

ATTACHMENT TO RESOLUTION 17.01.07

**SYNODICAL CONSTITUTION
OF
LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA**

PREAMBLE

Reason for Forming Lutheran Church-Canada

1. The example of the apostolic Church. Acts 15:1-31.
2. Our Lord's will that the diversities of gifts should be for the common profit. 1 Cor. 12:4-31.
3. The conviction that such an organization will facilitate our witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our country and throughout the world.

Article I Status and Definitions

1. This Synodical Constitution has been passed pursuant to the Statutory Bylaws enacted pursuant to the Act.
2. In this Synodical Constitution words and expressions defined in the Act, in the Statutory Bylaws, and in the Synodical Bylaws have the same meanings when used herein.

Article II Confession

Lutheran Church-Canada, and every Member of Lutheran Church – Canada accepts without reservation:

1. the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice;
2. all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

Article III Objectives

The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall:

1. conserve and promote the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:10), work through its official structure toward fellowship with other Christian church bodies, and provide a united defence against schism, sectarianism (Rom. 16:17), and heresy;
2. strengthen congregations and their members in giving bold witness by word and deed to the love and work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and extend that Gospel witness into all the world;
3. recruit and train pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers and provide opportunity for their continuing growth;
4. provide opportunities through which its members express their Christian concern, love, and compassion in meeting human needs;
5. aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and nurture and to establish agencies of Christian education such as elementary and secondary schools;
6. aid congregations by providing a variety of resources and opportunities for recognizing, promoting, expressing, conserving, and defending their confessional unity in the true faith;
7. encourage congregations to strive for uniformity in church practice, but also to develop an appreciation of a variety of responsible practices and customs which are in harmony with our common profession of faith;
8. provide evangelical supervision, counsel, and care for pastors, deacons, and other professional church workers in the performance of their official duties;
9. provide protection for congregations, pastors, deacons, and other church workers in the performance of their official duties and the maintenance of their rights;
10. aid in providing for the welfare of pastors, deacons, and other church workers, and their families, in the event of illness, disability, retirement, special need, or death.

Article IV Prerequisites to Membership

No community of believers and no individual shall be entitled to membership in Lutheran Church-Canada unless that community, that pastor or that deacon confesses and accepts the confessional basis of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as stated in Article II.

A community of believers, a pastor, a deacon, and a candidate for the office of the ministry or for the position of a deacon must be received at a Convention or by the Board in order to become a Member of Lutheran Church-Canada.

A community of believers may not be received as a Member Congregation unless a Convention or the Board has passed a resolution confirming that it is satisfied that the constitution of the community submitted by that community contains nothing contrary to the Scriptures or the Confessions.

A pastor, deacon, or candidate for the office of the ministry or for the position of a deacon not coming from recognized orthodox church body, must submit to a colloquy before being received as an Individual Member.

Article V Additional Conditions of Membership

Additional conditions for acquiring and holding membership in Lutheran Church-Canada include:

1. Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II.
2. Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description, such as:
 - a. serving congregations of mixed confession, as such, by pastors;
 - b. taking part in the services and sacramental rites of heterodox congregations or of congregations of mixed confession;
 - c. participating in heterodox tract and missionary activities.
3. Regular call of pastors and deacons and regular election of lay delegates by the congregations, as also the blamelessness of the life of such.
4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymn books, and catechisms in church and school.
5. Service of a Member Congregation by a pastor who is an Individual Member.

Article VI Termination of Membership

1. The membership of a Member who acts contrary to the confession laid down in Article II or to the conditions of membership set out in Article V or persists in an offensive conduct, shall, after previous futile admonition, be terminated.
2. Termination of membership shall come into effect only after following any procedures set out in the Synodical Bylaws.
3. If the membership of a Member being terminated is a pastor or deacon serving a congregation which is a Member Congregation, such congregation shall rescind his call and deal with him in accordance with the Word of God, notwithstanding an appeal. If the congregation fails to do so, the regional pastor shall deal with the congregation. If all negotiations and admonitions of the regional pastor fail, such congregation shall cease to be a Member Congregation as provided in the Synodical Bylaws.

