**CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**

The Word of God requires that a Christian congregation shall conform to this 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 Martini Lutheran Church, accept and subscribe to the following revised Constitution and By-Laws, in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed, this first day of July, 1968. [Revised 1973, 1980,1988,1993, 2000, 2004 2017]

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be Martini Lutheran Church,

located at 333 East Moeller Road New Haven, Indiana 46774.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The purpose of this congregation shall be to spread the Kingdom of God by the preaching of the Word of God, by the administration of the Sacraments, and by the religious instruction of youth and adults, according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III), and to foster Christian fellowship and charity.

**ARTICLE III – CONFESSIONS**

This congregation acknowledges and accepts all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the revealed Word of God, verbally inspired, and acknowledges and accepts all the Confessional Writings of the Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord of the Year 1580, to be the true and genuine exposition of the doctrines of the Bible. These Confessional Writings are:

A. The Three Ecumenical Creeds (Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian);

B. The Unaltered Augsburg Confession;

C. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession;

D. The Smalcald Articles;

E. Luther’s Large and Small Catechisms;

F. The Formula of Concord.

In this congregation, therefore, no doctrine shall be taught or tolerated which varies from these symbols of the Lutheran Church, and all doctrinal controversies which may arise in this congregation shall be adjudicated and decided according to this doctrine.

**ARTICLE IV – OFFICE OF PASTOR**

The pastoral office of this congregation shall be conferred only upon minister and candidates who:

A. Profess and adhere to the confessional standard set forth in Article III of this Constitution and are well qualified for their work. Pastors shall, in the call extended to and accepted by them, be pledged to this confessional standard;

B. Are members of, or have qualified and applied for membership in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to which this congregation belongs;

C. Have been properly and rightfully called by the congregation.

**ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this congregation consists of:

A. Baptized Membership

Baptized members are all members who have been baptized in the Name of the Triune God with water and are under our pastoral care.

B. Communicant Members are those who:

1. Are baptized in the Name of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost;

2. Accept all canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as the only divine rule and standard of faith and life;

3. Are familiar at least with Luther’s Small catechism and declare their acceptance of it;

4. Attend divine services faithfully;

5. Lead Christian lives and do not live in manifest works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21);

6. Partake of the Lord’s Supper frequently after Confirmation;

7. Contribute regularly and faithfully, as God has prospered them, towards the congregation and throughout the world;

8. Devote their time and talents to the extension of the Kingdom of God;

9. Permit themselves go be fraternally admonished and corrected when they have erred;

10. Are not members, affiliated, or supporters of secret societies or other organizations conflicting with the Word of God and the conduct of a Christian (2 Corinthians 6:14-18);

11. Send their children of school age to our Christian Day School or provide otherwise for their Christian education and training, and see that their children receive instruction from Dr. Martin Luther’s Small Catechism.

C. Voting Membership

1. All confirmed members who have reached the age of 18 shall be voting members of the Voters’ Assembly.

2. All confirmed members who have received the rights and privileges of voting members of the congregation shall be entitled to serve as officers and members of boards and committees with exception so indicated by the Holy Scriptures and as following in number 3.

3. Female members holding voting membership may 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 Sacrament, church discipline) and as long as this service does not violate the order of the creation (usurping authority over men). Accordingly, they shall not serve as pastor, as a member of the Board of Elders, or as president or vice-president of the congregation.

**ARTICLE VI - POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

A. General

The congregation as a body, through the voting members, shall have supreme power to administer and manage all its external and internal affairs. The establishment and conduct of all institutions and societies within the congregation, such as Sunday School, Youth Societies, Ladies’ Organizations, Choirs, etc., shall at all times be subjected to the approval and supervision of the congregation. The congregation, however, shall not be empowered to decide anything contrary to the Word of God and the confessions of the Lutheran Church (Article III), and any such decisions shall be null and void.

B. Right of Calling

The right of calling pastors, as well the right of electing officers of the congregation, shall be vested in the congregation and shall never be delegated to an individual or a minority group within the congregation.

C. Decisions

Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided by the Word of God; other matters shall be decided by majority vote of The Voter’s Assembly unless otherwise specified by the Constitution of By-Laws.

D. Powers of Officers

Congregational officers of committees, whether elected or appointed by the voters, shall have no authority beyond that which has been conferred upon them. Whatever power has been delegated to them may at any time be altered or revoked by the voters.

E. Removal from Office

Any pastor, officer, or appointed teacher may be removed from office by the congregation, by ballot, in Christian and lawful order, for one (1) of the following causes:

1. Persistent adherence to false doctrine;

2. Scandalous life;

3. Inability to perform his/her official duties;

4. Willful neglect of his/her official duties.

**ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS AND CHURCH COUNCIL**

The officers of this congregation shall be such officers, boards, or committees as described in the By-Laws of this congregation. There shall be a Church Council, the membership and duties of which are also described in the By-Laws.

**ARTICLE VIII – PROPERTY RIGHTS**

If at any time a separation should take place on account of doctrine, or any other reason, the property of the congregation and all benefits therewith connected shall remain with those voting members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article III of this Constitution. In the event the congregation should totally disband, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

**ARTICLE IX – DOCTRINAL LITERATURE**

Only such hymns, prayers, and liturgies shall be used in the public services of the congregation and in all ministerial acts as conform to the confessional standard of Article III. Likewise, in all classes for instruction in Christian doctrine only such books shall be used as conform to this standard.

**ARTICLE X – SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP**

A. This congregation shall hold membership in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. It shall send its pastor and a lay delegate to the District convention of Synod.

B. It shall be the duty of the congregation and its individual members to support the work of Synod, since they thereby support their own Christ-appointed work.

**ARTICLE XI – CENTRAL LUTHERAN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

This congregation shall hold membership in the Central Lutheran School Association of New Haven, Indiana.

**ARTICLE XII – BY-LAWS**

This congregation shall adopt By-Laws as required for the accomplishment of its purpose.

