

# **Trinity Lutheran Church Constitution**

*Approved By Congregation 7/18/10/Updated and approved on 1/24/16*

## **PREAMBLE**

According to the Word of God (I Cor. 14:40; Col. 2:5), in every Christian congregation all things should be done decently and in order; therefore we, a body of Lutherans, have drawn up this constitution by which all internal and external affairs of our congregation shall be regulated and governed.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

**“Teaching about Christ, Leading to Christ, Caring like Christ”**

## **I. NAME**

**Our congregation shall be known as Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Congregation Unaltered Augsburg Confession, Reese, Michigan. 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.**

## **II. CONFESSION**

**This congregation declares unreserved adherence:**

- A. To all the canonical books of the Old and the New Testaments as the inspired Word of God;**
- B. To all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a pure and sound exhibition of the Word of God by which all doctrine in Church and School is to be taught and judged and all doctrinal controversies decided. These confessional documents are the Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds; the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; the Apology of the same; the Smalcald Articles; Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms; and the Formula of Concord.**

## **III. MEMBERSHIP**

**A. Accordingly, no one can be or remain a member of this congregation, or hold an office in the same, or enjoy and exercise the rights and privileges of a member, unless he/she:**

- 1. Is baptized;**
- 2. Accepts the Holy Scriptures as the only form of faith and life;**
- 3. At least knows and accepts Luther’s Small Catechism;**
- 4. Does not live in manifest works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), but leads a Christian life;**
- 5. Diligently hears the Word of God and frequently partakes of Holy Communion;**
- 6. Conforms to the regulations, which have been and shall be established and are not contrary to the Word of God, and submits to brotherly admonition when in error;**
- 7. Does not belong to a secret religious society (commonly known as “lodge”);**
- 8. Contributes according to ability toward the maintenance of church, school, and in general assists in bearing the**

burdens of the congregation (Gal. 6:6; I Cor. 8:11-14).

**B. Definition of Membership shall be as follows:**

- 1. BAPTIZED Membership-** Includes all those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the congregation.
- 2. COMMUNICANT Membership-** Includes all those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, accept the confessional standards of this congregation, and who are not members of any organization whose principles and conduct conflicts with the Word of God.
- 3. VOTING Membership-** Includes all Communicant Members who have reached the age of 18 years.
- 4. ASSOCIATE Membership-** Includes all those who participate in the ministry of this church, but want to keep their membership in another LCMS congregation. Associate members enjoy all the benefits and opportunities in the congregation with the exception of voting privileges or being elected to a church office.

#### **IV. SUFFRAGE**

All members of this congregation who have reached the age of 18 years are entitled to vote. Women may serve as officers and as members of all boards and committees of this congregation which do not call upon them to carry out the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching in or serving as the leader of the public worship service, the public administration of the sacraments, and the public exercise of church discipline.) Accordingly, a woman shall not serve as pastor of this congregation, as Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, or as an Elder.

#### **V. EXCOMMUNICATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

If a member after fruitless application of prescribed grades of admonition according to God's Word (Matt. 18:15-18), where the observance of such grades has been possible, is excommunicated, such person shall then have forfeited all rights of a member and all claims to the property of the congregation so long as he/she is not re-admitted to membership. The same applies also to those members who have refused to submit to church discipline and thus have excommunicated themselves as well as those who voluntarily withdraw from the congregation or sever their connection by removal to another place.

#### **VI. PASTORS AND TEACHERS**

Pastors and teachers of this congregation must subscribe to the confessions designated in paragraph II. The right to call, dismiss and depose ministers and teachers shall be vested in the congregation as a whole and shall never be delegated to an individual or a group within the congregation. Reasons for deposing pastors or teachers are persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life and willful neglect of official duties.

#### **VII. POWER OF OFFICERS**

The officers shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the congregation and whatever power may have been delegated to them shall at all times be subject to change or rescission by the congregation. All the officers of the congregation may, in Christian and lawful order, be removed from office.

