

Explanatory Document for Reviewing the Draft Amended Constitution – First Lutheran

The current constitution for First Lutheran – Gladstone was last updated in 2015 and approved by the congregation at its 2016 Annual Meeting. Since then, required language updates have been made to the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations in 2016 and 2019. This 2022 draft amended constitution for First Lutheran includes all the required language updates from 2016 and 2019. It also contains amendments to bring it up to date with the current policy and actual governance and activities of this congregation.

All edits, both required and suggested are designated in red colored font. All black colored font is language from the 2016 version that has not been amended. Language being removed is in red font with a strikethrough line (example: ~~other parts~~). All additions or replacement language is in red colored font and underlined (example: the other expressions).

Below is some helpful information to assist your review of the draft document

1. The constitution is divided into chapters, and each chapter contains provisions, and each chapter may also contain bylaws and/or continuing resolutions.
 - a. Example of a provision: C10.01. – this is the first provision of chapter 10.
 - b. Example of a bylaw: C10.01.01. – this is the first bylaw under provision C10.01. A second bylaw under provision C10.01. is designated as C10.01.02.
 - c. Example of a Continuing Resolution: C11.01.A22. – this is the first continuing resolution under provision C11.01. The “A” indicates the first one and the following “22” designates that it was established in 2022. A second continuing resolution under provision C11.01. is designated as C11.01.B22.
2. An important distinction between bylaws and continuing resolutions: bylaws can only be added, deleted, or edited by the congregation and must be both approved at one meeting and then ratified at a second meeting. Continuing Resolutions can be added, deleted, or edited by a 2/3 majority vote of the congregation council or by a simple majority vote of the congregation at a legally held congregation meeting.
3. If a provision designation has an asterisk before the letter C, it is a required provision that must be in a congregation’s constitution (example ***C2.01.**). The language of a required provision must exactly match the language of the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations. No words may be left out and no words may be added. So asterisked provisions cannot be changed except for edits necessary to bring them up to date with the most current Model Constitution.
4. You will note many cases where words in the 2016 constitution were italicized but have now been changed to be not italicized. This is done to meet current standards of the ELCA and current convention for documents of this type.
5. In order to become the new constitution for First Lutheran, these amendments must undergo a four-step approval process. First, the council must approve it and pass a motion to recommend it to the congregation and provide the recommended draft to the congregation for review at least 30 days before there is a congregation meeting to consider it. Second, it must be approved by a simple majority vote of the congregation at a legally held congregation meeting. Third, if approved at the first meeting, the amended constitution must then be ratified by a 2/3 majority vote at a regular meeting of the congregation (the next annual meeting). There must be at least 30 days between the two meetings. The final or fourth step is that the amendments to First Lutheran’s constitution must receive the approval of the Northern Great Lakes Synod. The synod review for the 4th step will happen concurrently with this congregation’s scheduled meetings.