



**CONSTITUTION  
of the  
INDEPENDENT LUTHERAN DIOCESE**

2016



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## **ARTICLE 1 – PURPOSE AND VISION**

**Desiring the promotion of true orthodoxy in the unity of the true faith by returning to our first love, Jesus Christ, and the Traditional Liturgy, Doctrines and Faith of the Lutheran Church, this organization is formed.**

## **ARTICLE 2 - NAME**

**The name of this organization is The Independent Lutheran Diocese established July 25, 2008 and incorporated in the State of Oregon on Dec 10, 2008, hereafter referred to as the ILD.**

## **ARTICLE 3 – STATEMENT OF FAITH**

**Section 1. The ILD accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the verbally inspired and inerrant Word of God, and as the only infallible rule and norm of Christian doctrine and practice using the Authorized Version or King James Version (1611) as the standard for interpreting Doctrine.**

**Section 2. The ILD accepts the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, contained in the Book of Concord**

**(1580), as true and faithful expositions of the Word of God, and as correct statements of the teaching of Holy Scripture and of the Faith of the ILD. These Symbolical Writings are: The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession (1530), the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord (Epitome and Solid Declaration).**

**Section 3. The substance of this article shall remain unalterable.**

#### **ARTICLE 4 – DUTIES OF THE ILD**

- **To stand guard over the purity and unity of doctrine within the ILD and to oppose false doctrine.**
- **To help pastors remain faithful in the performance of their duties.**
- **To prepare future pastors for service in the Church.**
- **To examine candidates for the Holy Ministry.**
- **To provide for ecclesiastical ordination and installation into the pastoral office.**
- **To assist congregations in need of pastoral care.**
- **To give theological guidance and consultation on practices.**
- **To strive for uniformity in ceremonies and practices.**
- **To maintain in the congregations the exclusive use of orthodox hymnals, agendas, and catechetical materials.**
- **To establish connections with Orthodox, Confessional Lutheran Churches.**
- **To establish mission congregations wherever the Lord provides opportunity.**

#### **ARTICLE 5 –GOVERNANCE**

**Section 1. The ILD is Episcopal in Polity with each ministry of the ILD being semi-congregationally governed and accountable to the District Representative and the Presiding Bishop. The District Representatives and the Presiding Bishop serve in advisory capacities except those outlined in Article 4 and Article 10.**

**Section 2. The ILD is governed by a Council of Bishops under the authority of the Presiding Bishop. Members of the Council of Bishops shall serve for three-year terms and may be reappointed by the Presiding Bishop. The Council of Bishops, subject to the needs of the ILD, may consist of up to twelve (12) Bishops of the ILD, including the Auxiliary and the Presiding Bishop, subject to the needs of ILD. The Presiding Bishop has the authority to act alone on all matters concerning the Church, but is limited by this Constitution.**

**Section 3. The Presiding Bishop serves *in perpetuity*. He is to provide sound spiritual leadership and teaching. He shall supervise the doctrine and practice of the ILD's ministers and member congregations, and he may be assisted in this regard by the Auxiliary Bishop and Council of Bishops. He is the chief spokesman for the ILD.**

**Section 4. The Auxiliary Bishop is appointed by the Presiding Bishop. He is responsible for maintaining the status quo when the Presiding Bishop is unable to function for a limited time. He does not have the authority to override or change anything that the Presiding Bishop has or has not approved. In the event of the resignation, incapacitating illness, or death of the Presiding Bishop, the Auxiliary Bishop shall immediately call a session of the Council of Bishops to elect a new Presiding Bishop.**

**Section 5. The Council of Bishops consists of members who have been appointed by the Presiding Bishop to govern the ILD. They are to stand guard over the purity and unity of doctrine within the ILD and to oppose false doctrine. They shall approve give or deny approval to those seeking ordination or transfer of credentials to the ILD. They shall also make decisions in regards to Doctrine, Church Practice and status of Pastors and Congregations.**

**Section 6. District Representatives are appointed by the Council of Bishops for a period of five (5) years. They are to oversee the various Congregations in their Districts and they shall represent the ILD when requested to do so under the direction of the**