**ARTICLE XIII – CHANGE OF CONSTITUTION**

A. Unalterable Articles

The following article of this Constitution or sections thereof shall be unalterable or irrepealable: III.

B. Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution and the By-Laws may be adopted at a regular Voters’ Assembly, provided that:

1. They do not conflict with the provisions laid down in Article III and XIII-A, or with any section of any other Article that pertains to Scriptural doctrine and practice;

2. The proposed amendment has been submitted in writing at a previous Voters’ Assembly;

3. They are carried by a two-thirds majority of the voting membership present at the Voters’ Assembly.

**BY-LAWS**

**ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

1. Admission into Membership
2. Baptized membership
3. By Valid Baptism

All those baptized in this congregation shall be considered baptized members of the congregation, unless, for Pastoral Care reasons, the Pastor conducts a baptism for special reasons.

1. By Presentation of Evidence of Valid Baptism

Persons coming with evidence of valid baptism shall be received into baptized membership by the Pastor and Elders, whose action is to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly.

1. Communicant Membership
2. By Confirmation

Confirmation itself being a reception into communicant membership, all who are thus received by this sacred act become communicant members.

1. By Transfer

Persons coming with a communicant letter of transfer from a congregation in church fellowship, provided they conform in all respects to the requirements of membership of this congregation (Constitution: Articles V, Section B) shall be received by the Pastor and Elders, whose action is to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly. \*See Board of Elders, Art. 8 number 11.

1. By Profession of Faith

Other persons shall submit their application to the Pastor or an Elder and having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Pastor and at least one (1) Elder, they shall be received as communicant members, to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly.

1. Reinstatement

Persons wishing to be reinstated shall submit their written application to the Pastor or Elder, and having given satisfactory evidence of qualifications for communicant membership to the Pastor and at least one (1) Elder, they shall be received as communicant members, to be ratified in a subsequent meeting of the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly.

1. Voting Membership
2. All communicant members, who are in good standing and have reached their eighteenth birthday, shall have the rights and privileges of voting members of the congregation.
3. Duties: It shall be the duty of every voting member to attend the Voters’ Assembly meetings. By failing to attend such a meeting a member waives the right to cast his vote during that meeting. The Elders recommend Martini strikes the following sentence - He shall accept nomination for office, committee appointment, etc. if possible, and generally participate in the business of the Voters’ Assembly.
4. Termination of Membership
5. Baptized Membership
6. When the congregation is no longer able to offer a viable pastoral ministry or such pastoral ministry is no longer accepted.
7. By terminating membership in congregation with their parents’ termination of membership.
8. Communicant Membership
9. Transfer to Another Congregation

Communicant members desire to join a congregation in church fellowship shall present their request for transfer to the Pastor and Elders to whom authorization is granted to issue such transfers. Such transfer of membership shall be ratified by the Voters’ Assembly in a subsequent meeting.

1. Joining Other Churches

In cases where communicant members have joined another congregation outside our own fellowship, they shall, upon the recommendation of the Pastor and Elders be considered as to have terminated their membership and their names shall be removed from the list by a resolution of the Voters’ Assembly.

1. The names of members whose whereabouts are unknown for at least two (2) years and cannot be established shall be removed by the Voters’ Assembly and forthwith such membership is terminated.
2. Excommunication and Self-Exclusion

Any member who persists in false doctrine or conducts himself in an unchristian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-20. If he refuses to amend his sinful life after proper admonition, he shall be excommunicated. If the member refuses to attend the Voters’ Assembly (or in the case of female members to meet with a smaller group officially acting for the Voters) to discuss his case, he has thereby excluded himself. A unanimous vote shall be required for every resolution by the Voters’ Assembly for excommunication or self-exclusion terminating membership.

1. Severed

A member who does not demonstrate a desire to receive the blessing God offers through the Sacrament of Holy Communion after being duly admonished (By-Laws: Article B, g 2) shall upon unanimous vote of the Voters’ Assembly be severed from membership and all rights and privileges shall be forfeited.

1. Status

A person whose communicant membership has been terminated has forfeited all rights of a member of this congregation as such, or upon any part thereof, so long as he is not reinstated into membership.

1. Admonition
2. Worship attendance

Any member who continually neglects his responsibility and privilege of joining in public worship regularly shall be duly admonished by the Pastor and/or Board of Elders according to Guidelines that the Congregation adopts.

1. Holy Communion

Any member who continually neglects his responsibility and privilege of partaking of the Lord’s Body and Blood in the Sacrament of the Altar shall be duly admonished by the Pastor and/or Board of Elders according to Guidelines that the Congregation adopts.

1. Stewardship

Stewardship and finance will work with the Elders and Pastor to educate our members about using our God-given blessings to support the financial needs of Martini Lutheran Church.

ARTICLES II – CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Voters’ Assembly shall be held in the months of January, April, July, October, and November and in the November meeting the Voters’ Assembly shall set the dates of the regular voter’s meetings for the coming year.

1. Annual Election and Budget Meetings
2. The January regular meeting shall be the annual meeting of the Voters’ Assembly.
3. The October meeting shall include in its new business the consideration of the next year’s church budget.
4. The November meeting shall be the meeting primarily for the election of officers and such business that demands completion prior to the next regular meeting.
5. Special Meetings
6. Special meetings of the Voters’ Assembly may be called by the Pastor and/or by the Church Council when necessary.
7. The privilege of calling a special meeting shall also be granted to any group of members at large; however, in such case, it shall be necessary that the members desiring a special meeting first confer with the Pastor and present to the President a written petition signed by at least five (5) voting members in good standing.
8. Public Notice of Meetings
9. Every regular meeting of the Voters’ Assembly shall be announced by word or in print at two (2) worship services prior to its scheduled date.
10. All special meetings shall be announced by the Recording Secretary by mail or by at least one announcement being made at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to said meeting.
11. All communicant members of the congregation are welcome to attend Voters’ Assembly meetings as visitors without the privilege of voting, unless there appears on the agenda items of Christian discipline of a private nature, then visitors shall be dismissed from the Assembly until such business is concluded.
12. Quorum for Meetings
13. The members present at any regular or special meeting which has been properly announced, shall be considered a properly convened meeting capable of transacting business in the name of the congregation.
14. A. For the amending of the Articles of incorporation or the Constitution and By-Laws, the erection of buildings, the purchase of property, or the removal of an elected person from office, a quorum of over 50% of the voting members is necessary, and a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required for adoption of a resolution.

