

Lutheran CORE Constitution

August 9, 2011

Chapter 1. Name and Incorporation

- 1.01. The name of this ministry shall be Lutheran Coalition for Renewal, dba Lutheran CORE, a community of confessing Lutherans.
- 1.02. Lutheran CORE is organized and operated as a nonprofit corporation under the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Action (Minnesota Statutes Chapter 317A) exclusively for religious, charitable, literary, educational, and scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Amendments to the articles of incorporation shall be submitted to the Steering Committee for ratification before filing.
- 1.03. Lutheran CORE shall engage in mission as:
 - a. a confessional and confessing unity movement for all Lutherans who identify with the purposes of Lutheran CORE;
 - b. a churchly community, grounded in Word and Sacrament, and rooted in the Holy Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds, and the Lutheran Confessions;
 - c. an association, not a church body, providing a sense of Christian community and Lutheran identity;
 - d. a coalition of congregations, individual lay persons, pastors, synods, church bodies and other renewal movements.

Chapter 2. Confession of Faith

Lutheran CORE confesses:

- 2.01. The Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 2.02. Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
 - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.
- 2.03. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged" (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part one).
- 2.04. The Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.

- 2.05. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.
- 2.06. The other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.
- 2.07. The Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.
- 2.08. Lutheran CORE honors and accepts The Common Confession (2005), attached in an appendix hereto, as a summary of teachings otherwise affirmed in the Lutheran Confessions.

Chapter 3. Membership

- 3.01. The following are eligible for membership in Lutheran CORE:
 - a. Lutheran congregations.
 - b. Individual members of Lutheran congregations, both lay people and pastors.
 - c. Renewal movements within the Lutheran community
 - d. Lutheran church bodies, or their constituent synods or districts.
 - e. Lutheran seminaries, schools, and colleges.
- 3.02. Members of Lutheran CORE shall accept and adhere to this constitution and shall agree with the goals and principles of Lutheran CORE.
- 3.03. The secretary of Lutheran CORE shall maintain an up-to-date roster of the membership.

Chapter 4. Statement of Purpose

- 4.01. Lutheran CORE shall:
 - a. Strengthen the renewal of personal faith and congregational life, and foster a sense of churchly community and identity among its supporters and partners.
 - b. Serve as a community of faith for its members, nurturing a dimension of the church as a larger Christian fellowship and fostering mutual support and encouragement in the Christian faith among its members.
 - c. Support and counsel all individual members who seek to live in accord with Biblical and confessional teachings and practices in their churches and in the world.
 - d. Be an advocate and prophetic voice to churches within the Lutheran community, and work for reform and renewal under the Word of God, and advocate for Biblical authority and Lutheran confessional identity.
 - e. Cooperate with Lutheran churches and entities and support ministries within them; conduct joint ministries with Lutheran church bodies; and, as may be needed, provide alternate resources for congregational life in worship, Christian education, and youth ministry.

- f. Work for the outreach of the Gospel, following the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) as a priority in the life of Lutheran CORE.
- g. Develop a means for ongoing theological reflection and conversation on issues related to Holy Scripture, the Lutheran Confessions, and personal and social ethics.
- h. Provide counsel to congregations and individuals in their financial support for the mission of the Church, encouraging support for ministries that are reflective of Lutheran CORE's convictions and commitments.

4.02. Lutheran CORE shall maintain a close relationship in ministry and mission with the North American Lutheran Church.

Chapter 5. Relationship with Other Renewal Movements

5.01. Lutheran CORE shall include within its ministry the ministries of other renewal movements and shall seek to cooperate with them in the development of shared resources for Christian education, theological education, global missions, worship, and others as may be determined.

5.02. Such renewal movements shall accept and adhere to this constitution and shall be in agreement with the goals and intentions of Lutheran CORE.

5.03. Such renewal movements shall maintain their own goals and purposes and shall determine their own affairs.

5.04. The relationship between Lutheran CORE and other renewal movements shall be characterized by mutual sharing, cooperation, and partnership, rather than supervision and control.

5.05. Renewal movements shall be included within Lutheran CORE by action of the Steering Committee.

Chapter 6. Convocation

6.01. Lutheran CORE shall have an annual convocation which shall serve as its chief decision-making body.

6.02. The responsibilities of the annual convocation shall include: presentations, theological discussions, election of officers and Steering Committee members; adoption of a budget; reception of reports from the Steering Committee and officers; and other items of business as may be determined.