## VIII. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

The supreme power in all affairs is vested in the congregation as a whole, therefore:

- A. No orders nor enactments, be they general or specific, shall be binding on the congregation or any member unless rendered by authority of the congregation; orders and enactments contrary to the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions shall be null and void;
- B. The election of officers of the congregation is always performed by the voters and this authority shall never be delegated to an individual or any group within the congregation;
- C. The congregation as a body owns and controls all church property;
- D. Should at any time a separation take place in this congregation on account of doctrine—which God in mercy may prevent—the property of the congregation and all advantages connected therewith shall remain in possession of those members who continue to adhere to the unalterable paragraphs as designated in paragraph XIII.

## IX. DIVINE SERVICES AND CUSTOMS

In the public worship of the congregation, authorized Lutheran hymnals and, in all official acts, purely Lutheran liturgical forms only are to be used. In the school there shall be used such books only for instruction in Christian doctrine which are purely Lutheran.

## X. MANAGEMENT OF PROPERTY

All property of the congregation shall be entrusted to the care of its trustees. They are to manage all property of the congregation in the name of the congregation, let contracts relating thereto, sign documents, and represent the congregation. The trustees are not at liberty, however, to manage the property of the congregation according to their own ideas, but only in accordance with valid resolutions and enactments of the congregation. For all such performances of the trustees the congregation must protect the trustees from all personal responsibility. For all acts and performances of the trustees in relation to the property of the congregation undertaken without authority from the congregation, the trustees shall be personally liable to the congregation.

## XI. MODE OF RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

Persons desiring admission and coming with a letter of transfer from a sister congregation shall present such letter to the pastor or to one of the elders to be submitted to the next Board of Elders meeting, who, having heard such letter, will at once act upon the application of the petitioner thus recommended. Other applicants shall take a course of instruction and upon completion of course of instruction, their application for membership shall be acted upon by the Board of Elders. The pastor shall welcome all new members in the name of the congregation.

## XII. MEETINGS

Regular meetings of the congregation shall be held quarterly. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Pastor, by the Chairman of the Congregation, or by the Board of Directors. The voters present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a quorum to do business. Congregational meetings shall be announced at a public service on the Sunday previous to its date, except in case of emergency. All matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All meetings conducted shall use Robert's Rules of Order as a guide.

**Matters introduced by individuals from the floor at a voters' meeting must be referred to an appropriate board or committee, if applicable, for consideration and recommendation action at the next voters meeting, or in urgent situations, to the Board of Directors."**

The congregation is the final authority and has the sole responsibility for the following items which must be

approved by a two-thirds majority vote:

1. Amending the Constitution;
2. Purchase or sale of real property, other than staff housing; erection, demolition or renovation of facilities;
3. Removal of called pastors and teachers;
4. Removal of officers.

B. The following items shall be decided by a majority vote:

1. Amending the Bylaws of the Church Constitution, the Endowment Trust Bylaws, and the Cemetery Constitution;
2. Approval of the annual operating budget including an annual expenditure limit;
3. Calling or releasing of called staff;
4. Borrowing of funds over **10%** of the annual operating budget in any fiscal year;
5. Excommunication of members of the church.

### **XIII. UNALTERABLE PARAGRAPHS**

Of this constitution, paragraphs II, III, V, VI, VIII, IX, and XIII shall be unalterable and irreplaceable. All petitions and motions to alter or repeal these paragraphs are always out of order and may neither be debated nor voted upon but must be rejected by the chairman by referring to this paragraph of the Constitution.

### **XIV. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this constitution for those sections which may be changed must be submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the congregation and published prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon. The amendment change must pass by a two-thirds majority of the voters present at the meeting.