B. For the removal of a Pastor or Teacher from office a quorum of three-fourths of the voting members is necessary, and a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required for adoption of a resolution.

1. A special resolution shall be necessary to extend any meeting beyond two (2) hours.

ARTICLE III – OFFICE OF PASTOR AND TEACHERS

1. Pastor
2. Nominations: At a meeting of the Voters’ Assembly properly convened (By-Laws: Article II, Section E) the list of candidates received from the District President shall be presented to the Voters’ Assembly. Any voting members is entitled to make additional nominations form the floor.
3. Election: The election of a Pastor from the list of Candidates chosen by the congregation shall be by ballot. The Candidate receiving the majority of all votes cast shall be considered elected. The election may be made unanimous by the rising vote and the call shall be sent to the Pastor elect.
4. Responsibilities:
5. To administer to us the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament and as set forth in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as found in the Book of Concord;
6. To administer the Holy Sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;
7. To perform the functions of a pastor in an evangelical manner; to aid, counsel, and guide members of all ages and social conditions; to visit the sick and the dying; to admonish the indifferent and the erring;
8. To guard and promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of the members of this congregation; in particular, to instruct the catechumens in our Christian Day School, our catechumens attending public school, and adults in the Word of God and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church;
9. To guide and assist the congregation in the maintenance and operation of our Christian Day School and participate in the planning and program of our school;
10. To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church agreeable to the Word of God;
11. To promote and guide the mission activity of the congregation as it is related to the congregation as it is related to the local community and to District and Synodical endeavors, in particular to train workers and guide them in evangelism activities and to enlist the support of the congregation for mission work generally;
12. To assist the congregation in adopting administrative policies and procedures which will help it carry out the mission of a Christian congregation as an ex officio member of all boards and committees;
13. To serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct, to endeavor earnestly to live in brotherly unity with the members of the congregation and fellow workers and sister congregations in the District and the Synod, and by the grace of God to do everything possible within the sphere of his called toward the edification of the congregation and the upbuilding of the church in Christ, both locally and generally.
14. Called Teachers
15. Nominations and Election:

The Central Lutheran School Association of which our congregation is a member is authorized to call such teachers as are needed to staff our school.

1. Assignment:
2. The School Association is authorized to call and assign teachers who will fill a particular congregational need such as organist, youth director, etc.
3. The School Board is authorized to assign other teachers as members of our congregation.
4. Responsibilities: To serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct, to endeavor earnestly to live in brotherly unity with the members of the congregation and fellow workers and sister congregations in the District and the Synod, and by the grace of God to do everything possible within the sphere of his calling toward the edification of the congregation and the upbuilding of the church in Christ, both locally and generally.

ARTICLE IV – ELECTION OF CONGREGATIONAL OFFICERS

1. Nominations

The Nominating Committee (By-Law: Article X, Section C) shall prepare a slate of candidates (By-Laws: Article IV, Section C) for the Annual Election meeting of Voters’ Assembly. The slate proposed by the nomination committee shall consist of at least three (2) names for each office, (if possible). This slate shall be made public at the regular October Voters’ Assembly meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Each name appearing on the slate as a candidate shall be considered eligible to be elected to that particular office.

1. Election

The election shall be by printed ballot. The offices elect shall assume their respective duties on January 1, of the following year. In the event of a vacancy in any office, the Church Council shall appoint a successor to serve for the length of the office filled. (By-Laws: Article VI, Section H)

1. Length of Office

An officer may serve the same office for only two consecutive terms. That officer may be elected to a different position. Officers shall be elected for terms specified in these By-Laws and shall hold office until their successors shall have been elected, qualified, and installed. This will only go into effect if we obtain 150+ members worshiping on a regular basis. A regular basis is defined by two consecutive quarters.

1. The office of the President, Vice-President, and Recording Secretary, shall be for one (1) year.
2. The term of office for the Treasurer, and Financial Secretary, and Chairman of Stewardship and Finance shall be for two (2) years. The terms shall be so arranged that they expire on alternate years.
3. The term of office for three (3) Elders shall be for three years. The terms shall be so arranged that one term expires each year.
4. The term of office for the Deacons shall be two (2) years. The terms shall be so arranged that one half the total number of Deacons shall be elected each year.
5. The term of office for the three (3) Trustees shall be so arranged that once term expires each year.
6. The term of office for the Chairman of Outreach Committee and the Chairman of the Education and the Chairman of the Youth Committee shall be for two (3) years.
7. The two (2) nominees for the Central Lutheran School Board shall be elected as nominees by ballot at the Voters’ Assembly election meeting. These two (2) nominees shall be presented to the Central Lutheran School Association Annual Meeting. The one (1) elected by the Association shall serve a three (3) year term. The nominees not elected by the Association shall have no further responsibility.
8. The two (2) nominees for the Central Lutheran School Auditing Committee shall be elected as nominees by ballot at the Voters’ Assembly Election meeting every third year. These two (2) nominees shall be presented to the Central Lutheran School Association Annual Meeting; the one (1) elected by the Association shall serve a three (3) year term as auditor. The nominee not elected by the Association shall have no further responsibility.

