

Constitution / Bylaws / Operation Procedures / Articles of Incorporation 4/5/2024
of
The Village Church (Lutheran)
Lacombe, Louisiana

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INTRODUCTION

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this Divine in doctrine and practice (Psalms 119:105; Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 1:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40.) Therefore we, the members of this congregation accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and By-Laws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our Congregation shall be governed. Membership shall be as set forth in XVI of the By-Laws.

CONSTITUTION

I. NAME

The name of this corporation shall be The Village Church (Lutheran), and under that name, it shall have and enjoy all the rights, privileges, and advantages granted by law to such associations and shall have and enjoy succession into perpetuity unless sooner dissolved. See § [Article 1](#)

The domicile of this corporation shall be Lacombe, Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana, and all citations and other legal process shall be served on the President, Vice-President, or Chairman of the Board of Elders, and in their absence, on any one of the officers of this corporation shall be at the locations as follows:

Mailing Address – Post Office Box 1219, Lacombe, La. 70445-1219

Municipal Address - 29180 Highway 190 West, Lacombe, La. 70445-1219 See § [Article 2](#)

This corporation is organized as a nonprofit corporation as defined in R.S. 12:201 (7) of the State of Louisiana and on a non-stock basis. See § [Article 3](#)

II. MISSION

Vision Statement:

The Village Church - Lutheran will be an inviting congregation for individuals to grow together in the faith that is centered on Jesus Christ, to serve with compassion, and to share God's love and forgiveness with all.

Mission Statement:

Through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, The Village Church - Lutheran will empower and equip individuals to deepen their relationships with the Lord by taking ownership of their faith through worship, Christian education and fellowship with outreach and service to others.

We will endeavor to accomplish this by:

1. Maintaining and advocating the core values of the (LCMS) Church,
2. Facilitating strong pastoral and lay leadership,
3. Engaging the youth and adults and fostering them to become life-long learners and followers of Christ,
4. Offering opportunities to engage in order to develop faith of self and others,
5. Providing a Care Ministry for our church, and
6. Supporting the greater needs of our community.

III. CONFSSIONAL STANDARD

This congregation acknowledges and accepts the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts 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. See § [Article 4](#)

IV. SYNOD MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of Synod and its Southern District.

V. MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

The membership of this congregation is comprised of the three categories of members defined in the bylaws of this congregation: baptized members, confirmed members, and voting members.

Membership in this corporate body may be held by all who have the qualification of membership specified in the By-Laws of this corporate body, it being understood, however, that only communicant members who are at least eighteen years of age and who have signed the Constitution and By-Laws of this corporate body, in a book kept by the secretary for this purpose, shall have the right of suffrage. See § [Article 9](#)

VI. CALLED CHURCH WORKERS / CALL PROCEDURE

6.1 Power to Call:

The power to call pastors and teachers shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated.

6.2 Qualifications of Pastors and Teachers:

This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standards set forth in Article 3 of this Constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member the Synod. The same shall apply to called all called positions.

6.3 Call Committee:

Should any of the Pastoral or other called offices be vacated, the President of the congregation shall immediately appoint a Call Committee consisting of at five (5) members. The church council President and Chairman of the Board of Elders shall automatically be members of the committee. The remaining three (3) positions will be appointed by the church council President.

6.4 Selection of Procedure:

6.4.1 Selection of Candidates:

The Call Committee shall invite the members of the congregation to suggest qualified candidates' names in writing to the committee. Simultaneously, the committee shall request the District President to provide a list of qualified candidates. The Committee shall also request the District President to provide pertinent background data on all candidates.

6.4.2 Pre-Call Meeting:

The President shall announce the date, time, and place of this meeting by written notice in at least two (2) Church Bulletins prior to the meeting time. The purpose of this meeting shall be:

1. To submit the known candidates' names and biographical and professional background information to the congregation.
2. To permit any congregation member to make additional nominations of qualified candidates currently.
3. Nominations will be closed at the end of this meeting should qualified candidates be presented.

6.4.3 Official Notification of Candidate List:

Within three (3) months (one quarter) after the Pre-Call Meeting, the list of Candidates with their background information shall be published by the Call Committee and made available to every family unit in the congregation.

6.4.4 Call-Meeting:

This meeting shall be held within three (3) weeks after the publication of the list of Candidates. The President shall announce the date, time and place written notice in at least two (2) Church Bulletins prior to the meeting date. The election shall be a written ballot from the published list of Candidates. The candidate who receives a majority (more than one-half of all votes cast) shall be considered elected. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated after each ballot, and balloting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority. When a majority is reached, a unanimous vote shall be called to reflect the unanimity of the congregation, and the call shall be sent to the elected candidate.

