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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

Whereas our Lord Jesus Christ, sent by God the Father, gave His life and was raised to life again and now says, "My peace be with you." And whereas He has ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand of God the Father, has given us His Holy Spirit as counselor and guide, and will come again to receive all believers into eternal life in His name. And whereas between Easter and His Second Coming He has set forth the Gospel imperative to ... "go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28: 18-20). May it therefore be that His body of disciples known as New Hope Lutheran Church of Hudsonville Michigan is dedicated to the fullness of this life and calling in Christ! Accordingly we focus on Jesus' mission ("making disciples"), ministry ("baptizing and teaching them"), and daily promise ("Truly, I am with you always"). In order to accomplish this mission and ministry, and in order to live in this promise, this governance and organizational system is built upon the following presuppositions:

1. All congregational systems and practices must be in agreement with the Word of God (Acts 2:42, Romans 15:4, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 2 Peter 1:19-21).
2. We understand that some areas of congregational life have no clear word of command or prohibition in the Word of God. In these areas - seeking God's guidance and wisdom - we aim to do those things that are most helpful to spread of the Gospel and most honoring to our Lord & Savior (1 Corinthians 9:18-20, 1 Corinthians 10:23-24).
3. The Lord accomplishes His mission and ministry through His Body the Church by the working and power of the Holy Spirit in both Word and Sacraments (Joel 2:28-29, 1 Corinthians 12).
4. While the Lord calls pastors to the office of the public ministry for the care of the church and the public proclamation of the Gospel, we also understand that the church is one body, united under Christ, called to bear his image, name, and saving love to the world. Therefore, collectively, we offer the individual gifts that God has granted for service in the church and active witness in the world (Romans 12:1-10, 1 Corinthians 12, Philippians 2:1-11).
5. The mission and ministry of the church are best supported as God's people practice first fruits giving (proportionate management of time, talent, treasure, and testimony). (Malachi 3:9-10, Acts 24:16-17, 2 Corinthians 8:18-20, Ephesians 5:1, Philippians 4:17-19).
6. Prayer is integral to the life of the church, and is therefore integral for both mission & ministry planning, and decision making & implementation (Matthew 7:7, Philippians 4:4-7, Ephesians 6:16-19).
7. Ministry leadership is best done by people who are faithful, committed and competent. (Acts 2:42, Titus 1:6-11, Titus 2:6-8).
8. In light of these things we understand that it is the calling of New Hope Lutheran Church to be actively comforted and built up in unity through this Good News from God, so that we may also go out actively and share the Good News with the world.

ARTICLE ONE - Name of Congregation

The name of this congregation shall be New Hope Lutheran Church of Hudsonville, Michigan.

ARTICLE TWO – Purpose

The mission of New Hope Lutheran Church is:

- 2.1 To live anew in the forgiveness, life and salvation that God the Father has given us through Jesus Christ – a life lived in the guidance and comfort of the Holy Spirit and Holy Scripture.
- 2.2 To spread the same message of salvation through Jesus Christ to all nations and people that the Lord may expand His kingdom.
- 2.3 To use our gifts and talents to both serve the life of the church and the advancement of the Gospel to the world through our daily vocations, mission, community service and outreach.

ARTICLE THREE - Confessional Standard

New Hope Lutheran Church accepts without reservation:

- 3.1 The Scriptures, namely, the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, as the verbally inspired and inerrant Word of God, and submits to them as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.
- 3.2 The Symbolical books (confessional writings) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580 AD, as the true, unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God. These are: The three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Martin Luther, the Small Catechism of Martin Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE FOUR - Membership

The membership of New Hope Lutheran Church includes the following:

- 4.1 Baptized Membership– The baptized membership includes all those who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and are under the spiritual care of the congregation, including children who have not yet confirmed their baptismal vow.
- 4.2 Communicant Membership– The communicant membership includes those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, accept the confessional standards of Article Three of this Constitution, are familiar at least with the basic Christian doctrines and who are not members of organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

- 4.3 Reception— Baptized members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through transfer, or with the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation. Communicant members are received by the rite of Confirmation, by transfer from a sister congregation, upon profession of faith or by re-affirmation of faith. All membership requests shall be affirmed by the Board of Elders and approved by the Church Council.
- 4.4 Duties— All members are expected to support the mission and ministry of New Hope Lutheran Church through devotion to and participation in worship, Bible study, prayer, service, and financial offerings.
- 4.5 Termination— Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining another congregation outside of our fellowship, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion. Twenty-four months of complete inactivity will be defined as reasonable cause for self-exclusion.

