

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Constitution and Bylaws

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Note: For ease of use, Bylaws are included in the appropriate sections of this constitution according to the subject matter and have been italicized.

PREAMBLE

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Created in God's image, redeemed by His Son, empowered by His Holy Spirit, this congregation is called to:

- † Preach the Gospel to the whole world (Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:18-20)
- † Unite in worship as commanded by Christ (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- † Practice fellowship with one another (Acts 2:42)
- † Witness to all people (Acts 1:8)
- † Help each other grow in the Word (Ephesians 4:11-14)
- † Serve the needs of all in Christian love (Ephesians 4:7-16, Mark 10:42-44, John 13:35, Galatians 6:10)
- † Administer the Sacraments (Mark 14:22-25)
- † Instruct the youth and provide for their spiritual welfare (Matthew 19:13-14)

Therefore we, a group of Lutheran Christians, accept and subscribe to the following Constitution and Bylaws in accordance with which all spiritual and material affairs of our congregation shall be governed.

ARTICLE 1. NAME AND INCORPORATION

- A1.01 The name of this congregation shall be: Faith Lutheran Church.
- A1.02 For the purpose of this constitution and accompanying By-laws, the Faith Lutheran Church congregation is herein after designated as "This Congregation".
- A1.03 This congregation shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Iowa as Spencer Faith Lutheran Church.

ARTICLE 2. CONFESSION OF FAITH

- A2.01 This congregation confesses faith in the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
- A2.02 In the Father, the creator and sustainer of the universe;
- A2.03 In the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior who died and rose again for the redemption of a fallen humanity; and
- A2.04 In the Spirit, who calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the Christian Church and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the faith.
- A2.05 This congregation further accepts that the Old and New Testaments are the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God and the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life. As a brief and true statement of the doctrine of the Word of God, this congregation accepts the following: The Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, Luther's Small Catechism, Luther's Large Catechism, and the Book of Concord of 1580.

ARTICLE 3. CHURCH AFFILIATION

A3.01 This congregation shall be affiliated with the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC).

ARTICLE 4. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

A4.01 The Church is a group of people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.

A4.02 To fulfill this purpose, this congregation shall:

- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
- b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
- c. Teach the Word of God.
- d. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
- e. Respond to human need, work toward righteousness and peace, care for the sick and suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
- f. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in this congregation.
- g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for this congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the church.

ARTICLE 5. MEMBERSHIP

A5.01 Members of this congregation shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this congregation at the time this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintained their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.

A5.02 Members shall be defined as follows:

- a. Baptized members are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this congregation, or having been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, have been received by a certificate of transfer from other Lutheran congregations, or by affirmation of faith. (see Green LBW page 198)
 - 1) Affirmation of Faith is the declaration of faith by the individual or in a minor's case by a parent/guardian.
- b. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed by this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism, or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

- c. Voting members are confirmed members or 18 years of age. Such confirmed or adult members shall have communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding year and/or given some other evidence of Christian fellowship within the preceding 12 months.
- d. Associate members are persons holding membership in other Christian congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices or membership on the Planning Council.
- e. Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
 - 1) death
 - 2) resignation
 - 3) transfer or release
 - 4) disciplinary action by the Planning Council
- f. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

ARTICLE 6. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- A6.01 Denial of the Christian faith as described in the Constitution and Bylaws, conduct grossly unbecoming of a member, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation shall be attempted following the process specified in Matthew 18: 15-17:
- a. Private admonition by the pastor(s) or Council Chairperson.
 - b. Admonition by the pastor(s) or Council Chairperson in the presence of two witnesses. The member facing discipline may bring as many as two witnesses to this meeting.
 - c. If there is no resolution, the Council shall be responsible to conduct a final effort to achieve reconciliation. The member facing discipline may bring as many as two witnesses to this meeting. The decision of the Council is final.
 - d. The Council may either suspend membership for a definite period of time or remove the member from the membership roll. The decision shall be confirmed in writing to the disciplined member.
 - e. When there is a disagreement among factions within the congregation on a substantive issue that cannot be resolved by the parties, members of this congregation shall have access to the Executive Board of the LCMC. The Executive Board's decision shall be final.

ARTICLE 7. NATURE OF THE CHURCH

A7.01 The Church is the Body of Christ. All power of the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this congregation are to be carried out under His rule and authority.