6.4.5 Return of a Call:

Should the elected candidate return the call, a new call meeting shall be announced by the President, by written notice in at least one (1) Church Bulletin prior to the meeting time. At this meeting the congregation shall have the option by majority vote to proceed with the election of a new candidate from the previous published list of candidate in the accordance with the election procedure of or in accordance with the election procedure of 6.6 or to re-open nominations in accordance with 6.6 and 6.7.

6.4.6 Right to Object:

Any member of the congregation has the right to object to any name on the list of Candidates. Any such objection should be done in writing stating the reason of the objection. It must be signed and delivered to

any member of the Call Committee. This may be submitted via email and the recipient of the e-mail must reply noting it has been received. Any such objections will be kept in strict confidence by the Call Committee. A valid objection, determined by the guidelines that follow under the by-laws section XXIII of will cause the candidate's name to be removed from the list of candidates.

6.4.7 Pastoral Representation:

A Pastor should be present at all meetings pertaining to a call.

VII. AUTHORITY OF AND WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

The general management of this corporation between official congregation meetings of the voting members shall be entrusted to a church council as defined in the bylaws. The church council shall have only such powers as are conferred by the voting members of the church. The voting members of the church as the body shall have the supreme power in the external and internal administration and management of its own ecclesiastical and congregational affairs and what may have been decided or ordered by individual or minor bodies within the church shall always be subject to review and revision by the voting members of the church. See § [Article 6](#) Only the voting members of the congregation are authorized to adopt the annual budget of the congregation, dissolve the congregation, or terminate its membership in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod according to the guidelines of dissolution stated in the constitution Section XII.

This corporation shall have the full power to sue and be sued in its corporate name, to make and use a corporate name, to make and use a corporate seal, and the same to alter or break at its pleasure. It shall have the power to acquire, hold, lease or purchase, as well as alienate, sell, convey, mortgage or hypothecate property, real or personal, to make and establish, alter and amend such Constitution, By-Laws, and regulations as are deemed necessary for its proper government; and generally to have, exercise and enjoy all powers incident to and now or hereafter conferred by the laws of the State of Louisiana upon corporations with the objects and purposes herein and needful and proper for their support and government. See § [Article 5](#)

VIII. MEETINGS

8.1 The regular Congregational Meeting shall be held annually in October. See § [Article 7](#). The President of the congregation will set the date of the meeting. Ten percent (10%) of the average Sunday worship attendance of the previous three quarters shall constitute a quorum. No abstentions or votes by proxy shall be counted. The Congregational Meeting shall include reports from the various congregational officers, committee chairpersons, and the Pastor.

8.2 Special meetings of the Congregation may be called by the President, any two elected officers, Pastor, or ten percent (10%) of the voting membership.

8.3 Every Congregational Meeting shall be announced – by word announced at service, electronically via email, or in the bulletin – at least one week prior to it with the agenda items noted. Whenever a meeting has thus been announced and consists of the voters in attendance, it shall be considered a properly convened and legal meeting capable of transacting business. Decisions shall be by majority vote unless otherwise specified in the By-Laws. However, the erection of buildings, the purchase or sale of property, or the removal of any elected officers shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present for the adoption of such resolution.

8.4 Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert’s Rules of Order.

IX. OFFICERS AND BOARDS / ELECTIONS

The elected officers of this congregation shall be a president, a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, a financial secretary, a head elder, a head trustee, a chairman of outreach, a chairman of fellowship, director of youth, a chairman of education, and a chairman of stewardship. Duties shall be outlined in the standard operating procedure manual.

The church council shall be composed of all elected officers. It shall be the duty of the church council to meet once a month as directed by the president to consider and discuss all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the president to consider and discuss all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the various boards and to present recommendations to the congregation. The church council shall act in matters committed to it and the congregational meeting and shall act, as necessary, between congregational meetings.

A nominating committee appointed by the president shall present a slate of candidates at the October meeting of the congregation. The slate proposed by the nominating committee shall consist of at least one name for each office. Additional nominations may be from the floor. The annual election shall be by ballot and shall take place at the October meeting. The officer elect shall assume his/her respective duties on 1st January, except that outgoing officers shall be responsible for preparing and submitting reports covering the tenure of their offices. In the event of a vacancy in any office, except that of the president, the congregational meeting shall elect a new successor to serve until the next annual election. Officers shall be elected for the term specified in the standard operating procedure manual and shall hold office until his/her successor has been elected and qualified.

The Pastor will be able to vote.

9.1 President:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The president shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation. The president shall make all committee appointments and shall be an ex-officio member of all committees. It shall be the president's duty to request written reports from all committees for regular meetings. The president shall sign all official documents as required as the representative of the Congregation. The president shall approve any and all official correspondence pertaining to congregational business. The president shall prepare the agenda for the Congregation and the church council meetings. The Congregational president only votes if there is a tie.

