

ST PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OF HARLINGEN, INCORPORATED

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8), that Christ's mission for His Church might be carried out according to His will. He has commanded that Christians unite in worship (Hebrews 10:24-25), practice fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42), witness to all men (Acts 1:8), help each other grow in the Word (Ephesians 4:11-14), serve the needs of all men in Christian love (John 13:34-35), administer the Keys of His Church (John 20:21-23, Matthew 18:15-20), maintain decency (Exodus 20:1-17, Matthew 22:36-40) and order (I Corinthians 14:40) in the Church.

Therefore, we have united into a congregation and in this document set forth the manner by which our affairs are to be regulated.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this congregation shall be:

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HARLINGEN INCORPORATED.

ARTICLE 2 - MISSION

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

To be a corporate religious organization; more specifically, that of a Christian Congregation established and maintained for the express purpose of dissemination of the Gospel Truth according to the Confessional Standard of the Lutheran Church, the Book of Concord, of the year 1580.

ARTICLE 3 - CONFESSIONAL STANDARDS

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired the only rule and norm of faith and practice; and it acknowledges and accepts all the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, to be true and genuine exposition of the Bible. These symbolical books are: The Apostolic Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord. The free exercise of our faith, carried out in our preaching, teaching and practices, must be in accord with the above, and all doctrinal controversies that may arise shall be decided in accordance with the same.

#### ARTICLE 4 - SYNODICAL AFFILIATION

This congregation shall be affiliated with The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod as long as St. Paul Lutheran congregation judges the doctrines and actions of said Synod to be in accord with the Bible, and the Confessional Standards of the congregation as laid down in Article 3 of the Constitution.

#### ARTICLE 5 - MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the congregation is held by all those Baptized, Confirmed and Voting members as defined in the Bylaws of this Constitution. Members shall not maintain membership in organizations or secret societies that conflict with the Word of God and the conduct of a Christian. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)

#### ARTICLE 6 - RIGHTS AND POWERS

The Congregation through its Voters' Assembly shall have power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the confessions of the Lutheran Church as defined in Article 3, and any such contrary decision shall be null and void. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided in accordance with the Word of God. Other matters shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the voting members in attendance at a Voter's Assembly meeting unless otherwise specified in the Constitution or Bylaws. The right to call a Pastor or other rostered worker is vested in the congregation through the Voters' Assembly, never any individual or part thereof. The Voting Membership may delegate to the Board of Directors the operational functions to carry out the mission of this congregation.

#### ARTICLE 7 - CALLED WORKERS

Only such candidates for Pastor and other rostered positions shall be called to serve who profess acceptance of and pledge faithful adherence to Article 3 of this Constitution, are members of or are endorsed by the Synod, and who are well qualified for their work. Pastors and rostered workers shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard.

#### ARTICLE 8 - OFFICERS

Officers shall be President, Secretary, and Treasurer as described by the Bylaws of this Constitution.

#### ARTICLE 9 - PROPERTY RIGHTS

- A. The property of the congregation shall be held in the corporate name as stated in Article 1.
- B. The congregation shall have the power under its charter, granted by the State of Texas, to buy, inherit, rent, receive, encumber or otherwise hypothecate real and personal property or other valuable things; to have and hold them for its personal use for churches, schools, parsonages, income and the like; to manage, improve, sell, transfer, encumber or otherwise hypothecate said property over its seal and signatures of its Officers as defined in the Bylaws.

- C. If at any time a division should take place within the Congregation, the property of the Congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with the majority of those Voting Members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article 3 and 4 of the Constitution.
- D. If dissolution of this congregation takes place the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Texas District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at it's final Voters' Assembly, or another 501(c)(3) organization.

#### ARTICLE 10 - BYLAWS

This congregation shall, through a majority vote of the Voters' Assembly as described in the Bylaws, have the power to make, alter, or rescind any Bylaws that are required to accomplish the purposes of this congregation. Upon adoption, such changes shall be submitted to the Texas District for approval in accordance with the Synod's Bylaws.

#### ARTICLE 11 - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed in writing in any Voters' Assembly meeting by any voting member. If the majority of the voting members present shall vote in favor of the proposal, a copy of such proposed amendment shall be made available to all voting members at least two (2) weeks preceding the next meeting. Thereupon the final vote shall be taken in that meeting, and a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members there present shall be required for adoption. Upon adoption, such amendment shall be submitted to the District for approval in accordance with the Synod's Bylaws.