

Constitution and Bylaws

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

ARTICLE I—MEMBERSHIP AND NAME

SECTION 1. Membership

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (LCGS), Brevard, NC Congregational Unit shall be a member of Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, hereinafter designated as “Women of the ELCA,” or WELCA.

SECTION 2. Name

The name of this congregational unit shall be Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Unit of WELCA, hereinafter designated as “the Unit.”

ARTICLE II—STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

SECTION 1. Purpose

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to ...

- ◆ grow in faith,
- ◆ affirm our gifts,
- ◆ support one another in our callings,
- ◆ engage in ministry and action, and
- ◆ promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world.

SECTION 2. Commitment

To accomplish the purpose of Women of the ELCA, women in this unit shall commit themselves to ...

- a. come together for study, support, and action;
- b. participate in the ministry of Women of the ELCA beyond the congregation;
- c. support financially the total program of Women of the ELCA; and
- d. designate leadership that shall be in communication with the synodical and churchwide women’s organization.

ARTICLE III—PARTICIPATION

SECTION 1. Composition

This Unit shall be composed of those women who participate in activities that indicate a commitment to the purpose of Women of the ELCA.

SECTION 2. Participation

Participation in this Unit shall be open to all women in Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and other women who subscribe to the purpose of WELCA.

- Item 1.** Women who are members of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd may be an Officer of the Unit; may represent the Unit at conventions held by NCSWO and at the Triennial Convention of WELCA; they may vote on those issues and policies that affect the organization of the Unit.
- Item 2.** LCGS has many women who are not members of the ELCA or of LCGS who regularly participate in activities of the Unit. Women who join in WELCA's purpose but who are not members of the ELCA or of LCGS shall be welcome to participate in this Unit's activities and ministries and they may lead Committees and Circles established by this Unit. Nonetheless, they are ineligible to be an Officer of the Unit; nor may they vote on issues and policies that affect the organization of the Unit or represent the Unit at conventions.

SECTION 3. Congregational Membership

Women elected to leadership in this Unit and elected as voting members to a convention of the Synodical Women's Organization shall be participants in this Unit and voting members of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd.

ARTICLE IV—RELATIONSHIPS

SECTION 1. Congregation

This Unit shall participate in the life and work of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd and report to the annual meeting. It may report to the Congregational Council at any time.

SECTION 2. Conference

This Unit shall participate in activities within the Smoky Mountain Conference of the North Carolina WELCA.

SECTION 3. Synodical Women's Organization (NCSWO)

In an interdependent partnership with the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization (NCSWO), this Unit shall participate in the convention of the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization by...

- Item 1.** Electing a voting member and an alternate to represent the Unit; and
- Item 2.** Cooperating in the process for nomination of officers and board members of the North Carolina Synodical Women's Organization.

SECTION 4. Churchwide Women’s Organization (Triennial Convention of WELCA)

- Item 1.** This Unit shall participate in the process for nomination of voting members to the Triennial Convention.
- Item 2.** This Unit shall participate in the process of nomination of officers and board members of the Triennial Convention.

ARTICLE V—MEETINGS

SECTION 1. Program

Women of this Unit shall come together at LCGS every Second Tuesday of the month between the months of September and May to study, support, and action. Additional meetings for study or action may be held at other times TBD.

SECTION 2. Business

There shall be a business meeting held each month, between September and May, for purposes such as receiving reports, projecting plans, electing leadership, and adopting an annual budget.

ARTICLE VI—LEADERSHIP

SECTION 1. Officers

This Unit shall have a President (or a President & Vice-President), a Treasurer, and a Secretary (or a Secretary/Treasurer, as needed), elected from women who are members of LCGS, for a term of two years with one reelection.

SECTION 2. Duties of Officers

Officers of the Unit will enable the Unit to enact the policies and promote the purposes of WELCA; will initiate and facilitate communications with other entities of WELCA; and will oversee the activities and programs developed by the Unit. Specific duties for each Officer are detailed in the accompanying By Laws of the Unit.

