

EDISON LUTHERAN CHURCH

Bow, Washington

BYLAWS

PART 1 – COMMUNION PARTICIPATION

1. This congregation invites all of its members, who have been prepared to receive the sacrament, to participate regularly in Holy Communion. Baptized children may be admitted to the Sacrament of the Altar if, after expressing a desire for the sacrament, they have been instructed in Holy Communion and the pastor and parents, in consultation with the child, decide that it is important for the child's spiritual development. Baptized children who come from other Lutheran congregations where they have been receiving Holy Communion shall normally be received at the Lord's Table at Edison Lutheran Church.
2. Participation in Holy Communion shall be open to others who accept the Lutheran teaching in regard to this Sacrament.
3. It shall be made known to prospective participants that the belief of this congregation is:

Participation in the Lord's Supper is the reception of "...the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given with bread and wine, instituted by Christ himself for us to eat and drink."*

We hold that a Person is well prepared and worthy who believes these words, given and shed for you for the remission of sins. But anyone who does not believe these words, or doubts them, is neither prepared nor worthy, for the words 'for you' require simply a believing heart."*

*quotes from Part V, Luther's Small Catechism.

PART II – CONFLICTING LOYALTIES

1. While the building of the congregation shall be open to all people to share in its worship, instruction, pastoral care, and fellowship, the congregation rejects all fellowship with any secret or open organizations which are avowedly religious or which practice forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God incarnate to be our only Savior from sin, and which thus teach salvation by works.
2. Ceremonies of lodges or other such organizations shall not be permitted in the building or premises of the congregation; nor shall its Pastor(s) or lay assistant(s) take part in any such ceremonies wherever they are conducted.

PART III – MEMBERSHIP (cf. Chapter 8 of Constitution)

A. Baptized Members:

1. A child, one or both of whose parents or guardians are members of the congregation, shall, upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member.
2. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, shall, upon receiving Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation; unless for good reason he/she is to be a baptized member of another congregation, in which case membership shall be transferred to that congregation.
3. A child baptized in another congregation shall be received as a baptized member in the congregation when a transfer has been received.
4. An unbaptized adult who has received instruction and has given evidence of an adequate understanding and acceptance of the teaching of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, shall, upon confession of faith and Baptism, become a baptized member of the congregation.
5. When one or both parents of baptized children are received into the membership of the congregation, their children shall be received as baptized members with the consent of the member parent or parents.
6. Where a baptized child is an orphan or a ward of someone who moves into the area served by this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member when it is commended to the care of this congregation by the congregation which baptized the child.
7. When the parents of a baptized child are not themselves members of the Lutheran Church but move into the area served by this congregation and desire to have their child put within the pastoral care of this congregation, the child may be received as a baptized member.

B. Confirmed Members:

1. A baptized adult, not previously a confirmed member of a Lutheran congregation, shall become a confirmed member of this congregation after having received instruction, having given evidence of adequate understanding of the teaching of the Word of God as confessed by the Lutheran Church, and having publicly affirmed his/her faith.
2. A baptized member of the congregation shall become a confirmed member through the rite of confirmation; except that an adult who has become a baptized member in accordance with the provisions of Section A, 4, of this part of the Bylaws shall be considered a confirmed member without participation in the rite of confirmation.

3. An applicant for membership who presents a Letter of Transfer which certifies that he/she is a confirmed member in good standing of a Lutheran congregation shall become a confirmed member of this congregation upon approval by the Church Council. The acceptance of the applicant shall be reported to the congregation.
4. An applicant for membership who presents evidence of confirmation in a Lutheran congregation but does not have a Letter of Transfer shall be admitted to confirmed membership when the Church Council has determined that he/she meets the standards of Christian faith and life indicated in the constitution and bylaws and when he has reaffirmed his/her faith before the congregation.

C. Voting Members:

The Church Council shall determine the roster of voting members of the congregation in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and bylaws. The term “in good standing” shall be defined to include:

1. Those who partake of Holy Communion;
2. Those who contribute to the congregational treasury according to the congregation’s record;
3. Those who participate in the life and worship of the congregation.

