BY-LAWS – GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

PART I – COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

1. Since Holy Communion is the sacramental meal of the new people of God who are called to be the body of Christ in the world, only those incorporated into this body by personal faith, may participate in the Sacrament of the Altar. Whenever the sacrament is celebrated, it shall be open to all the people of God who are present.
2. Admission to the sacrament is by invitation of the Lord, presented through the church to those who are baptized. It is the practice of the church to admit Holy Communion those who are ready to participate. Such participation need not be tied to intellectual capacity or attainment. The decision regarding readiness should be informed by the following guideline, which are consistent with our confession:
	1. That there be a simple trust that the crucified and Risen Lord is here giving himself to his people, as his words declare;
	2. That there be a basic understanding and appreciation of the nature and benefits of the Sacrament;
	3. That there be an acceptance of one’s place as a communicant in the fellowship of believers, and
	4. That there is self examination in a manner appropriate to the level of maturity and recognition of the need of forgiveness.

There shall be special concern for the admission of children; children here shall mean those at age ten or the level of the fifth grade, but it may occur earlier or later. The responsibility for deciding when to admit a child is shared by the pastor, the child, the family or sponsoring persons, and the congregation.

1. Record of participation in Holy Communion shall be maintained.

PART II – MEMBERSHIP (Cf. Article VI of Constitution)

1. Baptized Members
	1. A child, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation shall, upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member.
	2. A child baptized in another congregation shall be received as a baptized member in the congregation when a transfer has been received.
	3. An unbaptized adult who has received instruction and has given evidence of adequate understanding and acceptance of the teachings of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation.
	4. When one or both guardians of baptized children are received into the membership of the congregation, such children should be received as baptized members with the consent of the member parent or parents.
	5. When the guardians of a baptized child are not themselves members of the Lutheran Church but move into the area served by this congregation and desire to have their child put within the pastoral care of this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member.
2. Confirmed Members
3. A baptized adult, not previously a confirmed member of a Lutheran Congregation, shall become a confirmed member of this congregation by giving evidence of adequate understanding of the teaching of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church and by publicly affirming his/her faith or an equivalent personal confession of faith.
4. A baptized member of the congregation shall become a confirmed member through the rite of confirmation; except when an adult who has become a baptized member in accordance with the provisions of Section 1 c, or this part of the bylaws shall be considered a confirmed member without participation in the rite of confirmation.
5. Voting Members
6. The Church Council shall be responsible for determining the voting membership in accordance with the qualifications specified in the constitution and bylaws. The church council will review and determine membership prior to the annual meeting.
7. Pastoral Care of Membership
8. The congregation shall, in the event of the removal of a member from the community it serves, encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve the member effectively.
9. A confirmed member desiring to change their membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
10. The council will attempt to contact any confirmed member who does not, for a period of one year, partake of Holy Communion, support the church with his/her offerings, and does not appear to desire to participate in the life and worship of the congregation. If the member cannot be contacted or does not want to be a member, they will be removed from the membership roster.

PART III – THE PASTOR (Cf. Article VIII of the Constitution)

1. When the congregation has voted to call a pastor, it shall issue a Letter of Call to the pastor-elect, in a form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. It shall be signed by the chairman of the call committee, the secretary of the Church Council, and attested by the Bishop of the Synod.
2. The Call shall normally be for an indefinite time unless specified in the letter of call.
3. If a pastor received a Call to another ministry, the pastor shall notify the Church Council, or if desired, the congregation, before reaching a decision. The pastor shall announce a decision as quickly as possible, normally within three weeks. The pastor shall notify the Bishop of the synod. When a Call has been accepted, the pastor’s ministry in this congregation shall be terminated as soon as feasible, normally within a month.

PART IV – MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION (Cf. Article of the Constitution)

1. Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be made at two public services immediately preceding the meeting. The services are to be at least a week apart. Announcement of the time and place of the annual meeting of the congregation shall be made in publications as the congregation or the pastor may periodically issue, or by written notice to the voting members mailed not less than ten days in advance of the meeting.
2. The current roster of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be available at each meeting of the congregation.
3. The annual meeting shall receive reports from all organizations of the congregation. Such reports, including a financial statement, shall be submitted in writing.
4. Unless otherwise ordered, parliamentary procedures shall be in accordance with Robert’s Rules of Order.

PART V – OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE HEADS (Cf. Article X of the Constitution)

1. Membership and meetings of the Church Council.

In addition to the provisions of the constitution, the following shall govern membership on the Church Council and the conduct of its meetings:

1. Only a voting member of the congregation shall be eligible for membership on the Church Council.
2. If a vacancy occurs on the Church Council, the Council may fill the vacancy until the next meeting of the congregation.
3. A member of the Church Council who is absent from two consecutive regular meetings shall be consulted by the president of the congregation; if a member is absent from three consecutive regular meetings without valid excuse, the Council may declare the office vacant.
4. A quorum for any regular or special meeting of the Church Council shall be two-thirds of its membership.
5. A special meeting may be called by the pastor, the president, or any three members of the Church Council. Notice of such meeting shall be given not less than five days prior to the meeting and shall be announced at a public service if one is held during that period.
6. Duties and Responsibilities of the Church Council

In addition to the duties and responsibilities provided in the constitution, the Church Council shall:

* 1. Secure necessary staff other than the pastor and fix and review annually their salaries.
	2. Review annually, the salary and performance of the pastor and make adjustments from time to time within the limits of the budget approved by the congregation.
	3. Receive reports regularly from the treasurer to ascertain that the expenditures are within the budget approved by the congregation. Any expenditures in excess of the total voted budget must be approved by the congregation.
	4. Prepare a budget to submit to the annual congregational meeting.
	5. Appoint annually an auditing committee composed of three members which shall audit the fiscal records of the congregation and report its findings in writing to the annual meeting.
	6. Be responsible for the buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is normally limited to the functions of the congregation.
	7. The Church Council oversees all committees to incorporate the life, work, and programs of the congregation and insure committee responsibilities are met.
	8. Have authority between meetings of the congregation to choose delegates to any group or meeting in which the congregation is entitled to representation.
1. Duties of Officers and Committee Heads
	1. The president shall have the power to appoint special committees and to appoint members to any committee. The president shall preside at all congregational meetings and at Church Council meetings.
	2. The vice-president shall chair the Mutual Ministry team. The Mutual Ministry team shall be responsible for evaluating the performance of the pastor offering support and direction, and resolving conflicts, both real and potential, between the pastor and the congregation. It shall meet quarterly.
	3. The secretary shall keep a record of all business meetings of the congregation and the Church Council, and shall ensure that such records are placed in the archives of the congregation. In the absence of the secretary, the Council will appoint a substitute.
	4. The treasurer shall be an active member of the finance committee. The treasurer shall make a monthly report on the status of the offerings to the congregation (can be done via the newsletter). The treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds of the congregation. He /she shall disburse all such funds in accordance with the decision of the congregation or the Church Council. He/she shall present a duly audited report to the annual congregation meetings, and such other reports to the finance committee or Church Council as may be required.
	5. The financial secretary shall maintain records of all contributions and make regular reports to the treasurer as required by the Church Council.

PART VI – MINISTERIAL RECORDS

 The pastor shall be responsible for keeping accurate record of membership and of his/her ministerial acts on the church’s recording system and which shall remain the property of the congregation. He/she shall report these statistics to the congregation annually, and, when required, to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. Upon leaving the congregation, he/she shall complete the records of his/her ministry up to the time of his/her departure.