SECTION 3. Duties of Unit’s Executive Board

- Item 1.** The Unit’s Executive Board shall consist of the Officers, Chairs of standing committees and, if relevant, Circle leaders, with duties as specified elsewhere in the Bylaws.
- Item 2.** The Executive Board shall have general supervision of the affairs of this Unit between its meetings and shall meet at least two (2) times annually.
- Item 3.** The Board shall seek the counsel of the Pastor of Lutheran Church of the Shepherd.

ARTICLE VII—PLANNING

SECTION 1. Program Areas and Goals

This Unit shall engage in planning, thus giving attention to the program areas and goals established by Women of the ELCA.

SECTION 2. Program Planning

The Board shall be responsible for the overall program planning for the Unit. The Program Year shall generally begin in September and end in May or June. Program at other times will be determined by the consensus of voting members of the Unit.

ARTICLE VIII—NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

SECTION 1. Nominating Committee

There shall be a Nominating Committee of at least three persons to present nominees for the Officers for election by this Unit.

SECTION 2. Elections

All elections shall be for a term of two years with one reelection.

ARTICLE IX—FINANCE

SECTION 1. Fiscal Year

The Fiscal Year and the Budget Year for this Unit shall be determined by the Fiscal Year of LCGS.

SECTION 2. Administration

This Unit shall develop and administer its own financial plan or budget that shall reflect support for the program of Women of the ELCA.

SECTION 3. Transmittal

This Unit shall transmit funds regularly to the Treasurer's Assistant of the Smoky Mountain Conference, in accordance with established procedures.

SECTION 4. Reports

The Unit's Treasurer shall provide a short financial report to participants at every business meeting. The Unit shall provide an annual financial report to participants and to the Church Council of LCGS.

SECTION 5. Financial accountability

An annual accounting compilation or review of this Unit's financial records shall be conducted by the auditor for LCGS financial records.

ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

In the event of the dissolution of this Congregational Unit, any surplus property remaining after the payment of its debts shall be disposed of by transfer to the Churchwide Women's Organization or its successor, provided that said organization is, at the time of dissolution, a qualified organization as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code of 1986 or comparable provision; and, if not, to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor; and, if not, to one or more organizations so qualified in such proportions as the leadership of this Unit shall determine.

ARTICLE XI—BYLAWS AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. Bylaws

This Unit may adopt Bylaws, not in conflict with this Constitution, by a majority vote, provided they have been presented in writing at a previous meeting.

SECTION 2. Amendments

- Item 1.** This Constitution may be amended at any regular business meeting or special meeting of this Unit by a two-thirds vote of the women present and voting, provided the proposed amendment has been presented at a previous meeting, and that it is consistent with the purpose of Women of the ELCA.
- Item 2.** Amendments to the Bylaws may be adopted by the Unit by a majority vote after having been presented at a previous meeting.
- Item 3.** Whenever the secretary of Women of the ELCA officially informs the Congregational Unit that the Women of the ELCA Triennial Convention has amended the approved Model Constitution and Bylaws for Congregational Units, whether by setting out alternate clauses or otherwise, such provisions shall be introduced at once into this Constitution. Notice of this action shall be forwarded to the Synodical President.

BYLAWS

Item 1. Officers

- a. **Duties of the President** (& Vice-President, as appropriate) shall include...
 - 1) presiding at all general meetings of this Unit and of the Executive Board;
 - 2) providing general supervision of the work of this Unit;
 - 3) being an ex-officio member of all Committees; however, she is unable to be a member of the Nominating Committee;
 - 4) establishing intercommunications with the Smoky Mountain Synod, NCSWO, and other Governing bodies of WELCA;
 - 5) facilitating the Presenters, activities, and content of Programs offered by this Unit.
- b. **Duties of the Treasurer** shall include...
 - 1) receiving and recording all income of this Unit, depositing funds into the Unit's checking account;
 - 2) making and recording all payments, as authorized, on behalf of this Unit, keeping a balanced check book;
 - 3) submitting mandated forms and funds to the Treasurer's Assistant of the Smoky Mountain Conference;
 - 4) accepting and submitting appropriate forms and monies collected for retreats or other programs promoted by this Unit to the Treasurer's Assistant of the Smoky Mountain Conference.
 - 5) Primary contact with LCGS Council

- c. **Duties of the Secretary** shall include...
 - 1) keeping accurate records of attendance and all proceedings and business transactions of the Unit and the Executive Board;
 - 2) submitting the records in the form of Minutes that are distributed in a timely fashion to members of this Unit, usually in the form of an email, as well as the Office Secretary, and on LCGS's WELCA Bulletin Board;
 - 3) maintain communications under direction of the President/Vice-President
 - 4) preparing the Annual Report for LCGS with input from all members of the Executive Board and, as appropriate, Committee Chairs and Circle Leaders.

