

Reformation Lutheran Church of Columbus Midland, Georgia Bylaws

THE BYLAWS OF THIS CONGREGATION

- Section 5 Powers of the Congregation
- Section 11 Congregational Meetings
- Section 12 Officers
- Section 13 Congregational Council
- Section 14 Congregational Committees

Section 5 – Powers of the Congregation

- 5.01. The Congregational Council shall meet a minimum of once a month. They may meet more often as the need arises.
- 5.02. Congregational Council Members or other voting members of this Congregation attending meetings or conventions on behalf of this Congregation where votes will be taken shall cast their votes as directed by a majority vote of the congregation present with regard to each issue on which a vote will be taken. Such member of this Congregation attending meetings or conventions shall be selected by the Congregational Council and approved by a majority vote of the Congregation at a regular or specially called meeting of the Congregation. At this Congregational Meeting, the Congregation shall also determine how the representatives shall vote on any specific issues where a vote will be taken. In the event of a vote at the meeting or convention not previously addressed by the Congregation, the elected representative(s) shall exercise their discretion and vote in a manner consistent with their understanding of the congregations position on the subject.

Section 11 – Congregational Meetings

- 11.01. The fiscal and church year for this congregation shall be from January 1 through December 31.
- 11.02. All Congregational Meetings shall open and close with the Word of God and Prayer.
- 11.03. Except as provided in Section 12.03, the President of the Congregational Council shall preside at all Congregational Meetings unless a majority of the voting members at the meeting decide otherwise. If both the President and Vice-President are not present at the meeting, the congregation, by majority vote, shall elect a presiding officer for that meeting.
- 11.04. The following votes must be by written ballot:
 - a. To elect Council Members,
 - b. To adopt or amend the Constitution or Bylaws of this congregation, or
 - c. To call or sever official relations with a Pastor.
 - d. To sever or accept official affiliation with a Lutheran organization.

Annual General Meeting

- 11.05. The Annual General Meeting of the congregation shall be no later in the fiscal year than the second Sunday in February.

11.06. All committees, ministries, auxiliaries, the Pastor(s), and other organizations within the congregation shall submit a written report for inclusion in the Annual Report of the Congregational Council for the Annual General Meeting. These reports shall be submitted at least four weeks prior to the meeting for publishing and distribution to the congregation.

11.07. The order of business at the Annual General Meeting of the congregation shall be:

- a. Word of God and Opening Prayer
- b. The Annual Reports of:
 - The Pastor
 - The Church Council
 - The Treasurer and Auditing Committee
 - Other Reports
- c. Unfinished Business
- d. New Business
- e. Word of God and Closing Prayer

Annual Business Meeting

11.08. In addition to the Annual General Meeting, there shall be an Annual Business Meeting to be held no earlier than the first Sunday in September or later than the second Sunday of December for the purpose of accepting a budget for the following year, electing new Congregational Council members, and other business that comes before the congregation.

11.09. The order of business at the Annual Business Meeting of the congregation shall be:

- a. Word of God and Opening Prayer
- b. The Presentation and Approval of the Budget
- c. The Nominating Committee Report
- d. The Election of Council Members
- e. Unfinished Business
- f. New Business
- g. Word of God and Closing Prayer

Section 12 – Officers

12.01 The term of each officer shall be one year. The term shall coincide with the calendar year of the church.

12.02 The President shall:

- a. Preside at all Congregational Council meetings and Congregational meetings, subject to section 11.03 of these bylaws.
- b. Enforce the Constitution and By-laws of the corporation and carry out the expressed will of the congregation and Congregational Council.

- c. See that Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, is used to govern parliamentary procedure at all the congregational and council meetings.
- d. See that all members of the Congregational Council are carrying out their respective callings and duties in accordance with the constitution and by-laws.
- e. Be welcome at any and all meetings of committees, ministries, and interest groups either in person or as represented by such person or persons he/she may appoint. The president or their representative can be excused from the Mutual Ministry Committee at the Committee's request.
- f. Be a member of the Executive Committee and call and preside over the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- g. Approve all official correspondence of the congregation as directed by the congregation and/or the Congregational Council.
- h. Endeavor to coordinate functions, plans and activities of the congregation in all its parts for the total furtherance of the work in Christ's Kingdom.

12.03 The Vice President shall:

- a. Perform the duties of the president in his/her absence, during his/her disability, or at his/her request.
- b. Succeed to the presidency at the resignation, dismissal or death of the president until Article 13.03 of the RLC Constitution can be fulfilled.
- c. Be available for whatever duties the president shall assign to him/her as the president's representative.
- d. Be a member of the Executive Committee.

12.04 The Secretary shall:

- a. Be responsible for the recording of the minutes of all Congregational Council, Executive Committee and Congregational meetings and enter said minutes into the permanent record book over his/her signature.
- b. Provide copies of the previous month's minutes to all the council members prior to each council meeting.
- c. Be responsible for the recording of all amendments and bylaws on the master copy of the constitution.
- d. Conduct correspondence authorized by the president, congregation and Congregational Council.
- e. Secure a substitute in the event the he or she cannot personally take the minutes.
- f. Be a member of the Executive Committee.