Communicant members who conduct themselves in an unchristian manner, whether in word or deed, shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If they still remain impenitent after proper admonishment, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be processed by the Board of Elders and the Pastor, presented to the Council and presented individually to the Voters' Assembly. If such members deliberately absent themselves from the meeting(s) at which their case is to be discussed, they shall be regarded as having excluded themselves from membership.

- 4.6 Voting Membership— Communicant members who have reached the age of eighteen shall have the privilege of voting at a Voters' Assembly. Attendance is highly preferred. Absentee ballots will be accepted and must be given to the Council Secretary prior to the Voters' Assembly.
- 4.6a Holding Office— Both men and women may serve as voter, officers and members of boards and committees. However, because God holds men accountable as the spiritual leaders of a congregation, it shall be required that men fill the positions which are directly involved in the specific functions of the pastoral office, such as preaching, the public administration of the Sacraments, or church discipline.
- 4.6b In all other circumstances, the congregation shall work to involve both males and females in mission and ministry capacities which promote the extension of God's kingdom and achieve mission and ministry goals—but does not violate God's order of creation. To that end, some men are given to serve as pastor, as members of the Board of Elders, or as chairman and vice-chairman of the congregation.

ARTICLE FIVE - Pastors, Teachers, Commissioned Workers

The pastoral office shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in Article Three of this constitution, who is qualified for this work, who has been endorsed by the Lutheran-Church Missouri Synod, and who is a member of Synod. The same shall apply to called teachers and commissioned church workers.

ARTICLE SIX - Authority of the Congregation

- 6.1 Any called pastor, teacher, or commissioned church worker may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly by a two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot vote (as prescribed in Article 9.2 of this Constitution), in Christian and lawful order and in consultation with the District Office, for one of the following reasons:
- Persistence in false doctrine or ungodly living
 - Willful neglect of official duties
 - Mental inability beyond reasonable accommodation
 - Physical inability beyond reasonable accommodation
- 6.2 All other matters before the Voters' Assembly shall be decided by a majority vote of those present at the Voters' Assembly, with the intent of having a consensus among all present, unless otherwise specified by this constitution or by-laws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God.
- 6.3 The Voters' Assembly shall be the governing body of New Hope Lutheran Church. It alone has the right of calling pastors, teachers, and other commissioned workers, electing officers, approving the budget, approving any transfers of real property involving the congregation, and approving all non-budgeted building projects.
- 6.4 The Church Council shall be charged with the month-to-month decisions and programs of the congregation. It shall be held accountable to the Voters' Assembly for the progress of the congregation toward its stated purposes. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the Church Council.

ARTICLE SEVEN - Officers and Boards

- 7.1 The officers of this congregation shall be such officers as prescribed in Article 3.1 of the Bylaws of this Constitution.
- 7.2 All officers of the congregation are expected to confess the teachings of the Lutheran Church (as prescribed in Article Three of this constitution), model the life of Jesus, and cheerfully and diligently fulfill the duties of their office. Failure to meet these expectations is grounds for removal from office. A two-thirds (2/3) majority ballot of present voting members is required for removal.
- 7.3 No congregational officer, board or committee member shall have authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the Voters' Assembly and/or the Church Council.

ARTICLE EIGHT - Meetings

- 8.1 Regular meetings of the Voters Assembly shall be held two (2) times per year, traditionally: May (elections), and November (budget).