ARTICLE V – CHURCH OFFICERS

1. President
2. The term of office of the President shall be for one (1) year. (By-Laws: Article IV, Section C, 1)
3. He shall preside at all meetings of the Voters’ Assembly and shall represent the congregation publicly.
4. He will confer with the Pastor regularly as to the needs and activities of the congregation.
5. He shall prepare a printed agenda for Voters’ Assembly meetings patterned after the sample in By-Laws: Articles VII.
6. He shall be responsible for seeing that the passed resolutions of the Voters’ Assembly are carried out.
7. He shall appoint such individuals and Committees as are needed to carry out the special business of the congregation; he shall appoint special service committees such as the Cemetery Committee (By-Laws: Article X, Section A), Welfare Committee (By-Laws: Article X, Section B), Nominating Committee (By-Laws: Article X, Section C), and Audit Committee (By-Laws: Article X, Section D).
8. He shall see to it that all congregational committees and officers are functioning properly.
9. He is a member of the Church Council (By-Laws: Article VI, Section A), the Legal Board (By-Laws: Article VIII, Section D) and an advisory member (ex officio) of all boards and committees of the congregation.
10. He shall preside at Church Council meetings in the Vice-President’s absence.
11. He shall present recommendations to the Church Council for their consideration in regard to appointees for vacancies and the position of Sunday School Superintendent (By-Laws: Article VI, Section H).
12. The President of the congregation shall appoint annually a representative for the Concordia Cemetery Association.
13. Vice-President
14. The term of office of the Vice-President shall be for one (1) year (By-Laws: Article IV, Section C, 1).
15. In the President’s absence the Vice-President shall assume and perform the duties of the office of President.
16. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice-President shall succeed to the office for the remainder of the term.
17. He shall act as Chairman of the Church Council meetings (By-Laws: Article VI, Section C).
18. He shall call special meetings of the Church Council when necessary (By-Laws: Article VI, Section D).
19. He shall confer regularly with the Pastor and congregational president as to the needs and activities of the congregation.
20. He shall act as chairman of the Nominating Committee (By-Laws: Article X, Section C, 2).
21. A copy of Robert’s Rules of Order will be present for all meetings.
22. Recording Secretary
23. Term of office of the Recording Secretary shall be for one (1) year (By-Laws: Article IV, section C, 1).
24. He shall be a member of the Legal Board (By-Laws: Article VIII, Section D, 1).
25. He shall keep an accurate and permanent record of the proceedings of all Church Council and Voters’ Assembly meetings.
26. He shall keep a current accurate list of all voting members and all official committee and board members.
27. He shall see that applicants for voting membership receive a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws.
28. He shall be responsible to announce special meetings of the Voters’ Assembly (By-Laws: Article II, Section D, 2).
29. He shall be responsible for the official correspondence sent and received by the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly.
30. He shall present the resolutions of the Church Council to the Voters’ Assembly and recommend adoption.
31. He shall keep a record of Voters’ Assembly member attendance.
32. Treasurer
33. The term of office for the Treasurer shall be for two (2) years, elected on the alternate year that the Financial Secretary is elected (By-Laws: Article IV, Section C, 2).
34. He shall be bonded in such amount as the Church Council may determine. The cost of such bonding shall be paid by the congregation.
35. He shall be a member of the Stewardship and Finance Committee (By-Laws: Article IX, Section D, 1).
36. He shall pay all bills authorized by the Church Council or Voters’ Assembly.
37. He shall be responsible for monthly and/or quarterly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies and prompt payment of salaries. All other expenses or bills, authorized by the congregation through her budget or by Voters’ action, he shall pay under the guidance and direction of the Stewardship and Finance Committee.
38. He shall keep an accurate record of the receipts and disbursements of the congregation in books which shall be and remain the property of the congregation; all these books shall be audited annually by the Audit Committee and a report of such audit shall be submitted to the Voters’ Assembly no later than the April regular Voters’ meeting.
39. He shall submit a preliminary report at each regular Stewardship and Finance Committee meeting and a preliminary report at Church Council meetings and a written report at each regular Voters’ Assembly meeting; such reports shall show actual receipts and disbursements compared with budgeted amounts.
40. During serious illness of the Treasurer or some other emergency, the books, papers, and other valuable articles in his keeping belonging to the congregation shall be taken into custody by the person whom the Church Council may appoint to serve as temporary Treasurer.
41. Financial Secretary
42. The term of office of the Financial Secretary shall be two (2) years, elected on the alternate year that the Treasurer is elected (By-Laws: Article IV, Section C, 2).
43. He shall be a member of the Stewardship and Finance Committee.
44. He shall be bonded in such amount as the Church Council shall determine. The cost of such bond shall be paid by the congregation. (Omit or Enforce)
45. It shall be his duty to receive, record in books kept for such purpose, and deposit in the congregation’s designated depository, all congregational monies, including offerings, contributions, special collections, loan subsidies, bequests, etc.; a report of all receipts shall be submitted to the Treasurer at regular weekly intervals.
46. The Financial Secretary shall submit a preliminary report for each regular Stewardship and Financial Committee meeting and a preliminary report for Church Council meetings, and a written report for each regular meeting of the Voters’ Assembly.
47. All offerings shall be counted in the presence of at least two (2) members of the Board of Deacons or their substitutes appointed by the Chairman of the board.
48. The books and records of the Financial Secretary shall be audited annually by the Audit Committee and a report of such audit shall be submitted to the Voters’ Assembly no later than the April regular voters’ meeting.
49. He shall be responsible for the record forms, recording congregational receipts and the handing out of offering labels to members
50. He shall be responsible for providing deacons with financial reports and see that each deacon prepares and distributes a written financial statement to each contributor no later than the thirty-first (31st) day of January.
51. During serious illness of the Financial Secretary or some other emergency, the books, papers, and other valuable articles in his keeping belonging to the congregation shall be taken into custody by the person whom the Church Council may appoint to serve as temporary Financial Secretary.