### **XV. CALLED PROFESSIONAL MINISTERS**

The Pastoral Office of this Congregation, including any other ministerial office that shall be a part of it, is open to such pastors and ministers who agree with the confessional standards of this congregation, who are qualified to serve, and who are certified for such service by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

### **XVI. BYLAWS**

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

## BYLAWS

### ARTICLE I. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

It shall be the duty of the Board of Directors to establish and monitor all governing policies, and resolve all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the congregation; except those issues that are reserved for congregational meetings, or delegated to church or school staff. It shall receive reports on the operations and policies of the program boards and committees, and appointments to said boards. It shall have the right to call up for review, modification or revocation any action, policy, personnel decisions, or member appointments of a program board or committee, (except for spiritual matters decided by the Board of Elders). It shall review the disbursement of funds, exercising general oversight over the financial activities of the church. Board of Directors meetings shall be open to all voting members; however, executive meetings may be called at the direction of the chairman. A voting member wishing to speak must have received permission from the chairman, who shall afford the speaker a time limit and a place on the agenda. A board chairman is encouraged to designate a representative from that Board, with voting rights, to attend the Board of Directors' meeting if the chairman is unable to attend.

### ARTICLE II. ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors shall consist of fourteen elected members and a pastoral representative as an advisory member. The Board shall consist of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and the chairmen of the following boards: Finance, Elders, Trustees, Stewardship, Evangelism, Education, Worship, Social Ministry, Youth, Parish Education and Cemetery. Only men shall be elected as Chairman, Vice Chairman or to the Board of Elders. Vacancies on the Board of Directors will be filled by an appointment by the Board of Directors, until the next election cycle for that seat. If the Chairman of the Congregation position becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairman shall assume the Chairmanship, and a new Vice-Chairman shall be appointed.

People elected to the Board of Directors shall serve a two-year term, and may run for a second or third two-year term. An election will be held annually, no later than the first Sunday in December. Candidates for the offices are to be nominated by the Nominating/Election Committee and must be communicant members at least 18 years of age. The candidates are to be presented to the congregation prior to the election. The Nominating/Election Committee is charged with the responsibility of holding the election. No write-in votes will be accepted or counted.

### ARTICLE III. APPOINTED MEMBERS OF BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

The chairman of each board shall appoint the members of their board to a one-year term, with the oversight and consent of the Board of Directors. The members of a board may be re-appointed each subsequent year. The chairman of any board or committee shall not vote, except in case of a tie.

### ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES

“Any member of the congregation may attend open meetings (regular meetings not designated as closed) of a board and request permission to speak to issues, but not to vote. Any voting member (or group of voting members) may request permission from a board chairman in advance of the meeting to attend and present an issue or speak to it. They are guests but have no voting rights. After their particular issue has been discussed, they may leave the meeting. However, no issue (except as noted following) presented by such a person or group may be voted on or decided that same meeting, but placed on the agenda for the next meeting for discussion after deliberation. In case of a time sensitive matter, the issue may be discussed and voted on after the presenting group has left.”

#### A. PASTOR(S)

The pastor(s) shall serve as an advisory member(s) of all boards and committees, unless otherwise noted.

#### **B. CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the congregation and of the Board of Directors. He shall be the executive officer of the congregation and, unless otherwise noted, shall be an advisory member of all boards and committees. It shall be his duty to see to it that the various boards are carrying out their duties as prescribed by the Constitution, Bylaws and specific directives of the Board of Directors and Congregation. The Chairman shall not vote at Board of Directors meetings, except in case of a tie.

#### **C. VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Vice-Chairman shall assume all the duties of the Chairman in case of vacancy, absence or temporary inability of the Chairman to serve. He shall serve as the chairman of the Budget Committee and the Compensation Committee, as well as serving on various other committees as directed by the Chairman.

#### **D. SECRETARY**

The Secretary shall keep records of meetings of the congregation and the Board of Directors. He/She shall be responsible for the publishing of a report to the membership of the congregation following these meetings.

