



**Southwestern Minnesota Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## **CONSTITUTION, BYLAWS, AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS CODIFICATION EXPLANATION**

It is recommended that the provisions of the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Continuing Resolutions that pertain to the same matter should be placed together. This arrangement requires that the three types of material be identified by means other than physical separation.

We recommend the following: The three types of provisions are identified by the following devices: (a) **All constitutional provisions are in bold face type.** (b) All bylaw provisions are printed in light face type. (c) *All continuing resolutions are printed in italic type.* (d) A numerical codification indicates general subject, constitutional provisions, bylaws, and continuing resolutions.

Major sections are designated as chapters. The *Model Constitution for Congregations* is organized into chapters by general subject matter and codified as (a) constitutional provisions, (b) bylaws, and (c) continuing resolutions. Each provision is preceded by a capital "C." If a constitutional provision is mandatory, it will be preceded by an asterisk, "\*C."

- a. **Constitutional provisions are codified with two sets of numbers, preceded by a "C": the chapter number, followed by a period and a two-digit number. A period follows the two-digit number. Thus, one required constitutional provision related to "Membership" in Chapter 8 is codified as \*C8.02. A provision in Chapter 12 relating to a report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting is codified as C12.09. Constitutional provisions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 16 titled "Amendments."**
- b. Bylaw provisions follow constitutional provisions to which they apply. They are not intended to be organized in a separate document at the end of the constitutional provisions. Bylaws are codified with three sets of numbers: the chapter number (preceded by a "C"), the related constitutional provision number, and a two-digit number. There are periods after the chapter number, after the reference to the constitutional provision, and after the bylaw number. Thus, a bylaw provision related to "Membership" would be codified as C8.02.01. A bylaw relating to the contents of an annual report by the Congregation Council to the congregation at an annual meeting would be codified as C12.09.01. Because bylaws and continuing resolutions normally relate to specific practices and details of each congregation's organization, operation, and life, there is not a model set of bylaws or continuing resolutions. Thus, each congregation has discretion and may develop its own bylaws and continuing resolutions, including bylaws and continuing resolutions under required constitutional provisions, but no such bylaw or continuing resolution may conflict with constitutional

provisions in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*, the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, or the constitution of the synod, as indicated in \*C6.03.e. Bylaws are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 17.

- c. *Continuing resolutions are intended to provide descriptions of operational patterns and practices or of the ongoing responsibilities of committees or other units within the organizational structure of the congregation. They follow the relevant constitutional provision or bylaw to which they refer. Continuing resolutions also are codified with three sets of numbers, except that the third set is preceded by a capital letter. Thus, a continuing resolution describing congregation committees in Chapter 13 might be numbered "C13.07A13." The initial numbers C13.07 indicate that the continuing resolution relates to the designated constitutional provision, which in this case provides that the duties of congregation committees may be specified in bylaws or continuing resolutions. The final letter and numbers A13 designate that this is the first continuing resolution "A" and the year that it was adopted, in this example 2013. Continuing resolutions are adopted and amended in accordance with Chapter 18. Unlike constitutional provisions and bylaws which are adopted by the congregation at a legally called and conducted meeting, continuing resolutions may be adopted either by a congregation meeting or by the Congregation Council.*