

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

**OF**

**ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH (U. A. C.)**

*(Perhaps adding the definition of U.A.C.: 'Unaltered Augsburg Confession')*

**MISSOURI SYNOD OF KRAMER, NEBRASKA, INC.**

**11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD  
CRETE, NEBRASKA 68333-3309**

**REPRINTED 10/22/2007**

*(Anticipated new: AMENDED/APPROVED ... date...)*

Black Text = Original Language

Red Text = Discussed by Committee as likely recommendation to Council and Voters

Blue Text = Committee Notation awaiting additional discussion/consideration

**CONSTITUTION OF ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**11440 ~~11440~~ 11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD**  
**CRETE, NEBRASKA 68333-3309**  
**JANUARY 2007** *(Updated date expected...)*

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**NAME**  
**ARTICLE I**

The name of this Congregation shall be St. John Evangelical Lutheran Congregation  
11440 ~~11440~~ 11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD CRETE, NEBRASKA 68333-3309

**DOCTRINAL STANDARDS OF THIS CONGREGATION**  
**ARTICLE II**

This Congregation accepts and acknowledges all the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Missouri Synod contained in the Book of Concord as the true and sound exposition of the Christian doctrine taken from and in agreement with the Holy Scriptures; and in this Congregation no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which is at variance with these Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, viz.:

1. The three ecumenical Creeds, the Apostolic, the Nicene and the Athanasian,
2. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession,
3. The Apology of the same,
4. The Smalcald Articles,
5. Luther's Small and Large Catechism,
6. The Formula of Concord.

According to this form of doctrine, all doctrinal controversies which may arise in this Congregation shall be decided and adjudicated.

**MEMBERSHIP**  
**ARTICLE III**

No one can be or remain a member of this Congregation or hold office in the same, or enjoy or exercise the rights and privileges of a member but such as:

1. Are baptized,
2. Declare their adherence to all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and norm of faith and life, and
3. While they may perhaps yet be weak in the knowledge of all the Lutheran Symbols, are familiar, at least, with the Small Lutheran Catechism and declare their acceptance thereof.
4. Do not live in manifest works of the flesh, but lead a Christian life,
5. Partake of the Lord's Supper with due frequency, if of sufficient age and understanding, permit themselves to be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred, and are not members of anti-Christian lodges and/or societies.

**FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES  
ARTICLE IV**

It shall be the duty of every member of this Congregation to contribute according to his ability toward the maintenance of the church and its Educational Programs and in general to assist in bearing the burdens of the Congregation.

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM  
ARTICLE V**

It shall be the duty of each member of this Congregation who has children of school age to send them to the education Program of this Congregation; otherwise, they must provide for the proper training in the pure Christian doctrine.

**VOTING MEMBERSHIP  
ARTICLE VI**

Only such male and female confirmed members of this Congregation who have had their eighteenth birthday and have signed this Constitution shall be entitled to become a voting member and after completion of one year shall be eligible to hold an office in this Congregation. The One-Year wait may be suspended by a majority vote of The Voter's Assembly.

**VOTERS' RESPONSIBILITIES  
ARTICLE VII**

The Voters Assembly shall be the Governing Body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. It shall be the duty of every voting member, if possible, to attend the meetings of the Congregation, and by failing to attend a meeting, a member agrees to abide by the resolutions passed at the meeting.

**VOTERS' MEETINGS  
ARTICLE VIII**

When a meeting has been announced twice (no less than ten (10) days or more than fifty (50) days before the date) the time, date, place and purpose given, such meeting shall be capable of transacting business and passing valid resolutions by the majority of the voters present.

**DOCTRINAL DECISIONS  
ARTICLE IX**

In matters of doctrine and conscience, unanimity shall be required for a final decision.

**CHURCH WORKERS AND OFFICERS  
ARTICLE X**

The right of calling and choosing ministers and teachers and electing all other officers of this congregation shall always be the business of the Voting Membership and never be vested or delegated in an individual or a certain part of the Congregation.

**PASTORAL QUALIFICATIONS  
ARTICLE XI**

The pastoral office in this Congregation shall be conferred upon such ministers or candidates only as profess their acceptance to paragraph **Article** II, and shall be pledged to faithful adherence to the Word of God and the Symbols of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod by the call extended to and accepted by them.

**CONGREGATIONAL RIGHTS  
ARTICLE XII**

The Congregation, as a body, shall have the supreme power of external and internal administrations and management of its own ecclesiastical and Congregational affairs, but not even the Congregation shall have the power to order, enact, or decide something which is contrary to God's Word and the Lutheran Symbols.

**OFFICERS  
ARTICLE XIII**

The number of officers, their duties, the method of electing them and their term of office shall be regulated by the By-laws.