#### **E. BOARD OF FINANCE**

The Board of Finance shall have at least seven appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. They shall be responsible for the strategic financial planning and vision of the congregation's financial dealings, exercising supervision over the financial affairs of the church including the work of the Treasurer, whom they appoint. The Board of Finance shall insure that: a set of permanent and accurate financial records, including receipts and disbursements, is kept at the church office; all bills and salaries are paid upon proper authorization; financial records are submitted to the Auditing Committee for review; information and counsel is given regarding financial matters when requested; and quarterly and annual financial reports are given to the congregation. They shall manage the assets of the congregation, insuring wise and prudent financial judgment on the issues such as operating capital, building debt and operational debt. They shall track financial data, such as giving and expenditure trends, and offer interpretation of all related data. They shall be responsible for ordering and distributing contribution envelopes to all members. They shall keep a careful record of all moneys received through these contribution envelopes and plate collections, and transmit all receipts to the Treasurer of the congregation. They shall send individual reports to members semi-annually. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **F. BOARD OF ELDERS**

The Board of Elders shall have at least eleven appointed male members in addition to the elected chairman. The Board of Elders shall assist the Pastor(s) with their advice and support him/them in his/their work with every means at their command. They shall foster and maintain high spiritual standards in their own lives and in the lives of the members of the congregation. They shall, as assistants to the Pastor(s), be concerned with the spiritual life of the congregation, and assist with worship. They shall serve as points of contact for the concerns of the members. They shall admonish members who are neglecting the means of grace and who fail to share in the support of congregational endeavors. They shall have the responsibility of forming a call committee for a Pastor. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **G. BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees shall have at least five appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. They shall safeguard all property of the congregation. They shall let contracts relating to management of church property; sign

legal documents; and represent the congregation in legal matters. They shall keep the buildings of the congregation in repair. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **H. BOARD OF STEWARDSHIP**

The Board of Stewardship shall have at least four appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. They shall develop and promote activities that will stimulate an increased utilization of congregational time, talents and treasures in Christ's work. They shall attempt to identify the available skills and talents that exist among the members of the congregation. They shall supervise the orientation and integration of new members. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **I. BOARD OF EVANGELISM**

The Board of Evangelism shall have at least six appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. They shall seek to stimulate and maintain proper interest in missionary and evangelism activity in the congregation. They shall initiate and supervise the evangelism program of the congregation. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **J. BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Board of Education shall have between four and seven appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. Advisory members to the Board of Education shall include the Trinity Lutheran School Principal, a pastoral representative and a faculty representative. They are responsible for the administration and smooth operation of Trinity Lutheran School and its faculty. They shall create and enforce written policies as to the operation of the school through various handbooks and manuals. They shall make annual budgetary requests to the Budget Committee. They shall have the responsibility of forming a call committee for a principal or teachers. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **K. BOARD OF WORSHIP**

The Board of Worship shall have at least seven appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. The Board of Worship shall be responsible for ushering at all worship services, both regular and special. They shall ensure that all members are properly greeted, especially guests, informing and introducing these guests to the pastor. To ensure adequate coverage at regular and special events, they shall be in communication with and coordinate with people responsible for greeters, readers, and ushers. Special events may include confirmation, concerts, and programs. They shall develop policies and procedures to take care of any emergencies (medical or otherwise) that may occur during worship, making sure that properly trained volunteers are available to assist. They shall develop policies and procedures which will ensure that those who attend worship are properly assisted, including those with disabilities or special needs and that parking is clear, adequately marked and used appropriately. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **L. BOARD OF SOCIAL MINISTRY**

The Board of Social Ministry shall have at least five appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. The mission of this board is to provide a range of human care services locally and internationally and to provide meals and transportation to those in need. They shall offer social and fellowship activities to various age groups within the congregation. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **M. YOUTH BOARD**

