

41 We reject and condemn any teaching that would deny the inerrancy, inherent clarity,
 42 and sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures or that would promote any authority over our
 43 teaching and practice than that of Scripture alone.

- 44 B. The ACLC subscribes unconditionally to:
- 45 1. The Ecumenical Creeds:
 - 46 a. The Apostles' Creed
 - 47 b. The Nicene Creed
 - 48 c. The Athanasian Creed
 - 49 2. The Lutheran Confessions as contained in the Book of Concord of 1580:
 - 50 a. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession
 - 51 b. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession
 - 52 c. The Smalcald Articles
 - 53 d. The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
 - 54 e. The Small Catechism of Martin Luther
 - 55 f. The Large Catechism of Martin Luther
 - 56 g. The Formula of Concord

57 C. The ACLC subscribes unconditionally to these Creeds and Confessions because all
 58 their doctrine is drawn from and is in complete agreement with the Holy Scriptures.
 59 We reject and condemn any approach to the Lutheran Confessions that would deny
 60 their relevance to the church today or their suitability to settle doctrinal disputes
 61 among us.

62
 63 **NOTE TO ARTICLE III**

- 64 A. We agree with and welcome examination of our pastors based on Ministry, Word,
 65 and Sacraments: An Enchiridion by Martin Chemnitz (1593)
- 66 B. Although we do not subscribe unconditionally to the following documents, we
 67 commend them as useful for study and guidance:
- 68 1. The Following Doctrinal Statements from the Missouri Synod:
 - 69 a. CFW Walther's Theses on Church and Ministry (1852)
 - 70 b. "A Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod"
 71 (1932)
 - 72 c. "Fellowship in its Necessary Context of the Doctrine of the Church" -
 73 Statement of the Overseas Committee: From the Proceedings of the
 74 Recessed Forty-Sixth Convention of the Synodical Conference (1961)
 - 75 d. "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" (1973)
 - 76 2. The following doctrinal statements of the Norwegian Synod:
 - 77 a. "Theses on Lay Preaching" (1862)
 - 78 b. "The Third Commandment and the Christian Sunday" (1863)
 - 79 c. "Absolution" (1874)
 - 80 d. "An Accounting" (1884)
 - 81 3. The Following Statements of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod:

- 82 a. "Unity, Union, and Unionism" (1936)
 83 b. "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod: Character, History, Doctrine, Mission"
 84 (1981 edition)
 85

86 **ARTICLE IV – ADVISORY NATURE OF THE ACLC**

87 The ACLC is an association of churches. It is only advisory with respect to member
 88 congregations with their pastors. Individual congregations operate according to their
 89 own constitution and bylaws.
 90

91 **ARTICLE V - BUSINESS OF THE ACLC**

- 92 A. To stand guard over the purity and unity of doctrine within the ACLC, and to oppose
 93 false doctrine.
 94 B. To help pastors remain faithful in the performance of their duties.
 95 C. To publish and distribute a churchly periodical.
 96 D. To prepare future pastors for service in the Church.
 97 E. To examine candidates for the Holy Ministry.
 98 F. To provide for ecclesiastical ordination and installation into the pastoral office.
 99 G. To assist congregations in need of pastoral care.
 100 H. To give theological opinions.
 101 I. To strive for uniformity in ceremonies.
 102 J. To maintain in the congregations the exclusive use of orthodox hymnals, agendas,
 103 and catechetical materials.
 104 K. To establish connections with Confessional Lutheran Churches.
 105 L. To establish and support mission congregations wherever the Lord provides
 106 opportunity.
 107

108 **ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP**

- 109 A. Membership in the ACLC shall be available to the following:
 110 1. A confessional Lutheran congregation that subscribes to Article III of this
 111 Constitution, endorses Article II of this Constitution, and agrees to comply with
 112 this Constitution and Bylaws.
 113 2. A pastor called by and serving an ACLC congregation, who himself subscribes
 114 to Article III of this Constitution, endorses Article II of this Constitution, and
 115 agrees to comply with this Constitution and Bylaws.
 116 3. A pastor called by and serving an independent Lutheran congregation that
 117 subscribes to Article III of this Constitution, who himself subscribes to Article
 118 III of this Constitution, endorses Article II of this Constitution, and agrees to
 119 comply with this Constitution and Bylaws.
 120 4. Pastors emeriti, ordained theological professors, missionaries, and inactive
 121 Lutheran clergy who are members of ACLC congregations may be accepted as
 122 advisory members.