9.2 Vice-President:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the president, the vice president shall succeed to the office of president for the remainder of the term. This position shall meet with all subcommittees monthly to share with the church council the ongoing of each group. These groups consist of but are not limited to music, theater, men's club, LWML, prayer chain, feeding ministry and any other groups created that does not sit directly on the Church council board.

9.3 Secretary:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected.

1. Keep an accurate and permanent record of all congregational and church council meetings.
2. Keep a permanent roll call record.
3. Keep a master copy of the constitution and bylaws, recording all current amendments therein.
4. Conduct such official correspondence as necessary.
5. Perform other duties in keeping the office as necessary.

9.4 Treasurer:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The treasurer shall pay all bills authorized by the congregation. They shall keep an accurate record of the receipts and disbursements of the congregation. The treasurer shall be a member of the stewardship committee. He/she shall submit a report at each congregational meeting. Such reports shall show actual receipts and disbursements. He/she shall also be a member of the budget committee.

9.5 Financial Secretary:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. It shall be their duty to receive, record in books kept for such purpose and deposits in the congregational designated depository, all congregational monies, including offerings, contributions, special collections, loans, subsidies, bequests, and such other monies belonging to the congregation. A report of all receipts shall be submitted to the treasurer at a regular weekly interval. The financial secretary shall prepare a report for each meeting of the congregation. All moneys should be locked in the safe until custody is taken by the Financial Secretary for deposit at a regular weekly interval. The financial secretary shall complete an annual yearly internal audit and complete an external audit every five years.

9.6 Head Elder:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he may serve again if elected. The Elders shall elect the head Elder. All Elders shall be a male member. The order of succession is

president, vice president, and head Elder. This position shall meet with all subcommittees pertaining to spiritual needs to share with the church council the ongoing of each group. These groups are Men and women's bible studies, Sunday school bible study and Youth.

9.7 Head Trustee:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The board of trustees shall consist of at least three members, and their term of office shall be for three years with staggered tenure. The head trustee shall be selected by the trustees. It shall be the duty of the head trustee to administer all property belongings of the congregation.

9.8 Outreach:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. This committee shall consist of the elected chairman and at least two appointed members whose term shall be for one year. They shall divide their responsibility so that one member is in charge of evangelism, another in charge of public relations. The chairman shall represent the committee at all Congregational Meetings. It shall be the duty of this committee to meet monthly and:

1. Plan, promote and carry out an evangelism program in the congregation and in the community.
2. Plan and supervise religious surveys of the community.
3. Enlist aid in visiting prospective members of the church.
4. Assist the pastor in training the laity to bring the unchurched to the pastor's instruction classes.
5. Introduce new members into the life and work of the church.
6. It shall call to the attention of the congregation the welfare activities being conducted by the church and solicit support for them.
7. In the area of public relations, it shall endeavor to publicize the Gospel and the activities of the congregation by the various modern avenues possible.
8. Promote programs to invite visitors to both worship and church activities.
9. Arrange for the maintenance of record files in order to keep an evangelism program active.

9.9 Fellowship:

This committee shall consist of the elected chairman whose term of office shall last for one year and has a committee of five members. The chairman shall represent the committee at all Church Council and Congregational Meetings. The committee shall meet monthly and have the following responsibilities:

1. Plan, promote and carry out fellowship activities in the congregation consisting of programs that promote Senior citizens activities as well as youth activities and activities that involve the community.
2. Programs to equip members to share Christ's love with others.
3. Include repeat visitors and new members to attend Fellowship meetings and join the committee.
4. The Fellowship committee should search out and discover the needs of individuals in the congregation. This consists of but not limited to the aged, sick and poor. The committee should bring these needs to the attention of the congregation with suggestions for action.
5. The Fellowship committee shall organize church picnics, new member receptions, potlucks, and dinners.
6. The Fellowship Committee should advertise and publicize the Gospel and the activities of the congregation by various modern avenues as possible.

9.10 Youth:

This committee should consist of a Youth Director where term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The Youth Director will serve the church by developing, coordinating, and administering an effective and comprehensive ministry to the junior-high and senior-high youth of the church and providing leadership to and supervision of staff members and volunteers involved in this ministry. The youth director will submit reports at each church council meeting and congregational meeting outlining their activities and future plans. The Youth Director Shall:

1. Supervise the youth ministry program, including worship, education, spiritual development, evangelism, missions, fellowship, affirmation of youth, and support of families of youth.
2. Work with youth leaders to develop youth activities and curriculum.
3. Represent the church by serving on appropriate denomination committees and community organizations.