The Youth Board shall consist of at least four appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. Advisory members to the Youth Board may include a pastoral representative, youth staff, and student representatives from Junior and Senior Youth. The Youth Board will support and guide the youth ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church as it strives to build faith, provide opportunities to serve, and foster Christian relationships in order that youth

might identify with the life and mission of the church. They shall oversee the activities of the Junior and Senior High Youth programs. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **N. PARISH EDUCATION BOARD**

The Board of Parish Education shall consist of at least four appointed members in addition to the elected chairman. This board is responsible for the planning, organizing and promoting of educational events for the members and friends of Trinity Lutheran Church and the surrounding community. These educational events include, but are not limited to: Sunday School, Adult Bible Studies, Vacation Bible School, and other special educational events. The Sunday School Superintendent and Vacation Bible School Director shall be advisory members. They shall annually develop goals and submit them to the Board of Directors.

#### **O. CEMETERY BOARD**

The Cemetery Board shall have at least two members in addition to the elected chairman. They shall supervise the Trinity Lutheran Church Cemetery according to the Cemetery Constitution. They shall annually review the Cemetery Constitution and shall submit suggested changes to the Board of Directors.

#### **P. AUDITING COMMITTEE**

The Chairman of the Congregation shall annually appoint a committee of three members to audit the books and records of the treasurer, finance committee and any other financial records the congregation may desire.

#### **Q. BUDGET COMMITTEE**

The Budget Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chairman, Board of Finance Chairman, a pastoral representative, Principal and two representatives from the Board of Stewardship. The Budget Committee shall receive and consider the financial requests from the various boards. This committee shall also consider requests from committees appointed by the chairman. Requests from committees appointed by boards shall come to the Budget Committee through those boards. The Vice-Chairman of the congregation shall assume the chairmanship of the Budget Committee and shall set a timetable of meetings that will insure finalization of the budget presentation at the June congregational meeting. The Board of Directors is responsible for informing the Budget Committee of any specific budgetary requests or guidelines. Prior to the presentation at the congregational meeting, the tentative budget shall be presented at a meeting of the Board of Directors. The Budget Committee shall be responsible for informing the congregation of the budget one week prior to the congregational meeting, and also be responsible for its presentation at the congregational meeting.

#### **R. COMPENSATION COMMITTEE**

The Compensation Committee shall consist of one representative from each board having responsibility for paid staff members, plus two members appointed by the Board of Directors, and the Vice-Chairman who shall serve as chairman of the committee. This committee shall study, analyze, review and formulate a salary and benefit package for all employees. The recommendation of this committee shall be presented to the Budget Committee for their review and approval before it is presented to the Board of Directors.

#### **S. TRUST FUND COMMITTEE**

The Trust Fund Committee shall consist of the Vice-Chairman of the Congregation, a pastoral representative, the Principal of the school, and up to four members appointed annually by the Board of Directors. The committee shall be responsible for administering the trust funds of Trinity Lutheran Church in accordance with the adopted Bylaws of each trust.

#### **T. MEMORIAL AND DESIGNATED GIFT COMMITTEE**

The Memorial and Designated Gift Committee shall consist of at least five members appointed annually by the



Board of Directors in addition to a pastoral representative. The committee shall survey the needs of the congregation on a regular basis in order to formulate a list of needs that may be funded with memorial or designated gift donations. This list shall be prioritized and publicized to the congregation and its alumni in order to solicit funds for these projects. This committee's work shall be supervised by the Board of Directors, with the committee's chairman reporting directly to the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

#### **U. ALTAR GUILD**

The Altar Guild exists to reverently prepare and beautify God's house for worship. This group will have officers of president, vice-president, treasurer and secretary as its executive board, elected from within and by the group. The Altar Guild will report to the Board of Elders and a pastoral representative as their voice on the Board of Directors.

