



Messiah Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America www.messiahnh.org
303 Route 101 P.O. Box 488 Amherst, NH 03031-0488 603-673-2011

Christmas 2025

Dear Messiah Community,

The Messiah Council would like to make an amendment to our constitution to reduce the size of our council so it is more in line with our needs and also our ability to fill positions. This amendment would need to follow the language of the ELCA model constitution for congregations which says:

Chapter 16. AMENDMENTS

***C16.01.** Unless provision ***C16.04.** is applicable, those sections of this constitution that are not required, in accord with the Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, may be amended in the following manner. Amendments may be proposed by at least twelve voting members or by the Congregation Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Congregation Council 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special Congregation Meeting called for that purpose. The Congregation Council shall notify this congregation's members of the proposal together with the council's recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting. Notification may take place by mail or electronic means, as permitted by state law.

***C16.02.** An amendment to this constitution, proposed under ***C16.01.**, shall: a. be approved at any legally called meeting of this congregation by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting; and b. be ratified unchanged at the next regular meeting of this congregation by a two thirds vote of those voting members present and voting.

The portion of our constitution we would like to modify is:

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the officers of this congregation, and not more than ~~six~~ **four** nor fewer than ~~four~~ **two** members of this congregation at least one of whom shall be a youth, if possible, and at least one of whom shall be a young adult, if possible. Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

Currently our council is supposed to have 9-11 members (pastor, president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) with not more than six nor fewer than four additional members.

(continued on back)

Faith, hope, love... and the greatest of these is love - First Corinthians 13:13

If approved our revised constitution would be:

C12.01. The voting membership of the Congregation Council shall consist of the pastor(s), the deacon(s), the officers of this congregation, and not more than four nor fewer than two members of this congregation at least one of whom shall be a youth, if possible, and at least one of whom shall be a young adult, if possible. Any voting member of this congregation may be elected, subject only to the limitation on the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Congregation Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a voting member of this congregation or b) is absent from four successive regular meetings of the Congregation Council without cause. Consistent with the laws of the state in which this congregation is incorporated, this congregation may adopt procedures for the removal of a member of the Congregation Council in other circumstances.

In order to incorporate this change into the constitution:

- we need an initial vote to bring this change into consideration (**per *16.01.**) with a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at a legally called meeting (our January 25, 2026 annual meeting).
- have an additional ratification vote (also **per *16.01.**) of the unchanged proposal at the next regular meeting of the congregation (January 2027 annual meeting which will be on the 3rd or 4th Sunday of January) with a 2/3 vote of voting members present and voting

The Messiah Church Council is hereby notifying you of this proposed change and recommending that our voting membership vote in favor of the proposal and also vote in favor of the ratification.

Thank you. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to reach out to any of our Council members.

Grace and Peace,

Michelle Alvarez
President

Teri Drake
Vice President

Deanna Cordts
Secretary

Jeff Cordts
Treasurer

Karl Hester
Pastor

Aria Neukam

Jonathan Rossé

Ed Stinnett