**ARTICLE VI – CHURCH COUNCIL**

1. The Church Council shall consist of the President of the congregation, the vice-President, the Recording Secretary, the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, the Senior member of the Board of Elders, the Chairman of the Stewardship and Finance Committee, the Senior member of the Board of Trustees, the Head Deacon, the Chairman of the Outreach Committee, the Chairman of the Board of Education, the Chairman of the Youth Committee, the Senior School Board Member.
2. The Pastor and one (1) called teacher (on a rotating yearly basis) assigned to Martini shall be ex officio members of the Church Council. (Pastor By-Laws: Article X, Section C, 4, Teacher By-Laws: Article X, Section C, 5) C, 4, Teacher By-Laws: Article X, Section C, 5).
3. The Vice-President of the congregation shall act as the chairman of Church Council meetings.
4. The Church Council shall normally meetthe week prior to voter’s assembly meeting; such times as are required by the business needs of the congregation at the call of the Vice-President of the congregation; or at the request by a minimum of three (3) council members submitted to the Recording Secretary.
5. The Church Council shall be responsible for the overall program of the congregation, as approved by the Voters’ Assembly and shall act in matters committed to it by the Voters’ Assembly and take the initiative in seeing that all resolutions of the Voters’ Assembly are carried out.
6. The Church Council shall be able to conduct business when a quorum of eight (8) of its members are present.
7. The Church Council shall consider all reports and appointments of the standing committees (Outreach, Stewardship, and Finance, Education, and Youth) and all reports of special and temporary committees and approve such appointments, plans, and reports which serve the growth and welfare of the congregation.
8. The Church Council upon the recommendation of the congregational President shall appoint officers to fill vacancies should they occur, such vacancy appointments shall extend for the length of the office filled (as outlined in By-Laws: Article IV, Section C).
9. The Church Council is to administer the temporal affairs of the congregation, devise improvements of all the affairs of the congregation in every respect, and to take the initiative in that direction. Decisions of minor importance and expenditures not exceeding $100.00 are within the jurisdiction of the Council.
10. The Church Council shall give final approval of Sunday School Superintendent.

**ARTICLE VII – ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The following order of business may be used for regular Voters’ Assembly and Church Council meetings:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_To be used for Voters and Church Council\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Call to Order
2. Devotion
3. Roll Call (recognition of visitors)
4. Reading of the Minutes
5. Treasurer’s Report and Financial Secretary
6. Pastor’s Report
7. Admission of new voting members (By-Laws: Article I, Section A, 3)
8. Report of Officers, Boards, and Committees:
9. Board of Elders
10. Board of Deacons
11. Board of Trustees
12. Outreach Committee
13. Stewardship and Finance Committee
14. Education
15. School Board Representative
16. Youth Committees
17. Unfinished Business
18. New Business
19. Announcements
20. Adjournment
21. Prayer

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Possible Format to be used for Committee Meetings\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Generic Order of Business – recommended for meetings other than Voters’ Meetings and Church Council Meetins.

1. Call to Order
2. Devotion
3. Reading of Minutes
4. Old Business

Reports from Committee Members

1. New Business

What do Committee Members need to do by next meeting?

1. Adjournment
2. Closing Prayer

**ARTICLE VIII – CHURCH BOARDS**

1. Board of Elders
2. The Board of Elders shall consist of three (3) men.
3. The term of office for an Elder shall be three (3) years; the election of Elders shall be so arranged that one term expires each year.
4. Elders shall be consecrated men who show themselves to be mature in their judgment, well versed in scripture, sound in doctrine, and actively loyal to Christ and His church (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).
5. The third-year Elder shall be the chairman of the Board and shall be the representative of the Board at Church Council meetings. He shall make regular reports to the Church Council as to the spiritual condition of the congregation.
6. An Elder shall be a member of the Outreach Committee, an Elder shall be a member of the Education Committee, and an Elder shall be a member of the Youth Committee.
7. An Elder shall be a member of the Stewardship and Finance Committee. The Elder who serves on the Stewardship and Finance Committee shall also serve on the Nominating Committee.
8. Elders shall be concerned about the spiritual, emotional, and physical health and welfare of the Pastor and his family and of the assigned called teachers and their families.
9. The Elders shall counsel and assist the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual life of the congregation; they serve as the Pastor’s chief assistants and together with the Pastor are accountable for each soul in the congregation, seeing that there is an accurate up-to-date membership roster and that proper literature and worship material is made available for the congregation; they are to consider the needs of the congregation in regard to the number, kind and time of services being conducted, and submit recommendations to the Church Council.
10. The Elders are responsible for approving the Catechism instruction of all Junior High and Adult Catechumens.
11. The Elders are to assist the Pastor in the Catechism education of Junior High and Adult Catechumens.
12. The Elders approve or disapprove of all membership transfers, releases, and confirmations. The transfers and releases will be brought for voter approval.
13. The Elders supervise and approve all worship liturgies.
14. The Elders will weekly study God’s Word during the Sunday School hour.
15. The Elders are to consider the complaints and grievances of members of the congregation, observing the principal of Matthew 18:15-16, and report such grievances to the congregation that cannot be otherwise resolved, in accordance with Matthew 18:17-18.
16. The Elders shall make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance of services, in the use of the Sacraments, and the financial support of the church, to amend their sinful ways and to fully enjoy the rights and privileges of their membership.
17. The Elders shall assist the Pastor in arranging for pulpit assistance, special services, and guest speakers; supervise the care for all vestments, paraments, communion supplies and equipment; supervise and make recommendations regarding the musical portion of all church services. Encourage choirs and choral groups.
18. The Elders shall audit the congregation’s membership records as outlined in By-Laws: Article XI, Section B.
19. Board of Deacons
20. The Board of Deacons shall consist of one Deacon for each congregational district; such districts are determined by the Stewardship and Finance Committee with Church Council approval.
21. The term of office shall be two (2) years, with one half of the total Board being elected by the Voters’ Assembly on the alternate year.
22. The Head Deacon shall be appointed for a period of one (1) year by the Deacons themselves.
23. Head Deacon shall be the representative of the Board of Deacons on the Church Council.
24. He shall report regularly to the Church Council as to the work and recommendations of the Board of Deacons.
25. He shall be a member of the Board of Stewardship and Finance.
26. He shall establish and maintain list of duties for Deacons and Assistant Deacons.
27. Deacons shall pray regularly for those families of the congregation entrusted to their care, and encourage faithfulness in worship and participation in church functions.
28. He shall be responsible that the physical facilities of the worship areas are so adjusted that the worshipers are as comfortable as possible.
29. Board of Trustees
30. The Board of Trustees shall consist of three (3) members.
31. The term of office for a Trustee shall be for three (3) years; the election of Trustees shall be so arranged that one term expires each year.
32. The third-year Trustee shall be chairman of the Board and shall be the representative of the Board at Church Council meetings; he shall make regular reports to the Church Council as to the physical condition of all church property; he shall also be a member of the Legal Board (By-Laws: Article X, Section C, 3).
33. The first-year Trustee shall be a member of the Nominating Committee (By-Law: X, Section C, 3).
34. The Trustees shall make regular inspection of all church properties and recommend needed repairs and improvements, especially noting needed safety and fire equipment, annually they shall make an inventory of all church equipment; such inventory shall be included in the annual report to the Voters’ Assembly.
35. The Trustees shall carry out all resolutions of the Voters’ Assembly concerning property and equipment, and take the initiative to accomplish needed repairs with an authorization, in case of emergency, to make expenditures not exceeding $200.00 over the budgeted operating costs in any one month; they shall be accountable to the Church Council for all such expenditures made.
36. The Trustees shall be responsible that adequate custodial help with congregational approval and supplies as needed are made available for the proper maintenance of congregational property and equipment.
37. The Trustees shall determine and establish with Voters’ Assembly approval, regulation governing the use of all church property and equipment.
38. The Trustees shall be responsible for the issue and record of keys to church property.
39. The Trustees shall be responsible for the church cemetery.
40. Legal Board
41. The Legal Board shall consist of the President of the congregation, the Recording Secretary, the third-year Trustee, and the Treasurer.
42. This Board shall meet and the needs of the congregation require and report to the Church Council and Voters’ Assembly all items for consideration of legal matters.
43. The Legal Board shall be responsible that the congregation is properly incorporated according to the laws of the state and shall at the instruction of the Voters’ Assembly and in its behalf, make contracts, sign legal documents, buy and sell property and appear in court on behalf of the congregation when such need arises.
44. The Legal Board shall be responsible to annually check the adequacy, in keeping with current property and equipment inventories (By-Laws: Article VIII, Section C, 5) of all types of insurance and negotiate insurance contracts; they shall make proper registration or tax purposes with the government.
45. The Legal Board shall be responsible that an annual inventory of official documents is made and enter such inventory in the official minutes of the Voters’ Assembly; this Board shall also be responsible that safe retention is provided for all important and valuable documents and securities of the congregation.
46. School Board – Senior member shall report to church council and voters assembly.

