

Iowa Mission District Constitution

Article 1 – Name and Incorporation

- 1.1 The name of this Mission District shall be the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church.
- 1.2 For the purpose of this constitution and any accompanying bylaws, the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church is hereinafter designated as “this Mission District.”
- 1.3 This Mission District shall be incorporated, and Articles of Incorporation consistent with this Charter shall be filed, under the laws of the State of Iowa.

Article 2 – Purpose and Affiliation

- 2.1 This Mission District shall be a constituent part of the North American Lutheran Church (“the NALC”) and therefore shall accept and adhere to the Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the NALC. All mission and ministry of this Mission District shall be conducted in accordance with the Confession of Faith and the Constitution of the NALC.
- 2.2 This Mission District exists to enable congregations of the NALC in Iowa to join in collaboration to fulfill most effectively the ministry and mission of the NALC within its territory. In particular this means giving priority to the Great Commission “to make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) in our mutual life and work. We come together as congregations of this Mission District to strengthen, encourage, support, and equip one another for evangelism and discipleship in our local settings. We seek to work together in outreach across the territory of this Mission District in witness to Christ and in the building up of His Church, revitalizing established congregations and growing new congregations. We join together to support the continental and global priorities of the NALC. We seek to be Christ-centered, mission-driven, traditionally-grounded, and congregationally-focused, drawing upon the riches of our confessional Lutheran heritage.
- 2.3 The work of this Mission District shall be done in consultation with the Bishop, Executive Council, and other leaders of the NALC.

Article 3 – Membership

- 3.1 This Mission District is a member organization made up of congregations of the NALC and ordained ministers of the NALC within its territory.
- 3.2 NALC congregations in regions adjacent to the state of Iowa—southern Minnesota, southwest Wisconsin, western Illinois, northern Missouri, eastern Nebraska, and southeast South Dakota—may be received as congregations of this Mission District if they so request and if approved by the Executive Council of the NALC.
- 3.3 This Mission District shall have no right to or interest in the property of any congregation unless the congregation has expressly conveyed such a right or interest to this Mission District.

Article 4 – Annual Convocation

- 4.1 A Convocation of this Mission District shall be held annually.
- 4.2 Delegates with voting privileges at a Convocation shall be the ordained ministers of the NALC within the territory of this Mission District and lay delegates from the member congregations of this Mission District. Each congregation of this Mission District shall elect 2 lay delegates who shall represent their congregations to the Convocation.
- 4.3 The responsibilities of the annual Convocation shall include: elections, as necessary, for Dean, District Secretary, Treasurer, at-large members of the Mission District Council, and any other position requiring election; adoption of a budget for the subsequent calendar year; consideration of mission and ministry needs of this Mission District; reception of reports; and other items of business as may be determined by the Mission District Council or by the Convocation.

- 4.4 Nominations for elective offices referred to in 4.03 may be solicited from congregations and pastors prior to the Convocation by either the Mission District Council or a Nominating Committee appointed by the Mission District Council; the process and rules for such nominations shall be established by the Mission District Council, but must include confirmation that the candidate is eligible to serve and agrees to serve if elected. In any event, nominations during the Convocation by delegates with voting privileges shall always be allowed, provided the candidate is eligible to serve and agrees to serve if elected.
- 4.5 On any ballot for one of the elective offices referred to in 4.03, any candidate who receives a majority of the valid votes cast shall be elected. Votes are invalid if they are blank, if more than one candidate is indicated or if a name is written in of a person who was not nominated.

In the event that there are three or more candidates on the first ballot and no candidate receives a majority, only the top two candidates by votes received, plus ties, shall be included on the second ballot. On all ballots, if no candidate receives a majority, only the top two candidates by votes received, plus ties, shall be included on the subsequent ballots. Voting shall continue until one candidate receives a majority
- 4.6 Special Convocations may be called for specified purposes by the Dean or by the Mission District Council.
- 4.7 Roberts' Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern the business of a Convocation absent the approval by the Convocation of alternative rules of procedure by at least two-thirds of the votes cast. The quorum for any Convocation shall be 50 percent of all delegates registered in accord with the process established by the Mission District Council or at its direction. The Dean or the Dean's designee shall preside over all Convocations. If neither the Dean nor a designee of the Dean is available, a Convocation may select a delegate to preside.

Article 5 – Dean

- 5.1 The Dean shall be an ordained minister of the NALC within the territory of this Mission District.
- 5.2 The Dean shall be accountable to, work with, and represent the Bishop of the NALC in exercising oversight and pastoral care for the congregations and ordained ministers of this Mission District.
- 5.3 In consultation and coordination with the Bishop, the Executive Council and the staff of the NALC, the Dean shall provide assistance and counsel to congregations and ordained and lay ministers in the certification and reception process, the call process, the procuring of interim pastors, and in conflict resolution matters.
- 5.4 The Dean or a representative authorized by the Dean shall install ordained ministers called by the congregations of this Mission District.
- 5.5 When authorized by the Bishop of the NALC, the Dean may ordain candidates for ordained ministry who have been approved and certified by the NALC.
- 5.6 The Dean may assist the Bishop of the NALC, when necessary, to do an initial investigation and to form a panel where certain issues merit clarification.
- 5.7 The Dean, at the request of the Bishop of the NALC, may be responsible for forming a colloquy panel that will examine the doctrinal commitment of a pastor coming from a non-Lutheran tradition who seeks certification as an ordained minister of the NALC.
- 5.8 The Dean shall serve as pastor to the ordained ministers and seminarians of the NALC and their families within the territory of this Mission District.
- 5.9 The Dean will conduct a ministry of teaching and visitation with ordained ministers and congregations.
- 5.10 The Dean will consistently lift up the priority of the Great Commission in the work of this Mission District and in the life of its congregations.
- 5.11 The Dean may continue to serve under the call of one or more congregations.

