

## Revised Proposed Changes and Additions in Bethesda By-Laws

1) A new Bylaw to accompany the Constitution at Chapter 4- Statement of Purpose

Current: \*C4.03 To fulfill these purposes, this congregation shall:

e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people

Proposed: Add as a Bylaw, the Welcoming statement approved by the congregation in January 2021 and amended by the Congregation Council February 2021.

**Welcoming Statement.** We invite you to join our community which is committed to inclusion, racial equity and anti-racism. We share in God's abundant grace knowing that we cannot be separated from the love of God by our age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, physical or mental abilities or faith background

Why needed: Our current governing documents do not contain a way to preserve an important decision made by our church to proclaim that we are an inclusive and equity focused congregation.

2) Amend a Bylaw to accompany the Constitution Chapter 9. Rostered Minister

Current Bylaw III. Program Staff Section A. Rostered Staff (Clergy, Associates in Ministry, Deaconesses of the ELCA and Diaconal Ministers) shall be responsible for those areas of mission and ministry assigned to them in their Letter of Call. The responsibilities of the non-rostered program staff shall be defined in their Letter of Employment. The letter shall include a position description outlining specific responsibilities.

Proposed: Amend the Bylaws, by separating rostered and non-rostered staff and including a statement approved by the Congregational Council February 2021

**Rostered staff (Pastor and Deacon) shall be responsible for those areas of mission and ministry assigned to them in their Letter of Call. In the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, or ELCA, leadership is open to all people. Bethesda Lutheran is committed to being inclusive and to racial equity and anti-racism. All positions of rostered leadership are open to both LGBTQIA+ individuals as well as Black, Brown and Indigenous Persons of Color (BIPOC).**

Why needed: The amendment does three things. 1. It updates the language to the current standard of the 2019 Model Constitution for Pastor and Deacon as the two types of rostered ministers. 2. It separates rostered from non-rostered staff as per the Model Constitution 3. It incorporates the current ELCA statement of inclusion and preserves the important decision made by our church to proclaim that we are an inclusive and equity focused congregation.

3) Amend Bylaw to clarify filling of vacancies

Bylaw Section IV.B

Current: The officers shall be elected by the congregation at the January annual congregational meeting

Proposed: **The officers shall be elected by the congregation at the January annual congregational meeting. If no one is elected at the annual meeting, or there is a vacancy mid-term, the Council President shall appoint someone to fill that position for the remainder of the term, with confirmation by the Council**

Why needed: To allow positions to be filled that are required for a functioning Council.

4) Amend Bylaws to conform to 2019 Model Constitution

Current Bylaw Section III Subsections B.5, B.6, E and F all use the old terminology of Associates in Ministry, Deaconess of the ELCA and Diaconal Ministers

Proposed change: Change all phrases to **Minister in Word and Service (Deacon)**

Why needed: to bring our Bylaws into conformity with the most recent Model Constitution of the ELCA