**OFFICERS AND CHURCH WORKERS DISCIPLINE  
ARTICLE XIV**

Any and all members of the Council may be removed from office on account of neglect of their official duties. Sufficient and urgent causes for deposing the Pastor or Teacher, are: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life and willful neglect of official duties and prolonged inability to perform.

**CHURCH DISCIPLINE  
ARTICLE XV**

When a member of this Congregation, after fruitless admonition in the various grades as stated in Matthew 18:15-20, where the observance of such grades has been possible, fails to heed such admonition, such member shall be expelled from the Congregation. Such an excommunicated person then has forfeited all rights and privileges which he enjoyed as a member. This shall also be in force with reference to members who refuse to submit to church discipline and thus have excommunicated themselves, or such as have severed their connection with the Congregation by moving to a different place.

**PROPERTY RIGHTS  
ARTICLE XVI**

If at any time a separation takes place in this Congregation on account of doctrine, the property of the Congregation and all benefits and privileges connected there with shall remain with the part that shall continue to adhere to this Constitution. The dissenters shall forfeit any and all rights to the property and benefits of the Congregation.

**CHANGING ARTICLES  
ARTICLE XVII**

To change any part of this Constitution requires two (2) consecutive regular voters' meetings and two-thirds majority of all present. To change Articles III, IV, V, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, shall require a two-thirds majority vote at 3 consecutive regular voters' meetings.

**UNALTERABLE AND IRREPEALABLE ~~ARTICLE~~  
ARTICLE XVIII**

Of this Constitution, Article II shall be unalterable and irrevocable.

**ARTICLE XIX  
LIMITATIONS OF OFFICE**

Women may serve as officers and as members of boards and committees as long as these positions are not directly involved in the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching, the public administration of the sacraments, church discipline) and as long as this service does not violate the order of creation (usurping authority over men). Accordingly, they shall not serve as pastor, as a member of Board of Elders, as president or vice-president of the congregation.

Working DRAFT - 1/19/2021

**BY-LAWS**  
**JANUARY 2007** *(Date Change)*

**1. ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS**

Persons intending to join St. John Congregation, 4444 ~~11440~~ 11400 WEST PANAMA ROAD, Crete, Nebraska 68333, shall give notice of such intention to the Pastor or an Elder, together with satisfactory evidence of their qualification for membership. (For qualifications, see Article III of the Constitution.)

**1.1. RECEPTION**

Baptized and communicant members are received into this congregation through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation, through the rite of confirmation, through transfer from a sister congregation, through profession of faith, or reaffirmation of faith.

The names of all such applicants shall be announced at a regular meeting of the Elders, Pastor and President, and if no protest has been entered and sustained, the applicant may immediately be received into membership. The ~~names of these people~~ reception shall be reported to the next Voter's meeting by the Pastor or Elders.

**1.2. MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATION**

**1.2.1. Baptized Membership.** Baptized members are all members who have been baptized, in the name of the Triune God.

**1.2.2. Communicant Membership.** Communicant members are those who have been baptized, duly instructed, and accept the basic doctrine of Holy Scriptures and the Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. As such, they shall hold to at least the minimum requirements of church membership (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38; John 8:31), namely:

1.2.2.1. Regular and faithful support of the church and its mission. II Corinthians 16:2.

1.2.2.2. Living a Christian life. II Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 5:16.

1.2.2.3. Regular and faithful worship in the fellowship of the congregation. Colossians 3:16; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25.

1.2.2.4. An understanding of and frequent partaking of the Sacrament of the Altar. I Corinthians 11:25-27.

1.2.2.5. The willingness to repent and confess either publicly or privately their sins and to seek the assurance of God's forgiveness through Jesus. John 20:22-23.

1.2.2.6. Not holding membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

**1.3. Voting Membership.** The voting membership of this congregation shall be comprised of those communicant members, male or female, who have reached the age of eighteen and who fulfill the obligations of Articles III, VI, and VII inclusive. Those who desire such membership shall

have read the constitution and be recommended by the Pastor and the President or the Pastor and a voting member. Reception will be in a regular meeting of the Voters Assembly at which time the new member will sign the constitution.

## **2. TRANSFER OR RELEASE FROM MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be terminated by transfer to an LCMS Lutheran congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion.

2.1. Church discipline is a God-given obligation of the congregation exercised through the Office of the Keys (cf. Catechisms of Martin Luther) and the Voter's Assembly. It seeks the salvation of the manifest sinner, serves as a warning to others, and purifies the church to the glory of God. 1 Corinthians 5:5-6; 1 Timothy 1:19, 5:20; Ezekiel 3:18; Deuteronomy 13:5, 17:12). Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated.

2.2. Each case shall be presented individually to the Voter's Assembly for a decision. 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 the membership of the congregation.

