

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF
OROMO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LOS ANGELES
Formerly 'WALDD OROMO (UNITED OROMO CHURCH), INC.
*At Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
436 Beverly Dr, Beverley Hills, CA 90036*

[Approved April 5, 2009]

CONSTITUTION

1.0 NAME

1.1 The name of this congregation shall be OROMO EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN LOS ANGELES

1.2 Whereas by Oromo we mean the Oromo speaking Christians.

1.3 Whereas by Evangelical we mean we are a community of believers that confess salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in the Person and work of Christ alone as revealed in the Scripture alone, to the glory of God alone.

2.0 MISSION

The purpose of this congregation shall be to give honor and glory to God, to carry out His will, to assist in preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the World, to manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, to foster Christian fellowship and love, to extend a helping hand in human need, and to achieve these objectives by the preaching of the word of God, by the administration of the sacraments, and by the religious instruction of all our members according to the confessional standard of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

3.0 CONFSSIONAL STANDARDS

This congregation accepts without reservation:

3.1 The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice;

3.2 All the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unadulterated statement and position of the word of God, to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

4.0 DOCTRINAL LITERATURE

Only those hymns, prayers, and liturgy which conform to the confessional standard of Section 3 shall be used in the public services of this congregation and in all its ministerial acts. Only books that conform to this standard shall be used for normative religious study.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Congregational Membership

The membership of this congregation includes the following:

5.1.1 Baptized members are those who have been baptized in the name of the Triune God, and who are under the spiritual care of the congregation, including the children who have not yet been confirmed.

5.1.2 Communicant members are those baptized members who have been confirmed in the Lutheran Faith, accept the confessional standards of Section 3 of this constitution, are familiar at least with the contents of Luther's Small Catechism. Membership in organizations whose principles and conduct conflict with the Word of God is prohibited.

5.1.3 Voting members are communicant members who have reached the age of 18 years and who have been received as voters at a meeting of the Voters Assembly. Following this action, the newly received voter may vote at all subsequent meetings of the Voters Assembly.

5.2 Reception

Baptized and communicant members are received through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, through the consent of one or both parents, in the case of children who have been baptized in another Christian congregation, through the rite of confirmation, through transfer from a sister congregation, through of faith or reaffirmation of confession. The reception shall be approved by the Voters Assembly.

5.3 Duties

Members of the congregation shall strive to conform their entire lives to the rule of God's Word, and to that end make diligent use of the means grace, exercise faithful stewardship of God's many gifts and talents, impart and accept fraternal admonition as the need for such admonition becomes apparent, and be available readily for service in the kingdom of Christ within and beyond the congregation.

5.4 Termination

5.4.1 Membership shall be terminated by transfer to a sister congregation, by death, by joining a congregation outside the fellowship of this congregation, by excommunication, or by self-exclusion.

5.4.2 Communicant members who conduct themselves in an un-Christian manner shall be admonished according to Matthew 18:15-18; if they remain impenitent after proper admonition, they shall be excommunicated. Each case shall be presented individually to the Voters Assembly for a decision. The vote to excommunicate must pass by a 2/3 (two-thirds) majority of voting members present and voting. If such member deliberately absent themselves from the meeting(s) at which time their case is to be discussed, they shall be regarded as having excluded themselves from the membership of the congregation. This in no way is meant to discourage the individual's attendance at worship services.

When the circumstances that have led to excommunication or self-exclusion have been removed and the individual desires reinstatement, the Board of Elders shall recommend reinstatement to the Voters Assembly for its joyous action.

6.0 PASTORS AND TEACHERS

6.1 This congregation shall establish the pastoral office, which shall be conferred only upon such a pastor or candidate who professes and adheres to the confessional standard set forth in

Section 3 of this constitution, who is qualified for his work, who has been endorsed by the Synod, and who is a member of the Synod. These same conditions shall apply to called teachers in the parochial school.

6.2 Any pastor, called teacher or officer may be removed from office by the Voters Assembly by a two-thirds ballot vote of those present and voting, in Christian and lawful order, for one of the following reasons: persistent adherence to false doctrine, scandalous life, willful negligence or inability to perform the duties of his or her office.

6.3 The congregation may request the resignation of any pastor, called teacher or officer from his or her position in the congregation in the case of incapacity or general incompetence.

7.0 AUTHORITY OF THE CONGREGATION

7.1 The Voters Assembly shall be the governing body of this congregation and shall be empowered to administer all its affairs. The Voters Assembly shall have the authority to enact resolutions and to rescind or amend resolutions enacted by the Board of Elders or by another board or committee. The establishment and conduct of all organization and societies within the congregation or related directly to it shall be subject to the approval and supervision of the Voters Assembly.

7.2 All matters - except for those of doctrine and conscience - shall be decided by a majority of votes cast by a Voters Assembly unless specified otherwise by this constitution and bylaws. Matters of doctrine and conscience shall be decided only on the basis of the Word of God.