Article VII Relation of the Synod to Congregations

The Synod is not an ecclesiastical government exercising legislative or coercive powers, and with respect to an individual congregation's right of self-government, the Synod is advisory. Accordingly, no resolution of Lutheran Church-Canada impacting on a Member Congregation other than on the Member Congregation's rights and status as a Member is of binding force if it is not in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a Member Congregation is concerned.¹

Article VIII Rights of Conventions

In addition to the authority vested in a Convention under the Statutory Bylaws, a Convention shall be the paramount decision-making authority of Lutheran Church-Canada in all ecclesiastical matters established under this Synodical Constitution and the Synodical Bylaws, subject to any limitations set out in the Statutory Bylaws, the Synodical Constitution, and the Synodical Bylaws.

All matters of doctrine and of conscience discussed at a Convention shall be decided only by the Word of God.

Article IX Ecclesiastical Functions of Officers

In addition to the duties and responsibilities of the officers under the Statutory Bylaws, an individual officer, shall exercise the ecclesiastical functions given to those officers in this Synodical Constitution and the Synodical Bylaws.

Article X Ecclesiastical Authority of President

1. The president shall have ecclesiastical supervision regarding doctrine expressed by all officers and employees of Lutheran Church-Canada.
2. It is the president's ecclesiastical responsibility to see to it that all the aforementioned act in accordance with the confession set out in this Synodical Constitution, to admonish all who in any way depart from it, and, if such admonition is not heeded, to report such cases to the Convention.
3. The president has and always shall have the responsibility to advise, admonish, and reprove. He shall conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the regions.
4. The president shall:
 - a. manage the delivery of the following services:
 - (i) providing ecclesiastical supervision
 - (ii) building community
 - (iii) caring for Members
 - (iv) training church workers
 - (v) engaging in Canadian Missions
 - (vi) engaging in World missions
 - (vii) providing social ministry
 - b. provide pastoral leadership, oversight and support to the regional pastors,
 - c. provide leadership in the strategic planning process of Lutheran Church-Canada and the Synodical Family,
 - d. represent Lutheran Church-Canada at national and international meetings and gatherings of Lutherans and other multi-denominational gatherings,
 - e. represent Lutheran Church-Canada as required at meetings and gatherings of organizations with which Lutheran Church-Canada has signed a Memorandum of Understanding,
 - f. monitor compliance with the Memoranda of Understanding signed with other organizations.

¹*Cf. Synodical Bylaws, 1.21b*

Article XI Amendments to the Synodical Constitution

1. Amendments to this Synodical Constitution may be made provided they do not conflict with the provisions laid down in the Act or Statutory Bylaws, or in Article II and in Article V.
2. All proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to a Convention, and each proposed amendment shall be voted on separately. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast at a Convention shall be necessary for adoption
3. After adoption by the Convention such amendments shall be reported to the Member Congregations in an official periodical of Lutheran Church-Canada.
4. Proposed amendments to the Synodical Constitution adopted by a Convention shall be submitted directly to each Member Congregation on an official ballot, and the Member Congregations shall by official action express their affirmative or negative vote and indicate the same to the secretary of Lutheran Church-Canada on this official ballot. The proposed amendment shall become effective at the expiration of six months from the date on which the amendment was adopted by a Convention, provided a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by Member Congregations within that period shall have favored the amendment. At the end of the six-month period the secretary of Lutheran Church-Canada shall announce the outcome of the voting in an official periodical of Lutheran Church-Canada.

Article XII Repeal of Previous Synodical Constitution

The Synodical Constitution and all amendments to it are repealed as of the effective date of this Synodical Constitution.

ADOPTED by a majority of at least two-thirds of the votes cast by delegates at a Convention this day of October, 2017.

LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA

Per:

PRESIDENT

Per:

SECRETARY

NOTICE

This Synodical Constitution was APPROVED by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at the 2017 Convention of Lutheran Church-Canada and approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast by Member Congregations of Lutheran Church-Canada effective the day of , 2018.