2.3. All matters involving excommunication shall be decided by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present. The individual, if a voter, shall forfeit his/her voting franchise in the matter.

## **3. MEETINGS**

### **3.1 REGULAR VOTERS VOTER'S MEETINGS**

The regular Voter's meetings of this Congregation shall be four (4) in number during each calendar year, to best be held during the following months: January, April, July, and October.

### **3.2 SPECIAL MEETINGS**

Special meetings of the Voter's are for the purpose of conducting normal congregational business and may be called by the church council, the pastor, or the congregational president to be convened to address a specific topic. A special meeting must be announced at a worship service with provisions that those not in attendance at this worship service be notified by mail, E-mail, or phone, or other available means.

### **3.3 EMERGENCY MEETINGS**

Emergency meetings are for the purpose of conducting congregational business that needs immediate attention and is not considered normal business. Emergency meetings may be called by the Church Council, the Pastor, or the congregational president with notification provided by phone, E-mail, or other available means.

### **3.4 ELECTRONIC MEETINGS**

In the event that an in-person meeting cannot be held due to illness, facility damage, pandemic or ongoing weather-related event, Voter's and members of the Church Council and Boards

may participate in an annual or regular meeting of its members conducting the meeting through the use of any means of communication by which all members participating may simultaneously hear each other, and speak to one another, during the meeting. A member participating in a meeting by this means is deemed to be present at the meeting. (Nebraska Revised Statute 21-1951)

- 3.5 All ~~voters'~~ Voter's meetings shall be announced per Aarticle VIII of the constitution to be considered a valid meeting.
- 3.6 15 voting members present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a Quorum *at Voter's Meetings. \_\_\_\_\_ voting members present at a properly called meeting shall constitute a Quorum at Council Meetings.*
- 3.6.1 In addition to principles laid down in scripture, and in the Constitution & Bylaws of this Congregation, accepted parliamentary procedures such as 'Robert's Rules of Order' shall be followed.
- 3.7 It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the Voter's meeting. By failing to attend, the member waives his/her right of casting his/her vote during such meeting.
- 3.8 In all meetings of the *Congregation*, the majority of votes cast shall decide all questions except the following: Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and the By-laws shall require a two-thirds majority of votes cast. In matters of doctrine, unanimity shall be required for a valid decision.
- 3.9 ORDER OF BUSINESS *(Moved here from Section 9 (or what would have been 10...)*
- 3.9.1 The order of business of a regular meeting shall be as follows:
- 3.9.2 Opening prayer.
- 3.9.3 Reading Presentation Approval of the minutes. *("Presentation" was as per Voter Approval, 10/26/2020.)*
- 3.9.4 Reception of new members.
- 3.9.5 Report of the Treasury. Board of Finance/Treasurer's Report.
- 3.9.6 Reports of the Board of Elders, Board for Parish Education, Board of Trustees, Pastor, and other committees. Board, Standing Committee, and Special Committee Reports
- 3.9.7 Election of officers.
- 3.9.8 Unfinished business.
- 3.9.9 New business.
- 3.9.10 Roll-call.

### 3.9.11 Adjournment with prayer.

#### 4. OFFICERS

- 4.1 The eCongregation shall elect a President, Vice-president, and Secretary. These officers shall serve for a term of one year, but not more than two complete, consecutive terms. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. These officers shall serve on the Church Council and must be voting members.
- 4.2 The Congregation shall elect a Board of Elders, consisting of six (6) members, three of which shall be elected annually. Each Elder shall serve a term of two years, but no more than two complete, consecutive terms. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. The Elders must be represented on the Church Council and must be voting members.
- 4.3 The Congregation shall elect a Board of Trustees, consisting of four (4) members, two of which shall be elected annually. 2 members must be voting members and 2 may be congregational members over the age of 18. Each Trustee shall serve for a term of two years, but not more than two complete, consecutive terms. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. One member must represent this board on the Church Council. This member must be a voting member.
- 4.4 The Congregation shall elect a Board of Education consisting of three (3) members, one of which shall be elected annually. Each member shall serve for a term of three years, but not more than one complete term. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. The Board of Education must be represented on the Church Council and must be voting members.
- 4.5 The Congregation shall elect a Financial Secretary. He/she shall serve a term of one year as Financial Secretary and then a term of one year as Treasurer after his/her year as Financial Secretary is completed. This is a two-year commitment. The Financial Secretary shall be elected each year at the annual meeting. The Financial Secretary shall serve on the Church Council and must be a voting member. The Treasurer shall also serve on the Church Council.
- ~~4.6 The Congregation shall elect a Cemetery Board consisting of four (4) members, two of which shall be elected annually. Each member shall serve for a term of two years, but not more than two complete, consecutive terms. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. These board members need not be voting members. (Removed if "Board" becomes "Committee...)~~
- 4.7 The Congregation shall elect a Board of Evangelism consisting of three (3) members, one of which shall be elected annually. Each member shall serve a term of three years, but not more than one complete term. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. These board members need not be voting members. One member shall represent this board on the Church Council. This member must be a voting member.
- 4.8 The Congregation shall elect a Board of Finance, consisting of three (3) members, all of which shall be elected annually. Members of this Board shall serve for a one-year term. The election shall be held at the annual meeting. These board members need not be voting members.