**ARTICLE IX – STANDING COMMITTEES**

1. Outreach Committee

Mission Statement:

To build relationships in our community by reaching out with God’s love and respect to all people from every nationality.

Vision Statement:

We will help grow and impact lives by being the voice and hand of the Holy Spirit which encourages our community to change their lives with the hope and peace of God.

1. The Outreach Committee shall consist of at least six (6) members.
2. The chairman of this committee shall be elected by the Voters’ Assembly for a three (3) year term of office, elected on the alternate year that the chairman of the Education and Youth Committee is elected.
3. The chairman of this committee shall be a member of the Church Council.
4. An Elder shall be a member of this committee.
5. At least three (3) additional members of this committee shall be appointed by the chairman from the communicant membership of the congregation serving a one (1) year term of appointment; all such appointments shall be subject to the approval of the Church Council.
6. This committee shall meet monthly as the needs of the congregation require and make regular reports to the Church Council with all plans and programs subject to Church Council approval.
7. This committee shall plan, promote, and implement outreach programs/events within the congregation and the community and will oversee these programs/events from start to completion.
8. Specific areas of responsibility in the work of Outreach by this Committee should include:
9. Establish and maintain effective relationships with other organization within the community.
10. Create and promote outreach programs/events through social media, newspapers, tv, flyers, posters, signs, advertisements.
11. Develop and maintain outreach programs/events that attract, connect, and engage the community which will invite them into a life of faith.
12. Plan and create a yearly calendar for Outreach events.
13. Review and analyze current programs/events and determine effectiveness and potential for continuation or improvement.
14. Maintain the greeter program of welcoming visitors at worship services.
15. Establish and maintain sub committees who will help with planning and organizing outreach programs/events.
16. Develop and maintain an outreach mission and vision statement.
17. Establish and maintain a visitor’s welcome station.
18. Involving congregation members in outreach activities.
19. Establish and maintain a relationship with Martini Kids Club.
20. This committee shall be responsible to order and prepare necessary outreach materials; such expenditure should be reported to and approved by the Church Council.
21. This committee shall be responsible for a program of community public relations that identifies the congregation with the Gospel of Christ and shall supervise all public relation programs relating the congregation to the community.
22. All matters pertaining to the Vacation Bible School such as selecting the Superintendent, who chooses the staff and orders materials and equipment with the Pastor’s approval.
23. Stewardship and Finance Committee
24. The Committee of Stewardship and Finance shall consist of at least six (6) members.
25. The chairman of this committee shall be elected by the Voters’ Assembly for a two (2) year term of office and shall be a member of the Church Council (By-Laws 6, A).
26. The Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Head Deacon, an Elder, and the third-year School Board member shall be members of this committee.
27. This committee shall meet monthly as the needs of the congregation require and make regular reports to the Church Council with all plans and programs subject to Church Council approval.
28. This committee shall prepare and present a yearly budget of planned congregational expenses to the Church Council for their recommendations and to the Voters’ Assembly for their approval and adoptions. (By-Laws: Article II, Section B, 3).
29. This committee shall regularly review the arrangement and number of congregational districts and make necessary recommendations to the Church Council.
30. This committee shall inform the Pastor and Board of Elders of those members who give little or nothing for the work of the church so that their situation may be evaluated and the necessary action taken for their spiritual growth.
31. This committee shall provide the congregation with the means of stewardship information, keeping the all-inclusive program of Congregation, District and Synod before the members and shall help build enthusiasm for the work of the church.
32. This committee shall arrange and conduct every member visit or other contact program as deemed necessary.
33. This committee shall be responsible to order and prepare necessary stewardship materials; such expenditure should be reported to and approved by the Church Council.
34. This committee shall guide and direct the treasurer as to the payment of all expenses or bills authorized by the congregation through her budget or by Voters’ action other than offerings for missions and church agencies and the payment of salaries.
35. This committee shall advise all boards and committees as to the necessity of cutbacks from the approved budget.
36. This committee shall establish and maintain a fundraising sub-committee to meet the non-budgetary needs of the congregation.
37. Education
38. The Committee of Education shall consist of at least seven (7) members.
39. The chairman of this committee shall be elected by the Voters’ Assembly for a three (3) year term of office, elected on the alternate year that the chairman of the Outreach Committee is elected.
40. The chairman of this committee shall be a member of the Church Council.
41. An Elder, the second-year School Board member, and the Sunday School Superintendent shall be members of this committee.
42. At least two (2) additional members of this committee shall be appointed by the chairman from the communicant membership of the congregation serving a one (1) year term of appointment; such appointments shall include one of the faculty members of Central Lutheran School, such appointments shall be subject to the approval of the Church Council.
