall make that fact known in writing to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall cause the creating and mailing of a letter of transfer to the receiving congregation.
- B. The names of people whose whereabouts are unknown or who have moved from the area after a period of one year may be removed from membership.

- C. All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. The purpose of any disciplinary action is to renew a member's relationship with the Lord and with the church.
- D. A member shall be considered self-excluded when unresponsive to the witness and ministry of the church as determined by the Senior Pastor and the Ministry Leadership Council.
- E. Communicant members who conduct themselves in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20 and the congregation's stated guidelines. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case of excommunication shall be presented to the Voters Assembly for a decision. A two-thirds majority vote of the Voters Assembly shall be required.

Article 5 Voters Assembly

- A. The Voters Assembly shall meet at least once per year. The day and hour of the annual meeting shall be set by the Ministry Leadership Council and be publicized at least one month in advance. The agenda of items to be considered shall be distributed at least two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. No agenda items may be added once the agenda is distributed.
- B. The Voters Assembly may meet at other times of the year subject to an action by the Ministry Leadership Council or at the written request of any twenty voting members of the congregation. Notice of any such special meeting shall be publicized as far in advance as possible but at least two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. The notice shall contain an agenda of items to be considered. No agenda items may be added once notification of any meeting is publicized.
- C. The President, Vice President, or their designated Ministry Leadership Council member shall preside at all Voters Assembly meetings.
- D. A quorum of thirty voting members must be present to conduct the business of the Voters Assembly. However, considering the nature of the business, if the membership present deems the body too small to transact such business, the meeting shall be postponed.
- E. The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall guide the Congregation in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this Constitution and Bylaws and any special rules of order the Congregation may adopt.

Article 6 Calling A Called Worker

- A. Calling a Pastor
 - 1. Calls will only be issued to such candidates who are approved by The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.
 - 2. For a pastor, after authorization is received from the Voters Assembly, the Ministry Leadership Council shall appoint a Call Committee, consisting of members of the Congregation and at least one member of the Ministry Leadership Council.
 - 3. The Call Committee shall give due consideration to the District guidelines for the calling of a Pastor.
 - 4. Every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations for any Pastor.
 - 5. The Call Committee will present a final list of candidates to the Voters Assembly for issuance of the call. The Voters Assembly shall call the pastor by a majority vote and by secret ballot.
- B. Other Called Workers
 - 1. For other called workers, the specific method for identifying and recommending candidates shall be determined by the Ministry Leadership Council.
 - 2. The Voters Assembly shall call other called workers by majority vote.
- C. A pastor or other called worker may be removed from office by the Voters Assembly, with a two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot.

Article 7
Professional Workers and Staff

- A. The offices of Pastor, Principal, Director of Christian Education, Called Teacher, and other called staff shall be conferred only upon such persons who profess and adhere to the Confession of Faith (Article III of the Constitution) and who have been declared eligible by The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Called Workers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.
- B. Approval to establish any new staff position shall be obtained from the Ministry Leadership Council.
- C. The hiring of non-called church staff shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor with guidance from the staff member requesting such a position(s), subject to final approval of the Ministry Leadership Council. All church staff members shall accept the Confessions of Faith (Article III of the Constitution).
- D. Contract Teachers and school staff shall be hired by the principal with the approval of the Ministry Leadership Council. All contract teachers and non-called school staff shall accept the Confessions of Faith (Article III of the Constitution).
- E. Non-called workers are at will employees and may be removed at any time by the Senior Pastor subject to final approval of the Ministry Leadership Council. The well-being of the church and Christian compassion shall guide any decision to remove a non-called worker.
- F. Called workers may only be removed by the congregation in accordance with these bylaws. However, should the Ministry Leadership Council determine that the called worker's presence at the workplace could impact the well-being of the church; the Ministry Leadership Council may place the called worker on temporary leave of absence until the congregation can take appropriate action in accordance with these Bylaws.

Article 8
Officers

- A. President - The duties of the President shall be as follows:
 - 1. Preside at all meetings of the Voters Assembly and the Ministry Leadership Council;
 - 2. Sign all legal documents, with the Secretary, on behalf of the congregation; and
 - 3. Uphold and defend the Constitution and Bylaws and perform the general duties as are common for the office, including such additional duties as may be directed by the Voters Assembly or the Ministry Leadership Council from time to time.
- B. Vice President - The duties of the Vice President shall be as follows:
 - 1. Perform all of the duties of the President in the President's absence; and
 - 2. Perform other additional duties that may be directed by the Voters Assembly, the Ministry Leadership Council, or the President.
- C. Secretary - The duties of the Secretary shall be as follows:
 - 1. The duties shall be those commonly required of that office, especially the keeping and preserving of accurate records of all Voters Assembly meetings, and handling such correspondence as the congregation may require;
 - 2. Sign all legal documents, with the President, on behalf of the congregation; and
 - 3. Keep minutes of all Ministry Leadership Council meetings.
- D. Treasurer - The duties of the treasurer shall be as follows:
 - 1. Keep and preserve the accurate records of all receipts and disbursements, and submit a monthly written report of them at all regular meetings of the Ministry Leadership Council, and at all regular meetings of the Voters Assembly; and
 - 2. Assure accuracy and propriety of all financial transactions of the congregation through appropriate internal controls and division of duties.
- E. Term of Office
Each officer shall serve for a term of three years and shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The Secretary and Treasurer will be elected in election years separate from each other and from other officer positions. The President and Vice President will be elected in the same election year independent of the Secretary and Treasurer. The term of office of each elected officer commences the first day of the month following the election.