- 8.2 Special meetings may be called at the request of a) the pastor, b) the Church Council, c) at least three (3) officers, or d) at least ten (10) of the voting members on the active roll. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is being called, and no other business shall be transacted at this meeting.
- 8.3 All voters meetings require an announcement in the worship services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the meeting.
- 8.4 Meetings shall be conducted at that level of parliamentary procedure that allows all who wish to speak the opportunity to do so, that enables the majority to make decisions, and that encourages good will among the members of a Voters' Meeting and the whole congregation. The latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall be used as a guide to these ends.

ARTICLE NINE - Quorum

- 9.1 All eligible and active voting members at a validly called meeting shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise specified by this Constitution, decisions shall be by majority vote. A ballot vote may be requested by any one member. The Chairman may cast the deciding vote in the case of a tie except in the election of officers (as prescribed in Article 3.1 of the Bylaws of this Constitution).
- 9.2 When amending the Constitution, or removing a pastor, teacher, or other commissioned worker, it is necessary to require a majority of the voters of the congregation to constitute a quorum. If that quorum does not attend, those present may set a date for an adjourned meeting. The sole notice of such a meeting will be made by mail five days in advance. Those members present at such a continued meeting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE TEN - Synodical Membership

New Hope Lutheran Church shall be a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to New Hope's confessional standards as determined by Article Three of this Constitution.

ARTICLE ELEVEN - Property Rights

- 11.1 All property of this congregation shall be held in the corporate name as stated in Article 1 of this Constitution.
- 11.2 If at any time a separation should take place within New Hope Lutheran Church on account of doctrine, the property and all the benefits therewith connected shall remain with those members, even though a minority, who shall continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article Three of this Constitution.
- 11.3 If division in the congregation takes place for any other reason, the property and all the benefits therewith connected shall remain with the majority of communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article Three of this Constitution.

- 11.4 In the event of the dissolution of this congregation all property of the congregation shall be liquidated and disbursed for the payment of debt. Any and all surplus after the settlement of just claims against this congregation shall be conveyed to the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE TWELVE - By Laws

New Hope Lutheran Church may adopt such Bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purposes.

ARTICLE THIRTEEN - Changing the Constitution

The Constitution and/or proposed amendments to it shall be declared adopted and valid at any scheduled Voters' Assembly, provided that:

- 13.1 the clear content and intent of Articles Two, Three, Five, and Thirteen of this Constitution shall not be changed or repealed;
- 13.2 the proposed change does not conflict with the provisions defined in Articles Two, Three, Five, and Thirteen or to a Scriptural doctrine or practice;
- 13.3 the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing to the Church Council and published for the Voters' Assembly two (2) weeks prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon; and
- 13.4 an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) majority of voters (as prescribed in Article 9.2 of this Constitution) is secured.
- 13.5 Following the adoption of an amendment, the Council Secretary shall forward a certified copy of the amendment to the President of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod for recognition that it is not in conflict with the Synodical Constitution. Upon notice of such approval from the District Office, the amendment shall become effective.

ARTICLE FOURTEEN - Implementation

Upon adoption, this Constitution shall supersede the existing constitution and by-laws and become effective on _____20____. All resolutions, operating procedures, and directives not inconsistent with the provisions of this Constitution shall continue in full force and effect until repealed or amended.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE ONE - Core Values

