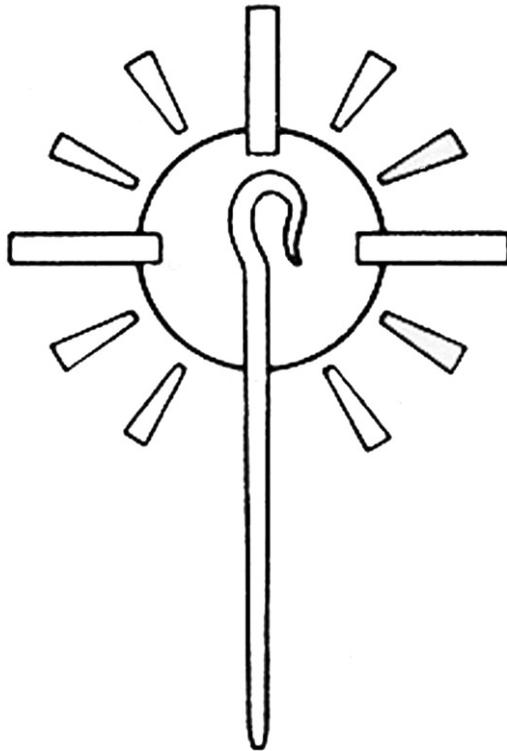


# CONSTITUTION and BYLAWS



**Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church**  
Bolingbrook, Illinois

## **PREAMBLE**

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to the Divine Word in doctrine and practice (Psalm 119:105; Matthew 28:18-20; Galatians 1:6-8; 2 Timothy 4:1-5) and that all things be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). Therefore, we, the members of Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **1.0 NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be Divine Shepherd Lutheran Church of Bolingbrook, Illinois, in the County of Will. This congregation is incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois as a non-profit corporation.

## **2.0 MISSION**

The mission of this congregation shall be to live for God, give honor and glory to God, to carry out His will as revealed in the Sacred Scriptures, to foster Christian fellowship and love by the preaching and teaching of the Word of God, to administer the Sacraments, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to care for the needs of its members, including the religious instruction of all its members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod; and to reach out into the immediate community and into the whole world with the Gospel of Christ.

## **3.0 CONFESSIONAL STANDARD**

This congregation acknowledges and accepts without reservation:

- 3.1 All the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testament as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and the only infallible divine rule and norm of faith and life (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- 3.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

## **4.0 MEMBERSHIP**

### 4.1 Membership

The membership of this congregation includes the following.

- 4.1.1 Baptized members are all who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God and who are under the spiritual care of the pastor of this congregation, including the children who have not yet confirmed their baptismal vows.
- 4.1.2 Communicant members are those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran faith, accept the confessional standard of Section 3.0 of this Constitution, are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism, and are not members of organizations, open or secret, whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God.

4.1.3 Voting members are communicant members who have reached the age of 18 years, and have accepted the Constitution of the congregation.

#### 4.2 Reception

Baptized and communicant members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through the consent of one or both parents in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation, through the rite of confirmation, through transfer from a sister congregation, through profession of faith or reaffirmation of faith.

#### 4.3 Duties

Members of the congregation shall conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word, and to that end make diligent use of the means of grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need of such admonition becomes apparent, and be readily available for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation. It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the meetings of the congregation regularly.

#### 4.4 Termination

4.4.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside of the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion.

4.4.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20; if they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be presented individually to the voters assembly for a decision.

If such members deliberately absent themselves from the meeting(s) at which their case is to be discussed, they shall be regarded as having excluded themselves from the membership of the congregation.

## **5.0 PASTORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS**

5.1 This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only on such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in Section 3 of this Constitution, who is qualified for this work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member of the Synod. (The same shall apply to other professional church workers.)

5.2 Any pastor, other professional church worker or officer may be removed from office, or asked to resign, by the voters assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful neglect, or inability to perform the duties of the office.

5.3 The pastor will be ex-officio member of all boards and committees.

## **6.0 AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION**

- 6.1 The voters assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer and manage all its affairs. The establishment and conduct of all organizations and societies within the congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the voters assembly.
- 6.2 Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God; other matters shall be decided by majority vote unless otherwise specified by the Constitution and Bylaws.
- 6.3 The right of calling pastors or other professional church workers shall be vested in the voters assembly and shall not be delegated otherwise.