ARTICLE 8. POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

A8.01 The power and authority of this congregation has its source in the Word of God and shall be exercised through congregational meetings. These meetings shall be called and conducted in conformity with civil laws and the provisions of the constitution and bylaws of this congregation.

A8.02 Only such authority as is delegated to the Planning Council of this congregation or to other organizational units in this congregation's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by this congregation which is authorized to:

- a. Call a pastor as provided in Article 11.
- b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Article 11.
- c. Appoint or terminate the positions necessary in the governing of this congregation such as youth director, music director, education director, etc.
- d. Approve the annual budget.
- e. Acquire real and personal property by gifting, creating, purchasing, or other lawful means. (see Article 15, A15.02.01)
- f. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose.
- g. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means.
- h. Elect its officers, Planning Council, the Call Team, and require them to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution and bylaws.

ARTICLE 9. PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

A9.01 All property that is acquired by this congregation shall be held, owned, and titled in the name of this congregation.

A9.02 This congregation's real property shall not be purchased, disposed of, or encumbered in any manner except as is approved by a two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting members present and voting at a congregational meeting of this congregation.

A9.03 Upon dissolution of this Church (corporation), the Planning Council shall pay and make provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of this Church (corporation). The Planning Council shall dispose of all of the non-cash assets of this Church (corporation).

- A9.04 Prior to dissolution of this Church (corporation), the Planning Council shall pay and make provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of this Church (corporation).
- A9.05 Upon dissolution and after payment of all liabilities, a two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting membership present and voting at a congregational meeting of this congregation shall direct the cash assets (remaining equity) to those organizations involved exclusively with charitable, educational, or religious purposes. Said organizations shall qualify as an exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code as the Planning Council shall determine.

ARTICLE 10. THE CALL TEAM

- A10.01 When a pastoral vacancy occurs, there shall be a Call Team elected from the voting members from this congregation.
- A10.02 The Call Team shall consist of no less than 9 and no more than 15 voting members from this congregation.
- a. The Call Team shall include one Planning Council member with the remainder being voting members from this congregation.
 - b. The President of the Planning Council shall be a non-voting member who provides guidance as needed to the Call Team. The President may attend meetings at the request of the Call Team.
 - c. Upon the need for additional pastor(s), the current pastor(s) shall be non-voting member(s) who provide guidance as needed to the Call Team.
- A10.03 A congregational meeting shall be called for the purpose of electing a Call Team.
- A10.04 Two weeks notification (see Article 12, A12.04) must be given to this congregation to elect a Call Team.
- A10.05 The Call Team shall elect a team leader from the membership of the Call Team.
- A10.06 The Call Team shall elect a secretary from membership of the Call Team to record the minutes of each meeting.
- A10.07 The Call Team team leader shall report team progress at each regular meeting of the Planning Council.
- A10.08 The term of the Call Team shall terminate upon the installation of the pastor.
- A10.09 Two weeks notification shall be given to this congregation before a congregational meeting to vote to call the pastor.
- A10.10 Authority to call a pastor shall rest in this congregation by at least a two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting members present and voting at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.
- a. A member is defined in Article 5 of this constitution.

b. A quorum is defined in Article 12 of this constitution.

A10.11 The LCMC Call Packet can be found on the LCMC website.

ARTICLE 11. THE PASTOR

A11.01 Only individuals who accept and pledge faithful adherence to the confessions of this congregation as set forth in the Preamble and Article 2 of this Constitution and are clergy of, and/or recommended for consideration by the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, can be called to serve as pastors of this congregation.

A11.02 Authority to call a pastor for this congregation shall be by at least a two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting members present and voting at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

A11.03 Consistent with the confession of faith and the practice of this Church, each pastor shall:

- a. Preach the Word.
- b. Administer the Sacraments.
- c. Conduct public worship.
- d. Provide pastoral care.
- e. Give pastoral leadership for meetings, activities, and organizations.
- f. Lead and equip the members in fulfilling the call to give faithful witness.
- g. Strive in word and action to be a worthy example in Christian living.
- h. Continue their education to provide opportunity for personal renewal, enrichment of devotional life, and development of pastoral effectiveness.

A11.04 The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in the letter of call.

