

# Constitution & Bylaws of



*Where the SON Always Shines!*

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**Mt. Olive's Mission  
TO DEVELOP DEVOTED DISCIPLES BY REACHING,  
BUILDING AND SENDING**

Date of adoption: March 10, 2002

**Constitution of  
Mt. Olive Lutheran Church  
Yakima, WA**

Preamble

WHEREAS, the history of the Christian Church proves that rules and regulations are necessary to attain properly the purpose and to fulfill the obligations of the congregation; and  
WHEREAS, God has set forth in I Corinthians 14:40 that all things in the church shall be done decently and in order; therefore,  
BE IT RESOLVED, that we, a congregation of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Yakima, Washington, and vicinity, do herewith unite in the name of the Triune God.

Article I  
Name

The name of this congregation shall be Mt. Olive Lutheran Church located in the city of Yakima, Yakima County, State of Washington.

Article II  
Mission and Purpose

Because of Christ, we love and build others by inviting them to the family of Christ at Mt. Olive. It is the will of our Lord Jesus Christ that His disciples should preach the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:16; Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8). To this end this congregation shall serve its members and spread the Kingdom of God by:

- A. Preaching of the Word of God,
- B. Administration of the Sacraments,
- C. Witnessing to all people,
- D. Religious instruction of youth and adults, and
- E. Fostering Christian fellowship and charity.

Article III  
Confession of Faith

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church accepts and confesses without reservation all canonical books of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible to be the inspired Word of God. We accept the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, as true and correct expositions of Christian doctrine drawn in full agreement with Holy Scriptures. These confessional writings are:

1. The three Ecumenical Creeds: The Apostolic, the Nicene, and Athanasian;
2. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
3. The Apology of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession;
4. The Smalcald Articles;
5. Luther's Small Catechism and Luther's Large Catechism;
6. The Formula of Concord.

Article IV  
Synodical Membership

This congregation shall hold membership in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as long as the confessions and constitution of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod are in accord with the confessions and constitution of this congregation as laid down in Article III as determined by a majority vote of the voters' meeting called for that purpose.

## Article V Membership

### Baptized Membership

Baptized members are all persons within the congregation who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God, whether children or adults, and come under the pastoral care of this congregation. It is expected that all baptized members will:

- A. Attend worship services faithfully and regularly.
- B. Lead a Christian life as taught in Galatians 5:19-26.
- C. Out of Christian love, submit to brotherly admonition, according to Matthew 18, when having erred or offended.
- D. Contribute, as God has blessed them, of their time, talents and treasure toward the maintenance of the congregation and the extension of the church at large.
- E. In due time, take a course of instruction in preparation for communicant membership in this congregation.
- F. Not accept membership of any organization conflicting with the Word of God.

### Communicant Membership

Communicant members are all baptized persons within the congregation who have received a course of instruction in Christian doctrine prescribed by the Senior Administrative Pastor.

Persons seeking to attain confirmed membership shall make that fact known to the Senior Administrative Pastor or any other delegated pastor. The pastor shall ascertain the understanding and commitment to the purpose and confession of faith contained in Article III. The pastor will determine if additional training is needed and the appropriate method for training. The pastor is authorized to extend communicant membership to the transferring person and shall be announced in a public service.

In addition to the duties of baptized members, it is expected of all communicant members that they:

- A. Familiarize themselves and declare acceptance of the doctrines of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
- B. Partake of the Lord's Supper.
- C. Participate in continuing Christian education for themselves and their family.
- D. Submit willingly and cheerfully to the policies already made or still to be made by the congregation.

### Voting Membership

Voting members are all communicant members who attend a Voters' meeting or who petition to vote at the voters' meeting.

## Article VI Termination of Membership

- A. A member desiring transfer to another congregation shall make that fact known to the Senior Administrative Pastor. The Senior Administrative Pastor shall cause the creating and mailing of a letter of transfer to the receiving congregation.
- B. Members who join congregations outside our fellowship thereby terminate their membership. Their names shall be removed from the membership.
- C. The names of people whose whereabouts are unknown or who have moved from the area after a period of one year shall be removed from membership.
- D. All discipline in this congregation shall be administered in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. The purpose of any disciplinary action is to renew a member's relationship with the Lord and with the church. A member shall be considered self-excluded when unresponsive to the witness and ministry of the church.

Article VII  
Organization

A. Voters' Assembly

The Voters' Assembly shall consist of all voting members of legal voting age present at a regular or special meeting of the congregation. The congregation, through the Voters' Assembly, shall have final authority in managing its internal and external affairs.

