

Minnesota District Constitution Committee

Rev. David Peters, chairman
Rev. Paul Welke Mr. Bradley Kletscher, Esq.

REPORT TO THE BIENNIAL CONVENTION OF THE MINNESOTA DISTRICT

June 3, 2022

Dear Brothers in Christ Jesus:

In the past biennium our Committee has been working with the following congregations with the rewriting or amending of their Constitutions and Bylaws. These are in various stages of the process:

St. John – Sleepy Eye, MN
Brooklyn – Brooklyn Park, MN
Cross of Christ – Coon Rapids, MN
Friedens – New Prague, MN
Zion – Olivia, MN
Holy Trinity – New Hope, MN
St. John – Redwood Falls, MN
Crown of Life – West St Paul, MN
Trinity–Mt. Olive – Johnson, MN

Please remember, when your voters are formalizing any amendment your constitution or bylaws, to include the following statement: “... pending approval by our Minnesota District Constitution Committee.”

Please submit all proposed constitutions, bylaws, and amendments of the same to the chairman of our Committee. He will forward it to the other two men who also serve on our Committee for their review and suggestions. They will send their suggestions back to the chairman, who will collate all of our suggestions together and send them back to the submitting congregation and await their second draft, which should incorporate our suggested revisions. At that point I will be the pen pal of the submitting congregation, which will resubmit revisions to our Committee until the three of us approve of the document. Our chairman will forward all approved documents to our District President’s office for his records.

Please submit your documents to our chairman in two formats: PDF and RTF. Our committee-men work with a variety of word processors, not necessarily the same as our congregations. For example, WordPerfect (WPD) and MS Word (DOCX) do not work together very well. However,

Portable Document Format (PDF) and Rich Text Format (RTF) work on almost everyone's systems very well.

Our Committee will compare all submissions to the current *Model Constitution and Bylaws of the WELS* as a starting point of our critique. We may ask questions about variances from the Model -- though not all variances will be rejected! We want to be sure that the submitting congregation, school, or organization, has very carefully thought through their proposed methods and language, and that their submission is consistent with God's Word, our Confessions, our synod's and district's constitution and bylaws, the laws of your state, and the experience of others who have attempted to use the same or similar variant methods and language. Sharing the wisdom seems wise.

Many of our editorial comments are very simple typos to be corrected. All of our suggestions can easily be incorporated into your document before you give it final approval. Please take our Committee's suggestions, update your proposed Constitution and Bylaws accordingly, and have your voters assembly approve the revised document once again "... pending approval of the Minnesota District Constitution Committee." Once done, please resubmit it to our committee through our chairman. Please direct any questions you may have to him. He will inform you when your finished document has received our Committee's formal approval.

How to Change an Article Which Is "Unalterable" and/or "Irrepealable"

By definition, you cannot amend anything within any article which is listed within your Constitution as "unalterable" and/or "irrepealable." However, you CAN rescind the entire Constitution and bylaws document and replace it with another Constitution and Bylaws -- one in which you have fixed all of the errors in the original document. This must be done through the regular amendment process as spelled out in your Constitution. It should also be accomplished in ONE resolution; for example:

"We hereby rescind our entire Constitution and Bylaws of January 15, 1944 [or whenever it was formally adopted] as amended most recently on August 23, 2002 [or whenever], and we hereby adopt the following document as the new and official Constitution and Bylaws of St. So-and-So's Lutheran Church, effective date ____, pending approval by the Minnesota District Constitution Committee of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod."

Thank you for the privilege of involving our Committee in this portion of the ministry being done by our district's congregations! May the Holy Spirit continue to bless our labor in the Lord, which is never in vain.

With you in Christ's service,

Rev. David Peters, chairman

Rev. Paul Welke

Mr. Bradley Kletscher, Esq.