

Key Points for 2026 Model Constitution, Bylaws, & Continuing Resolutions

Here are a few things to know when reviewing this document:

1. The Governance Team spent many hours combing through this document to ensure it corresponds to how we (Peace Lutheran Church) operate and live into our mission, vision, and values and under the 4 Pillars (Worship, Discipleship, Stewardship, and Community)
2. This team consisted of Brenda Martin (chair), Pastor Jake Fain, Cindy Thomas, and Brandy Huston.
3. The document was submitted to the Church Council in May 2026 and approved to send to the Synod office for review. The Synod office review went well so we then called a special called congregational meeting for a vote. If there is a favorable vote to approve, the document will still have to be ratified at the normal congregational meeting in January, then sent to the Synod Council for a vote in February before being adopted by Peace Lutheran Church.
4. In the document, sections marked with an asterisk “*” are required, and must be used exactly as written without any changes. Sections not marked with an asterisk are recommended; their wording may be used as written, revised, or omitted at our discretion.
5. Examples of numbering to help readers recognize the numbering of the document are as follows:
 - a. Constitution C1.01.
 - b. Bylaw C1.01.01.
 - c. Continuing resolution C1.01.A27. (The third part indicates sequence with a two-digit year of adoption.)
6. Many sections throughout the document say [senior] pastor vs pastor. This is to allow growth without having to go back and updated the document should the occasion arise.
7. Some sections were reworded for clarity while preserving their original meaning.
8. Some of the more notable changes:
 - a. C5.05. Was a recommended section to add. We kept this because we do have a mission endowment fund. We added bylaw C05.05.01 to note that Endowment fund shall be overseen by the Endowment Committee and that the contributions and distributions shall adhere to the Endowment Fund Charter.

- b. Bylaws C10.01.01 & C10.01.02 were changed from 1 annual meeting (January) per year to 2 annual meetings (October & February) per year. This will allow us to approve a budget before we start working out of the budget. It allows a budget to be put together and approved without being one of the busiest times of the church year. This also allows incoming council leaders to have time to acclimate to position on teams or on council and be able to assist with the budget that they will be overseeing once it is approved.
- c. C10.04 changed 10% +15 members to constitute a quorum to 15%.
- d. C11.03. As the pool of volunteers seems to get smaller, removing this line made sense, “No elected officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.” The office of Treasurer was the position we had in mind when considering this change, as this position requires a very specialized skill set and internal audits to keep financials in check. Also, section C12.02. addresses that terms are for two years and no more than 2 terms.
- e. C12.01. Only stated to not exceed more than 9 voting members. We added in “no fewer than 5”. It mentions that the 9th member must be a youth and was changed to state that youth and young adults will be encouraged to run for council. Young adults were not previously mentioned at all.
- f. The original section C12.03. pertaining to the youth council member was removed as it was not required with the changes in section C12.01. The remaining section 12 number was then updated.
- g. C12.04. b. mentions our 4 pillars.
- h. C12.05. c. With increase in labor and materials within the last 10-15 years, it made sense that council should be able to enter into contracts of up 15% (10% previously) of the budget for items not included in the budget. We were thinking in terms of emergency repairs (roofing repairs, a/c repairs) things that waiting for weeks for a special-called meeting doesn’t make sense. Things such as these are still always reported in treasure/finance reports and brought to annual meetings. And now with having 2 meetings a year, we could vote to adjust the budget if necessary.
- i. C12.10. is intentionally missing because it was missing from the Model Constitution template.
- j. Bylaw C13.06.01 was originally a list of all the teams/committees, most of which no longer exist or have been changed dramatically. So here we put in that the teams shall be organized around the pillars and used continuing resolutions to describe the pillars.

- k. C13.06.02. was updated to duties of committees and teams under each pillar will be specified in the Manual of Operations. (Revision of Manual of Operations to come.)

Steps from here:

1. We have a special called meeting on October 18th specifically for voting on this document. In order for a favorable vote, it will need to pass by a majority vote of voting members. A quorum by “old” constitution is 10% +15 of voting members.
2. If the document is approved at the special called meeting, then minutes from the meeting will be put on the agenda of the January Annual meeting to be ratified with 2/3's vote. If approved, the document will be sent to the Synod Council for their vote. If approved, we will then have a new, live, and working document.

Whew! Yes, it was a lot! Please know that a lot of thought went into all changes. If you have questions on any of them, please let me know.

Peace,

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