A11.05 The call of this congregation, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only by the following:

- a. A special congregational meeting shall be called to discuss the termination of the pastor. At this special congregational meeting a paper ballot shall be taken following civil discussion. The necessary action to be taken shall be determined by the two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting members present and voting at this congregational meeting called for this purpose.
 - 1) The Planning Council shall abide by the vote at this special congregational meeting.
- b. The completion of a call for a specific term.
- c. Resignation of the pastor.

- d. Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in this congregation in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor.
 - e. The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor.
 - f. Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty based on verified and documented evidence.
 - g. The dissolution of this congregation.
- A11.06 Upon the departure of the senior pastor all other pastors shall resign. These other pastors are eligible to be called as senior/associate pastors.

ARTICLE 12. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

- A12.01 The annual congregational meeting shall be held the second Sunday in August.
- A12.01.01 The financial books of this congregation shall be closed on December 31st of each year.*
- A12.02 At the annual meeting, membership of this congregation shall receive reports from all the officers, boards, teams, and organizations of the church. Such reports, including a financial statement, shall be submitted in writing to the church office 10 days prior to the annual meeting.
- A12.03 A special congregational meeting may be called by the pastor, the Planning Council, or the President, or shall be called at the written and signed petition request of one-fourth of the voting members. The call for each special congregational meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- A12.04 Notice of all special congregational meetings shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by electronic mail or postal mail to all members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the special congregational meeting. The posting of such notice in the postal mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- A12.05 One-fourth (1/4) of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.
- A12.06 Voting by proxy or by absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- A12.07 Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this congregation. It is incumbent upon the President and Vice President to follow Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE 13. THE NOMINATING TEAM

- A13.01 The nominating team shall serve a term of one year and shall consist of five voting members, two of whom shall be outgoing members of the council and three non-Planning Council members nominated from the floor and elected at the

congregational annual meeting from the prior year. The nominating team shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall receive prior consent from each candidate. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the notice of the annual meeting of Faith Lutheran Church. In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating team, nominations may be made from the floor during the annual meeting as long as prior consent of the nominee has been made.

A13.02 Nominating team members cannot nominate themselves or another Nominating Team member.

A13.03 Nominating team members and spouses cannot serve on the Nominating Team at the same time.

ARTICLE 14. PLANNING COUNCIL

A14.01 The Planning Council consists of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Council Secretary, and the Pastor, along with up to 15 team member team leaders. The Planning Council shall conduct monthly meetings plus additional meetings as needed.

A14.01.01 President – The President presides over the Planning Council meeting. The President advances to this position from Vice President. The President is a non-voting position except when a vote to break a tie is necessary.

A14.01.02 Vice President – The Vice President presides over the Planning Council meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice President is elected from the Planning Council by the Planning Council and shall have been a Planning Council member the year preceding election to the office of Vice President. The Vice President is a non-voting position.

1. If the Planning Council is unable to elect the Vice President from within itself, then the Planning Council will look for a Vice President from within the Planning Council teams.

2. If the Planning Council is unable to elect the Vice President from the Planning Council teams, then the Nominating Team will be given authorization to search out viable and willing candidates and present the candidates to the Planning Council for election.

A14.01.03 Treasurer – The Treasurer is appointed to the Planning Council. The Treasurer provides reports for every Planning Council meeting including reports for deposits of income, payments of expenses, bills and invoices to be approved, and financial statements. The Treasurer shall oversee the financial team who receives, records, and maintains the records for the income received from contributing members and other sources. Additional duties shall be contained in the job description. This position is a non-voting position.

