

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH-LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD
BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA 58501

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to His divine Word in doctrine and practice (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:6-8; 2 Tim. 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). Therefore, we, the members of Zion Lutheran Church, located at Bismarck, North Dakota, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Zion Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod of Bismarck, North Dakota.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this congregation shall be to seek the honor and glory of God, to carry out His will, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to spread the kingdom of God and to foster Christian fellowship and love, by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all its members, according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Article III).

ARTICLE III - DOCTRINAL STANDARD

- A. This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old Testament and the New Testament as the revealed and inerrant Word of God, verbally inspired, and submits to them as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.
- B. This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the year 1580, as true and genuine expositions 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.

ARTICLE IV - THE OFFICES OF PASTOR AND TEACHER

The pastoral office of this congregation, as well as the office of a called teacher in the parochial school, shall be conferred only on such ministers, teachers, and candidates who profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution and who are qualified for their work. Pastors and teachers shall be pledged to this confessional standard.

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ARTICLE V - DOCTRINAL CONFORMITY

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standards of Article III.

ARTICLE VI - SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall hold membership in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as this Synod remains true to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions.

ARTICLE VII - DIVISIONS

If, at any time, a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. If division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members. In the event the congregation should totally disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the North Dakota District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

ARTICLE VIII - VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

The Voters' Assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. Voting members are communicants who have been received by the Voters' Assembly. The congregation shall not be empowered to decide any matters contrary to the Word of God, the Lutheran Confessions, or Article III of this Constitution, and any such decision shall be null and void.

ARTICLE IX - BYLAWS

This congregation may adopt such Bylaws as may be required for the accomplishment of its purpose.

ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- A. Articles II, III, IV, and V of this Constitution shall not be subject to change or repeal.
- B. Amendments to this Constitution may be adopted at a regular meeting of the voting members, provided:
 1. That they do not conflict with the confessional standard of the congregation as stated in Article III of this Constitution, or with any other article of section thereof that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice; and

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2. That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the voting members; and
3. That the proposed amendment has been read to the congregation assembled for worship on at least one Sunday prior to its presentation for adoption.

The affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at the meeting shall be required for the adoption of an amendment.