- 123 B. Acceptance into membership shall be done according to the Bylaws.
- 124 C. Dual membership is prohibited (membership in the ACLC and another church body
- 125 at the same time).

126

127

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS

128 The ACLC shall be administered and managed by its officers in accordance with the

129 Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of the ACLC.

130 A. The officers of the ACLC shall be:

- 131 1. The Superintendent
- 132 2. The Assistant Superintendent
- 133 3. The Secretary
- 134 4. The Treasurer

135 B. The duties of the officers of the ACLC shall be prescribed in the Bylaws of the

136 ACLC.

137 C. Officers shall be pastors or male members 21 years of age or older belonging to

138 ACLC congregations.

139 D. Officers shall have only that authority conferred on them by the Bylaws or

140 resolutions of the ACLC.

141 E. Subject to any requirements in the Bylaws and resolutions of the ACLC, any officer

142 can be removed by the members of the ACLC at any legally called meeting for any

143 one or combination of the following:

- 144 1. Inability to serve.
- 145 2. Malfeasance of office.
- 146 3. Living an unchristian life.
- 147 4. Persistently acting contrary to Article III of this Constitution.

148

149

ARTICLE VIII - CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

150 This Constitution may be amended subject to the following conditions and procedures:

151 A. Article III shall not be altered or rescinded.

152 B. The proposed amendment does not conflict with Article III of this Constitution.

153 C. The proposed amendment must be submitted to the Superintendant in writing at least

154 90 days prior to a legally called meeting.

155 D. The Superintendant or his designee shall distribute the proposed amendment to all

156 members at least 60 days prior to a legally called meeting.

157 E. The proposed amendment receives consensus or a 75% majority vote at the legally

158 called meeting.

159 F. The proposed amendment adopted at the legally called meeting shall be distributed

160 with a ballot by the Superintendant to the entire membership for ratification within

161 30 days after the meeting at which it was adopted. Members must return ballots so

162 the Superintendant receives them within 60 days after distribution (if the members

163 wish for them to be valid).

- 164 G. The adopted proposed amendment must receive 75% approval by the members to be
 165 ratified.
 166 H. The ratified amendment shall become effective immediately.
 167

ARTICLE IX - VOTING

169 Whenever possible the ACLC's direction and course should be determined by Christian
 170 consensus (100% unanimity). When consensus cannot be reached, and voting is
 171 necessary, each congregation shall have one vote. Only ACLC congregations are voting
 172 members. Here "congregation" is understood as the laity with their pastor(s). The vote of
 173 a congregation may be cast by its lay delegate or pastor. In the event the pastor and lay
 174 delegate of a congregation do not agree on a matter, the congregation forfeits its vote on
 175 that matter. Lay delegates must be male members of the congregation (in accordance with
 176 the Word of God) at least 18 years of age.
 177

ARTICLE X - DISSOLUTION

179 Should dissolution be determined necessary, any ACLC assets remaining after the
 180 payment of all outstanding debts shall be disposed of by transfer to one or more
 181 organizations, institutions, associations, foundations, etc. which serve one or more of the
 182 purposes of this organization as determined by its members in a legally called meeting.
 183

BYLAWS

BYLAW I - MEETINGS

- 187 A. The ACLC shall meet at least one time per calendar year for its Annual Meeting at
 188 which the selection/election of officers shall be conducted. Other normal business
 189 may also be conducted at this meeting.
 190 B. All meetings shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian love, seeking
 191 consensus/unanimity in all things in order to preserve the bond of like-mindedness
 192 and peace according to the unadulterated Word of God. The current edition of
 193 Robert's Rules of Order, except where these are inconsistent with God's Word or
 194 with this Constitution and Bylaws, shall provide guidance when
 195 consensus/unanimity cannot be achieved.
 196 C. The Secretary shall announce all meetings.
 197 D. Special meetings shall be called by order of the Superintendent when requested in
 198 writing by a simple majority of the member congregations.
 199 E. At all meetings of the ACLC, those present shall constitute a quorum.
 200

BYLAW II - OFFICERS

- 202 A. The officers of the ACLC shall be:
 203 1. The Superintendent
 204 2. The Assistant Superintendent