- A14.01.04 *Council Secretary – The Council Secretary is appointed to the Planning Council. The Council Secretary records Planning Council business and prepares meeting minutes for each Planning Council meeting. Additional duties shall be contained in the job description. This position is a non-voting position.*
- A14.01.05 *Pastor(s) – The pastor(s) shall provide spiritual and theological input to the Planning Council's activities. Pastor(s) are non-voting participant(s) in the Planning Council.*
- A14.02 The Church Teams are Worship Services, Management and Finance, Mission and Outreach, Youth and Family, Christian Life, and Technology. The Church Teams are described in Article 15.
- A14.03 The Planning Council member can serve one three year term. The first year of the church there will be some council members that will serve one year, and some that serve two years until the rotations evolve into one-third of the council being elected each year. The elected Planning Council member duties begin upon election.
- A14.04 Planning Council terms are for three years.
- A14.04.01 *Only one member of a family may serve on the Planning Council during the same term. For the purpose of this bylaw, "family" includes the spouse.*
- A14.05 An individual seeking an additional term of office on the Planning Council may seek a term again after fulfilling a one year leave.
- A14.06 If a Planning Council member cannot fulfill the remaining term of their office, the Planning Council shall appoint an individual to fill the office until the next annual meeting. If there is time remaining in the office, the nominating team shall submit names of individuals to be voted on at the annual meeting to complete the remaining term of office.
- A14.07 If a Planning Council member is terminated from the council, that individual remains a member of the congregation.
- A14.08 The major properties projects such as kitchen, offices, and Sunday School rooms shall be funded by fundraising activities that are outside and above the approved Team budgets.
- A14.09 The Planning Council and its Teams shall not exceed \$5,000 in spending per item or incident outside and above the approved Team budgets without congregational approval.
- A14.10 In the event of an emergency, such as to protect the property or safety issues, the Planning Council is authorized to spend up to \$5,000 without congregational approval.

ARTICLE 15. THE CHURCH TEAMS

- A15.01 Worship Services

A15.01.01 Worship, & Liturgy – coordinates worship at each worship event considering the seasons of the Lutheran calendar, coordinates with Music to support the message, uses lessons and Psalms that tie to the message, works with the children's message presenter to coordinate message/lesson that supports the main worship message, searches for new worship materials, and brings recommendations to Planning Council for approval. Worship & Liturgy shall work together with Music.

A15.01.02 Music – coordinates music at each worship event considering the seasons of the Lutheran calendar, uses a variety of music that supports the message, searches for new worship music and materials, and brings recommendations to Planning Council for approval. Music shall work together with Worship & Liturgy.

A15.01.03 Worship Preparation – Prepares sanctuary for worship, helps arrange for additional items for administering sacraments and special services. Worship Preparation shall work closely with all Worship Services Teams.

A15.02 Management and Finance

A15.02.01 Stewardship, Gifts & Memorials – Take ownership of church finances, annual budget preparation, categorizes, records, and disperses gift and memorial funds. Receives written proposals to consider any new ideas for funding sources or financially supporting such items as missions, evangelism trips, etc.

A15.02.02 Staff Supervision and Time/Talent Scheduling – Develops job descriptions for staff, performs annual reviews for staff, provides time and talent inventory and scheduling, maintains living schedule for greeters, ushers, readers, communion assistants, etc.

A15.02.03 Properties, Budget and Maintenance – Maintain inventory of property, budget for capital improvements and repairs, maintain the church properties.

A15.03 Mission and Outreach

A15.03.01 Evangelism, Visitations, and New Members – New member recruitment, member retention, visit the sick, ensure communion for home bound, nurture new members, support networks to assist those who have suffered a loss or who are in need.

A15.03.02 World and Community Missions – Identifies local and world missions for this congregation to support, both financially and hands on, and brings to the Planning Council and/or congregation for approval, organizes execution of mission work.

A15.04 Youth and Family

A15.04.01 Children Christian Nurture – Youth education, organize and staff nursery, Sunday School program and education materials, staff teachers, and confirmation support.

A15.04.02 Sunday School Superintendent & Adult Christian Nurture – Adult membership education and programs, adult Bible studies, adult Sunday School, etc.

A15.04.03 Youth Group Christian Nurture – Hands on youth activities, organize youth service activities, support LCMC and other Lutheran camp participation, organize and take youth to LCMC youth conventions.

A15.05 Christian Life

A15.05.01 Fellowship, Coffee, Potlucks, Weddings, Funerals – Maintain servant resources and schedule food for weekly fellowship coffee and rolls, organize potlucks. Organize Servant Teams to support this congregation’s baptisms, confirmations, weddings, funerals, or other celebratory events.

A15.05.02 Ministries – History, Newsletter, and Library – Support ministries, organize and publish weekly newsletter, develop and maintain this congregation's library. Develop and maintain a church history of Faith Lutheran Church.

A15.06 Technology

A15.06.01 Technology Coordination – The Technology Team Leader shall assemble a Technology Team. This team shall oversee, advise, and coordinate all technological hardware and software purchases, operations, and improvements.