B. Ministry Council

The Ministry Council shall be the governing body of the congregation and is responsible to administer all the congregation's affairs except the following matters for action only by the Voters' Assembly:

1. Call or remove a called worker.
2. Purchase or sell church property or buildings valued at over 10% of the annual operating budget.
3. Adopt the Annual Financial Plan.
4. Dissolve the congregation.

C. Officers and Boards

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers as the Bylaws of this Constitution prescribe. The officers and boards prescribed in the Bylaws shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them in the Constitution or Bylaws. Limitations: Women may serve as officers and as members of Boards, Committees, and Ministry Teams as long as these positions are not directly involved in the special functions of the pastoral office (preaching, the public administration of the sacraments, church discipline.)

D. The Officers of the Congregation who are empowered to sign legal documents and serve as the elected officers of the Corporation are the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Article VIII  
Called Workers

Calls will only be issued to such candidates who are approved by The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

A. Eligibility

Called workers must profess and adhere to the Confession of Faith listed in Article III, who is qualified for his work who has been endorsed by Synod and a member of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

B. Calling into Office for Called Workers

1. After authorization for the position is received from the Voters' Assembly, the Ministry Council shall create and appoint a Call Committee. No more than one-third of the Call Committee members may be members of the Ministry Council.
2. The Call Committee shall consult with those in the affected ministry area and with the Northwest District of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as part of their efforts to secure the names of candidates.
3. The names of the nominees shall be submitted by the Call Committee to the Voters' Assembly. Any voter is entitled to make additional nominations from the floor that are also accompanied by printed description of the candidate's background, position experience, and Synodical "Personal Information Form."
4. The Voters' Assembly will select a candidate for issuance of the Call.

C. Removal from Office of Called Workers

Any pastor, or other called worker, officer, or board member, who fails to perform the duties of a confirmed member, or is unable or is willfully neglectful in the performance of the worker's official duties, may be removed from office in Christian love and lawful order by the Voters' Assembly. Such action shall be initiated by the Ministry Council and require a two-thirds majority of a secret ballot of the Voters' Assembly for removal.

Article IX  
Duties of the Ministry Council

- A. The Ministry Council, as the chief governing Council of the congregation, shall act in all matters pertaining to the legal and general welfare of the congregation, except those reserved for the Voters' Assembly in Article VI.B. of the Constitution.
- B. The Ministry Council's responsibility is generally confined to establishing policies, leaving implementation and subsidiary policy development to the Senior Administrative Pastor. All board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Senior Administrative Pastor. The Senior Administrative Pastor is to provide regular reports to the Ministry Council on the status of all operations. The Ministry Staff shall conduct the day-to-day business of the congregation.
- C. The Ministry Council shall see to it that all activities of the church reflect the purpose and faith of the congregation.
- D. It shall concern itself with establishing all policies governing the activities of the congregation and with the implementation of the mission, vision, budget, and plans adopted by the Voters' Assembly.
- E. The Ministry Council may appoint any entity needed. It shall oversee and have authority over all other boards, committees, task forces, action teams, or other entities of the congregation.

Article X  
Property Rights

If, at any time, a separation shall take place within this congregation, the advice of the officers of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod shall be sought. If, despite all efforts to resolve differences in peace and love, and a division of the congregation into factions occurs, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected shall remain with the majority. In the event the Congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Northwest District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Article XI  
Quorum for Decisions

All congregational matters decided by the Voters' Assembly shall be decided by a simple majority of the voting members present at a properly convened meeting of the Voters' Assembly, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and Bylaws.

Article XII  
Amendments

This Constitution may be amended, with the exception of Article III that is irrevocable, by a three-fourths majority of the votes cast in a meeting of the Voters' Assembly. The wording of the amended Constitution shall be distributed to the congregation assembled for worship on two different Sundays prior to the date upon which the amendment is presented for action. Dates of the adoption shall be included in the amendment.

**Bylaws of  
Mt. Olive Lutheran Church  
Yakima, WA**

Article 1  
Voters' Assembly

- A. The Voters' Assembly shall meet at least once a year. The day and hour of the annual meeting shall be set by the Ministry Council and publicized at least one month in advance. The notification shall contain an agenda of items to be considered as well as the slate of nominees for election.
- B. The Voters' Assembly may hold special meetings at other times of the year when called by the Ministry Council or at the request of twelve voting members of the congregation. Notice of any such special meeting shall be publicized as far in advance as possible but no less than one week in advance. The notice shall contain an agenda of items to be considered. No agenda items for special meetings may be added once notification of any meeting is publicized. The President, Vice President, or their designated Ministry Council member shall preside at all Voters' Assembly meetings.
- C. All voting members present at a meeting the Voters' Assembly shall constitute a quorum.
- D. Any voting member may petition the Ministry Council to vote by ballot in the event that the voting member will be absent. The Ministry Council shall formulate policies for such decisions.