4. Oversee the planning of youth programs for special services, such as: Youth Sunday, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.
5. Work with youth leaders to recruit and train volunteers for leadership in youth ministry.
6. Oversee the care of equipment related to youth ministry. Purchase supplies, materials, and equipment as authorized.
7. Coordinate youth activities with the church master program and facilities calendar.
8. Assist in worship at the request of the Pastor. Teach Sunday morning classes and any midweek Bible studies.
9. Establish departmental goals and objectives by prioritizing related programs, managing the use of facilities, planning an appropriate budget, delegating tasks, and evaluating progress regularly.
10. Work with appropriate committees, officers, and leaders in carrying out the youth ministry of the church.

9.11 Education Chairman:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. This committee shall consist of the elected chairman and two appointed members whose terms shall be no more for one year window but may serve additional terms. One of the appointed chair members shall be the Superintendent of the Sunday school. The chairman shall represent the committee at the congregational meeting.

The committee shall:

1. Foster spiritual growth in the life of the individual Christian.
2. Strengthen the Christian home and help equip parents, children, and young people for Christian family living.
3. Provide learning opportunities for all aged levels to include preschool, school age, youth, and adults.
4. Encourage the congregation to set up agencies and organizations to help the community best perform its educational task for each specific age level, namely the Sunday school from nursery to Bible class, youth and adult groups, couples and parents' groups.
5. Provide leadership education for teachers, officers, and workers.
6. Facilitate confirmation classes for the youth in our congregation.

9.12 Stewardship:

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The committee shall consist of the chairperson, the treasurer, the financial secretary, and two additional members who shall be appointed for a term of one year. The committee shall organize immediately after appointment for the purpose of choosing a secretary. The chairperson shall represent the committee at the Congregational Meeting. The committee shall hold regular monthly meetings. It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Prepare the annual congregational budget.
2. Conduct a talent survey.
3. Encourage support of programs sponsored by Synod, District, and local congregations.
4. Encourage the concept of proportional giving.

X. DIVISION

If at any time division shall take place within this congregation, efforts shall be made to resolve differences in a God-pleasing manner. If division into factions occurs, the counsel of the district president shall be sought to determine which group shall retain the property.

XI. AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any Congregational meeting called for that purpose, provided that such amendments have been made in writing and submitted to the congregation one month prior to the meeting for the vote on the amendments, and further that the same are not inconsistent with the constitution or the laws of the United States of America, or the State of Louisiana, and provided that two-thirds of the voting members present cast their votes in favor of such amendments. See § [Article 8](#)

XII. DISSOLUTION

If this congregation should be dissolved for any reason, all assets shall revert to the Southern District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

XIII. BY-LAWS

This congregation may adopt such By-Laws as may be required to accomplish its purpose.

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BY-LAWS

The following are subjects that ordinarily are addressed in a congregation's bylaws. For additional subjects that may be addressed as needed, see the document "Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws CCM – Guidelines for Constitutions and Bylaws of Small and Developing Lutheran Congregations – Page 5 – July 2015 of Lutheran Congregations" that has been provided by the Commission on Constitutional Matters (CCM) of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

XIV. BAPTIZED MEMBERSHIP

All those who have received a baptism in the name of the Triune God and are under the spiritual care of this congregation shall be included as baptized members.

XV. CONFIRMED MEMBERSHIP

All those who meet the following requirements shall be included as communicant members.

15.1 Have received a Christian baptism.

15.2 Worship and commune regularly.

15.3 Have been instructed and/or confirmed in the Lutheran faith.

15.4 Are ready to be involved in the purpose and life of the church.

15.5 Accept the Confessional Standards contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580.

XVI. VOTING MEMBERSHIP

All those who meet the following requirements shall be included as voting members. Each voting member shall have one (1) vote at a congregational meeting.

16.1 Be at least eighteen (18) years of age and be a communicant member.

XVII. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be terminated under any of the following conditions after review by the Board of Elders and presentation to and approval by the voting membership.

17.1 Transfer to other LCMS congregations.

17.2 Whereabouts unknown

17.3 Inactivity

17.4 Voluntary Termination

17.5 Excommunication

The congregation has the responsibility and the authority to exercise church discipline in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. A two-thirds vote at a duly constituted special congregational meeting shall be required for excommunication. The motion for excommunication shall be presented by the Chairman of the Elders or his appointee, who must be a member of the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall use the criteria established in Matthew 18:15-20 for the excommunication process.

17.6 Status

A person whose membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights as a member of this congregation and all claims upon the property of the congregation as such, or upon any part thereof.

XVIII. OFFICERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

18.1 The elected officers of this congregation shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, a financial secretary, trustees, a chairperson of outreach, a chairperson of fellowship, a chairperson of youth, a chairperson of education, and a chairperson of stewardship. Duties shall be as outlined in the Standard Operation Procedure Manual.