4.9 The Lutheran Youth Fellowship of our Congregation shall elect one of their mate members to be an ex-officio member without the right to vote to serve on the Church Council. This member will be elected annually by the Lutheran Youth Fellowship. This officer need not be a voting member.

4.10 In the event of a vacancy in any of the above listed offices, except in the case of 3.9, the Church Council shall appoint a qualified person to fill the vacancy for the remaining portion of the term of office.

## 5. ELECTIONS

5.1 In the October meeting, the President shall appoint a Nominating Committee, consisting of three voting members who are not at the time holding office. This committee shall meet with the Pastor and shall draw up a slate of candidates for each of the Congregation's various offices that are to be voted on at the annual meeting. All attempts should be made to have two or more candidates for each position. For the Finance Committee, the Nominating Committee shall make every attempt to nominate six (6) members and the three highest shall constitute the Finance Committee. This slate shall be published at two regular services of the Congregation, and if any communicant member shall offer a valid protest to any candidate, the Nominating Committee shall find a new candidate.

5.2 It shall remain the privilege of the Congregation to change, and/or add to the slate that the Nominating Committee presents to the annual meeting.

5.3 During the election of officers, the Nominating Committee shall pass out the ballots and shall count them and shall announce the results of the voting to the president, who in turn shall announce the results of the balloting to the voters.

5.4 In the event of a tie between two candidates, the president shall cast the deciding vote.

5.5 Candidates shall be eliminated in the following manner. After a ballot has been taken and counted, and the results announced by the president to the voters, the president shall announce that the candidate(s) having the least number of votes are eliminated. The voting shall thus proceed until the necessary candidate(s) has the majority votes cast.

5.6 The new officers take charge following the annual meeting.

5.7 Voting members may not be elected to an office if they have just completed their term for a different office. They must wait one year before election to a new office. In the event that no other volunteer accepts a nomination, a current officer may decline his year off to accept a new office, unless opposed by a majority vote of the voters' assembly.

## 6. DUTIES OF OFFICERS, BOARDS AND COUNCIL.

### 6.1 President and Vice-President

6.1.1 The pPresident shall preside at all meetings of the vVoters' aAssembly and eChurch eCouncil.

- 6.1.2 The president shall see that all eCommittees, Boards, Church Council of and the vVoters' aAssembly are functioning properly.
- 6.1.3 The pPresident is authorized to appoint all members to standing Special eCommittees of the vVoters' aAssembly.
- 6.1.4 The pPresident may vote only in the case of a tie. *(Do we expand or clarify this here?)*
- 6.1.5 In the pPresident's absence, the vVice-pPresident shall perform the duties of his office.
- 6.1.6 In the event of a vacancy in the office of pPresident, the vVice-pPresident shall act as pPresident for the remainder of the term.
- 6.1.7 The President and the Vice President shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed within meetings they attend.
- 6.2 **Secretary**  
The sSecretary shall keep accurate minutes of the meetings of the vVoters' aAssembly and of the eChurch eCouncil for the permanent records of the congregation, *(maybe add: retain and archive all documents and records as property of the congregation,)* and shall perform all other duties in keeping with his/her office.
- 6.3 **Finance Secretary**  
The Financial Secretary shall keep a record of the individual contributions of each member. He/she will also sign the their statements of giving to meet the Internal Revenue Service requirements. He/she shall also receive the money after each worship service, take it to the bank, and receive it from the bank to be counted as needed, with assistance from the Board of Finance.
- 6.4 **Treasurer**  
The Treasurer shall make disbursements only as authorized by the congregation. He/she shall make a report at the regular meetings of the voters. ~~He/she shall also receive the money after each service, take it to the bank, and receive it from the bank to be counted as needed.~~ The Treasurer shall be responsible for training the Financial Secretary in the duties of the Treasurer.
- 6.5 **Church Council** *(Ongoing conversation...refinement needed)*  
The eChurch eCouncil shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Finance Secretary, and at least one member from the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Education, and the Cemetery Board and one member of the Board of Evangelism. The Pastor shall automatically be a member of the council.
- ~~6.5.1 The Church Council shall have the power to act on behalf of the Congregation between meetings of the voters' assembly.~~
- 6.5.1.1 Replacement 5.5.1: The Council has authority to transact business on behalf of and in the name of the Congregation in all matters EXCEPT contracts, expenditures above \$ \_\_\_\_\_, election of officers, approval of church budget, the calling of a pastor or church worker, final

church discipline or excommunication, and amending the Constitution and/or Bylaws.  
(Dollar amount needed...)

