

Hawley Lutheran Church

CONSTITUTION

(Approved April 15, 2012)

PREAMBLE

We, baptized disciples of the Church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the Sacraments and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this Constitution and agree to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

MISSION STATEMENT

As children of God we invite all people to journey with us as we worship, grow in faith and serve in Jesus name.

ARTICLE 1: NAME AND INCORPORATION

1.01 The name of this Congregation shall be Hawley Lutheran Church.
(HLC)

1.02 This Congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the state of Minnesota.

ARTICLE 2: CONFESSION OF FAITH

2.01 This Congregation confesses faith in the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

- a. **In the Father**, the creator and sustainer of the universe; (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 104:27-30)
- b. **In the Son**, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who died and rose again for the redemption of a fallen humanity; (John 1:1, 14, John 3:16-17, Philippians 2:9-11)

- c. **In the Holy Spirit**, who calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the Christian church and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in faith (John 14:15-16:16, I Corinthians 3:16)

2.02 We Stand On the word of God. (Isaiah 40:8, II Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 15:4, Psalm 1)

The Bible is our authority and sole guide for life and faith. We accept on faith that all of the Scripture is inspired word of God and our final authority in all matters of faith and life. We study scriptures to grow in faith, hope and love.

- a. We accept the Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the scriptural faith we believe, teach and confess.
- b. We believe, teach and accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Word of God.
- c. We believe, teach and accept other confessional writings in the Book of Concord as further valid expositions of the Holy Scripture.

2.03 We Desire Genuine Worship. (I Peter 2:9, John 4:23-24, Psalm 98:4-9, Psalm 105:1-4)

Worship establishes and encourages a right relationship between God and His people – God is the audience. Worship is essential for the believer and central to the life of the church. In it we cast our eyes to the cross, we come under the instruction of God's Word, we are strengthened by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, bound together as Christ's body. Worship involves the whole person – body, mind, heart and spirit.

2.04 We Are Called by God. (Matthew 4:19, Mark 10:45, I Corinthians 12:12 & 27, II Corinthians 5:17-20, Ephesians 4:11-16)

We believe in "the priesthood of all believers" (I Peter 2:4-10). All of God's people are called to ministry and the body of Christ must recognize and affirm that call. God has gifted every believer through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to be ambassadors of Christ Jesus in the world, through our service, stewardship, ministry and witness.

2.05 We Are Free in Christ. (Romans 8:1-2, Galatians 5:1, John 8:31-36)

Because of what Jesus has done for us we are free. In this Congregation it is OK to have fun, it is OK to make mistakes, it is OK to say no. We are free to serve God in response to what the Lord has already done for us – we serve Him joyfully.

2.06 We Will “Go And Make Disciples.” (Matthew 28:18-20, Matthew 4:18-20, Luke 19:10, John 14:6, Acts 1:8)

We proclaim God’s saving gospel of justification by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Jesus gave his disciples this command – “Go and make disciples of all nations.” Therefore, the church exists primarily for the sake of those who don’t yet belong. We will seek to invite every person to consider a living and personal relationship with Jesus Christ, for He is the only way to salvation and eternal life.

2.07 We Celebrate That God is Changing Lives. (John 8:1-11, II Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:15)

We believe that God changes lives and that He alone has the transforming power of the Holy Spirit to create faith and help us live lives that are pleasing to him. As believers, we accept that there is nothing in this world that ever stays the same except the solid rock of our Salvation. We can, therefore, learn to adjust and adapt to our changing surroundings. We worship Jesus our Lord, not our tradition, not our history and not ourselves.

ARTICLE 3: AUTHORITY

3.01 In all matters of Christian faith and life, the authority of the Word of God is supreme. In the administration of all other affairs, the Congregation is governed by its constitution, bylaws, and decisions of the HLC Congregation.

3.02 For the purposes of this constitution, a quorum is 60 voting disciples.

ARTICLE 4: CHURCH AFFILIATION

4.01 The Congregation is a member of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) and is subject to its policies and disciplines. To sever membership in the LCMC, a two-thirds Majority vote is required of a quorum of the voting disciples present and voting at a HLC Congregational meeting. To become effective, the decision to sever must be ratified by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the voting disciples present and voting at a HLC Congregational meeting held at least ninety days after the initial vote was taken.

4.02 To join another Lutheran Association / Denomination, the same procedure will be followed.

ARTICLE 5: PASTORS

Only individuals who accept and pledge faithful adherence to the confessions of the Congregation as set forth in the Preamble and Article II of this Constitution and are clergy of, and/or recommended for consideration by the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, can be called to serve as pastors of the Congregation.

ARTICLE 6: MINISTRIES

All ministries within the Congregation are to be established as provided for in the Constitution and Bylaws. The pastor(s) by virtue of his or her pastoral duties will be the advisor(s) for all ministries.

ARTICLE 7: LEGAL OWNERSHIP

7.01 All property that is acquired by the Congregation will be held, owned, and titled in the name of the Congregation. The Congregation's real property will not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except as approved by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the voting disciples present and voting at a HLC Congregational meeting.

7.02 To terminate the Congregation's existence, a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the voting disciples present and at an HLC Congregational meeting is required.

7.03 Should the Congregation disband, title to its land and other estates, real and personal, all the proceeds must be used for charitable purposes as directed by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of the voting disciples present and voting at a HLC Congregational meeting.

ARTICLE 8: HLC ENDOWMENT FUND

In the Congregation's bylaws, an endowment fund has been established. It will be in addition to and separate from the general operations of the Congregation and used to enhance the mission and vision of the Congregation by supporting existing ministries, establishing new ministries, and providing stewardship opportunities. Its administration will be in accordance with the bylaws and it will be accountable directly to the Congregation through the HLC Congregational vote.

ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION

9.01 This Constitution may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least (25) voting disciples or by the HLC Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the HLC Council 60 days before formal consideration by this Congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The HLC Council shall notify the Congregation's disciples by mail of the proposal together with the Council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.

9.02 The doctrinal basis and confessional subscription contained in Article 2.01 and 2.02 of the Constitution are unalterable.

9.03 Amendments to this constitution, purposed under 9.01 shall:

- a. Be approved at a legally called Congregation Meeting according to this Constitution by a majority vote of a quorum of those present and voting.
- b. Be ratified without change at the next annual meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of those present and voting.
- c. Have the effective date included in the resolution.

ARTICLE 10: BYLAWS

This Congregation may adopt and amend bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with any provisions of this Constitution.