

Fjeldberg Lutheran Church Constitution Update Guide

This guide highlights major differences between the 2016 Approved Constitution and the Proposed Draft Constitution. These are the highlights of big changes as we updated our constitution to match the ELCA model constitution.

A couple notes:

1. Anything with an * cannot be changed; these are required portions of the ELCA model constitution.
2. We no longer have all our committees listed in the constitution. This is to make future changes/structure or ministry teams easier for the council and congregation to make. If we were to include committee descriptions in the constitution as a bylaw, we would need to hold a congregational meeting to approve the changes.

ELCA Ministry Partnerships

2016:

“The Church exists ... The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ... derives its character and powers both from the sanction and representation of its congregations”
(C3.02)

Proposed Draft:

“This church confesses the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church ... participates in The Lutheran World Federation as a global communion of churches”
(C3.02–C3.04)

Enhanced ELCA Mission

2016:

“Serve in response to God’s love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless”
(C4.02d)

Proposed Draft:

“Serve ... advocating dignity, justice, and equity for all people, working for peace and reconciliation ... caring for the marginalized, embracing and welcoming racially and ethnically diverse populations, and standing in solidarity with the poor and oppressed”
(C4.02)

Roster Language Updates

2016:

“call or terminate the call of associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers”
(C5.03c)

Proposed Draft:

“call a minister of Word and Service; terminate the call of a minister of Word and Service” (C5.03)

Affiliation & Property

2016:

“To terminate its relationship with this church ... requires two-thirds vote at two meetings ... relationship ends upon notification to bishop”
(C6.05)

Proposed Draft:

Adds synod control: “If adopted ... the relationship ... shall be terminated subject to Synod Council approval ... If congregation does not affiliate with another Lutheran denomination ... (C6.05)

Also: “In neither case does title to this congregation’s property transfer to the synod”
(*C7.04*)

Membership Roles

2016:

Members: baptized, confirmed, voting, associate
(C8.02)

Proposed Draft:

Adds seasonal members: “Seasonal members ... have all the privileges and duties of voting members except: [no voting on call, affiliation, property, synod assembly, etc.]”
(C8.02)

Minister Roles

2016:

Pastors only described.

Proposed Draft:

Adds deacons (Ministers of Word and Service): call, duties, termination
(C9.21–C9.27)

Committees

2016:

All committees and roles listed

Proposed Draft:

Only includes Executive, Nominating, Audit, and Mutual Ministry Committees. Updated Language to in make other existing committee's ministry teams. This means that council and/or committees can adjust their roles without needing to have one or two congregational meetings to approve.