#### **V. NOMINATING/ELECTION COMMITTEE**

The Nominating/Election Committee shall consist of at least four members, with two members appointed by the Congregational Chairman for two-year terms in alternate years to provide for consistency in practice from year to year. They are responsible for recruiting candidates for the various openings that will occur that year. They are charged with the responsibility of holding the election of the Board of Directors per Article II of these Bylaws.

#### **W. CALL COMMITTEE**

The Call Committee shall proceed as directed by the Board of Elders(when calling a pastor), or the Board of Education(when calling a principal or teacher).

1. After determining the qualifications required for the call that is to be made, the call committee will request a call list from the District President.
2. The congregation is invited to submit, by a specific deadline, names for consideration. Those names are then forwarded to the District President for consideration to be added to the call list if they are qualified and available to be extended a call.
3. The call committee shall consider the names returned by the District President, and after adequate review of each candidate, a congregational call meeting shall be scheduled to bring before the entire congregation an updated list of candidates who indicate that they would consider a call, as well as the call committee's recommendation.
4. After presenting the committee's recommendation, and adequate discussion of the remaining candidates, a motion to close nominations is entertained and a paper ballot vote is cast. If the vote is overwhelmingly in favor of one candidate, a motion to make the vote unanimous is entertained. If a clear majority is not obtained by first round paper ballot, all names with less than 25% of the vote are removed from the ballot and votes are cast again until unanimous consent is achieved.
5. When unanimous approval of the candidate is obtained, the Congregational Chairman is directed to contact the District President with the results of the Call Meeting and the candidate is notified of his or her call.

### **ARTICLE V. COORDINATING COUNCIL**

The Pastor, the Principal of the Christian Day School, the Board of Directors and the presidents of all auxiliary organizations in the congregation shall constitute the Coordinating Council. It shall review the parish program in order to effect good coordination among all departments of the congregation.

### **ARTICLE VI. TRUSTS**

Trinity Lutheran Church has established two trusts to assist members with planned giving opportunities. These trusts operate under the direction of Trinity Lutheran Church. They are governed by their own Bylaws which must

be approved by the congregation. Currently there are two trusts:

**A. The Trinity Lutheran Church Endowment Trust. The purpose of this fund is to receive gifts and bequests and to use them exclusively for the mission and ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church and School.**

#### **ARTICLE VII. CEMETERY**

**Trinity Lutheran Church is the sole owner of a cemetery in Blumfield Township. It is used as a suitable burial ground for its own members and fellow believers. The cemetery is governed by its own constitution and overseen by the Cemetery Board.**

#### **ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS**

**These Bylaws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the congregation by a majority of all voting members present, provided the proposed change has been announced at least one week prior to the meeting in which the amendment is voted upon.**

#### **ARTICLE IX. INDEMNIFICATION**

**Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Congregation Board member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of any committee of this congregation, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.**

## **TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY CONSTITUTION**

### **PREAMBLE**

**“And let my body have**

**A quiet resting place**

**Beside a Christian’s grave;**

**And let it rest in peace.”**

**In accordance with the Christian desire and sentiment expressed in these sacred lines, Trinity Lutheran Church has adopted the following rules and regulations for the operation of its Cemetery.**

### **PARAGRAPH I. OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF**

#### **TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH CEMETERY**

**Trinity Lutheran Church, located and incorporated in Reese, Tuscola County, Michigan, is the sole owner of the Memorial Park, legally purchased and acquired in Blumfield Township, Saginaw County, as a suitable burial ground for its own members and fellow believers. It extends only usufructuary rights and privileges to those who received permission to bury their loved ones in the cemetery.**

**The day-to-day operations of the cemetery rest with the Cemetery Board, composed of an elected chairman and at least two appointed members. The Cemetery Board shall make regular reports to the Board of Directors. Their duties and obligations are:**