- 5.12 The Dean shall be elected by a Convocation for a term of three (3) years and may serve up to three consecutive terms. The term shall begin at the close of the Convocation at which the Dean was elected.
- 5.13 In case of resignation, death or disability precluding the exercise of the office of Dean, the Mission District Council may appoint an interim Dean to serve until the next annual Convocation.
- 5.14 The Dean may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the Convocation.
- 5.15 The Dean may be suspended by a three-quarters vote of the Mission District Council, excluding the Dean, for cause, as outlined in the provisions for discipline in the NALC Constitution and in consultation with the Bishop of the NALC and the Court of Adjudication. The Mission District Council will appoint an interim Dean to exercise the office until the next annual Convocation. The next annual Convocation may subsequently remove the suspended Dean by a two-thirds vote and set in motion a process for the election of a successor.

Article 6 – The Mission District Council

- 6.1 The Mission District Council shall consist of three elected officers—the Dean, the District Secretary, and the Treasurer—and six at-large members (three ordained ministers and three lay members).
- 6.2 The District Secretary may be either an ordained minister or a lay member who shall assist the Dean, assure that proper records and documents are made and retained, be responsible for official correspondence and communication for the Mission District Council, oversee the nominations and election process of the Mission District, ensure that the actions of the Mission District Council and Convocation are in accord with the constitutions of the NALC and this Mission District, and carry out other duties as requested by the Dean and the Mission District Council. The District Secretary shall be elected by a Convocation for a term of three (3) years and may serve up to two consecutive terms.
- 6.3 The Treasurer may be either an ordained minister or a lay member who shall be the chief financial officer of this Mission District, overseeing the receiving and disbursing of all funds and keeping accurate accounts of all transactions. The Treasurer shall make complete and accurate reports for review by all members of this Mission District. The Treasurer shall be elected by a Convocation for a term of three (3) years and may serve up to two consecutive terms.
- 6.4 The terms of the at-large members of the Mission District Council shall be staggered such that one ordained minister and one lay member will be elected at each annual Convocation for a term of three (3) years. They may serve up to two consecutive terms. Notwithstanding the fore-going and in order to establish staggered terms for at-large members of the Mission District Council, the initial Convocation of this Mission District, will elect one ordained minister and one lay member for a term of one (1) year, one ordained minister and one lay member for a term of two (2) years, and one ordained minister and one lay member for a term of three (3) years; those elected to terms of less than three years will be eligible to be re-elected for two additional consecutive regular three year terms.
- 6.5 During the interim between Convocations, the Mission District Council shall implement the work and policies of this Mission District and shall act for this Mission District, subject in all matters to review of its actions by subsequent Convocations.
- 6.6 The Mission District Council shall meet at least twice between annual Convocations with additional meetings as needed. The times, locations, and frequency of meetings shall be determined by the officers of the Mission District who shall prepare the agenda for such meetings.
- 6.7 The duties of the Mission District Council shall be to:
 - a. Act as Board of Directors for the corporation of this Mission District;
 - b. Establish policies and procedures in accord with Confession of Faith, Purpose, and Constitution of the NALC and the constitution of this Mission District;

- c. Ensure the centrality of the Great Commission in the work of this Mission District and the life of its congregations;
 - d. Ensure financial integrity and, to the extent possible, solvency;
 - e. Provide for fiduciary oversight, including, if needed, an annual audit;
 - f. Ensure and approve long-range planning for this Mission District to be presented at the annual Convocation;
 - g. Prepare the proposed annual budget, including a recommendation of financial support from each congregation in this Mission District to meet the obligations of the approved budget;
 - h. Approve a proposed agenda and program for each Convocation;
 - i. Create and oversee committees and task forces as needed;
 - j. Adjust the budget approved by the annual Convocation as prudence dictates in response to changed financial circumstances;
 - k. Exercise the authority and responsibility delegated to boards of directors by applicable law;
 - l. Approve and appoint Assistant Deans as requested by the Dean;
 - m. Report all actions to the next annual Convocation.
- 6.8 The Mission District Council is empowered to suspend any member of the Mission District Council, whether an officer or at-large member, by a three-quarters vote of all members, excluding the member considered for suspension, for cause, in consultation with the Bishop of the NALC and Court of Adjudication. The Mission District Council may appoint an interim replacement until the next annual Convocation.

Article 7 – Indemnification

- 7.1 Any person who at any time shall serve or shall have served as a director, officer, or employee of this Mission District, or any other enterprise at the request of the NALC, and the heirs, executors, and administrators of such person shall be indemnified by this Mission District in accordance with, and to the fullest extent permitted by law.
- 7.2 Nothing contained in this Article shall affect any rights to indemnification to which the personnel of this Mission District may be entitled by contract or otherwise under law.
- 7.3 This Mission District 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 this Mission District would have been required to indemnify the person against the liability.

Article 8 – Amendments and Bylaws

- 8.1 The Mission District Council may propose amendments to this Constitution to be considered by a Convocation. No later than 90 days before the beginning of the Convocation at which it is to be considered, the Dean shall give written notice of each amendment proposed by the Mission District Council. The approval of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds majority of votes cast.
- 8.2 A minimum of ten delegates to an annual Convocation may propose an amendment to this Constitution. The adoption of such an amendment shall require a two-thirds majority of votes cast at such Convocation as well as the subsequent annual Convocation.
- 8.3 No amendments shall be made to this Constitution that are in conflict with the Constitution of the North American Lutheran Church.
- 8.4 Bylaws not in conflict with this Constitution may be adopted or amended by a majority vote of a Convocation.