- 6.5.2 The Council shall meet whenever necessary and must meet before each regular voters' meeting.
- 6.5.2.1 Special meetings of the Council are for the purpose of conducting normal or emergency congregational business and may be called by the church council, the pastor, or the congregational President to be convened to address a specific topic. A special meeting must be announced at a worship service with provisions that those not in attendance at this worship service be notified by mail, E-mail, or phone.
- 6.5.3 The Church Council may draw up a budget for home and outside purposes for the coming year to be presented for approval and adoption at the annual meeting.
- 6.5.4 Members of the Church Council shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.
- 6.6 **Board of Finance** *(The response from Finance/Secretary/Finance Board indicates a non-desire to be a "Committee".)*  
The Board of Finance shall:
- 6.6.1 Keep themselves well informed in reference to the financial condition of the Congregation.
- 6.6.2 See to it that all communicant members are annually supplied with envelopes for contributions.
- 6.6.3 Assist the Financial Secretary in keeping a record of the contributions of each member.
- 6.6.4 Assist the Financial Secretary with receiving the money after each worship service, take it to the bank, and receive it from the bank to be counted as needed.
- 6.6.5 Members of the Board of Finance shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.
- 6.7 **Board of Elders**  
The duties of the Board of Elders shall be:
- 6.7.1 To assist the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the Congregation.
- 6.7.2 To supervise Christian discipline in the Congregation according to Matthew 18:15-17.
- 6.7.3 Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance at worship, in the use of the Sacraments, and in their financial support of the church, to mend their sinful ways and fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.
- 6.7.4 See to it that all worship services be conducted in an orderly manner as commanded by our Lord (1 Corinthians 14:40). General oversight or activity may include the following set of duties:
- 6.7.4.1 The Board may assist in opening and securing the church facility in readiness for Divine

- Services, to include where applicable, the presence of Greeters, Acolyte(s) and Organist/Pianist, preparations for Holy Communion and/or Baptism, the lighting of candles, and all such other tasks requested for that service;
- 6.7.4.2 May assist the Pastor in the distribution of Holy Communion on a scheduled basis;
- 6.7.4.3 On a scheduled basis, be "Elder of the Day" for Worship Service, assisting the Pastor as necessary, and lead worship to a limited extent in the event of Pastors' illness;
- 6.7.4.4 May assist Pastor with Baptisms of members as requested;
- 6.7.4.5 May assist Pastor with Funeral proceedings as requested;
- 6.7.4.6 Make contact with individuals or families on Elder's list as needed;
- 6.7.5 Be an example of Christian conduct and conversation, according to our Lord's command (1Timothy 3:8-13).
- 6.7.6 Work in cooperation with the Board of Evangelism in requested assistance with evangelism activities.
- 6.7.7 Elders elect their own chairman of the Board by its members present at the first meeting of the new year. The Board Chairman must attend or send a representative to all Voters and Council Meetings.
- 6.7.8 The Board of Elders shall approve for the Congregation's Treasurer all bills and expenditures incurred in the performance of its duties and may, if called upon to do so, submit its own separate budget request annually to the Church Council and/or Financial Secretary for the operating funds needed in furtherance of its duties for an upcoming year.
- 6.7.9 Consider the general attitudes and harmony of the Congregation as a whole. If there are wrong attitudes or lack of harmony, the Board of Elders shall work to address and/or correct these problems.
- 6.7.10 The Board shall consider complaints and grievances of the members of the congregation if Matthew 18:15-16 has been fully observed.
- 6.7.11 Exhibit genuine spiritual love and concern for every soul under the responsibility of the Congregation and shall exercise church discipline as necessary in accordance with Matthew 18.
- 6.7.12 The Board shall, individually or collectively, by word and action always encourage and stand ready to help the Pastor in his work.
- 6.7.13 The Board shall also ensure the Pastor performs in accordance with his Call and does not neglect those responsibilities in connection to the same.
- 6.7.14 The Board shall always stand ready to help other leaders in difficult problems of the ministry.
- 6.7.15 Members of the Board of Elders shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings. (Anticipating further input to this section by the Board of Elders...)