D. Pastoral Care of Members:

1. The congregation shall, in the event of the removal of a member from the community it serves, encourage the member to request a transfer to a Lutheran congregation which can serve him/her effectively. Should the member fail to request a transfer, a Lutheran congregation in the community of his/her residence shall be notified.
2. A confirmed member in good standing desiring to change his membership to another Lutheran congregation shall, upon request, receive a Letter of Transfer.
3. A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if he/she fails to participate in the life and worship of the congregation.

PART IV – THE PASTOR (Cf. Chapter 9 of Constitution)

1. When the congregation has voted to call a pastor, it shall issue a Letter of Call to the Pastor-elect, in a form approved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It shall be signed by the president and the secretary of the meeting at which the Call was voted and shall be attested by the signature of the Bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A Call to a clergy person to be an assistant shall be issued only with the concurrence of the Pastor of the Congregation and in accordance with the provisions of this paragraph.

2. The Call shall normally be for an indefinite time. A Call issued to an assistant pastor may be for a definite time.
3. If a Pastor receives a Call to another ministry, he shall consult the Church Council or, if he desires, the congregation, before reaching a decision. He shall announce his decision as quickly as possible, normally within three weeks. He shall notify the Synod Bishop of his decision. When a Call has been accepted, the Pastor shall terminate his ministry as soon as feasible, normally within a month.
4. Clergy qualified under Paragraph C9.02 of the constitution may occasionally perform pastoral functions in this congregation with the approval of the Congregational Council and the Pastor, or in case of a vacancy in the pastorate, with the approval of the Congregational Council and the Bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

PART V – MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION (Cf Chapter 10 of Constitution)

1. The annual meeting of the congregation shall be held in January of each year.
2. The current rosters of voting, confirmed, and baptized members shall be available at each meeting of the congregation.
3. The annual meeting shall receive reports from all the organizations of the congregation. Such reports, including a financial statement, shall be submitted in writing to the Pastor not less than fourteen days before the annual meeting.
4. The nominating committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled and shall secure the consent of each candidate. The list of nominees shall be announced to the congregation in conjunction with the announcements of the meeting of the congregation at which the elections are to take place. In addition to the candidates submitted by the nominating committee, additional nominations may be made from the floor. The Church Council shall fill vacancies which occur on the nominating committee after the annual meeting.

PART VI – OFFICERS, COMMITTEES AND BOARDS (Cf. Chapters 11, 12 & 13 of Constitution)

A. Membership and Duties of the Executive Council

The following describes the roles of the Executive Council (members shall be the president, vice-president, secretary, and pastor) which are in addition to those duties and responsibilities provided in the Constitution.

1. The President shall preside at meetings of the Church Council and of the congregation. He/she shall appoint members to the committees provided for in these bylaws and to such committees or Task Forces as are established by the Church Council or determined necessary by the President, except as otherwise prescribed in the Constitution.

2. The President shall review the year end spend vs budget, incorporate the annual committee budgets, propose necessary adjustments and prepare the new annual budget for council approval. This budget will be part of the annual report.
3. The President shall submit the annual budget to the secretary to be incorporated into the annual report.
4. The President shall be responsible for reviewing and approving the annual report which is prepared by the secretary.
5. The President shall present the annual report and proposed budget at the annual congregational meeting for approval.
6. The Vice-President shall preside at meetings of the Church Council and of the congregation in the absence of the President. He/she shall perform such other duties as are designated for the President in his/her absence.
7. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the Church council and shall have custody of the archives of the congregation.
8. The executive council shall review bills addressed to the church and approve for payment. The church secretary shall email the bill(s) to the executive council for review and approval. One of the executive members shall approve for payment and forward to the financial secretary / or accountant (copying all executive council members).
 - a. The accountant shall maintain records of all contributions and make regular reports to the Church Council and to the members as required by the Council. He/she shall receive and disburse such funds in accordance with the decisions of the congregation and/or the Church Council

B. Membership and Duties of the Church Council

In addition to the provisions of the constitution, the following shall govern membership on the Church Council and the conduct of its meetings:

Membership

1. If a vacancy occurs on the Church Council, the Council shall fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting of the congregation.
2. A member of the Church Council who is absent from two consecutive regular meetings may be consulted by the president of the congregation; if absent from four successive regular meetings without cause, the Council may discuss how to proceed with action.
3. Since it is incumbent upon all members of the congregation to make diligent use of the Word of God in public worship and to attend the Lord's Supper, any officer or board member who neglects these privileges shall forfeit the right to serve in his elected or appointed capacity.