- A. To maintain, supervise, and preserve the church’s Memorial Park in the best of order and condition possible;**
- B. To make necessary improvements and changes as needed;**
- C. To lay out the cemetery into sections and plots in the order they are asked for and granted;**
- D. To provide the burial rights and privileges to those who have received permission to bury their loved ones;**
- E. To keep an exact record of the names and places of those buried;**
- F. To see that no tombstones or markers are erected bearing any inscriptions or emblems contrary to Lutheran principles;**
- G. To keep an exact record of contributions and expenditures made for the improvements and maintenance of the cemetery;**
- H. To give information and exact reports to the congregation on the standing of the Cemetery Fund.**

## **PARAGRAPH II. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR BURIAL PLOTS**

**A. The Cemetery is laid out in family lots permitting two, four or six interments (body or cremated remains). These lots are only allotted when a death occurs and cannot be purchased, but remain the property of the congregation; however, a family is required to make a \$350 deposit in the Perpetual Care Fund of Trinity Lutheran Cemetery for each burial. This money is to be deposited in the Church Extension Fund of the Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod, Michigan District and the interest of said fund is to be used in the care and maintenance of the cemetery. The principal of the Perpetual Care Fund may be used for cemetery care and maintenance with the approval of the Board of Directors.**

- 1. Flowers and other ornamental plants, not to exceed 36" high, may be planted on individual family sections and single plots.**
- 2. Tombstones, markers, and memorials of a Christian nature approved by the Cemetery Board shall mark the graves. When suitable markers are to be set, the necessary information should be ascertained from the Cemetery Board, which will also see to it that the foundation of these markers is such as not to be removed or destroyed by frost and other destructive elements. All footings should not exceed 22 inches wide with a 4 inch wash. Footings must be installed by the Sexton or with his supervision.**
- 3. All unsightly and objectionable objects shall be removed by the Sexton.**
- 4. In the new section, markers of a Christian nature can be flush or above the ground, not to exceed 30 inches in height, subject to approval of the Cemetery Board.**

## **PARAGRAPH III. RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR BURIAL**

**A. Our Cemetery is a suitable burial ground for such persons who are entitled to a Christian burial by the congregation, and at whose interment the pastor of the congregation, or his alternate, may officiate.**

**B. Every member of Trinity Lutheran Church is entitled to a burial space in our Cemetery, either in a family section or a single plot. Burial privileges may be extended to non-members under the discretion of the pastor. Such privileges may include, but are not limited to: immediate family of current members, past members, past employees, or those transferred to sister congregations. Those members who transfer to sister congregations but still desire burial rights at the Trinity cemetery should inform the congregation at the time of their transfer of this desire and deposit \$350 in the Perpetual Care fund of Trinity Lutheran Church for each gravesite. In case they do not adhere to these conditions, they may forfeit their right and claim to the burial ground. Those who for no valid reason leave the congregation or who are duly, according to God's Word, excommunicated and expelled from its membership, shall lose every claim and right to the Cemetery.**

**C. Funeral processions of secret societies, lodges, orders, and associations are prohibited from our Cemetery and the members thereof shall not be permitted to enter the cemetery in uniforms, regalia, or with badges, or to conduct funeral services at the grave. Officers and soldiers of our faith that died in the service of our country may be buried in their uniforms and full regalia, with the Stars and Stripes decorating their coffin and receiving the military salute.**

**D. The Sexton of the Cemetery or his substitute is the only person who by order of the Church's Cemetery Board, has the authority to make interments or removals.**

**E. Orders for graves shall be given to the Chairman of the Cemetery Board as soon as possible after death has**

occurred.