## 6.8 **Board of Education**

This board shall help supervise, with guidance from the Pastor, the educational activities of the Congregation in the ~~Week-Day School~~, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, ~~Adult Bible classes taught by the Pastor~~, the religious programs of the Lutheran Youth Fellowship, and in general seek to stimulate and maintain the proper interests in the Christian growth of all the baptized members of this Congregation. This board shall make random visits to the various education programs and shall report their findings to the Voters' Assembly. This board shall interest itself in the textbooks, other teaching aids, student-teacher relationships, and the facilities as they relate to Christian Education, and shall make recommendations to the Church Council and/or Voters' Assembly. They shall encourage the starting and maintenance of Bible classes, and when these have been begun, they shall come under the board's supervision.

*(Further edit is likely needed...)*

**6.8.1 Specific Duties of the Board of Education shall be:**

~~6.8.1.1 The Chairman (the third-year member) shall represent this board on the Church Council. This member shall also be the Sunday School Superintendent. The Superintendent's duties shall include:~~

6.8.1.2 Be in charge of purchasing Sunday School materials and monitor all other Sunday School expenses.

6.8.1.3 Record weekly student attendance and gathering of Sunday School offerings.

6.8.1.4 Be in charge of Sunday School teacher recruitment.

6.8.1.5 Inform the Pastor of names, addresses, and phone numbers of non-member students.

~~6.8.2 The second-year member shall be an assistant to the Superintendent. This member shall also assist the Pastor in supervising the Mid-week School. This member's duties shall include:~~

6.8.2.1 Recruitment of Mid-week School teachers.

6.8.2.2 Be in charge of purchasing Mid-week School materials and monitor all other Mid-week School expenses.

~~6.8.2.3 Inform the pastor of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of all non-member students.~~

~~6.8.2.4 Fill in for the Superintendent in case of his/her absence.~~

~~6.8.3 The first-year member shall be an assistant to the Superintendent. This member shall be in charge of the Vacation Bible School. This member's duties shall include:~~

6.8.3.1 Recruitment of teachers and helpers for VBS.

6.8.3.2 Organizing the VBS schedule.

6.8.3.3 Recording VBS attendance and offerings.

6.8.3.4 Be the Board's contact person for the Lutheran Youth Fellowship.

~~6.8.3.5 Can also fill in for the Superintendent in case of his/her absence.~~

~~6.8.4 General duties of the Board of Christian Education.~~

~~The Board of Education will determine and supervise the following items:~~

6.8.4.1 Student conduct and attendance at the various Christian Education Programs.

~~6.8.4.2 Student requirements and achievements at our Week-day School.~~

6.8.4.3 Scheduling of Congregational Education programs.

6.8.4.4 Teacher qualifications, conduct, and performance.

6.8.4.5 Review of all educational materials used in our Congregation.

6.8.5 *(Moved here from 7.1 (8.1)...) (These section number(s) likely to change upon removal of some sections above...)* Aims of our Christian Educational Programs: St. John's Christian Education Programs are organized in keeping with the Biblical principles expressed in Deuteronomy 4:9-10, 6:4-7; Psalm 111:10, Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 10:13-16; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; and 2 Peter 1:5-9, 3:18. These shall be the aims of our Christian Education Programs:

6.8.5.1 Diligent teaching of God's Word according to Divine Command.

6.8.5.2 Protection of the student against the dangers of a purely secular schooling.

6.8.5.3 Thorough indoctrination of our members in the fundamentals of Christianity.

6.8.5.4 Encourage Christian home life for the purpose of strengthening the very base of human society.

6.8.5.5 Christian citizenship grounded in obedience to God and His Word.

6.8.5.6 That all our members may be "people saved to be His own and to tell the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9

6.8.6 Members of the Board of Education shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.

## 6.9 **Board of Trustees**

This Board shall look after the physical interests of the Congregation, its real estate and buildings. They shall:

6.9.1 Inspect all buildings of the Congregation and report their conditions and needs to the Church Council and Voters' Assembly.

6.9.2 Represent the Congregation officially in all legal transactions or court business pertaining to the real estate, buildings, and repairs thereof belonging to the Congregation.

6.9.3 Have charge of renting the farmland. *(Discuss reference to a stated Policy in replacement of the following in this section...)* This ground shall be rented out only to those who are members of our Congregation. The rental of this ground shall be cash rental, one-half payable on the 1st of March, the second half the 1st of August. The renter shall consult with the Board of Trustees as to what acreage shall be planted. Anyone wishing to rent the ground for the following year shall give notice of such intention by sealed bid before March 1st of the present year. Public announcement for the giving of rental bids shall be published in the worship bulletin the four Sundays of February. The Trustees shall meet in executive session after the 1st of March and shall open all letters requesting the rental of the land and shall rent the ground to the highest bidder. Public announcement shall be made the

following two Sundays in the worship bulletin. The ground shall be rented for a period of only one year. It may be rented again to the same renter for any number of years, or as long as it is for the good of the Congregation. Members of the Board of Trustees shall not be eligible to rent the land. The Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids. If no bids are received, the Board shall give a new date for more bids. The renter is to cut all the weeds on the former school lot as needed but must do so before Vacation Bible School and the Church picnic.