43. This committee shall meet monthly or as the needs of the congregation require and make regular reports to the Church Council with all plans and programs subject to Church Council approval.
44. This committee shall supervise the Sunday School programs.
45. The Chairman of the Board of Education shall submit a recommendation to the Church Council for the position of Sunday School Superintendant.
46. The special areas of responsibility in the program of Christian Education should include:
47. All matters pertaining to Central Lutheran School with respect to Martini congregation, such as promoting the congregations interest in the school and bringing all major items for consideration to the attention of the congregation.
48. All matters pertaining to the Sunday School such as calling of teachers, care of equipment, acquiring teaching materials.
49. Be engaged in the promotion of congregational interest in the educational opportunities provided through the various programs established.
50. Administrate the Martini Kids Club with Pastoral involvement.
51. This committee shall be responsible to appoint such person(s) needed to order and secure necessary educational materials and equipment for the teaching ministry of the church; such expenditures should be reported to and approved by the Church Council.
52. This committee shall make recommendations concerning needed funds for the educational program of the church to the Stewardship and Finance Committee so that such funds may be included in the congregational budget.
53. Youth Committee
54. The Youth Committee shall consist of 4-6 members. The members of the Committee shall include a Chairman, secretary, treasurer, youth director, and youth counselor or counselors. The number of counselors shall be decided by this committee.
55. The Chairman of this committee shall be elected by the voters’ assembly to a three (3) year term.
56. The secretary and treasurer shall be selected by the chairman of the congregation and the chairman of this committee in consultation with the Pastor.
57. The youth director shall be hired by Martini Lutheran Church based on the job description developed by Martini. The contract shall be evaluated and renewed on a yearly basis with the initial recommendations of the Pastor.
58. The primary purpose of this committee is the continuation of ministry to junior high (grades 6-8) and senior high (grades 9-12) youth within Martini Lutheran Church.
59. This committee will support the youth director’s ministry to the youth. This support will include supervision authority, brainstorming, planning, implementing of planning, evaluation and accountability.
60. This committee may expand youth ministry to emprise preschool-5th grade and college age young adults.

**ARTICLE X – SERVICE AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

1. Nominating Committee
2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least five (5) members.
3. The chairman of this committee shall be the Vice-President of the congregation.
4. The Elders(s) who serves on the Stewardship and Finance Committee and the first-year Trustee shall be members of this committee.
5. The Pastor shall be an advisory member of this committee.
6. The called teacher who is presently serving on the Church Council shall be an advisory member of this committee.
7. Additional members of this committee may be appointed for a one (1) year term by the President of the congregation.
8. This committee shall meet prior to the fourth quarter meeting of the Voters’ Assembly and prepare a slate of officers as outlined in Article IV of the congregational By-Laws and present a printed ballot at the Voters’ Assembly election meeting. (By-Laws: Article II, Section B, 2).
9. Audit Committee
10. The Audit Committee shall consist of two (2) members.
11. The members of this committee shall be elected by the voters’ assembly on a (1) year term.
12. Members of this committee should be persons other than members currently serving on the Stewardship and Finance Committee.
13. The chairman of this committee shall meet with the third-year appointee.
14. This committee shall meet with the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary after the end of the business year and prior to the January Annual Voters’ Assembly meeting. (By-Laws: Article XI, Section A).
15. This committee shall be responsible to audit yearly all financial records of the congregation and make a report of the results of such audit at the Voters’ Assembly Annual Meeting.

**ARTICLE XI – CONGREGATIONAL RECORDS**

1. Financial
2. The financial records kept by the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary shall be the property of the congregation and subject to audit.
3. It shall be the responsibility of the audit committee to audit all financial records.
4. Membership Records
5. The personal records of members concerning communion attendance, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and burials which are kept by the Pastor shall be the property of the congregation and subject to audit yearly or as ordered by the Voters’ Assembly.
6. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders to audit the Pastor’s record of official acts.
7. The records of official acts shall be taken into custody by the Board of Elders prior to the granting of a peaceful release to a Pastor.
8. During a vacancy the church records shall be kept by the elected Vacancy Pastor and shall be audited every three (3) months by the Board of Elders.
9. Legal Documents

The legal Board shall have responsibility for all legal documents of the congregation. (By-Laws: Article VIII, Section D, 5)

**ARTICLE XII – CHANGES IN REGULATIONS**

The congregation shall from time to time adopt, alter, or amend rules and regulations for the guidance of officers and committees in their work. (Constitution: Article XIII)

**ARTICLE XIII – ENDOWMENT FUND**

1. Name

This congregation shall have a Congregational Fund. The Fund shall be called the **Martini Lutheran Church Endowment Fund (the Fund).** It shall be one of the funds of this congregation.