- 1.1 **Relationships.** We deeply value healthy relationships with God and one another.
 - Our church is Christ centered.
 - We love one another, as Jesus commands us to do. (John 15:12)
 - We support and emphasize our relationships with all Christians.
 - We have deep abiding commitment to, and acceptance of, one another in congregational fellowship.
- 1.2 **Worship.** We deeply value creative, family-friendly worship.
 - We support and nurture the celebration of the sacraments (Baptism and The Lord's Supper), uplifting music, faithful preaching and a warm welcome for our visitors.
 - We recognize that many types of family units make up the body of Christ.
 - We advocate youth participation in worship.
 - Our worship encourages the strengthening of the family.
- 1.3 **Education.** We deeply value Christian education for all ages.
 - We are scripture based in our teaching, preaching, and counseling.
 - The Bible is foremost in our beliefs.
 - We uphold the entirety of God's Word as truth.
- 1.4 **Dependence.** We deeply value our dependence on the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - We center our programs on the belief that all of God's people are offered the gift of salvation.
 - We focus our programs on the Gospel of our Lord.
- 1.5 **Community Outreach.** We deeply value outreach to our community.
 - We believe that lost people matter to God and we are committed to meet the needs of the unchurched in our community, understanding that we are all sinners, and are saved through the grace of God.
 - We respect and support other churches, denominations and persons who believe, teach, and confess the true Word of God.
- 1.6 **Missions.** We deeply value mission involvement.
 - We support and emphasize home care, disaster relief, and hands-on help for those in need, both in our community and in other communities.
 - We support world missions, believing that the motivation for spreading God's Word is to fill heaven. We open our hearts and church to all who would join us in repenting our sin and in receiving the Lord's life, forgiveness, and salvation, recognizing that the diversity of God's people is a visible fulfillment of Jesus' command to his disciples to spread His Word to the world.
- 1.7 **Prayer.** We deeply value prayer life.
 - We value prayer in our commitment to God in our daily lives.
 - We value intercessory prayers for one another, all Christians, the lost, and God's world.

- 1.8 **Service.** We deeply value dedicated people doing their utmost in God's service.
- We encourage and support the involvement of all members and visitors.
 - We are dedicated to giving and tithing of the monetary and non-monetary gifts that God has given all of us.
- 1.9 **Leadership.** We deeply value godly leadership from both professional staff and lay persons.
- We are committed to give encouragement, be constructive in any criticism, and prayerful support to our leadership.
 - Our leadership is committed to excellence, quality, good stewardship, and a clear focus on the future.
- 1.10 **Denominational Loyalty.** We deeply value commitment to church programs.
- We support the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
 - We welcome District involvement in our Congregation.

ARTICLE TWO - Calling a Pastor, Teacher, or Called Worker.

- 2.1 **Calling a Sole/Senior Pastor.**
- The Board of Elders and the Congregational Chairman shall comprise the Call Committee and in its discretion create an Advisory Committee consisting of members at large. This committee shall also arrange for the services of a vacancy or interim Pastor as necessary.
 - The Call Committee shall also review the mission/vision of the congregation in order to determine what will be expected from the new worker.
 - The congregation will be encouraged to submit names of candidates to the Call Committee. Any names will be shared with the District President as potential candidates.
 - The Call Committee will work with the District President or his representative on the call list in making preparations for the call meeting. The call meeting shall be a special meeting of the Voters' Assembly with the call being the only order of business. Biographical sketches of all candidates on the list will be submitted to the Voters' Assembly at the call meeting. No nominations may be accepted from the floor at the meeting.
 - A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast by secret ballot will be required for calling a Pastor.
 - A call document will be mailed as soon as possible.
- 2.2 **Calling an Associate/Assistant Pastor, Teacher, or other Commissioned Worker**
- The Church Council shall appoint not less than three voting members to work with the Pastor and the appropriate Board Chairman as a Call Committee.
 - The congregation will be encouraged to submit names of candidates to the Call Committee. Teachers and Commissioned Church Workers will be Synodically trained whenever possible.
 - The Call Committee will work with the District President or his representative on the call list and in making preparations for the call meeting. Biographical sketches of all candidates on the list will be submitted to the Voters' Assembly at a regular or special meeting of the congregation.
 - A two-thirds (2/3) majority of the votes cast by secret ballot will be required for calling a teacher or commissioned church worker.
 - A call document will be mailed as soon as possible.

ARTICLE THREE - The Church Council

3.1 Membership

- The New Hope Church Council shall be made up of the following:
 - Church Officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Recording Secretary and Treasurer
 - And the Chairpersons of the boards of Elders, Education, Trustees, Social Ministries, Finance and Evangelism.

The Pastor will serve as an advisory member to Council and all boards, with no voting rights. Up to three additional members of the congregation may be elected as advisory members to Council, with no voting rights.