18.2 The Church Council shall be composed of all elected officers and the head elder. It shall be the duty of the Church Council to meet once a month as directed by the President to consider and discuss all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation as presented by the various boards and to present recommendations to the

congregation. The Church Council shall act in matters committed to it at the Congregational Meetings and shall act, as necessary, between congregational meetings.

18.3 The order of succession is President, Vice-President, and Head Elder.

18.4 Each board is hereby authorized to approve expenses within its areas of responsibility and budget (as maintained in the boards and committees), and the pastor is authorized to approve expenses for the church office within the following guidelines:

- a. The expense must be within the annual budget. However, the church council retains the authority to suspend this delegation if actual revenues are significantly below the annual budget.
- b. The expense must be incurred in the normal course of business; this includes, without limitation:
 1. Expense reports
 2. Normal operating supplies and expenses
 3. Pay increases (again, within budget)

XIX. NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS, TERMS OF, AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

A nomination Committee appointed by the President shall present a slate of candidates at least two (2) weeks prior to the annual October meeting of the Congregation. The slate proposed by the Nomination Committee shall consist of at least one name for each office. The annual election shall be by ballot and shall take place at the October Congregational meeting. The officers-elect shall assume their respective duties on the following 1 January, except that outgoing officers shall be responsible for preparing and submitting reports covering the tenure of their offices. In the event of a vacancy in any office, except that of the president, the Church Council shall appoint a successor to serve until the next annual election. Officers shall be elected for the terms specified in the Standard Operating Procedure Manual and shall hold office until their successors have been elected and qualified.

XX. BOARDS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

To oversee the spiritual life of the congregation and its individual members.

XXI. AMENDMENTS TO THESE BYLAWS

Amendments can be made to these By-Laws at any duly constituted Congregational Meeting, providing that:

1. The proposed amendment(s) has been submitted in writing to the Secretary of the congregation.
2. The proposed amendment(s) is not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution or laws of the United States of America, or the Constitution or laws of the State of Louisiana.
3. The proposed amendment(s) has been announced to the congregation at least four (4) weeks prior to the time of the vote.
4. The President has announced the date, time, and place for the vote in at least two (2) consecutive church bulletins prior to the voting time.
5. A two-thirds majority of the voting members present cast their vote in favor of the amendment.

XXII. CALLING OF PASTORS AND TEACHERS

22.1 Power to Call

The power to call Pastors or any called positions shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated.

22.2 Qualifications of Pastors and Teachers/Directors of Christian Education

This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in Article II of this Constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member of the Synod. The same shall apply to called teachers/directors of Christian Education, Vicars, deaconesses, and Ministers of Music.

22.3 Call Committee

Should any of the pastoral or teacher offices be vacated, the President of the congregation shall immediately appoint a Call Committee consisting of at least three (3) members from the Board of Elders. In addition, the President and the Head Elder shall automatically be members of the committee.

22.4 Call Procedure

22.4.1 Selection of Candidates

The Call Committee shall invite the members of the congregation to suggest qualified candidate's names in writing to the committee. Simultaneously, the committee shall request the District President to provide a list of qualified candidates. The committee shall also request the District President to provide pertinent background data on all candidates.

22.4.2 Pre-Call Meeting

The President shall announce the date, time, and place of this meeting by written notice in at least two (2) Church Bulletins prior to the meeting time. The purpose of this meeting shall be:

1. To submit the known candidates' names and biographical and professional background information to the congregation.
2. To permit any member of the congregation to make additional nominations of qualified candidates currently.

Nominations will be closed at the end of this meeting should qualified candidates be presented.

22.4.3 Official Notification of Candidate List

Within three (3) months (one quarter) after the Pre-Call Meeting, the List of Candidates with their background information shall be published by the Call Committee and be provided to any communicant member when requested.

22.4.4 Call – Meeting

This meeting shall be held within three (3) weeks after the publication of the List of Candidates. The President shall announce the date, time, and place by written notice in at least two (2) Church Bulletins prior to the meeting date. The election shall be by written ballot from the published List of Candidates. The candidate receiving a majority (more than one-half of all votes cast) shall be considered elected. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate receiving the least number of votes shall be eliminated after each ballot, and balloting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority. When a majority is reached, a unanimous vote shall be called to reflect the unanimity of the congregation, and the call shall be sent to the elected candidate.

22.4.5 Return of a Call

Should the elected candidate return the call, a new call meeting shall be announced by the President by written notice in at least one (1) Church Bulletin prior to the meeting time. At this meeting, the congregation shall have the option by majority vote to proceed with the election of a new candidate from the previously published list of candidates in accordance with the election procedures of 6.4.4 or to re-open nominations in accordance with 6.4.2 and 6.4.3.