6.03. A quorum for conducting the business of a convocation shall be those members of Lutheran CORE who are registered and present at that convocation.

6.04. Unless a convocation decides otherwise, proxy and absentee voting shall not be permitted in the transaction of any business of Lutheran CORE.

6.05. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of a convocation, unless otherwise ordered by the convocation.

6.06. Special convocations may be called by the moderator with the consent of the Steering Committee, or by the Steering Committee acting by itself.

- 6.07. Notice of each special convocation shall define the purpose for which it is to be held. The scope of actions to be taken at such a special convocation shall be limited to the subject matter(s) described in the notice.
- 6.08. Notice of the time and place of all convocations shall be given by the secretary. Electronic or postal communications to all members, along with an announcement on the Lutheran CORE internet home page of at least thirty days before a convocation, shall be considered proper notice.

Chapter 7. Officers

- 7.01. The officers of Lutheran CORE shall be a moderator, a chair of the Steering Committee, a secretary, and a treasurer.

Moderator

- 7.02. The moderator shall be elected by a convocation. The moderator shall be an ordained minister of a Lutheran church body and a member of Lutheran CORE. The moderator shall be elected to a term of two years and may be re-elected for no more than two additional terms. A partial term of more than one year shall be considered as a full term. Former moderators, upon completion of their term(s), will be eligible to serve on the Steering Committee defined in 11.02 below.
- 7.03. As an ordained minister, the moderator shall preach, teach, and administer the sacraments in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions. The moderator shall provide pastoral care and leadership for Lutheran CORE and its ministries.
- 7.04. The moderator shall preside at convocation meetings. The moderator shall submit a report to each annual convocation concerning the life and work of Lutheran CORE.
- 7.05. In cooperation with the appropriate Lutheran church or entity, the moderator will seek to provide assistance in the candidacy process for those seeking ordination; and will seek to provide assistance in the calling process among pastors and congregations who belong to Lutheran CORE.
- 7.06. In cooperation with the appropriate Lutheran church or entity, the moderator will seek to work for the resolution of conflicts among ordained ministers and congregations who belong to Lutheran CORE.
- 7.07. The moderator shall be empowered to sign legal documents on behalf of Lutheran CORE, as authorized by the Steering Committee.
- 7.08. The moderator shall coordinate the work of the other officers and staff.

Chair of the Steering Committee

- 7.09. The chair of the Steering Committee shall be elected by the Steering Committee from among its members, and shall be a layperson other than in the event that the Steering Committee is comprised exclusively of ordained clergy.
- 7.10. The chair of the Steering Committee shall preside at all meetings of the Steering Committee, and shall have the power to delegate such authority. In the event of the death,

resignation, or disability of the moderator, the Chair of the Steering Committee shall convene the Steering Committee to arrange for the conduct of the duties of the moderator until a new moderator shall be elected, or, in the case of temporary disability, until the moderator resumes full performance of the duties of the office.

Secretary

- 7.11. The secretary shall be elected by a convocation to a term of two years and may be re-elected for no more than two additional terms. A partial term of more than one year shall be considered as a full term. The secretary shall be a member of Lutheran CORE.
- 7.12. The secretary shall keep the minutes of all Convocation meetings and the meetings of the Steering Committee, and shall maintain a list of members of Lutheran CORE. The secretary shall be empowered to sign legal documents on behalf of Lutheran CORE, as authorized by the Steering Committee, and shall perform other duties as may be directed from time to time.

Treasurer

- 7.14. The treasurer shall be elected by a convocation to a term of two years and may be re-elected for no more than two additional terms. A partial term of more than one year shall be considered as a full term.
- 7.15. The treasurer shall provide for the management of the monies and accounts of Lutheran CORE; shall receive and record offerings and contributions; shall be empowered to sign legal documents on behalf of Lutheran CORE, as authorized by the Steering Committee; and shall pay regular appropriations and orders in accordance with the budget and/or at the direction of the Steering Committee.
- 7.16. The treasurer shall present at each annual convocation a detailed and duly audited report of the receipts and disbursements of Lutheran CORE for the preceding fiscal year.
- 7.17. The treasurer shall have voice but not vote in all meetings of the Steering Committee.
- 7.18. The Steering Committee may, according to need, hire an assistant treasurer who will provide assistance in fiscal matters. The assistant treasurer may have voice but not vote on the Steering Committee.