Duties

4. Secure necessary staff other than the Pastor(s), such as choir director, worship musician (choir accompanist), church secretary, youth worker, and accounting services; review their salaries annually.

5. Receive reports regularly from the accountant to ascertain that the expenditures are within the budget approved by the congregation. Any expenditures in excess of the total budget must be approved by the congregation.
6. Prepare and submit individual committee budgets to be included in the overall annual budget.
7. Review and approve the overall annual budget to be presented at the annual meeting of the congregation.
8. Monitor that the treasurer and others who have access to the funds of the congregation are adequately bonded.
9. Be responsible for buildings and premises of the congregation so that their use is normally limited to the functions of the congregation. Should groups or individuals not associated with the congregation desire to use such property, application shall be made to the Church Council for its approval.
10. Have authority between meetings of the congregation to choose delegates to any group or meeting in which the congregation is entitled to representation.

C. Membership and Duties of Church Committees.

1. There shall be a Committee on **Evangelism** that may be composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on Evangelism shall:
 - a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.
 - f. Identify and recommend what the goals and objectives of the work of the Evangelism Committee shall be in the congregation.
 - g. Reach out to the community and welcome them into the fellowship of the living Body, the Church and to a personal faith in Jesus Christ.
 - h. Contact members of the congregation who have been inactive for a period of time from the church, encouraging them in their active participation within the Christian fellowship and to the life work of the church.
 - i. Be in tune with the spiritual life of all members in Christ, encouraging participation in spiritual Christian fellowship, within the mission of the church.
 - j. Encourage members to worship, witness and serve in church activities and the community by sharing their faith in a living God through their time, talents and other resources. This faith in action will enrich their own lives and others' lives in the Christian community of faith.

- k. Communicate with the members of the congregation that the Evangelism Committee is willing to help with physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, using the tools available through our Christian faith.
 - l. Cooperate with other church and community agencies to assist in their programs and activities.
 - m. Evaluate the congregation's over-all evangelism programs periodically to determine the effectiveness of its present programs. Minister to the whole person and make changes as necessary.
 - n. Serve as the congregation's link to the Synod and National Committees on Evangelism.
2. There shall be a Committee on **Social Ministry** that may be composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on **Social Ministry** shall:
- a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.
 - f. Identify and recommend what the goals and objectives of the work of Social Ministry shall be in the congregation.
 - g. Make serving a foremost function that flows out of the faith and worship life of the congregation.
 - h. Attempt to discover unmet human needs throughout the community and devise ways of meeting those needs and to involve Christians in the fulfillment of social concerns.
 - i. Help members of the congregation to understand the issues that concern the community, nation and world and the bearing of Christian faith upon them.
 - j. Be attentive to the needs of the congregation and community to see what social problems most call for action.
 - k. Cooperate with other church and community agencies in their study, education, service and action.
 - l. Evaluate the congregation's over-all social concern programs.
 - m. Serve as the congregation's link to the Synod and National Committees on Social Ministry as the need arises.
3. There will be a Committee on **Stewardship and Finance**, that may be composed at least three (3) members one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on **Stewardship and Finance** shall:
- a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.