6.9.4 Supervise the use of church property per the currently constructed church policy.

6.9.5 The Board of Trustees shall be in charge of church clean up. This may include the hiring and supervision of a custodian.

6.9.6 Members of the Board of Trustees shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.

## 6.10 Board of Evangelism

The Board of Evangelism shall:

6.10.1 Plan and promote the preservation of the faith and spiritual life of the members of the congregation.

6.10.2 Plan an effective continuing campaign of expanding the membership of the congregation by reaching the unchurched with the Gospel.

6.10.3 Supervise the visitations of the lay workers as they call upon members who are confined to their homes, members who are lax in their church activity, members who are new to the congregation, and upon individuals who are prospects for membership.

6.10.4 Promote church fellowship and friendliness within the congregation.

6.10.5 Work in cooperation with the Board of Elders to coordinate all evangelism activities.

6.10.6 Members of the Board of Evangelism shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.

## 6.11 Cemetery **Committee** Board *(Awaiting response from Cemetery Board...)*

This Board/**Committee** shall be in charge of maintaining the upkeep of our cemetery as per currently constructed church policy.

6.11.1 Members of the Cemetery Board/Committee shall be required to keep strictly confidential all matters of a private nature discussed at their meetings.

## 7. DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTOR

7.1 The basic duties expected of the Pastor of this Congregation shall be:

7.1.1 To lead the Congregation in orderly, instructive worship.

- 7.1.2 To visit the sick and shut-in members of the Congregation.
- 7.1.3 ~~To supervise and be actively involved with the Confirmation instruction of the children of the Congregation.~~ To attend and participate when available to act as spiritual advisor for Board and Committee meetings.
- 7.1.4 To supervise, with the assistance of the Board of Education, all Christian instruction programs performed within the Congregation.
- 7.1.5 To lead the Congregation in carrying out ~~their part in obeying~~ the Great Commission of Jesus Christ to "Go therefore and make disciples...". (Matthew 28:18-20).
- 7.2 The qualifications for the Pastor are the following:
- 7.2.1 The standards set in the Congregation's constitution, Article XI.
- 7.2.2 The standards set down in the following Scriptures by our Lord. : Malachi 2:6-7, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9.
8. ~~SEPARATE ARTICLES ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION~~ *(Assumed to be removed pending further discussion...)*
- 8.1 ~~AIMS OF OUR CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAMS~~ *(7.1 (or 8.1) moved to 5.8.5...)*  
St. John's Christian Education Programs are organized in keeping with the Biblical principles expressed in Deuteronomy 4:9-10, 6:4-7; Psalm 111:10, Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 10:13-16; Ephesians 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; and 2 Peter 1:5-9, 3:18. These shall be the aims of our Christian Education Programs:
- ~~8.1.1 Diligent teaching of God's Word according to Divine Command.~~
- ~~8.1.2 Protection of the student against the dangers of a purely secular schooling.~~
- ~~8.1.3 Thorough indoctrination of our members in the fundamentals of Christianity.~~
- ~~8.1.4 Encourage Christian home life for the purpose of strengthening the very base of human society.~~
- ~~8.1.5 Christian citizenship grounded in obedience to God and His Word.~~
- ~~8.1.6 That all our members may be "people saved to be His own and to tell the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 Peter 2:9~~
- 8.2 ~~AGE OF CONFIRMATION FOR CHILDREN~~ *(Assumed to be removed pending further discussion...)*  
Since the Lord has given all members of our Congregation the responsibility for the Christian education of our children, and since in our Congregation all things ought to be done in love, we, the Congregation, suggest the following points to parents wishing to have their children confirmed:

- ~~8.2.1~~ At the time of confirmation, children ought to be in the 8th grade or 13 years of age.
- ~~8.2.2~~ The Pastor will each year present the names of the candidates for confirmation to the Church Council.
- ~~8.2.3~~ Parents who wish to have their children confirmed contrary to the first suggestion should meet with the Church Council and present their reasons.
- ~~8.2.4~~ Parents are reminded that, in the event of an appeal to the Council, each such appeal will stand on its own merits, and not on some exception made in previous years.
- ~~8.2.5~~ Children who are to be confirmed must be in attendance at our Mid-Week School at least four years by the time of confirmation, or an equivalent amount of instruction.

