

**CONSTITUTION
OUR REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA
1962
(revised 1971, 1974, 1977, 1983, 1998, 1999)**

PREAMBLE

Whereas, according to God's Word (I Corinthians 14:40 and Colossians 2:5) all things should be done decently and in order in a Christian congregation, and whereas in obedience to this Biblical exhortation our forefathers have set an example in the drafting of Christian church constitutions; therefore, we, a number of Lutherans living in and near Cedar Falls, Iowa, by our signatures designate this present document as the order under which we are united as a congregation, and according to which all internal and external affairs of the congregation are determined and settled.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this congregation shall be Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Cedar Falls, Iowa.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE AND POWERS

- A. **PURPOSE** - The purpose of this congregation shall be to serve our Lord and Master Jesus Christ as His disciples. It is His will that we preach His gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8); join in worshiping Him as He commanded (Hebrews 10:24-25); practice fellowship with one another (Acts 2:41-42); serve the needs of all people in Christian love (Ephesians 4:7-16. Mark 10:42-44; John 13:35; Galatians 6:10); administer the Office of the Keys as His church (John 20:21-23); and maintain decency and order in the church (I Corinthians 14:40).
- B. **POWERS** - This congregation shall have power to hold title to and manage such real estate and other property as it may need to accomplish said purpose and shall have all rights and powers given and granted by the laws of the State of Iowa to religious corporations organized under the provisions of the Corporation Act of the State of Iowa.

ARTICLE III - CONFESSIONAL BASIS

This congregation accepts and acknowledges all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, and all the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580 as a true and sound presentation of the Christian Doctrine taken from and in full agreement with the Holy Scriptures; and in this congregation no Doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which is at variance with these Symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, viz: (1) Athanasian Creed; (2) Apostles' Creed; (3) Nicene Creed; (4) The Unaltered Augsburg Confession; (5) The Apology of the same; (6) The Smalcald Articles; (7) Luther's Small Catechism; (8) Luther's Large Catechism; (9) The Formula of Concord.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

A. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP:

1. Baptized members are all members baptized in the name of the Triune God.
2. Communicant members are those who:
 - a. are baptized in the name of the Triune God;
 - b. have attained such spiritual maturity as enables them to discern the meaning of Baptism and the Lord's Supper;
 - c. adhere to the guidance of God's Holy Word and Spirit.
 - d. abstain from being a member of or affiliated with any anti-Christian lodge, society, or other organizations conflicting with the Word of God.
3. Voting members are all confirmed members.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERSHIP:

It shall be the responsibility of members to be faithful stewards of God's Word, continually growing "in Grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). To this end, they shall:

1. attend divine services faithfully, as God enables them;
2. if communicant members, partake of the Lord's Supper frequently, and
3. devote their talents and gifts as God has blessed them toward the building of His Kingdom in the congregation and throughout the world.

C. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

Membership in this congregation may be terminated by:

1. letter of transfer from our congregation to another congregation;
2. voluntary withdrawal by a member;
3. departure of a member without requesting a letter of transfer. After a member has been absent for one year, during which time the congregation has sought in vain to locate and win him/her back, the Church Council may declare membership terminated;
4. excommunication after fruitless admonition according to the order prescribed by the Word of God (Matthew 18:15-20). Such a member shall be notified in writing of this action and of God's continuing love for him/her. He/she shall be informed that the congregation will pray for his/her early repentance and will welcome him/her back to the fold with joy.

Any person whose membership in this congregation has been terminated forfeits all rights of members and all claims upon the property of this congregation.

D. REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP:

Any person whose membership has been terminated may be reinstated as follows:

1. A former member who has transferred from the congregation may rejoin by transferring in as a new member;
2. A former member who has voluntarily withdrawn may be reinstated on the request of the former member and the recommendation of the Pastor and the Church Council;
3. A former member who has departed without requesting a letter of transfer may be reinstated on the request of the former member and the recommendation of the Pastor and the Church Council;
4. A former member who has been excommunicated may be reinstated on the request of the former member who acknowledges his/her sinful ways, repents, and promises with God's help henceforth to lead a Godly life. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and the Church Council such a former member shall be reinstated with Christian love and forgiveness, remembering that there is joy in heaven over each sinner who repents.

ARTICLE V - OFFICES OF PASTOR AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS

The office of the ministry in this congregation shall be conferred only upon such ministers or ministerial candidates as publicly profess their acceptance of and adherence to the Doctrinal basis set forth in Article III of the Constitution and are well qualified for their work. (I Timothy 3:1-6, Titus 1:7-9). The same shall apply to other professional church workers.

ARTICLE VI - POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- A. GENERAL - The congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as a parochial school, the Sunday School, youth societies, ladies' organizations, choir, etc.; shall at all times be subject to the approval and supervision of the congregation. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church as set forth in Article III; any such decision shall be null and void.
- B. THE RIGHT OF CHOOSING, CALLING, AND DISMISSING PASTORS and other professional church workers shall be vested in the Voters' Assembly and shall never be delegated to an individual or to a smaller body within the congregation.
- C. DECISIONS - Matters of Doctrine and Conscience shall be decided by the Word of God; other matters shall be decided by the Voters' Assembly by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution and By-Laws.
- D. POWER OF OFFICERS - Congregational officers or committees, whether elected or appointed by the Voters, shall have not authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them; whatever power may have been delegated to them, may at any time be altered or revoked by the Voters.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

The officers, boards, and committees of this congregation and their qualifications shall be prescribed by the By-Laws of this congregation.

ARTICLE VIII - SEPARATION

If at any time a separation should take place in this congregation because of doctrine or for any other cause, the property of this congregation and all the benefits connected with it shall remain with and belong to those members who shall faithfully adhere to ARTICLES III, IV, and V of this Constitution.

ARTICLE IX - ALTERATION OR REPEAL

To alter or repeal any alterable or repealable paragraph of this Constitution, it shall be necessary that in two (2) consecutive Voters' Meetings, two-thirds (2/3) of all the voting members present cast their votes in favor of such alteration or repeal. ARTICLE III, V AND VIII of this Constitution shall not be alterable or repealable in substance.

ARTICLE X - IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSTITUTION

Procedures for implementing this Constitution are contained in the By-Laws.