- f. Encourage liberal, thankful, loving and worshipful giving on the part of the membership.
 - g. Study the best stewardship literature available and use every God-pleasing means to promote a strong stewardship consciousness.
 - h. Keep talent forms of individual members in order to enlist as many people as possible in the work of the church.
 - i. Sponsor stewardship talks, discussions, forums and the like in the various organizations.
 - j. Inform the congregation of the stewardship challenges of the Synod and National church body.
 - k. Plan and execute scripturally valid programs in which the members of the congregation systematically, regularly and adequately cover both the congregation's financial needs and constantly enlarge the proportional giving beyond the congregation.
 - l. Schedule two people to count the offerings each week at a time convenient to both parties. Council member of the day and one other person is responsible for securing the offering in the safe after worship services.
 - m. Serve as the congregation's link to the Synod and National Committees on Stewardship.
4. There shall be a Committee on **Christian Education** that may be composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on Christian Education shall:
- a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and a secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.
 - f. Develop an effective teaching ministry which includes opportunity for learning by every member of the congregation.
 - g. Nominate candidates for Sunday School superintendent to the Church Council.
 - h. Supervise and coordinate all teaching agencies in the congregation.
 - i. Seek to assist parents to fulfill their teaching responsibilities in the home.
 - j. Seek to extend the congregation's teaching ministry into the community by attempting to reach the unchurched for Jesus Christ.
 - k. Promote, guide and relate youth activities to the total parish organization.
 - l. Encourage a broad, meaningful, vital, balanced ministry for and with our youth that includes personal faith, worship, education, witness, stewardship, service, fellowship and recreation.
 - m. Seek to involve the whole congregation in ministry to youth.
 - n. Provide adequate, helpful counsel and assistance to youth in determining their life work under God.
 - o. Identify and interpret the needs and aspirations of local youth.
 - p. Seek to prepare congregational youth for occupational and academic training beyond high school.
 - q. Serve as the congregation's link to Conference, Synod and National Committees on Christian Education and Youth and other related youth ministries.
 - r. Select a representative from the church to monitor Lutherwood activities and meetings.

5. There shall be a Committee on **Youth** composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council and one of whom shall be a youth, between the ages of 13 to 18. The Committee on **Youth** shall:
 - a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and a secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.

6. There shall be a Committee on **Worship and Music**, composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on **Worship and Music** shall:
 - a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.
 - f. Seek to interpret and enrich the worship life of the church.
 - g. Give leadership, concern and guidance in all matters pertaining to worship and music in the congregation.
 - h. Be responsible for all elements needed for and contributing to regular and special services, including hospitality and ushering. *Preparation of the altar for Communion Services and care for all paraments and vestments rests with the Altar Guild.*
 - i. Consult with the Pastor and work with the Church Council relative to the music staff.
 - j. Establish criteria for music to be used in the worship services and at weddings and funerals, with counsel and cooperation of the pastor and music staff.
 - k. Recruit and develop musical talent for both present and future services.
 - l. Serve as the congregation's link to Synod and National Committees on Worship and Music.

7. There shall be a Committee on **Property and Management**, composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on **Property and Management** shall:
 - a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.

- f. Be responsible for the care (Maintenance, repair and improvement) of all physical properties (Church office, grounds and equipment), and calling the attention of the Church Council to large, necessary repairs and improvements needed.
 - g. Propose necessary maintenance and services to the Church Council, including recommendations as to responsibility and remuneration for same.
 - h. Review and approve payment for all budgeted expenditures concerning maintenance, repairs and improvements.
 - i. Be responsible for adequate insurance coverage of all kinds, presenting such to the Church Council for approval.
8. There shall be a Committee on **Parish Life**, composed of at least three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. The Committee on Parish Life shall;
- a. Elect from its own membership a chairperson and secretary.
 - b. Conduct regular meetings, not less frequently than every other month, at such time and place as the committee may determine.
 - c. Submit committee meeting minutes to the church secretary and council.
 - d. Prepare and submit a summarized report of the annual committee activities to be included in the ELC annual report / annual meeting.
 - e. Develop an annual committee budget and submit to the church council for consideration.
 - f. Arrange for, in cooperation with other committees, special functions of the congregation and community (auction, etc.).
 - g. Arrange and coordinate dates for social and spiritual functions for the congregation, such as Harvest “Dinner” and Pie Auction, Christmas Brunch, Easter Breakfast, Family Night, etc.
 - h. Study needs for greater involvement and encourage same.
 - i. Evaluate fellowship programs from time to time.

PART VII – PARISH RECORDS

The records of the congregation shall be and remain the property of the congregation. The Pastor shall be responsible for the maintenance of the records, except as otherwise provided herein. Upon termination of his service to the congregation, he shall have brought the records up to date prior to his/her departure. The records shall consist of:

1. The roster of baptized, confirmed and voting members.
2. The ministerial acts performed by the pastor.
3. The minutes of the meetings of the congregation and the Church Council, for which the secretary of the congregation shall be responsible.
4. The financial records of the congregation, for which the treasurer of the congregation shall be responsible.
5. The Pastor shall report to the Bishop of the Northwest Washington Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America such statistics as may be required and shall annually report to the congregation a summary of his ministerial acts.