1. General Purpose
2. The Fund’s purpose shall be to receive gifts and bequests, from those members and non-members who elect to support an endowment to benefit the mission and ministry of Martini Lutheran Church.
3. The fund shall consist of four permanent sub-funds. These will be entitled, Capital Improvements, Operations, CLS Subsidy and CLS Tuition. (Attached is a description of each sub-fund.)
4. The donations placed in each sub-fund (principal) shall never be used except and unless the entire Fund is dissolved, along with all other congregational assets as per existing bylaws.
5. The donations placed in each sub-fund shall be combined for investment purposes.
6. The investment growth earned by the Fund, up to a maximum of ten-percent (10%) growth in any calendar year, shall be used by the congregation, in the following year, for the purpose of each sub-fund or be reinvested in The Fund. Each sub-fund will available as its share (of the investment growth for the year) an amount equal to that sub-fund’s proportion of the entire Fund’s principal.
7. If the investment growth, earned in the prior year, exceeds 10% of the beginning year principal, this excess amount must be reinvested into the Fund and allocated to each sub-fund, in amounts equal to each fund’s proportion of the entire Fund’s principal. The congregation may approve the use of all or part of these excess earnings, in the following year, by a simple majority vote, at a duly called and constituted Voters’ Assembly.
8. Church members may recommend to the Church Council the creation of new sub-funds. However, the congregation, must approve the establishment of any new sub-fund by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those present at a duly called and constituted Voters’ meeting.
9. Individuals and groups may deposit gifts in the memory of others and/or for the celebration of significant events in their lives, as long as the gifts are designated to one of the four permanent sub-funds or any new sub-fund created by the congregation via the method shown in item seven (7).
10. Duration
11. The **Martini Lutheran Church Fund** shall continue in existence and be used as herein above provided, unless earlier revoked, so long as **Martini Lutheran Church** shall continue to exist. **If Martini Lutheran Church** should cease to exist, then the assets constituting the Fund when **Martini Lutheran Church** ceases to exist shall become the property of the successor Lutheran Church or, if no successor Lutheran Church, then it shall become the absolute property of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.
12. If **Martini Lutheran Church** dissolves it shall, at the time of such dissolution, have the right and duty to determine the existence of a successor Lutheran Church, if any, providing such successor Lutheran Church must qualify as an exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code, and Martini Lutheran Church shall execute the necessary documents to affect such transfer.
13. Governing Board and Officers
14. The Church Council shall promote and manage the Fund. The treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible for receipts and disbursements from the Fund, shall maintain complete and accurate books of the accounts, and shall provide, at least annually, a written financial report of the Fund to the Voters’ Assembly.
15. The Church Council, may Research and recommend that the assets of the Fund be delivered to one or more outside managers for the purpose of exercising prudent investment strategy and action. Initiating any outside management recommendation shall require the approval by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at a duly called and constituted meeting of the Voters’ Assembly.
16. The council shall establish written rules and regulation as may be necessary for the operation of the Fund. It shall adopt standards of goals to guide in the expenditure of the income from the Fund, which it may amend, all within the stated purposes of the Fund.
17. The council shall maintain the fund accounts with such financial institutions as it may, by resolution, authorize and determine. All checks and other documents transferring or expending any funds or assets in the Fund shall be executed by the treasurer and the chairperson of the council.
18. Any members of the council with check signing authority, at the expense of the Fund, shall be covered by a corporate fidelity bond in a principal amount to be determined from time to time by the council.
19. The council may ask other members of the congregation to serve as advisory members and may employ, at the expense of the Fund, such professional counseling on investments and legal matters as it deems to be for the best interest of the Fund.
20. The council shall maintain complete and accurate books of account and may employ such professional help, as it deems necessary in this connection, at the expense of the Fund.
21. No member of the council shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the Fund in which the member of the council has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interests would conflict with the interest of the Fund.
22. Fiscal Year
23. For tax, accounting, distribution, or other purposes, the fiscal year (whether terminating December 31 or otherwise) of Martini Lutheran Church shall be the fiscal year of the Fund.
24. Within two months after the close of each of the Fund’s fiscal years, and at such other times(s) as is deemed convenient, an itemized written statement accurately reflecting the position of the Fund’s income and corpus accounts as of a date reasonably close to the date the statement is submitted, and the receipts, disbursements and changes therein since the Fund’s inception or the previous accounting, as the case may be, shall be submitted to the Marini Lutheran Church Voters’ Assembly.
25. Duties
26. The Church Council shall, at least annually, render a full and complete account of the administration of the Fund during the preceding year.
27. Gifts and contributions from any individual, form or corporation, in cash, appreciating securities, or in any other form of property, including, by way of explanation and not in limitation, direct gifts for the purpose of the Fund, gifts in memory of any person, gifts in the form of a devise or bequest under Will or trust instrument, and gifts of proceeds or portions of proceeds of insurance, annuity, or endowment policies or contracts, may be received by the Fund at any time.
28. Means for acknowledging the receipt of each gift and contribution shall be established and maintained, including, whenever feasible, a designation of the value ascribed to each gift, consistent with the requirements set forth in the Internal Revenue Code for substantiating charitable contributions.
29. All funds and property shall be kept and maintained separate, distinct and independent from the funds and property otherwise belonging to the church. However, the council shall in no event be required to make physical segregation of the assets of the Fund in order to conform to the directions of any individual donors, but may establish separate accounts in it accounting records.
30. The council is to inform the members of the congregation of the purpose of the Fund, and may periodically arrange for members of the congregation to meet with professional counselors in the areas of charitable giving, wills, bequests, insurance, etc.
31. All new members of the council are to receive a copy of the Bylaws of the congregation relating to the Fund to become acquainted with the function and purposes of the Fund.
32. Amendments

Any amendment to the Bylaw which will change, alter, or amend the general purpose for which the Fund is established shall be adopted only if approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present at a duly called and constituted meeting of the Voters’ Assembly, the notice of which has stated that such an amendment will be proposed to the Voters’ Assembly.