**F. No graves will be opened for inspection except for official public investigation.**

**G. The Sexton of the Cemetery is to see to it that the best order and quietness prevails during the burial service and direct the funeral procession to the burial grounds.**

**H. The Sexton is to prepare the grave site and work with the funeral director for opening and closing the grave site.**

**I. All burial sections and plots in the Cemetery are subject to these rules and regulations and any future changes made by the Congregation.**

#### **BYLAWS OF THE TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH TRUSTS**

**I. This congregation does have congregational trust funds. They are separate entities, but are owned and administered by this congregation.**

**II. The Trust Committee shall consist of up to seven members who shall include: the current Vice-Chairman of the Congregation, a pastoral representative, the School Principal, and up to four church members who shall annually be appointed by the Board of Directors. Each year, no later than January 15<sup>th</sup>, the committee shall elect its Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, and Publicity and Information Director. The Committee shall meet regularly, at an interval fixed by the committee, as it deems necessary, for the best interest for the management of the funds. Special meetings may be called on a 24-hour notice, by the Chairperson or any two members. A quorum shall consist of four members. All resolutions shall be carried by a simple majority vote.**

**The Committee shall, with the concurrence of the church Treasurer, maintain accounts with such financial institutions as it may authorize and determine. All checks, and other documents transferring or expending any funds or assets in the trusts, shall be executed by the church Treasurer and the Chairperson of the Trust Committee. Any member of the Trust Committee with check signing authority, at the expense of the Trust, shall be covered by a corporate fidelity bond, in a principal amount to be determined by the Trust Committee. The Committee may invite other church members to be advisory members, or may employ professional counselors on investment and legal matters, at the expense of the trust fund. The Trust Committee, in conjunction with the church Treasurer, shall maintain complete and accurate books of account, and may employ professional help, if deemed necessary. The trusts shall have the same fiscal year as the church, and shall annually render a full and complete account of the administration of the trust funds from the proceeding year. No member of the Trust Committee shall engage in any transaction with the trust funds that may be deemed as a conflict of interest.**

**The Director of Publicity and Information is to regularly remind the congregation of the purposes of the trusts, and may arrange for members of the congregation to meet with professional counselors in the areas of charitable giving, wills, bequests, insurance, etc.**

**The Secretary shall maintain complete and accurate minutes of all meetings, and supply a copy to each member within seven days after the meeting. Each member shall keep a complete copy of minutes, which shall be handed down to successors. All new members to the Committee shall receive a copy of these Bylaws and minutes in order to become acquainted with the function and purpose of the trusts.**

**III. Gifts and contributions from any individual, firm or corporation, in money, securities, or any form of property, bequests under a will or trust instrument, proceeds of insurance, annuities, or endowment policies or contracts may be accepted at any time. The Committee shall acknowledge the receipt of each gift, and shall establish whenever possible, a designated value of each gift. Gifts and contributions made with special terms, conditions, or limitations may be accepted under the discretion of the Trust Committee. Separate identification and recording shall be made of all transactions with respect to any such special or restricted gifts. The donor may designate a Trustee to hold and administer the gifts, or the Committee may designate a corporate Trustee, or may use the Michigan District Church Extension Fund to manage the gifts. The Committee, or its designee, may invest the funds as they deem in the best interest of the fund. These investments may include, but are not limited to, certificates of deposit, bonds, stocks,**

mutual funds, and investment or rental properties. Any management expenses shall be paid by the Trust Fund.

At no time shall the assets of the Trusts be placed in the Church's operating budget, or be borrowed from, to cover a General Fund shortfall, or be used in capital improvement. No amount of funds shall be used to carry on propaganda, or intervene in any political campaign on the behalf of any candidate for public office.

#### **THE TRINITY ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND**

The purpose of this fund shall be to receive gifts and bequests, and to be used exclusively for the Mission and Ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church and School. It is the intent of this fund to use only the annually earned income from the fund's assets, and on special occasion it may use up to 5% of the fund's principal, only upon approval by a majority vote of the congregation. The Endowment Trust Committee shall make, at least annually, recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval for distribution of income from the Trust for designated uses, projects, and programs. A new congregational or school program may be allowed to receive distributions from the Fund during the initial five years, on a decreasing basis, until it can be fully supported by the operating budget.

Donors of one thousand dollars, or more, shall have their names engraved on the Endowment Fund commemorative plaque, which shall be displayed in the church or school.