- 205 3. The Secretary
- 206 4. The Treasurer
- 207 B. The terms of office shall be for two years, beginning after the Annual Meeting.
- 208 Additionally:
- 209 1. Officers shall have reached the legal age of 21 years.
- 210 2. No officer may hold more than one ACLC office concurrently.
- 211 3. No officer may serve in the same office more than two consecutive terms.
- 212 4. Two offices shall be filled each year: Superintendent and Secretary in odd-
- 213 numbered years, Assistant Superintendent and Treasurer in even-numbered
- 214 years.
- 215 C. The general duties/responsibilities of the officers shall include, but not be limited to,
- 216 the following:
- 217 1. Facilitate the dissemination and exchange of information relevant to
- 218 confessional and doctrinal issues of interest and concern, as well as those
- 219 promoting the purposes of the ACLC.
- 220 2. Communicate with other groups and individuals which share the confessional
- 221 basis, objectives, and purposes of the ACLC.
- 222 3. Determine the time and place of all meetings of the ACLC.
- 223 4. Prepare an application for membership which requires all members to comply
- 224 with Article VI of the Constitution of the ACLC.
- 225 5. Any additional specific duties assigned by the ACLC from time to time.
- 226 D. The specific duties/responsibilities of the individual officers shall be as follows:
- 227 1. The Superintendent shall:
- 228 a. Be an ACLC pastor on the clergy roster serving an ACLC congregation.
- 229 b. Preside at or designate a qualified pastor to preside at each meeting of the
- 230 ACLC or its officers.
- 231 c. Ensure, to the best of his ability, compliance with the Constitution and
- 232 Bylaws of the ACLC in carrying out the will and purpose of the ACLC and
- 233 its members.
- 234 d. Be responsible for the preparation, publishing, and dissemination of a
- 235 tentative agenda before each meeting of the ACLC. This agenda is to be in
- 236 the hands of the membership at least 30 days before the opening of the
- 237 meeting.
- 238 e. Arrange for biennial ecclesiastical visitations in order to help pastors to
- 239 remain faithful in their duties.
- 240 2. The Assistant-Superintendent shall:
- 241 a. Be an ACLC pastor on the clergy roster serving an ACLC congregation.
- 242 b. Act in the stead of the Superintendent in his absence, and assist the other
- 243 officers as needed.
- 244 c. Work with the other officers in organizing the conferences and meetings of
- 245 the ACLC, securing the location and the accommodations necessary and in

246 the best interest of the ACLC and its members for attendance and
 247 participation.

- 248 d. Secure speakers and prepare the program for all conferences of the ACLC.
 249 All officers must approve all speakers and programs.

250 3. The Secretary shall:

- 251 a. Be a member (preferably lay) of an ACLC congregation.
 252 b. Record and promptly distribute the ACLC minutes of each meeting to each
 253 congregation.
 254 c. Keep a permanent record of all minutes, correspondence, and official
 255 actions; passing them on to his successor in a timely manner.
 256 d. Notify all members of the date, time, and location of all ACLC meetings.
 257 Notice shall be made in writing (electronic dissemination permissible
 258 providing affirmative response of reception is made) at least 45 days prior
 259 to all meetings.
 260 e. Maintain a current list of membership in the ACLC which shall be
 261 available to all members, and distribute and receive all applications for
 262 membership.

263 4. The Treasurer shall:

- 264 a. Be a lay member of an ACLC congregation.
 265 b. Determine in consultation with the other officers the members' costs (e.g.,
 266 registration, facility costs) for all conferences/meetings, and disseminate
 267 the information to the members.
 268 c. Collect all donations, registration fees, etc., and deposit them for
 269 disposition to pay all costs incurred by the ACLC for all
 270 conferences/meetings.
 271 d. Prepare and present a detailed Treasurer's Report at each ACLC Annual
 272 Meeting and other times as requested by the officers.
 273 e. Assemble and maintain a list of acceptable costs that may be billed to the
 274 ACLC as approved by the officers and/or membership.

- 275 E. The officers shall meet (electronic communication is permissible and may be
 276 recommended) as often as necessary to fulfill their duties and responsibilities,
 277 keeping in mind stewardship obligations.

278 F. Vacancies

- 279 1. If the office of Superintendant becomes vacant, the Assistant-Superintendent
 280 shall assume the office of Superintendant for the remainder of the term.
 281 2. The duties of all other vacant offices shall be assumed by the remaining officers
 282 until the next Annual Meeting.