ARTICLE 16. FINANCIAL REVIEW

A16.01 An official review of the financial books of the church shall be done by an accounting firm annually. This official review shall be completed prior to the annual meeting.

ARTICLE 17. BYLAWS

A17.01 This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution. Changes to the bylaws may be proposed by one third (1/3) of the voting membership or by the Planning Council. The proposed bylaws must be filed in writing with the Planning Council at least 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special congregational meeting called for that purpose. The Planning Council shall notify the congregation's voting members of the proposal with the council recommendations at least 30 days prior to the meeting. Bylaws proposed may be adopted or amended at a legally called meeting of this congregation for this purpose by a majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting members present and voting. Approved changes to the bylaws shall be officially recorded by the secretary of this congregation.

ARTICLE 18. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A18.01 Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by at least one-third (1/3) of the voting membership or by the Planning Council. The proposed amendments must be filed in writing with the Planning Council at least 60 days before formal consideration by this congregation at a regular or special congregational meeting called for that purpose. The Planning Council shall notify the congregation's voting membership of the proposal with the council recommendations at least 30 days prior to the meeting. An amendment to this constitution shall be approved at a legally called congregational meeting according to this constitution by a two-thirds majority paper

ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting membership present and voting. The passed amendment shall then be read at the next annual meeting and voted on by the two-thirds majority paper ballot of a quorum (see Article 12, A12.05) of the voting membership present and voting at the annual congregational meeting. If the amendment is passed, the effective date shall be included in the amendment and noted in the constitution.

ARTICLE 19. LIMITS OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

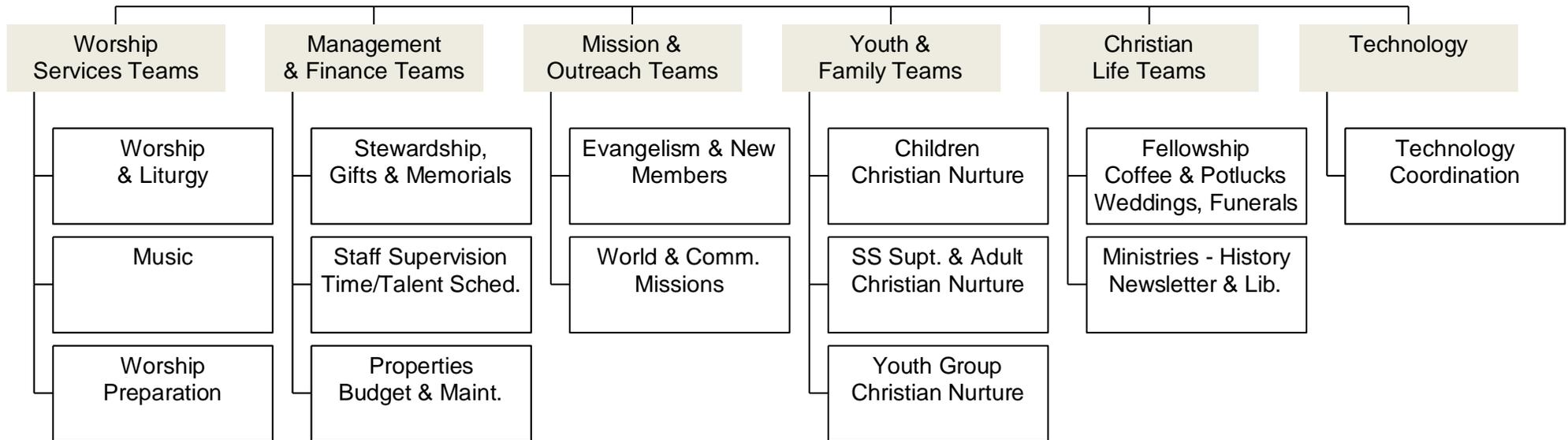
A19.01 This congregation will purchase general liability insurance, professional liability insurance, and directors and officers insurance. These liability policies may provide coverage for all persons who may serve or have served at any time as senior pastor or associate pastor or in an executive level, staff position in the church, or as a church officer, or member of a board or team, or as a leader elected or appointed by the church or a volunteer while acting under the scope of the church or congregation.

Faith Lutheran Church – Spencer, Iowa

Officers and Appointed Positions



Planning Council Teams



a – advances from Vice President
 b – call process
 c – appointed by Planning Council
 d – elected from Planning Council