Elections

- 7.19. The Steering Committee shall recommend a rule of procedure to a convocation regarding the elections process to be conducted at a convocation.
- 7.20. The terms of the officers and Steering Committee members shall begin immediately following the convocation at which they are elected.

Chapter 8. Director and Staff

- 8.01. The moderator, in consultation with the Steering Committee, shall hire and retain a director for this ministry, who shall employ support staff as may be required consistent with the budget.

- 8.02. The director shall manage the day to day affairs of Lutheran CORE and shall report regularly to the moderator and to the Steering Committee.
- 8.03. The Steering Committee shall adopt a job description for the director and staff, in consultation with the director. The job description shall include responsibilities, accountabilities, and terms of service. The director shall be empowered to sign legal documents on behalf of Lutheran CORE, as authorized by the Steering Committee.
- 8.04. The director and other staff shall receive compensation in accordance with the budget.

Chapter 9. Nominations and Elections

- 9.01. In all elections by a convocation a majority of the legal votes cast shall be necessary for election.
- 9.02. The Steering Committee shall serve as a nominating committee and shall present to a convocation a slate of nominees. Additional nominations for all positions may be made from the floor.
- 9.03. The results of each ballot in every election shall be presented in detail to the convocation.

Chapter 10. Steering Committee

- 10.01. The Steering Committee shall consist of the moderator and eight other members who shall be elected at an annual convocation. Each person elected to the Steering Committee shall be a member of Lutheran CORE.
- 10.02. The terms of office of members of the Steering Committee shall be two years. No member shall serve more than three consecutive terms, and a partial term of more than one year shall be considered as a full term. The terms of office of the members of the Steering Committee other than the moderator shall be staggered such that each annual convocation shall elect four members of the Steering Committee other than the moderator.
- 10.03. The Steering Committee shall be the board of directors of Lutheran CORE and shall serve as its interim decision-making body between meetings of the annual convocation. It may make decisions which are not in conflict with actions taken by a convocation or which are not precluded by provisions in this constitution.
- 10.04. The responsibilities and functions of the Steering Committee shall be to:
 - a. Determine and hold Lutheran CORE to its vision and mission.
 - b. Establish organizational policies and ensure effective planning.
 - c. Ensure financial integrity and, to the extent possible, solvency.
 - d. Nurture and evaluate the director.
 - e. Help the moderator and the director represent Lutheran CORE publicly.
 - f. Recommend program goals and a budget to regular meetings of a convocation and develop strategies to implement the priorities of Lutheran CORE.
 - g. Fill vacancies until the next regular meeting of a convocation, and determine the fact of the incapacity of any officer.
 - h. Carry out resolutions of a convocation.

- i. Report its actions to the regular meeting of a convocation.
 - j. Serve as a nominating committee for Steering Committee elections.
 - k. Perform other functions, as may be delegated to it by a convocation.
- 10.05. No elected member of the Steering Committee shall receive compensation for such service, with the exception of the moderator and treasurer, if the Steering Committee so determines. Steering Committee members and officers shall be reimbursed for reasonable and proper expenses incurred in fulfilling their duties, provided they submit valid receipts in a manner approved by the Steering Committee.
- 10.06. The Steering Committee shall normally meet at least quarterly.
- 10.07. According to need, and with the consent of at least two of the officers, the Steering Committee may on occasion deliberate and make decisions by conference phone calls. Under the same circumstances, the Steering Committee may make decisions by electronic devices.
- 10.08. A quorum for Steering Committee meetings shall be a majority of its members, including the officers.
- 10.09. The Steering Committee will meet at least annually with the comparable body in the North American Lutheran Church for the purpose of coordinating ministries, sharing information, and joint planning.

Chapter 11. Committees and Task Forces

- 11.01. The Steering Committee and/or a convocation shall appoint committees, task forces, or other working groups to meet the needs of Lutheran CORE.
- 11.02. The Steering Committee shall organize a Council of renewal movements within Lutheran CORE, which shall meet at least annually for the purpose of mutual support and sharing information. This Council may make recommendations to the Steering Committee and the convocation regarding the ministry of Lutheran CORE. A representative from each renewal movement, selected by the movement, shall serve on the Council. The Steering Committee shall attend meetings of the Council, and a representative of the North American Lutheran Church shall attend in an advisory capacity.
- 11.03. A Joint Commission on Theology and Doctrine will be formed with representation from Lutheran CORE and the North American Lutheran Church. The Steering Committee will appoint the members from Lutheran CORE. The Joint Commission on Theology and Doctrine shall consider topics of a theological nature, implement theological conferences as may be appropriate, draft statements of a theological nature, and may recommend the adoption of statements by the appropriate bodies of Lutheran CORE and the North American Lutheran Church. Additionally, the Joint Commission on Theology and Doctrine will provide guidance to Lutheran CORE and the North American Lutheran Church on ecumenical matters and will provide educational and other resources that will interpret the ministries of Lutheran CORE and the North American Lutheran Church.