## **7.0 OFFICERS AND BOARDS**

This congregation shall have the following officers and boards in addition to any which the congregation shall authorize:

### 7.1 Officers

- 7.1.1 A president, who shall,
  - 7.1.1.1 conduct all council and congregational meetings,
  - 7.1.1.2 serve as representative of congregation in all legal and association-related matters,
  - 7.1.1.3 be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees,
  - 7.1.1.4 maintain all legal documents,
  - 7.1.1.5 annually appoint an ad hoc committee to audit the books of the Board of Treasury no later than six months from the close of the fiscal year,
  - 7.1.1.6 serve as interim chairman of any vacant board until a new chairperson is elected.
- 7.1.2 A secretary, who shall,
  - 7.1.2.1 keep minutes of all council and congregational meetings,
  - 7.1.2.2 distribute council minutes within two weeks of meeting,
  - 7.1.2.3 make congregational meeting minutes available to the congregation within one month of meeting,
  - 7.1.2.4 be responsible for congregational correspondence,
  - 7.1.2.5 maintain records of all official acts and memberships.
- 7.1.3 A chairman of the Board of Treasury, who shall,
  - 7.1.3.1 keep accurate records the receipts and disbursements of the congregation in books which shall be and remain the property of the congregation,
  - 7.1.3.2 pay all bills authorized by the congregation or council,
  - 7.1.3.3 submit a report at each meeting of the council showing actual receipts and disbursements compared with budgeted amounts,
  - 7.1.3.4 be responsible for the annual preparation of a proposed budget for the coming year,
  - 7.1.3.5 sign all legal documents requiring a second signature,
  - 7.1.3.6 be bonded,
  - 7.1.3.7 be responsible for the reception and deposit of all monies of the congregation in the bank designated by the council,
  - 7.1.3.8 be responsible for the maintenance of the deposit slips along with an itemized account of all monies received,

- 7.1.3.9 be responsible for the maintenance of members' contribution records,
  - 7.1.3.10 be responsible for annually informing members of their contributions,
  - 7.1.3.11 be responsible for counting the offering monies.
- 7.1.4 A chairman of the Board of Elders, who shall,
- 7.1.4.1 assist the President when called upon,
  - 7.1.4.2 preside at any council or congregational meeting at which the President is absent,
  - 7.1.4.3 be responsible for consideration of complaints and grievances of members of the congregation according to Matthew 18:15-18,
  - 7.1.4.4 be responsible for contacting members who have been separated from the Word and sacraments,
  - 7.1.4.5 be responsible for the reverent conduct of all public worship,
  - 7.1.4.6 be responsible for assisting the pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services and guest speakers,
  - 7.1.4.7 be responsible for preparing a list of candidates when the congregation is to call a pastor,
  - 7.1.4.8 be responsible for approval of membership recommendations from the pastor,
  - 7.1.4.9 be responsible for the examination of the confirmands.
- 7.1.5 A chairman of the Board of Stewardship, who shall,
- 7.1.5.1 be responsible for maintaining Biblical principles, both corporately and individually, concerning the giving of time, talents and treasure.
- 7.1.6 A chairman of the Board of Evangelism and Missions, who shall,
- 7.1.6.1 plan, promote, and carry out a Biblical evangelism program,
  - 7.1.6.2 be responsible for the pursuit of any prospective new member,
  - 7.1.6.3 maintain communication with synodical mission activities.
- 7.1.7 A chairman of the Board of Christian Education, who shall,
- 7.1.7.1 be responsible for the maintenance of a Biblical Sunday School program,
  - 7.1.7.2 be responsible for the maintenance of a Biblical Vacation Bible School,
  - 7.1.7.3 be responsible for the maintenance of the church library,
  - 7.1.7.4 be responsible for the provision of Christian learning opportunities for all age levels,
  - 7.1.7.5 be responsible for the supervision of the logistics of confirmation instruction.
- 7.1.8 A chairman of the Board of Fellowship and Welfare, who shall,
- 7.1.8.1 be responsible for sensitivity to the welfare needs of the congregation and community,
  - 7.1.8.2 be responsible for coordinating the social activities of the congregation.
- 7.1.9 A chairman of the Board of Trustees, who shall,
- 7.1.9.1 be responsible for the inspection of all church properties as needed, not less than annually; and effect needed repairs and improvements,
  - 7.1.9.2 be responsible for maintaining an inventory of all church properties and equipment,
  - 7.1.9.3 be responsible for checking the adequacy of all types of insurance for church property and equipment; and negotiate insurance contracts as deemed necessary, but not less than annually,
  - 7.1.9.4 be responsible for negotiating all service contracts for church equipment.
- 7.1.10 Chairman of the Board of Youth and Singles, who shall,
- 7.1.10.1 be responsible for all social or welfare activities of youth,
  - 7.1.10.2 be responsible for the provision of a well-rounded Christian ministry to the youth of this church and community,