**Council of Bishops. District Representative may consist of ordained Pastors or Bishops.**

## **ARTICLE 6 – DISSOLUTION**

**The ILD does not own property, solicit nor disburse funds, and does not have a treasurer, bank account, or any other assets on hand. Therefore, upon dissolution, the Church will simply cease to exist with no assets on hand to disburse.**

## **ARTICLE 7 – GENERAL MEETINGS OF THE ILD**

**The ILD will meet in General Meeting at least once every two years to conduct its affairs. The time and place of such Meeting shall be determined by the Council of Bishops.**

## **ARTICLE 8 – RULES OF ORDER**

**All official meetings and voting of the ILD shall be conducted in accordance with the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order.**

## **ARTICLE 9 – ARTICLES AND BYLAWS**

**Section 1. The Articles and Bylaws of this constitution may be changed or repealed, or any new ones added by the Council of Bishops of the ILD by unanimous vote.**

## **ARTICLE 10 – ADVISORY NATURE OF THE ILD**

**The ILD is only advisory with respect to member congregations with their pastors. Individual congregations operate according to their own constitution and bylaws. The ILD will assist its Pastors in crisis situations or by request. It does not direct, control, or supervise the affairs of individual member Congregations or Missions except as specifically provided in this constitution. The ILD shall, in a crisis situation, assist a Congregation through the situation according to the by-laws.**

## **ARTICLE 11 - MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** The members of the ILD consist of the ordained ministers, congregations and missions which have been received into membership according to the procedures outlined in the Bylaws of this Constitution. The ILD will recognize, receive, and maintain a list of its member churches and other ministries.

**Section 2.** The ILD will afford its Pastors, Congregations and Missions, full freedom to separate themselves from ILD. The ILD will make no stipulation or bylaw denying the freedom to leave the ILD. A member Congregation may terminate its relationship with the ILD by following such internal procedures as are required by that member Congregation and gives written notice to the ILD that it no longer desires to be a member of the ILD.

**Section 3.** Each member congregation of the ILD will retain full title to its properties. The ILD will make no stipulations or bylaws denying the property rights of its member congregations. The constitutions of individual congregations will stipulate their own relationship with the ILD in regard to membership. If a congregation dissolves, its property may be given to the ILD to dispose of in the manner that congregation so desires after due consultation with the Council of Bishops.

**Section 4. Adjunct Congregations.** When a congregation is part of another church body not in Pulpit and Altar Fellowship with the ILD, that congregation may apply to become an adjunct congregation of the ILD. When the Congregation is able to adhere to the ILD constitution and has severed membership with its former church body, it may then apply for congregational status in the ILD.

## **ARTICLE 12 - ORDINATION**

**Section 1.** An ordained Lutheran minister who seeks membership in the ministerium of the ILD must be in agreement with the doctrine and practice of the ILD, and he must agree to abide by the constitution and bylaws of the ILD. He must not hold simultaneous membership in any other church-body unless

**approved by the Council of Bishops. He must apply for membership through the Presiding Bishop and be accepted provisionally by the Council of Bishops, with final acceptance by majority vote of Council of Bishops.**

**Section 2. In addition to the stipulations of Section 1 of this Article, an ordained candidate for membership who is not a member of a church-body with which the ILD is in fellowship with, must participate in a colloquy arranged by the Council of Bishops, in order to determine his agreement with the doctrine and practice of the ILD. Following provisional acceptance by the Council of Bishops, the candidate will be eligible to accept a call in the ILD.**

**Section 3. An ordained candidate for membership who is entering the ILD from another Lutheran church-body may be received by transfer into the ILD in accordance with Section 2 of this Article.**

**Section 4. Ordained ministers of the ILD shall be subject to church discipline for the following reasons: a) teaching or preaching false doctrine; b) malfeasance of duty; c) immoral conduct (including, adultery, homosexuality, drunkenness, criminal behavior, etc.). Upon a charge of misconduct under one of the above categories, Council of Bishops of the ILD shall appoint a committee to investigate and report on the charge. If the accused is a member of the Council of Bishops, he shall not participate in the appointment of such a committee or the disciplinary decisions of the Council of Bishops. Discipline shall be determined and administered by the Council of Bishops, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures (Matthew 18:15-19; Luke 17:3; Titus 3:10, etc.).**