- A Nominating Committee will be appointed by the Church Council. This Committee shall present a slate of candidates for ratification by the Congregation. The slate will include the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Recording Secretary (the church officers) and members for each board. The board members will then select a Chairman to represent them on Council. No person shall be nominated without his or her consent.
- Officers of the Church Council shall be elected for a term of two years, with a maximum of two consecutive terms. Board members shall be elected for a term of two years.
- In case of a vacancy of an elected office, the Church Council may appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term. Service for more than one-half of a term shall constitute a full term.

3.2 Order

- The Council shall be directed by the Chairman. The Chairman shall also work with the Pastor in the implementation of Board direction. The Chairman shall be responsible for providing a printed meeting agenda.
- In the event of the Chairman's absence, the Vice Chairman will conduct the Council's business, followed by the Recording Secretary.
- The Recording Secretary shall be responsible for the recording of meeting minutes and assist with Council correspondence within the Congregation.
- The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial records of the congregation, signing payroll checks for staff, overseeing the payment of church bills and preparing and presenting the annual church budget. The Treasurer, in conjunction with the Board of Elders, shall annually review salaries and wages of the Pastor(s) and staff for the benefit of Council, as well as provide wage and salary guidelines.
- The Council shall supervise the work of the Treasurer and Business Manager in keeping an accurate account of all disbursements.

3.3 Meetings

- The Council shall meet monthly, or as required to meet commitments.

3.4 Fiscal/Program Year

- The Council shall determine the most appropriate fiscal/program calendar. The Council shall approve, from the Treasurer, an annual budget for the Voters' approval.

3.5 Board Members Duties

Board of Elders

- The Chair or other board member will represent the board at Council.
- The New Hope Elder must be weighed positively in light of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

- The New Hope Elder must be a male of at least 25 years of age.
- The New Hope Elder must have been a Lutheran for at least five years, and a member of New Hope for at least two years.
- One Elder should be selected for up to 20 households in our Congregation.
- The Board, as an extension of the pastoral office, shall concern itself with:
 - a) the spiritual life of members and staff
 - b) communication with members
 - c) proper preaching and teaching of the Word of God in accord with doctrinal standards of Article Three of the Constitution
 - d) proper worship life
 - e) the pastoral care of members
 - f) care for the spiritual and emotional needs of the pastor(s)
 - g) evaluation and recommendation to Council of Benevolent Fund distributions
- The Board shall meet monthly, or as often as it deems necessary.
- A majority of members of the board shall constitute a quorum for decision making.
- In conjunction with the Treasurer, annually review salaries and wages of the Pastor(s) and staff for the benefit of Council, as well as provide wage and salary guidelines.
- The Board will be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Board of Education

- The Chair or other board member will represent the Board at Council.
- Minimum of three members.
- Shall be responsible for the nurture and Christian growth of the members of the congregation.
- The Board shall be charged with the supervision of the Sunday morning education programs, summer vacation Bible programs (VBS), youth activities and nursery care.
- Give leadership to the operating of Sunday morning education programs and summer vacation programs, encourage enrollment and attendance, provide materials, assist the pastor(s), Director of Christian Education and youth leader in maintaining an adequate teacher staff and in general, do all that is possible to increase the effectiveness and mission activity of these agencies.
- Provide a program of training for Sunday morning teachers.
- Supervise the finances for the areas of responsibility previously mentioned.
- The Board will be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Board of Trustees

- The Chair or other board member will represent the Board at Council.
- Minimum of three members.
- Shall be responsible for the physical properties of the congregation.
- Maintain control of facility keys and assist the Business Manager with a list of authorized key-holders, as well as retrieving keys.
- Maintain a list of "opportunities" to itemize needed repairs and improvements.
- Supervise and direct the work, as well as attend to the maintenance and repair of all properties of the congregation, including snow removal and grounds care.
- Authorize the necessary equipment and supplies for the efficient operation of the congregation.
- Be responsible for maintaining adequate property and liability insurance coverage. The Board shall report annually to Council the status of all insurance coverage. Any changes in insurance policies and/or the selection of any insurance company shall be subject to Council approval.