- 7.1.10.3 be responsible for the integration of the youth into all aspects of the spiritual, evangelistic, and service life of the Church,
  - 7.1.10.4 be responsible for fostering communications between parents and youth,
  - 7.1.10.5 be responsible for fostering communications between the Church and its youth,
  - 7.1.10.6 be responsible for providing a youth program that is led by the youth, guided by adult supervisors, and aided and supported by the entire congregation,
  - 7.1.10.7 be responsible for considering the opinions of each youth member in all decisions,
  - 7.1.10.8 be responsible for communication with all Scouting programs,
  - 7.1.10.9 be responsible for requiring all youth to have medical release forms before participating in any activity off the church grounds,
  - 7.1.10.10 be responsible for all social and welfare activities of Divine Shepherd singles.
- 7.1.11 A chairman of the Board of Assimilation, who shall,
- 7.1.11.1 be responsible for maintaining an inventory of the experience and interests of all members,
  - 7.1.11.2 be responsible for monitoring the personnel needs of all congregational boards and committees,
  - 7.1.11.3 be responsible for incorporating each new member into some area of activity within six months of taking membership.
- 7.1.12 A chairman of the Board of Communications, who shall,
- 7.1.12.1 be responsible for all internal communications,
  - 7.1.12.2 be responsible for all external communications.
- 7.1.13 A chairman of the Board for Preschool, who shall,
- 7.1.13.1 be responsible for all preschool activities,
  - 7.1.13.2 be responsible for all preschool policy, and procedure decisions,
  - 7.1.13.3 assist director when called upon,
  - 7.1.13.4 enlist and organize volunteers to assist director in fund raising, publicity, registration, enrollment, substitutes, operations, staffing, curriculum matters,
  - 7.1.13.5 be responsible for preparing a list of candidates when the congregation needs to hire a director, teacher or assistant.
- 7.2 Boards
- 7.2.1 A Board of Treasury, consisting of at least an assistant treasurer, who shall assist the chairman and fill the responsibilities of 7.1.3.1 through 7.1.3.6 in the event that the treasurer is unable to fill his obligations; and a chairman of the finance committee, who shall be bonded, and responsible for items 7.1.3.7 through 7.1.3.11.
- 7.2.2 A Board of Elders, consisting of no less than three elders, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.4.
- 7.2.3 A Board of Stewardship, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.5.
- 7.2.4 A Board of Evangelism and Missions, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.6.
- 7.2.5 A Board of Christian Education, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.7.

- 7.2.6 A Board of Fellowship and Welfare, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.8.
- 7.2.7 A Board of Trustees, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.9.
- 7.2.8 A Board of Youth and Singles, consisting of at least two members, half of which must be youth, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.10.
- 7.2.9 A Board of Assimilation, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.11.
- 7.2.10 A Board of Communications, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.12.
- 7.2.11 A Board for Preschool, consisting of at least two members, who shall assist the chairman in carrying out the duties listed under 7.1.13.

## **8.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP**

This congregation shall be member of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards set forth in Section 3 as determined by a majority vote of the congregation at a meeting called for that purpose.

## **9.0 DIVISION**

- 9.1 If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Section 3 of this Constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of the Synod.
- 9.2 If a division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Section 3 of this Constitution, as determined by the adjudication procedures of the Synod.
- 9.3 In the event the congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to that District of the Synod in which the congregation held membership at the time of dissolution.

## **10.0 MEETINGS**

Regular meetings of the voters assembly shall be held as determined in the Bylaws. Announcement of the meeting shall be made in the services of the two previous Sundays. Special meetings require announcement in services in the two previous Sundays or notification by mail and announcement in the services of one previous Sunday. Such special meetings may be called at the request of three officers or ten voting members. Regular meetings of other boards and committees shall be held at times specified by the respective board chairman.

## **11.0 QUORUM**

- 11.1 Ordinarily, the members present at a properly called congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum to do business.
- 11.2 For special meetings such as:
  - 11.2.1 amending the Constitution,
  - 11.2.2 calling a pastor or other professional church worker,
  - 11.2.3 the purchase or sale of property,
  - 11.2.4 for the erection of buildings,

one fourth of all voting members shall be required for a quorum. In the absence of a quorum, those present may fix the date to reconvene the meeting. The members who are present at the reconvened meeting shall constitute a quorum.