## ~~9. THE CEMETERY~~

The cemetery of St. John's Lutheran Church is a private burial grounds, not open to the general public. Only those may be buried there, who, at their death were members of St. John's Congregation. Any other Lutheran of the Missouri Synod may receive Christian burial there provided he/she went to his eternal rest as a member in good standing at his/her home church. The members of St. John's, Kramer, need pay no fee for a grave; however, any other Lutheran desiring burial will be required to pay a fee of \$150 for a grave. Former members of this Congregation, who have transferred their membership and desire burial here, will also be required to pay the \$150 fee. This fee includes only the permission to have the burial here. The digging of the grave, the closing of the grave, the care and beautifying of the grave itself is not included in this fee. Since the upkeep of the cemetery involves expense, all who have graves here are asked to contribute towards its upkeep. To avoid possible misunderstanding, all people, before placing a monument in the St. John Lutheran Church Cemetery must submit the design and wording for the proposed structure to the Board of Elders for approval. *(Pulled from Bylaws to be of better use in "policy".)*

## ~~10. ORDER OF BUSINESS~~ *(Moved to Section 2.9...)*

The order of business of a regular meeting shall be as follows:

- ~~10.1~~ Opening prayer.
- ~~10.2~~ Reading ~~Presentation Approval~~ of minutes. *(Perhaps "approval" is a suitable word also.)*  
*("Presentation" was as per Voter Approval, 10/26/2020)*
- ~~10.3~~ Reception of new members.
- ~~10.4~~ Report of the Treasury.
- ~~10.5~~ Reports of the Board of Elders, Board for Parish Education, Board of Trustees, Pastor, and other committees.
- ~~10.6~~ Election of officers.
- ~~10.7~~ Unfinished business.

10.8 — New business.

10.9 — Roll-call.

10.10 — Adjournment with prayer.

**11. PROCEDURE FOR CALLING ORDAINED AND COMMISSIONED MINISTERS** *(Likely to be renumbered as an earlier Section number...)*

- 11.1 When a pastor is to be called, every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the President of the synodical District for recommendations in following Synod and District guidelines. The President of the congregation shall either appoint a Call Committee (4-6 voting members) or ask the Board of Elders to serve as the screening committee for the nominations.
- 11.2 In the screening process the respective board or committee shall submit all names to the respective District President for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the District President, the respective board or committee shall present to the congregation by means of a public announcement at least 3 preferred candidates, together with a biographical sketch of each.
- 11.3 At a specially called voters meeting (for the purpose of electing a new pastor) the preferred list may be amended by means of a two-thirds vote of the voters' present. At that point, the voters' assembly shall be asked to agree to be satisfied with whatever selection is finally made.
- 11.4 Balloting shall proceed by means of a secret ballot vote. The majority vote determines the pastor to be called.

**12. AMENDMENTS**

Suggested amendments to these By-Laws must be presented in writing at a regular meeting. The passing of such amendments requires a two-thirds majority vote of those present to be held during a second or subsequent meeting following discussion and consideration of those changes. Amended changes will require review by the LCMS NE District prior to having concluding effect. *(As also per the Voters at an earlier meeting in 2021...)*

**POST INSERTIONS:**

We, the undersigned, President and Secretary of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church Missouri Synod of Kramer, Nebraska, U.A.C., do hereby certify at the quarterly meeting of the Congregational Voters Assembly held at St. John on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, a quorum of the voting membership being present, the above revised were duly and regularly adopted by at least two-thirds vote of the members present at such meeting entitled to vote, and that notice of said meeting was announced as provided in the By-Laws, and that on a previous quarterly constitutional meeting of the Voter's Assembly, a quorum of the voting membership being present, the above revised By-Laws were duly and regularly adopted by at least two-thirds vote of the members present as such meeting entitled to vote, and that notice of said meeting was announced as

provided in the By-Laws; hence, the above revised By-Laws were duly approved at two consecutive constitutional meetings of the Voter's Assembly in accordance with Section 12 of the By-Laws herein above.

The Constitution and By-Laws of St. John Lutheran Church, Crete (Kramer), shall follow all synodical constitution guidelines.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, Secretary

### **APPENDIX A – Definitions/Glossary**

BOARD – A board consists of people elected by the Voters of St. John to be responsible for the sound and prudent governance and performance of the churches' role for that chosen area of focus, and its compliance to the Bylaws thereby associated.

COMMITTEE - A Committee is a group of people to whom some specific role or purpose has been delegated by the Voters, Church Council, or the congregational President. They are established to build expertise and lessen the workload of the entire membership/Voters. The role of a Committee is usually to research, review and make recommendations, and advise the Voters on specific matters. Committees have limited authority, power, and responsibilities, and each committee should operate under its own charter or terms of reference. The Voters retain ultimate responsibility for any actions recommended or made by a committee.

STANDING COMMITTEE – A permanent committee so established by the Voters' Assembly as to function within the parameters of the By-laws of St. John.

SPECIAL or SELECT COMMITTEE – A committee established by the Voters' Assembly for a limited period of time to perform a particular task, study or investigation.