7.3 The right of calling pastors and teachers shall be vested in the Voters Assembly and shall not be delegated otherwise.

8.0 SYNODICAL MEMBERSHIP

This congregation shall be a member of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod so long as the Synod conforms to the congregation's confessional standards set forth in Section 3 as determined by a super-majority of two-thirds (2/3) of those present and voting at a Voters Assembly called for this purpose.

9.0 PROPERTY

The property of this congregation is dedicated irrevocably to religious and charitable purposes and no part of net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private individual.

10.0 DIVISION

10.1 If at any time a division should take place on account of doctrine, the property of the congregation and all benefits connected therewith shall remain with those communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article 3 [confessional article] of this constitution, as determined by the Synodical dispute-resolution procedures.

10.2 If a division takes place for any other reason, the property shall remain with the majority of the communicant members who continue to adhere in confession and practice to Article 3 of this constitution, as determined by the Synodical dispute-resolution procedures.

10.3 In the event the congregation should dissolve, the property and all rights connected therewith shall be transferred to the district of Synod in which the congregation held membership at the time of dissolution.

11.0 BYLAWS

11.1. This congregation may adopt bylaws. No bylaw may conflict with this constitution.

11.2. Bylaws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of the Voters Assembly, with a quorum present, by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting.

11.3. Approved changes to the constitution or bylaws shall be sent by the Secretary of this congregation to the District Constitution Committee.

12.0 AMENDMENTS

12.1 Amendments to the provisions of this constitution - except Sections 2.0, 3.0, 6.0, and 8.0 - may be adopted by the Voters Assembly provided:

12.1.1 That the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing at the previous meeting of the Voters Assembly and published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church and by mail prior to the meeting at which time the proposed amendment will be acted upon.

12.1.2 That the amendment shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

12.2 Amendments to Sections 2.0, 3.0, 6.0, and 8.0 may be adopted by the Voters Assembly provided that:

12.2.1 That any changes in these articles shall not destroy the essential meaning of the same. Whether or not this may have occurred shall be determined, if challenged, by the Synodical dispute-resolution procedures.

12.2.2 That the proposed amendment shall have been submitted in writing at the regular meeting of the Voters Assembly preceding the regular meeting at which time the proposed amendment will have its first hearing, and that the proposed amendment shall have been published by posting in a conspicuous place in the church and by mail prior to this first hearing.

12.2.3 That the amendment shall be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at two consecutive regular meetings of the Voters Assembly. Due notice of the fact that a vote will be taken, shall be given to all voting members of the congregation.

BYLAWS

13.0 PROCEDURES FOR CALLING PASTORS AND TEACHERS

13.1 When a pastor or teacher is to be called, every communicant member of the congregation shall have the privilege of making one or more nominations. The congregation shall also ask the President of the Synodical District for recommendations. The Board of Elders shall serve as the screening committee.

13.2 In the screening process the Board shall submit all names to the District President for information and evaluation. After receiving information and recommendations from the District President the Board shall present to the congregation by public announcement a list of candidates with a summary biographical sketch (limited to general information and matters of public record) on each candidate.

13.3 At the Voters Assembly meeting called for the purpose of calling a pastor or teacher, the slate of candidates may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the voters present and voting. If additional names are proposed, the meeting shall be adjourned until the District President reviews and reports on the additions.

13.4 The Voters Assembly shall call the pastor or teacher by a majority ballot of those present and voting for one of the candidates as above.

14.0 OFFICERS

This congregation shall have the following officers and committees in addition to any which the congregation shall establish from time to time.

The Voters Assembly shall elect a President, a Vice-president, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall be the officers of the congregation. The Voters Assembly shall also elect three other voting members, who with the four officers and the Pastor shall comprise the Board of Elders of the congregation. The Pastor is a non-voting, *ex officio*, advisory member of the Board.

14.1 President

The President shall be executive officer of the congregation responsible for implementing the provisions of this constitution and bylaws and the resolutions of the Voters Assembly. He shall chair the meetings of the Voters Assembly and the Board of Elders. The President, together with the Secretary, shall sign all legal documents on behalf of the congregation.

14.2 Vice President

The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President during the President's absence or disability, or at the President's request. In the event of a vacancy in the office of the President, the Vice President shall succeed to the office of the President for the remainder of the term.

14.3 Secretary

The Secretary shall record and preserve the minutes of the meetings of the Voters Assembly and the Board of Elders. All minutes remain the property of the congregation. The Secretary, together with the President, shall sign all legal documents on behalf of the congregation.

14.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain the financial records of the congregation. He shall disburse funds in accordance with the budget using checks bearing the names of two of the following officers: Vice- President, Secretary, or Treasurer. Those handling congregational funds or financial records shall be bonded or otherwise be covered against errors, omissions or mishandling of funds by a comprehensive insurance policy.