## **12.0 LIMITATIONS ON HOLDING OFFICE**

- 12.1 Women who have reached the age of eighteen (18) may hold voting membership in the congregation and serve as officers and as members of boards and committees as long as these positions are not directly involved in the specific functions of the pastoral office (preaching, the public administration of the sacraments, church discipline) and as long as this service does not violate the order of creation (usurping authority over men). Accordingly, they shall not serve as pastor, as a member of the Board of Elders, as chairman of the congregation, or as chairman of the Board of Elders.
- 12.2 No one may serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

## **13.0 AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to provisions of this Constitution except Sections 2.0, 3.0, 5.0, 8.0 and 13.0 may be adopted at a regular voters meeting, except as hereinafter otherwise provided:

- 13.1 That the proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous meeting of the voters assembly and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church or by mail prior to the meeting at which the proposed amendment will be acted upon;
- 13.2 That an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the voters present is secured.

# **BYLAWS**

## **14.0 PROCEDURES FOR CALLING PASTORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKERS**

- 14.1 When a pastor or other professional church worker is to be called, every member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the District President for recommendations. In the case of a pastoral or other professional church worker call, the Board of Elders shall be responsible for establishing a screening committee.
- 14.2 In the screening process, the respective committee shall submit all names to the respective District President for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the District President, the respective committee shall present to the congregation, by means of a public announcement, at least three preferred candidates, together with a biographical sketch of each.
- 14.3 At the voters meeting, called for the purpose of electing a new pastor or other professional church worker, the preferred list may be amended by means of a two-thirds vote of those present. At that point, the voters assembly shall be asked to agree to be satisfied with whatever selection is finally made by the congregation.
- 14.4 Balloting shall proceed by means of a secret ballot vote. A majority is needed in order to determine the disposition of the call.

## **15.0 CHURCH COUNCIL**

### 15.1 Membership

The church council shall be the board of directors and shall consist of the president, the secretary, the chairmen of the Board of Elders, the Board of Trustees, the Board of Christian Education, the Board of Evangelism and Missions, the Board of Treasury, the Board of Stewardship, the Board of Fellowship and Welfare, the Board of Youth and Singles, the Board for Preschool, the Board of Assimilation, and the Board of Communication. The pastor shall be an advisory member of the church council. The president of the congregation shall serve as chairman of the church council.

### 15.2 Meetings

The church council shall meet in regular sessions monthly. Special meetings may be called by the chairman (or pastor) or any three members of the church council by sending a notice which shall be delivered to the residence of each member at least 24 hours in advance. A majority of the voting members of the church council shall constitute a quorum.

### 15.3 Duties

It shall be the principle duty of the church council to coordinate the program and activities of the various departments of the congregation. It shall have power to act on behalf of the congregation between meetings of the voters assembly.

## **16.0 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

- 16.1 A nominating committee, chosen by the church council, shall present a slate of candidates for all elected offices. The slate shall normally consist of two names for each office. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. No person shall be nominated without his consent.
- 16.2 All officers shall be elected by a majority ballot vote and voting shall continue until a clear majority has been established after candidates receiving the lowest number of votes have been eliminated in each succeeding ballot.
- 16.3 The officers are elected for a term of two years. The other members of the church council and the members of all boards shall be elected or appointed for a term of two years.
- 16.4 Officers and board members shall be inducted into office in a public service of the congregation.
- 16.5 In case of a vacancy in an elective office, the church council shall appoint a successor until the next congregational meeting to fill the unexpired term.
- 16.6 The chairmen of the Board of Elders, Evangelism and Missions, Fellowship and Welfare, Assimilation, Communications, and the Secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years. All remaining positions shall be elected during odd-numbered years.

## **17.0 OFFICIAL DUTIES**

Officers and members of boards shall perform the duties prescribed in the Constitution. The congregation shall also have the privilege from time to time of detailing and enlarging these responsibilities or by calling such other boards or committees into being as it may need from time to time, by majority vote of the church council.

## **18.0 MEETINGS**

Regular meetings of the congregation shall be held as needed, at least once a year, to receive the reports of the church council and to discuss and vote on necessary church business. Fourteen (14) days notice shall be given to all known members of the congregation and, in addition, shall be announced at each church service on the two Sundays preceding the meetings.

## **19.0 RULES OF ORDER**

In addition to principles laid down in Scripture, the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.

## **20.0 AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the voters assembly by a majority of all voting members present, provided the proposed change has been announced in a previous meeting or has been submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting to all voting members.