**Section 5. A theological student studying for the ministry under the auspices of the ILD may attend a theological seminary approved by the ILD. As part of his theological studies, he may serve for approximately 6 months to one year as a vicar (Deacon) in a member congregation of the ILD, or, if approved by the Presiding Bishop of the ILD, may establish a congregation in place of a doing a Vicarage. Upon finishing his studies, and upon approval of the Council of Bishops, he will be eligible for ordination and a call to a member congregation of the ILD, or to a**

**congregation that is in the process of becoming a member congregation of the ILD. Upon his acceptance of a call, he will be ordained by the local Bishop, or a minister of the ILD who has been authorized by the local Bishop.**

## **BYLAWS TO THE ILD CONSTITUTION**

**These bylaws are duly adopted to govern the affairs of the Independent Lutheran Diocese.**

### **BYLAWS FOR ARTICLE 5 – GOVERNANCE**

**05.02.01 Any decisions made by the Council of Bishops must be by unanimous vote with all members agreeing.**

**05.02.02 Additional members to the Council of Bishops may be made after due consultation, nomination and vetting of potential candidates. This also hold true for the addition of other Bishops not in the Council of Bishops.**

**05.03.01 The Presiding Bishop may resign if necessary due to health issues or discipline under Article 12 Section 4 of the Constitution.**

**05.05.01 Any decision made by the Council of Bishops may be appealed; such appeals are to be written and submitted to the Council for reconsideration and final disposition.**

### **BYLAWS FOR ARTICLE 10 – ADVISORY NATURE**

**10.01.01 When the pastor of a member congregation believes that his congregation is in a crisis situation, he shall consult with the District Representative, who shall consult with the Council of Bishops. After investigation, the Council of Bishops, in**



**consultation with the District Representative and the Pastor of the congregation, will determine whether or not the congregation is, indeed, in a crisis situation. If the congregation is determined to be in crisis, the Council of Bishops and the District Representative will assume management of the congregation until such time as the situation is resolved to the satisfaction of the Council of Bishops and the District Representative.**

**10.01.01.01 Crisis situations will include, but not be limited to: a member or members who cause continual dissention in the congregation to the point of creating an unstable environment; members who are under discipline but refuse to accept said discipline; situations of personal danger to the pastor and/or members of the congregation.**

**10.01.01.02 Other situations will be determined by the individual pastor, in consultation with the local District Representative and the Council of Bishops.**

## **BYLAWS FOR ARTICLE 11 - MEMBERSHIP**

**11.01 A congregation which seeks membership in the ILD, shall adhere to ILD procedures.**

**11.01.01 It shall profess its agreement with the doctrinal basis of the ILD as set forth in Article 3 of this constitution and abide by this Constitution. If necessary, the Congregation shall revise and/or amend its constitution and bylaws in order to bring them into harmony with the constitution and bylaws of the ILD.**

**11.01.02 A Congregational majority vote must taken before requesting membership.**

**11.01.03 A Congregation shall apply for membership through the Presiding Bishop and be accepted provisionally the Council of Bishops.**

**11.02.01 Member Congregations and Missions shall subscribe to and uphold the constitution of the ILD and its Doctrine.**

**11.02.02 Member Congregations and Missions shall agree to call Pastors or Deacons who actively uphold and subscribe to the constitution of the ILD and its Doctrine.**

**11.02.03 Member Congregations and Missions shall agree Preach the Word and administer the Sacraments in accordance with Holy Scripture (Old and New Testaments) and with the Confessions of the Lutheran Church (Book of Concord 1580).**

**11.02.04 Congregations needing a Pastor shall be provided one until an ILD Pastor is selected.**

**11.02.05 Both Pastors and Congregations shall submit an annual report to the Council of Bishops by Jan 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.**

**11.03.04 Any Congregation dissolving shall notify the Council of Bishops shall notify the Council of Bishops.**

## **BYLAWS FOR ARTICLE 12 – ORDINATION**

**12.01 All seeking to be rostered or ordained must fill out an application form and a Colloquy of Theology (CET).**

**12.02 Those who seek ordination must show proper training in an approved Lutheran program such as the lay-ministry program, training for DCN certification, etc. They may also seek ordination after taking the courses in the Independent Lutheran Seminary.**

**12.04.01 Pastors who cannot be reached by any means and who have not submitted an annual report for a period of two (2) years may be removed from the roster of the ILD.**

