



North Carolina Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Constitution for Congregations—Review Checklist

1. The following is a checklist to help the congregation create a final draft of the constitution. The most efficient way to update the congregation constitution is to download the latest version of The Model Constitution for Congregations. The Model can be found on the NC Synod website:
<https://nclutheran.org/?s=model+constitution> or the ELCA website:
<https://resources.elca.org/office-of-the-secretary/model-constitution-for-congregations-2025/>.
2. Make sure to include all starred items without change including placement of the star in front of the number from the latest Model Constitution for Congregations.
3. Within the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions there are places to make choices. You will need to choose between multiple options or whether something is kept in or not. Be sure all places where things must be inserted have taken place. See the list below:
 - a. C1.01. insert name of the congregation. If incorporated, use name from incorporation. If share name with another church, be sure to add city.
 - b. C1.02. insert full legal name of the congregation. (i.e. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Mount Pleasant as opposed to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Mount Pleasant). These entries may be identical.
 - c. C1.02. remove the brackets and the phrase in brackets if your document does not have continuing resolutions
 - d. C1.11. insert North Carolina in the blank
 - e. *C4.04. be sure appropriate bylaws and/or continuing resolutions are written to adequately define the organizational structure of the congregation. Remove the phrase in brackets if your document does not have continuing resolutions

- f. *C5.03.j. make multiple selections based on your structure. Remove phrases and brackets which do not apply
- g. *C5.04. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- h. C5.05. determine where the operation of the mission endowment fund is detailed. Select bylaws or continuing resolutions and delete all brackets.
- i. *C6.01. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- j. *C6.04.d. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- k. *C7.01. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- l. *C7.03. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- m. *C7.05.b. insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- n. *C8.02.d. choose one or all that apply. Remove brackets and what does not apply.
- o. *C9.01. determine who may recommend a call. Select and remove brackets.
- p. *C9.03.b.5) insert North Carolina Synod in the blank
- q. *C9.21. determine who may recommend a call. Select and remove brackets.
- r. C10.01. insert North Carolina in the blank
- s. C10.02. insert a percentage of voting members to call a special meeting
- t. C10.02. keep the word senior and remove brackets or remove brackets and the word senior
- u. C10.03. determine whether to keep the word voting or to strike it. If it is kept, remove the brackets around it
- v. C10.04. insert a percentage of voting members for a quorum
- w. C10.09. make sure to include as it defines the term “ex-officio.”
- x. C11.01.d. indicates the selection process for your treasurer. If the phrase in brackets is applicable, remove the brackets and keep the sentence. If not, remove the sentence.
- y. C11.02. there are four options for the election of the officers of the congregation and options for who does the electing. There are also options for when their terms begin and end – and, if applicable, those blanks must be filled in. Remove brackets and any language that does apply.
- z. C12.01. determine if deacons are on council just like pastor. If so, remove brackets. If not, strike the word deacon. If you do not currently have a deacon, you may want to consider what you would do if you had one. Also, identify the minimum and maximum sizes of your Congregation Council and any other considerations of the voting membership of the council. Remove brackets and phrases which do not apply.

- aa. C12.02. depending on what you did in C12.01., do the same with the deacon in C12.02. Then choose option 1 or 2 and fill in all blanks. Delete what you don't use.
- bb. C12.05.a. insert North Carolina in the blank
- cc. C12.05.a. choose trustees or directors. Remove brackets and the word you do not select.
- dd. C12.05.c. insert an amount in the blank
- ee. C12.05.d. insert an amount in the blank
- ff. C12.06. determine if you have continuing resolutions. If so, remove brackets and keep those words. If not, remove brackets and words as necessary.
- gg. C12.12. keep the word senior and remove brackets or remove brackets and the word senior, as appropriate
- hh. C13.04. determine if president or vice president is correct based on C11.02. Remove brackets and words you do not select.
- ii. C13.05. determine who elects the call committee. (See *C9.01.) Remove brackets and words you do not select.
- jj. C13.07. determine if committee descriptions will be in bylaws or continuing resolutions. The selection must match *C4.04. Remove brackets and words you do not select. (A better option may be to put all committee descriptions in a congregation policy booklet/manual.)
- kk. C13.08. keep the word senior and remove brackets or remove brackets and the word senior. Determine if council president will be an *ex officio* member of all committees like the pastor. Remove brackets and words as necessary.
- ll. C14.02. if allowing, add the appropriate continuing resolution. If not, remove brackets and phrase.
- mm. *C15.11. replace president with vice president if the pastor is the president of the congregation. Remove brackets and words as necessary.
- nn. *C16.01. insert a number in the blank
- oo. Chapter 20 Parish Authorization – if your congregation could become a part of a parish, remove the italicized line in brackets and maintain the provisions. If not, you can remove the whole chapter.

4. Bylaws are required to be part of this document. You may have more bylaws than the ones listed below but you are required to have the following:
 - a. *C4.04. requires an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. This could be a bylaw in Chapter 4 or Chapter 12.
 - b. *C8.05.e. needs a bylaw regarding how to remove a member from the rolls for inactivity
 - c. C10.01. needs a bylaw to specify the time of the annual meeting. The meeting should be held on a specific week and month each year. It is required to at least have the month in which the meeting will occur.
 - d. C11.01.a. requires bylaws regarding the duties of the officers of the congregation/council
 - e. C13.07. need bylaws or continuing resolutions to specify the duties of the committees.

5. There are four footnotes present in the Model Constitution for Congregations all referring to when the pastor is the president of the congregation (and Congregation Council). If this is not applicable in your setting;, use the term “president”, not “vice president,” and remove the brackets and the footnotes.
 - a. C10.02. Consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting. Remove the footnote.
 - b. C12.11. Consider giving the vice president the authority to call a special meeting. Remove the footnote.
 - c. C13.04. use the term “vice president”, not “president,” and remove the brackets and footnote.
 - d. C13.08. Consider selecting the vice president for ex officio membership. Remove the footnote.

6. Be sure all non-starred sections of the constitution, bylaws, and continuing resolutions are not in conflict with any starred section.