Chapter 12. Financial Matters

- 12.01. The fiscal year of Lutheran CORE shall be January 1 through December 31.

- 12.02. On the basis of estimated income, the Steering Committee shall authorize expenditures within the budget for the fiscal year. Expenditure authorizations shall be subject to revision by the Steering Committee in light of changing conditions.
- 12.03. The Steering Committee shall arrange to have an annual review of the financial records of Lutheran CORE by a certified public accountant selected by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee may determine to carry out an audit of financial records according to need and circumstances.
- 12.04. This ministry shall maintain adequate, continuous insurance coverage.

Chapter 13. Indemnification

- 13.01. Any person who at any time shall serve or shall have served as a director, officer, or employee of Lutheran CORE, or of any other enterprise at the request of Lutheran CORE, and the heirs, executors, and administrators of such person shall be indemnified by Lutheran CORE in accordance with, and to the fullest extent permitted, by Minnesota Statutes Section 317A.521, as it may be amended from time to time.
- 13.02. Nothing contained in this Chapter 13 shall affect any rights to indemnification to which the personnel of Lutheran CORE may be entitled by contract or otherwise under law.
- 13.03. Lutheran CORE may, but shall not be required to, purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of a person in that person's official capacity against any liability asserted against or incurred by the person in or arising from that capacity, regardless of whether Lutheran CORE would have been required to indemnify the person against the liability.

Chapter 14. Adjudication

- 14.01. The moderator and the Steering Committee shall be available to give counsel when disputes arise within Lutheran CORE.
- 14.02. The moderator and Steering Committee shall receive expressions of concern within the membership, and may make appropriate recommendations for their resolution. According to need, the Steering Committee may appoint an ad hoc task force that will consider the matter and make a recommendation for its resolution.

Chapter 15. Amendments

- 15.01. Amendments to this constitution may be adopted by this ministry through either of the following procedures:
 - a. An amendment may be presented to a convocation over the signatures of at least twenty-five members of Lutheran CORE, and approved by a two-thirds vote at such a convocation. At a subsequent convocation the amendment may be adopted by a two-thirds vote.
 - b. The Steering Committee may propose an amendment, with notice to be sent to the members of Lutheran CORE at least three months prior to the next convocation meeting. Such an amendment shall require for adoption a two-thirds vote at such a convocation.

APPENDIX: The Common Confession

1. The Lord Jesus Christ

We are people who believe and confess our faith in the Triune God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We trust and believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.

2. The Gospel of Salvation

We believe and confess that all human beings are sinners, and that sinners are redeemed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God alone justifies human beings by faith in Christ—a faith that God creates through the message of the Gospel. As ambassadors for Christ, God uses us to speak His Word and build His kingdom.

3. The Authority of Scripture

We believe and confess that the Bible is God's revealed Word to us, spoken in Law and Gospel. The Bible is the final authority for us in all matters of our faith and life.

4. A Common Confession of Faith

We accept and uphold that the Lutheran Confessions reliably guide us as faithful interpretations of Scripture, and that we share a unity and fellowship in faith with others among whom the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel.

5. The Priesthood of All Believers

We believe and confess that the Holy Spirit makes all who believe in Jesus Christ to be priests for service to others in Jesus' name, and that God desires to make use of the spiritual gifts he has given through the priesthood of all believers.

6. Marriage and Family

We believe and confess that the marriage of male and female is an institution created and blessed by God. From marriage, God forms families to serve as the building blocks of all human civilization and community. We teach and practice that sexual activity belongs exclusively within the Biblical boundaries of a faithful marriage between one man and one woman.

7. The Mission and Ministry of the Congregation

We believe and confess that the church is the assembly of believers called and gathered by God around Word and Sacrament, and that the mission and ministry of the church is carried out within the context of individual congregations, which are able to work together locally and globally.