14.5 Any officer or board member who fails to carry out his or her duties of office or who fails to perform the responsibilities of confirmed membership (see paragraph 5.3 above) may be removed from office by the Voters Assembly by a two-thirds majority ballot vote of those present and voting, in Christian and lawful order. Matthew 18 should be followed under such circumstances.

15.0 SHEPHERDING COMMITTEE

The Shepherding Committee shall consist of the Pastor and 4 members appointed by the Board of Elders. The appointed terms of office shall be for two years with members appointed as the terms expire or as vacancies occur. The Shepherding Committee shall watch over the doctrine, life, and administration of the offices of called personnel, and ensure that they are treated with due respect and that the congregation fulfills its duty toward them with respect to their physical needs in accordance with the Word of God and their respective calls. The Shepherding Committee shall assist the Pastor in the planning of worship, provide for services in his absence, and assist in maintaining order and discipline in difficult ministerial cases. The Shepherding Committee shall seek to lead members in the deepening of their spiritual life and regular participation in worship.

16.0 BOARD OF ELDERS

16.1 Membership

The Board of Elders shall consist of the Senior Pastor, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and three elected voting members of the congregation.

16.2 Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet monthly. Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three members of the Board of Elders by sending a notice which shall be delivered to the residence of each member at least 24 hours before the special meeting. A majority of the members is a quorum. An agenda must be included in the notice for a Special Meeting. Only those items included on the agenda may be considered at a Special Meeting.

16.3 Duties

The Board of Elders shall have general supervision of the affairs of the congregation between meetings of the Voters Assembly. It shall coordinate the programs and activities of the various departments of the congregation, make recommendations to the Voters Assembly, and perform such other duties as are specified by these bylaws. The Board of Elders is subject to the authority of the Voters Assembly, and none of its actions shall conflict with actions taken by the Voters Assembly.

16.4 Non-Called Employees

The Board of Elders shall have the authority to hire and dismiss all non-called employees subject to the limitations of the congregation's budget.

17.0 NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

17.1 Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of three voting members of the congregation appointed by the Board of Elders who are not currently members of that board. It shall present a slate of candidates for Board of Elders members. The slate shall include at least one name for each office. Additional nominations may be made from voting members, with the consent of the nominee, up to one week prior to the election. Only voting members are eligible for nomination and election.

17.2 Elections

The members of the Board of Elders shall be elected at the annual Voters Assembly.

17.3 Appointments

The Board of Elders shall appoint the members of the Shepherding Committee. All voting members are eligible for appointment to the Shepherding Committee.

The Shepherding Committee may appoint ad hoc committees to perform needed tasks in the areas of youth, evangelism and other activities.

17.4 Terms of Office

Members of the Board of Elders shall be elected for the terms of two years starting in January, and may be elected for two consecutive terms.

17.5 Induction into Office

Board of Elders members shall be inducted into office in a public service of the congregation.

17.6 Vacancies

In case of a vacancy in an elective or appointive office, the Board of Elders shall appoint a successor to fill to the unexpired term.

18.0 VOTERS ASSEMBLY

The voting members of the congregation shall constitute the Voters Assembly

19.0 MEETINGS

19.1 A regular meeting of the Voters Assembly shall be held annually in the month of November at a time that shall be specified by the Board of Elders. The meeting shall include the adoption of the annual budget and the election of officers. Announcement of the regular meeting shall be made in the two Sunday services immediately preceding the meeting.

19.2 Special meetings of the Voters Assembly may be called at the request of the Pastor, the Board of Elders, three officers or 6 voting members. Announcements of special meetings shall be made in the two Sunday services immediately preceding the special meeting and by mail. An agenda must be included in the meeting notice. Only those items included on this agenda may be considered at a Special Meeting. Special Meeting shall be held no more than thirty days following a qualifying request.

19.0 Auditing Committee

The Board of Elders shall appoint an Auditing Committee of two voting members who shall audit the financial records of the congregation once a year and report to the Voters Assembly. This committee shall consist of those who do not normally have access to congregational funds or financial records.

19.0 Quorum

Five or more members present at a properly called meeting of the Voters Assembly shall constitute a quorum.

20.0 Rules of Order

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with this constitution and bylaws.

21.0 Disputes

Should a dispute arise in the congregation that cannot be resolved internally, which God may mercifully prevent, the dispute resolution resources of the Pacific Southwest District shall be utilized.

22.0 NON-DISCRIMINATION

Membership or other congregational privileges shall not be denied to any Christian because of race or ethnic origin.

23.0 HARASSMENT

Harassment in any form, particularly sexual harassment, is not tolerated in this Christian family. Any charge of sexual harassment shall be reported to the Board of Elders for investigation and appropriate remedial action.

24.0 AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended in a properly convened meeting of the Voters Assembly by a majority of those present and voting, provided that the proposed change has been announced in a previous meeting and has been submitted in writing to all the voting members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.