283
 284 **BYLAW III - MEMBERSHIP**

- 285 A. Application for Membership:

- 286 1. Individuals or congregations seeking membership shall submit to the Secretary
 287 a completed and signed application for membership.
 288 2. The Secretary shall produce copies of each membership application to be
 289 delivered to the Membership Committee in a timely manner for their evaluation
 290 and recommendation.
- 291 B. Acceptance of members:
- 292 1. The Membership Committee shall review applications for membership and
 293 conduct whatever interviews or questioning they deem necessary to adequately
 294 determine the applicant's confessional standard in teaching and practice.
 295 2. The Membership Committee shall then submit with recommendation for action
 296 each application for membership to the ACLC at the next legally called Annual
 297 Meeting.
 298 3. Membership applications shall be acted upon by the ACLC only at its Annual
 299 Meeting.
 300 4. Membership in the ACLC shall become effective immediately upon approval
 301 by the ACLC, but new members cannot vote until the following meeting.
- 302 C. Continued Membership Eligibility:
- 303 1. Continued membership is contingent upon continued compliance with Article
 304 VI of the Constitution.
 305 2. Requests for removal of membership status shall be approved only at the
 306 Annual Meeting.
 307 3. Member pastors and congregations who refuse to comply with Article VI of this
 308 Constitution will be addressed patiently and with the utmost integrity at the
 309 Annual Meeting, following due process.

BYLAW IV – STANDING COMMITTEES

- 312 A. Committees may be established as authorized by the members of the ACLC only at
 313 the Annual Meeting.
- 314 B. There shall be a standing Membership Committee as follows:
- 315 1. The Membership Committee shall consist of four members of the ACLC: two
 316 laymen and two pastors serving ACLC congregations.
 317 2. Members shall be selected at each Annual Meeting to serve a staggered two-
 318 year term.
 319 3. Members may serve up to two consecutive terms, after which they will be
 320 ineligible to serve again on this committee for two years.

BYLAW V – AD HOC COMMITTEES

- 323 *Ad hoc* committees may be established by the officers if they deem it necessary from time
 324 to time.
- 325 A. The Superintendent and other members of a committee established by the officers
 326 shall be appointed by the ACLC officers unanimously.

327 B. Committees established by the officers shall not continue in existence beyond the
328 next Annual Meeting unless otherwise directed by the ACLC.

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330

BYLAW VI - VOTING

331 A. Unless otherwise provided in these Bylaws or the Constitution, an attempt shall be
332 made to have all matters decided by consensus/unanimity. If, after extended efforts,
333 consensus/unanimity is not achieved, the matter shall be decided by a 75 percent
334 majority vote. Voting members present shall constitute a quorum.

335 B. Voting by proxy, or by written or electronic mail ballot is prohibited unless
336 specifically directed by the Constitution, Bylaws, or the ACLC in its Annual
337 Meeting.

338 C. In the case of any official ballot by mail, the officers shall appoint a Ballot
339 Committee to tabulate, certify, and announce the result(s) of the balloting. The
340 Ballot Committee shall consist of one member pastor and one member layman,
341 preferably neither of which is an ACLC officer.

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343

BYLAW VII - AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

344 A. All amendments to these Bylaws shall first be attempted by consensus/unanimity. If,
345 after extended efforts, consensus/unanimity is not achieved, the matter shall be
346 decided by a 75 percent majority vote.

347 1. The proposed amendment shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent at
348 least 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

349 2. The proposed amendment shall be distributed by the Secretary to all members
350 at least 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

351 B. Amendments to these Bylaws shall take effect immediately upon passage unless
352 otherwise stated in the amendment.

353
354

BYLAW VIII - CONCLUDING ADMONITION

355 Recognizing the corrupt nature of man, we hereby go on record that we reject and
356 condemn any appeal to the authority of the ACLC in any and all matters, and direct
357 ourselves and all members of the ACLC of all time to God's Word, and God's Word
358 alone.

359
360

In these last days of sore distress
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness
That pure we keep, till life is spent,
Thy holy Word and Sacrament.
(TLH #292:2)

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Adopted unanimously at the ACLC Annual Meeting 1/27/09
Ratified unanimously by all ACLC congregations 4/27/09

367