Article 2  
Officers

- A. President:
  - 1. Preside at all meetings of the Voters' Assembly and the Ministry Council.
  - 2. Enforce the constitution and bylaws.
  - 3. Perform the general duties as are common for the office, including such additional duties as may be directed by the Voters' Assembly from time to time.
- B. Vice President:
  - 1. Perform all of the duties of the President in the President's absence and such other additional duties that may be directed by the Voters' Assembly or by the President.
- C. Secretary:
  - 1. The duties shall be those commonly required of that office, especially the keeping and preserving of accurate records of all Voters' Assembly meetings, and handling such correspondence as the congregation may require.
  - 2. Keep and make available the minutes of all Ministry Council meetings.
- D. Treasurer:
  - 1. Keep and preserve the accurate records of all receipts and disbursements, and submit a written report of them at all regular meetings of the Voters' Assembly.
  - 2. Assure accuracy and propriety of all financial transactions of the congregation.
- E. Election
  - 1. Nomination:

Ministry Council shall annually appoint a Nominating Committee whose responsibility will be to develop a slate of candidates for officers and Ministry Council members to be elected each year. The committee shall contain a majority of non-Council members, shall function for one year only, and shall report their nominations to the annual Voters' Assembly. The Senior Administrative Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Nominating Committee.

All nominees shall be voting members noted for their Christian knowledge, zeal, and experience in the spiritual work in the Kingdom. Officers may not receive compensation from the congregation. Specific criteria for elected officers shall be outlined by the Nominating Committee prior to accepting any nominations. In addition to the Nominating Committee's slate of candidates, any voting member may nominate candidates. Such nominations shall be closed three weeks prior to the annual Voters' Assembly meeting.

2. Election

Nominees who receive a simple majority of votes cast at the Voters' Assembly shall be elected.

F. Term of Office

Each officer shall serve for a term of three years and shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The term of office commences immediately following the election.

G. Removal from Office

Any officer who is unable or is willfully neglectful in the performance of his official duties, may be removed from office by the Voters' Assembly. Such action shall be initiated by the Ministry Council and require a two-thirds vote for removal. The Ministry Council shall be authorized to appoint persons to fill vacancies for unexpired terms.

Article 3  
Ministry Council

A. Membership

The Ministry Council shall consist of twelve voting members, eight elected at large by the Voters' Assembly plus the four congregation officers. Members of the Ministry Council may not receive compensation from the congregation. They may not serve on any group that reports directly to the Ministry Council, except a Call Committee or the Nominations Committee. All called workers are ex officio members of the Ministry Council.

B. Nomination and Election

The nomination and election shall take place at the same time and in the manner described for the officers as stated in Article 2, Section E.

C. Term of Office

The term of office shall be three years, with approximately one-third of the Ministry Council being elected each year. Council members shall serve no more than two full successive terms in that position without a break of at least one year. The term of office commences immediately following the election.

D. Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy, the Chairman of the Ministry Council shall create a list of candidates from which the Ministry Council will elect an individual to serve until the next election for that particular position.

E. Meetings

The Ministry Council shall meet at least quarterly and may be called more frequently at the request of the Congregation President, the Senior Administrative Pastor, or any three Ministry Council members. The Congregation President chairs the Council. Eight voting members of the Council shall constitute a quorum for any meeting. Notice of each meeting shall be posted. The minutes shall fully disclose all actions taken and be signed by the President and Secretary. Minutes of the meetings shall be available to voting members upon request.

F. Removal from Office

Any Ministry Council member who is unable or is willfully neglectful in the performance of his official duties, may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Voters' Assembly. The Ministry Council shall initiate such action.

Article 4  
Powers of the Ministry Council

The Ministry Council shall have the power to develop policies as required to execute the goals approved by the Voters' Assembly. Written policies shall be available upon request. The Council shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them by the constitution, its bylaws, or by the Voters' Assembly.

Article 5  
Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made in the following manner:

- A. A copy of the proposed amendment shall be mailed to all voting members at least two weeks prior to a Voters' Assembly meeting at which the amendments will be considered.
- B. At this meeting the vote shall be taken on the amendment and two-thirds approval of the voting Assembly members present shall secure adoption.

Date of adoption: March 10, 2002