22.4.6 Right of a Call

Any member of the congregation has the right to object to any name on the List of Candidates. Any such objection should be done in writing, stating the reason for the objection. It must be signed and delivered to any member of the call committee. Any such objections will be kept in strict confidence by the Call Committee. A valid objection will eliminate the name from the List of Candidates.

22.4.7 Pastoral Representation

A Pastor or representative of the District President must be present at the Pre-Call Meeting and Call Meeting. It is recommended they be present at Call Committee meetings or required to be present when requested by the President or Head Elder.

XXIII. DISMISSAL OF A PASTOR, DEACONESS, MINISTER OF MUSIC, OR TEACHERS/DCE

The power to dismiss pastors or other called positions shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated. The District President or his appointee shall be consulted in all matters concerning the dismissal of a pastor or other called positions. The congregation shall exercise their authority to dismiss pastors or teachers in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20.

Reasons for dismissing a pastor or other called positions shall be persistent adherence to any of the following:

1. False teaching
2. An ungodly life
3. Non-performance of duties

A two-thirds vote at a duly constituted special congregational meeting shall be required for dismissal. The motion for dismissal shall be presented by the Chairman of the Board of Elders or his appointee, who must be a member of the Board of Elders.

XXIV. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

All auxiliary organizations of the church shall exist by permission of the congregation and are directly responsible to it through the Church Council.

XXV. EFFECTIVE DATE

These By-Laws shall become effective January 1, 1990.

These By-Laws have been amended effective November 1, 2009, but not approved by Synod.

These By-Laws have been amended and submitted for approval effective April 7, 2024.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE MANUAL

1. PRESIDENT

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The president shall preside at all meetings of the Congregation. The president shall make all committee appointments and shall be ex-officio member of all committees. It shall be the president's duty to request written reports from all committees for regular meetings. The president shall sign all official documents as required as the representative of the Congregation. The president shall approve any and all official correspondence pertaining to congregational business. The president shall prepare the agenda for the Congregation and the church council meetings. The President will be an authorized signature on the Church checkbook.

2. VICE-PRESIDENT

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The vice-president shall perform the duties of the office of the president in the absence of the president. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the president, the vice-president shall succeed to the office of president for the remainder of the term. He/she shall serve as a liaison between non board serving groups and meet and report monthly to Church council. These groups consist of but are not limited to youth, music, theater, head elder, men's club, men's Bible study, women's Bible study, LWML, prayer chain, outreach and fellowship, feeding ministry and any other groups created that do not sit directly on the Church council board.

3. SECRETARY

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The secretary shall:

1. Keep an accurate and permanent record of all Congregational Meetings and Church Council meetings.
2. Keep a permanent roll call record.
3. Keep a master copy of the Constitution and By-Laws, recording all current amendments therein.
4. Conduct such official correspondence as is necessary.
5. Perform other duties in keeping the office.
6. Keep a record of all amendments/changes to the Constitution or By-Laws.

4. TREASURER

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The treasurer shall pay all bills authorized by the Church Council. The treasurer shall keep accurate records of the receipts and disbursements for the congregation. The treasurer shall be a member of the stewardship committee and the budget committee. The treasurer shall submit a report at each Congregational Meeting. Such reports shall show actual receipts and disbursements.

5. FINANCIAL SECRETARY

The term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. It shall be the financial secretary's duty to receive, record in books kept for such purpose, and deposit in the congregational designated depository all congregational monies, including offerings, contributions, special collections, loans, subsidies, bequests, and such other monies belonging to the congregation. A report of all receipts shall be submitted to the treasurer at regular weekly intervals.

6. BOARD OF ELDERS

The board of elders shall consist of at least three members, with one elder for each ten (10) to fifteen (15) family units, and their terms of office shall be for three years, with staggered tenure. The Elders shall select the head Elder. All elders shall be male members. When it is believed another is needed, there is an agreement by the Elder board after input from and discussion with the Pastor. Once the discussion has taken place in the Elder's meeting and agreement has been reached, the candidate is then approached by the Pastor and the Head Elder to ask for prayerful consideration of the position.

The elders shall:

1. Assist the pastor and be responsible to the congregation for all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
2. Consider the complaints and grievances of members of the congregation and if necessary, ensure Matthew 18:15-16 has been fully observed, and if necessary, they shall report to the congregation those which cannot be otherwise adjusted in accordance with Matthew 18:17-18.
3. Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance of services and in the use of the Sacraments to mend their sinful ways and to fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.
4. See to it that all services are conducted in such a manner as conducive to worship among those in attendance.
5. Assist the pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services, and guest speakers.
6. Appoint and supervise ushers and head usher.
7. Prepare a list of candidates when the congregation is to call a Pastor.
8. Be an example of Christian conduct and conversation.

7. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The board of trustees shall consist of at least three members, and their terms of office shall be for three years, with staggered tenure. The trustees shall select the head trustee. It shall be the duty of the trustees to administer and maintain all property belonging to the congregation. The board of trustees shall maintain an up-to-date inventory list of all church property.