Article 9
Ministry Leadership Council

A. Membership

The Ministry Leadership Council shall consist of the congregational officers listed in Article 8 of these Bylaws, plus three members elected at large by the Voters Assembly, and the Senior Pastor. The three at large members, the congregational officers, and the Senior Pastor shall all be voting members of the Ministry Leadership Council. The School Principal shall be an advisor to the Ministry Leadership Council.

B. Term of Office of Members at Large

The term of office of the at large members shall be three-year staggered terms with approximately one-third being elected each year. At large members shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The term of office commences the first day of the month following the election.

C. Meetings

The Ministry Leadership Council will meet monthly, at least ten times per year. Meetings may be called more frequently at the request of the President or any three Ministry Leadership Council members. An elected officer shall preside at all meetings. A majority of the voting members of the Ministry Leadership Council shall constitute a quorum for any meeting. Notice of each meeting shall be posted in a convenient location. Minutes of the meetings shall be available to voting members of the congregation upon request and shall be posted in a convenient location or electronically. The minutes shall fully disclose all actions taken except for confidential employment actions or other actions deemed by the Ministry Leadership Council to be of a nature which, if made public, could be detrimental to the church or school. Confidential matters will be dealt with in Executive Session. Executive session is defined as a meeting consisting of only the members of the Ministry Leadership Council and persons deemed by the Ministry Leadership Council as being necessary to the deliberation of matters.

Article 10
Powers and Duties of the Ministry Leadership Council

- A. The Ministry Leadership Council, as the chief governing council of the congregation, shall act in all matters pertaining to the legal and general welfare of the congregation, except those reserved for the Voters Assembly in Article VI.B of the Constitution.
- B. The Ministry Leadership Council shall see to it that all activities of the church reflect the mission of the congregation.
- C. The Ministry Leadership Council shall maintain the financial integrity of Salem, including the expenditures of monies.
- D. The Ministry Leadership Council shall encourage and empower the Senior Pastor and the ministry staff in their work through prayer, word, and action and provide for the spiritual and physical health and welfare of the ministry staff and their families.
- E. The Ministry Leadership Council shall be responsible for the receiving of and acting upon, if necessary, feed-back and/or complaints from members of the congregation regarding aspects of its operations.
- F. The Ministry Leadership Council shall establish and change as needed any committees, action teams, or other entities to accomplish the mission of the congregation.
- G. The Ministry Leadership Council shall have the power to develop policies as required to execute its responsibilities under the Constitution, Bylaws or as otherwise approved by the Voters Assembly. Written policies shall be available to voting members upon request and posted electronically.

- H. The Ministry Leadership Council shall be available for any additional functions that the Voters Assembly may confer on it.
- I. The Ministry Leadership Council in concert with the Senior Pastor shall provide a written annual state of the Church and School report to the congregation by October 31 of each year.

Article 11
Election, Removal from Office, and Vacancies

A. Nomination

The Ministry Leadership Council shall annually appoint a Nominating Committee whose responsibility will be to develop a slate of candidates for officers and Ministry Leadership Council members at large to be elected each year. The committee shall contain a majority who are not Ministry Leadership Council members, shall function for one year only, and shall report the nominations to the election meeting of the Voters Assembly. The Senior Pastor shall be an advisory member of the Nominating Committee.

All nominees shall be active voting members noted for their Christian knowledge, zeal, and experience in the spiritual work of the church. Specific criteria for elected officials shall be outlined by the Nominating Committee prior to accepting any nominations. In addition to the Nominating Committee's slate of candidates, any voting member may nominate candidates. A call for nominations will be distributed to the congregation no less than one month prior to the election meeting. The list of nominations will be closed at the time that the meeting agenda and slate of candidates are distributed.

Those elected by the voters may not receive compensation from the congregation. All staff and employees are not eligible to serve as elected members of the Ministry Leadership Council.

- B. Election voting shall be by secret ballot. Nominees who receive the greatest number of votes cast at the Voters Assembly shall be elected.
- C. Removal from Office of Elected Officials
Any elected official may be removed from office by the Voters Assembly, with a two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot.
- D. Vacancy
The Ministry Leadership Council shall be authorized to appoint a person to fill an unexpired term of an elected official.

Article 12
Annual Financial Review and Audits

- A. The President shall annually appoint a financial review committee to review the financial statements and records of the congregation.
- B. The Ministry Leadership Council may initiate the audit of financial statements and records.
- C. The results of all written financial reviews will be available to voting members upon request, except that information about individual contributions shall remain confidential.

Article 13
Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast in a meeting of the Voters Assembly. The wording of the proposed amended Bylaws shall be distributed to all members in a mailing as far in advance as possible, but no less than two Sundays in advance. In addition, the revisions will be distributed to the congregation assembled for worship on two different Sundays prior to the date upon which the amendment is presented for action.