Item 2. Committees

- a. The Nominating Committee, composed of three (3) voting members of the Unit, shall prepare for election at the annual May Meeting, a slate of Officers, as specified in this Constitution.
- b. Committees shall be selected to develop plans for implementing the purpose of the Women of the ELCA, as stated in Article II of this Unit's Constitution.
- c. Committees that have been selected to implement a set purpose of the Unit's Program, shall have a Chair who will set Meetings at the convenience of the Committee's members
- d. The Chair of the Committee will record and report proceedings (or findings) to the Executive Board. At the request of the Unit's President, the Chair may make a report to the Unit's participants at a Business Meeting.
- e. Any woman who is regularly active in the Unit, whether a member of LCGS or not, may be a Chair of a Committee.

Item 2. Circles

- a. As needs dictate, one or more Circles of women may develop to further the purpose of WELCA to provide mission activities, support, and Bible study.
- b. Each Circle shall have a Leader to serve as Coordinator (and serve on the Executive Board) and a Recorder, who will keep a record of the meetings' procedures and collect and transmit offerings to the Treasurer of the Unit.
- c. The Leader and Recorder shall prepare a Report in October to be given to the Executive Board and included in the Annual Report by LCGS. A report in May shall to be given to the Unit by the Executive Board, in preparation for the new Program Year in September.
- d. Any woman who is regularly active in the Unit, whether a member of LCGS or not, may be a Leader or Recorder of a Circle.

Item 3. Finances

- a. **Regular Offerings** are given whenever women gather.
 - 1) The Unit keeps ½ of these Offerings for their own ministries
 - 2) The other ½ shall be sent in check form, written to Women of the ELCA and sent to the Assistant of the Treasurer of Smoky Mountain Conference along with Form A.
- b. **Thank Offerings** are collected by participants over a period of time in gratitude for blessings recognized.
 - 1) They are gathered at least once a year.
 - 2) The funds are deposited into the Unit's bank account and a check from the Unit made in the amount of Thank Offering collected to Women of the ELCA and forwarded with a copy of Form B to The ELCA Gift Processing Center.
- c. **Designated Gifts** support specific ministries or initiatives of the churchwide organization of Women of the ELCA, or, *through* Women of the ELCA, the ministries or initiatives of the larger ELCA church.
 - 1) **Examples of Designated Gifts:** Katie's Fund, WELCA Scholarships, Alabama Tornado Relief, ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran World Relief Freight for Quilts, etc.
 - 2) Every cent of Designated Gifts is used for the ministry or initiative noted.
 - 3) A check is written to Women of the ELCA, with the name of the Designated Ministry or Initiative written on the memo line. It is then forwarded to the ELCA Gift Processing Center along with Form B.
- d. **Special Gifts and Offerings** are given in support of other programs of activities of Women of the ELCA that are not specifically included in the budget of the churchwide women's organization, but that are consistent with our mission and purpose.
 - 1) **Examples of Special Gifts and Offerings:** Raising Up Healthy Women & Girls, Anti-Racism Programs, and Café.
 - 2) The check is made to Women of the ELCA, writing the name of the designated program or activity on the memo line. Then forward the check with a copy of Form B to The ELCA Gift Processing Center.
- e. Other ways to give Offerings to or through Women of the ELCA is through **Faithful Friends**, a monthly automatic gift given electronically, and to give funds designated as **Where Needed Most**, which will allow WELCA to use the donation most flexibly.
- f. For more information, refer to WELCA's pdf, ***Women of the ELCA Offerings: A How-To Guide for Unit Treasurers***. Copies of the forms needed are also available in this resource.

<https://www.womenoftheelca.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Unit-Treasurers-Guide.pdf> (A copy of this Guide is attached with this document)