8. COMMITTEE OF OUTREACH

This committee shall consist of the elected chairman and at least two appointed members whose term shall be for one year. They shall divide their responsibility so that one member is in charge of evangelism, another in charge of public relations. The chairman shall represent the committee at all Congregational Meetings. It shall be the duty of this committee to meet monthly and:

1. Plan, promote and carry out an evangelism program in the congregation and in the community.
2. Plan and supervise religious surveys of the community.
3. Enlist aid in visiting prospective members of the church.
4. Assist the pastor in training the laity to bring the unchurched to the pastor's instruction classes.
5. Introduce new members into the life and work of the church.
6. It shall call to the attention of the congregation the welfare activities being conducted by the church and solicit support for them.
7. In the area of public relations, it shall endeavor to publicize the Gospel and the activities of the congregation by the various modern avenues possible.
8. Promote programs to invite visitors to both worship and church activities.
9. Arrange for the maintenance of record files in order to keep an evangelism program active.

9. COMMITTEE OF FELLOWSHIP

This committee shall consist of the elected chairman whose term of office shall last for one year and has a committee of five members. The chairman shall represent the committee at all Church Council and Congregational Meetings. The committee shall meet monthly and have the following responsibilities:

1. Plan, promote and carry out an evangelism program in the congregation and community, consisting of programs that promote Senior citizens activities as well as youth activities and activities that involve the community.
2. Programs to equip members to share Christ's love with others.
3. Include repeat visitors and new members to attend Outreach and Fellowship meetings and join the committee.
4. The Fellowship committee should search out and discover the needs of individuals in the congregation and community. This consists of but not limited to the aged, sick and poor. The committee should bring these needs to the attention of the congregation with suggestions for action.
5. The Fellowship committee shall organize church picnics, new member receptions, potlucks, and dinners.
6. The Fellowship Committee should advertise and publicize the Gospel and the activities of the congregation by various modern avenues as possible.

10. YOUTH

This committee should consist of a Youth Director where term of the office shall be one year. If running unopposed for the following year, he/she may serve again if elected. The Youth Director will serve the church by developing, coordinating, and administering an effective and comprehensive ministry to the junior-high and senior-high youth of the church and providing leadership to and supervision of staff members and volunteers involved in this ministry. The youth director will submit reports at each church council meeting and congregational meeting outlining their activities and future plans. The Youth Director Shall:

1. Supervise the youth ministry program, including worship, education, spiritual development, evangelism, missions, fellowship, affirmation of youth, and support of families of youth.
2. Work with youth leaders to develop youth activities and curriculum.
3. Represent the church by serving on appropriate denomination committees and community organizations.
4. Oversee the planning of youth programs for special services, such as: Youth Sunday, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.
5. Work with youth leaders to recruit and train volunteers for leadership in youth ministry.
6. Oversee the care of equipment related to youth ministry. Purchase supplies, materials, and equipment as authorized.
7. Coordinate youth activities with the church master program and facilities calendar.
8. Assist in worship at the request of the Senior Pastor. Teach Sunday morning classes and any midweek Bible studies.
9. Establish departmental goals and objectives by prioritizing related programs, managing the use of facilities, planning an appropriate budget, delegating tasks, and evaluating progress regularly.
10. Work with appropriate committees, officers, and leaders in carrying out the youth ministry of the church.

11. COMMITTEE OF EDUCATION

This committee shall consist of the elected chairperson and two appointed members, whose term shall be for one year. One of the appointed members shall be the Superintendent of the Sunday School. The chairman shall represent the committee at the Congregational Meeting. The committee shall:

1. Foster spiritual growth in the life of the individual Christian.
2. Strengthen the Christian home and help equip parents, children, and young people for Christian family living.
3. Provide learning opportunities for all age levels; pre-school, school-age, youth and adult.
4. Encourage the congregation to set up agencies and organizations to help the parish best perform its educational task for each specific age level: namely the Sunday School from nursery department to Bible class, youth and adult groups, couples' and parents' groups.
5. Provide leadership education for teachers, officers, and workers.

12. COMMITTEE ON STEWARDSHIP

This committee shall consist of the chairperson, the treasurer, the financial secretary, and two (2) additional members who shall be appointed for a term of one year. The committee shall organize immediately after the appointment for the purpose of choosing a secretary. The chairperson shall represent the committee at the Congregational Meeting. The committee shall hold regular monthly meetings. It shall be the duty of this committee to:

1. Prepare the annual congregational budget.
2. Conduct a talent survey.
3. Conduct a pledge survey.
4. Encourage support of programs sponsored by Synod, District, and local congregations.
5. Encourage the concept of proportional giving.