- Authorize the use of congregational facilities by those organizations that are within the congregation, as well as those that are independent of the congregation.
- The Board will be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Board of Social Ministries

- The Chair or other board member will represent the Board at Council.
- Minimum of three members.
- Shall be responsible for facilitation of fellowship and care opportunities within and between members of the congregation.
- Involvement on the Board is open to all church members.
- The Board will meet at least annually to plan activities for the program year.
- Each member of the Board will be responsible for chairing or co-chairing at least one activity annually.
- The Board will be responsible for planning and facilitating the following events:
 - New member recognition event
 - Sunday morning fellowship
 - Meals associated with special/holiday worship (Lent, Easter, Advent)
 - Benevolent programs to assist members (Thanksgiving, Christmas)
 - Other social activities as decided by board
- The Board will be responsible for the care and supply of the church kitchen.
- A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for decision making.
- The Board will be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Board of Evangelism

- The Chair or other board member will represent the Board at Council.
- Minimum of three members.
- Shall lead the members of the congregation in outreach into the community.
- Oversee and maintain an ongoing visitation program.
- Develop a Sponsor program in order to assist new members to become acquainted and involved in the church facility and programs.
- The Board will be responsible for submitting an annual budget to the Treasurer.

Board of Finance

- The Chair or other board member will represent the Board at Council.
- Minimum of three members.
- Shall be charged with the teaching and promoting of proper stewardship of time, talents and treasures.
- Appoint annually the Financial Secretary subject to Council approval.
- Gather the offerings and keep a record of same. Supervise the work of the Financial Secretary and assistants in keeping an account of all contributions.

3.6 Committees

This congregation shall have such committees as are necessary to assist the called workers, elected leaders and members of the congregation in carrying out its mission and ministry. These committees may be authorized or created by staff members or boards, subject to review and approval by Council.

ARTICLE FOUR- Indemnification

- 4.1 Those members duly elected or appointed to or by the members who do not receive anything of value from this congregation for serving as a board member other than reasonable per diem compensation and/or reimbursement for actual, reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by such board member in service of the capacity as a board member shall be deemed a "volunteer" for all purposes hereunder.
- 4.2 A volunteer board member shall not be personally liable to the congregation or its membership and/or members for monetary damages for any breach of board member's fiduciary duty except for liability arising from or relating to:
- a) a breach of the duty of loyalty to the congregation or its members;
 - b) acts or omissions not in good faith or the involvement of intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law;
 - c) an act in violation of the provisions of Michigan Law, specifically MCLA 450.2551(1);
 - d) any transaction from which a board member derives an improper personal benefit;
 - e) any act or omission resulting in liability occurring before the date of the adoption and filing of this provision;
 - f) any act or omission that is grossly negligent.
- 4.3 The congregation shall assume all liability to any person or entity other than the congregation or its members for all acts or omission of a volunteer board member occurring on or after the date of adoption and filing of this provision.
- 4.4 The congregation by adoption of a resolution in accordance with its Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, and pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 170 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1987, shall have the power to indemnify those persons serving in the position of, or at the request of the corporation, as an officer, trustee, non-director volunteer, employee or agent against expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by a person in connection with any actions, suits or proceedings, formal or informal, relating to the service of said individual on behalf of the congregation if such person acted in good faith and in a manner that the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the congregation of its members, or other respect to any criminal action or proceeding if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct engaged in was unlawful. The congregation, through its Board of Directors, shall have such further or other authority to indemnify officers, employees or agents consistent with the provisions of Michigan Law and specifically consistent with the provisions of Public Act 170, Michigan Public Acts of 1987, as amended.

ARTICLE FIVE – Changing the By-Laws

- 5.1 Amendments to these bylaws may be made by a Voters' Meeting, with a majority vote. Amendments require a simple majority of those present. Amendments shall first be presented to the Church Council in writing. Council will review the proposal in light of Article 13 of our constitution and forward it to the Voters' Meeting with their recommendation at least thirty days before the vote is taken.
- 5.2 Following the adoption of an amendment, the Recording Secretary shall forward a certified copy of the amendment to the President of the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for recognition that it is not in conflict with the Synodical Constitution. Upon notice of such approval from the District President, the amendment shall become effective.