13. PLANNING COUNCIL

The chairpersons of all committees, the pastor, the president of the congregation, and the head elder shall constitute the Planning Council, which shall meet annually at the request of the pastor to plan the parish program for the year, draw up the church calendar, and provide meeting nights for the various groups within the church. Ordinarily, the Planning Council will meet in the fall and plan the program for the upcoming calendar year.

14. AUDITORS

Annually, the president will appoint two qualified people with auditing experience to audit the treasurer's books. An audit will be made on or before December 1. A written report of the audit will be given to the Congregational Meeting by the chairman of the auditing committee, with a copy to the treasurer. The committee will carefully inspect the records to see that all congregational funds are being properly recorded as receipts and disbursements and audit for clerical errors. An external audit will be completed every five (5) years.

15. AMENDMENTS

Amendments can be made to these standard operating procedures at any duly constituted Congregational Meeting, providing that:

1. The proposed amendment(s) has been submitted in writing to the Secretary of the congregation.
2. The proposed amendment(s) is not inconsistent with the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution or laws of the United States of America, or the Constitution or laws of the State of Louisiana.
3. The proposed amendment(s) has been announced to the congregation at least four (4) weeks prior to the time of the vote.
4. The President has announced the date, time, and place for the vote in at least two (2) consecutive church bulletins prior to the voting time.
5. A two-thirds majority of the voting members present cast their vote in favor of the amendment. In the event of a meeting not in person, electronic votes may be cast by emailing their vote no later than the end time of the meeting to the church council president and vice president to be counted.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
THE VILLAGE CHURCH LUTHERAN
LACOMBE, LOUISIANA

Article 1

The name of this corporation shall be The Village Church (Lutheran) and under that name, it shall have and enjoy all the rights, privileges and advantages granted by law to such association, and shall have and enjoy succession into perpetuity, unless sooner dissolved.

Article 2

The domicile of this corporation shall be Lacombe, Parish of St. Tammany, State of Louisiana, and all citations and other legal process shall be served on the President, Vice-President or Chairman of the Board of Elders, and in their absence, on any one of the officers of this corporation shall be as follows:

Mailing Address – Post Office Box 1219
Lacombe, La. 70445-1219

Municipal Address - 29180 Highway 190 West
Lacombe, La. 70445-1219

Article 3

This corporation is organized as a nonprofit corporation as defined in R.S. 12:201 (7) of the State of Louisiana, and on a non-stock basis.

Article 4

The objects and purposes, for which this corporation is organized, are declared that of a religious organization, more particularly that of a Christian Congregation, established and maintained for the express purpose of dissemination the Gospel truth according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580.

Article 5

This corporation shall have the full power to sue and be sued in its corporate name, to make and use a corporate name, to make and use a corporate seal and the same to alter or break at its pleasure. It shall have the power to acquire, hold, lease or purchase, as well as alienate, sell, convey, mortgage or hypothecate property, real or personal, to make and establish, alter and amend such Constitution, By-Laws, and regulations as are deemed necessary for its proper government; and generally to have, exercise and enjoy all powers incident to and now or hereafter conferred by the laws of the State of Louisiana upon corporations with the objects and purposes herein and needful and proper for their support and government.

Article 6

The general management of this corporation between meetings of the voting members shall be entrusted to a Church Council as defined in the By-Laws. The Church Council shall have only such powers as are conferred by the voting members of the Church. The said voters of the Church as a body shall have the supreme power in the external and internal administration and management of its own ecclesiastical and congregational affairs, and whatever may have been decided or ordered by individual or minor bodies within the Church shall always be subject to review and revision by the voting members of the Church.

Article 7

The annual meeting of this corporate body shall be held in October for the election of officers and board members.

Article 8

Amendments to these Articles of Incorporation may be made at any Congregational meeting called for that purpose, provided that such amendments have been made in writing and submitted to the congregation one month prior to the meeting for the vote on the amendments, and further that the same are not inconsistent with constitution or the laws of the United States of America, or the State of Louisiana, and provided that two-thirds of the voting members present cast their votes in favor of such amendments.

Article 9

Membership in this corporate body may be held by all who have the qualification of membership specified in the By-Laws of this corporate body, it being understood, however, that only communicant members who are at least eighteen years of age, and who have signed the Constitution and By-Laws of this corporate body, in a book kept by the secretary for this purpose, shall have the right of suffrage.

CORPORATING OFFICERS

President – Gary DeLucca

Vice-President – Jerome F. Pankow

Chairman of Board of Elders – Frank X. Redmond

Financial Secretary – Judy DeLucca

Treasurer – Emelda Redmond

Secretary – Maryjune N. Pankow

State Registered Agent – Frank X. Redmond

Post Office Box 1219

Lacombe, Louisiana 70445-1219