12.05 The Treasurer shall:

- a. Be responsible for the accurate recording of congregational receipts and disbursements and budgeted and actual expenditures according to proper accounting procedures and, as deemed advisable, suggest improved methods for congregational consideration.

- b. Present a written financial report to the Congregational Council at the Annual General Meeting (Article 11.05) for the previous Fiscal Year and for inclusion in the Annual Report to the Congregation.
- c. Present a written financial report monthly to the Congregational Council.
- d. Submit permanent financial records for annual audit.
- e. Be responsible for the monthly remission of offerings for missions and church agencies and for prompt payment of salaries and bills authorized by the congregation or the Congregational Council as duly constituted sources.
- f. Coordinate the flow of money from the treasury to the various committees and ministries in such a way that an adequate balance is retained for the payment of salaries and other recurring expenses.
- e. Reimburse members of the congregation for documented expenses approved by the committee or ministry chairpersons under whose jurisdiction they function.
- f. Maintain a record of all moneys received through worship services, special offerings, or any other source and duly record same.
- g. Have available for all committees and ministries a current record of their accrued disbursements and budget allotment.
- h. Have the authority to work out with salaried workers of the congregation a breakdown of the worker's total compensation into salary and fringe benefits as the worker requests as provided by the law.
- i. Submit payments to the State and Federal Authorities as required on a timely basis and provide for all forms and accountings due the employees of Reformation Lutheran in accordance with the laws governing this corporation.
- j. Have available any records requested by the Stewardship and Finance Committee to assist them in the preparation of the Annual Budget proposal.
- k. Be responsible , under the direction of the Congregational Council, for the opening, closing, and maintenance of all congregational accounts in financial institutions. All accounts require two signatures for all types of withdrawals or expenditures as designated by the Congregational Council.
- l. Be a member of the Executive Committee.
- m. Ensure that any specified funds are used for the purpose stated. Release shall be based upon the written approval of the donor when practical.
- n. Be appointed by the Council at their first meeting following the annual meeting of the Congregation or as soon as practicable thereafter.

Section 13 – Congregational Council

13.01 Congregational Council can authorize up to \$1,000 of expenditures not included in the approved budget. All expenditures over \$1,000 must be approved by the congregation at a special called meeting for that purpose.

- 13.01** It shall be the duty of the Council to plan the program of the congregation and to take such steps as are necessary to effectively carry it out.
- 13.02** The Council is to oversee the program of Worship, Christian Education, Stewardship, Evangelism, and Church Discipline in harmony with the Constitution of this congregation.
- 13.03** The Council shall make recommendations at the annual meeting of the congregation relative to its welfare and future program.
- 13.04** The Council is the custodian of the property of the congregation, and is responsible for its maintenance and development.
- 13.05** Council Liaison members shall serve one year terms not to exceed two consecutive terms in the same position.
- 13.06** Upon the motion of any member of the Congregational Council, the council, by majority vote, may determine whether any officer or council member is unable to adequately perform their duties and may declare their seat vacant.

Section 14 – Congregational Committees

14.01 The Executive Committee (Article 14.01) shall:

- a.** Prepare the agenda for the regular and special congregational meetings and meetings of the Congregational Council.
- b.** Act as a Personnel Committee in the absence of a separate committee for that purpose.
- c.** Act as Budget and Planning Committees in the absence of separate committees for those purposes.
- d.** A quorum shall consist of three members of the Executive Committee.
- e.** The Executive Committee cannot overturn or amend any decision made by the Congregational Council. However, the Executive Committee can make a recommendation to reconsider a decision and request a new vote after the discussion.
- f.** All Executive Committee meetings shall be open meetings, except in the case of a salaried lay workers situation or if the Congregational Council gives approval by a majority vote for a closed meeting. In the event of a closed Executive Meeting regarding a Human Resources issue where the individual being discussed is present, the individual will be allowed to have a representative present with them at the meeting.
- g.** All minutes of the Executive Committee, whether open or closed, shall be submitted to the Congregational Council in writing.
- h.** The Executive Committee can not authorize expenditure of Congregational funds without the majority approval of the Congregational Council.

14.02 The Nominating Committee (Article 14.02) shall:

- a.** Be convened by the President or Vice President. Thereafter a chairperson from their midst will be elected and the chairperson shall call and preside at each subsequent meeting.

- b. Nominate one or more candidates for each office to be filled, which shall include:
 - 1. Church Council
 - 2. Other offices which may be specified by these bylaws
- c. Ask each candidate to serve the full term of office if elected.
- d. Announcements of the nominees and their qualifications shall be made available to the Congregation at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays prior to the Annual Business Meeting.
- e. Accept nominations from the floor providing that the nominee is present at the meeting to deliver both their qualifications and their consent to serve.

14.03 The Audit Committee (Article 14.03) shall:

- a. Audit the financial books and records prior to the Annual General Meeting and optionally during the year without prior announcement.
- b. Report their signed findings to the Congregational Council in writing upon completion of audit and include a summary with their Annual Report.

14.04 The Call Committee (Article 14.04) shall:

- a. Study the congregation's mission and pastoral needs and share the results with the Council.
- b. Gather descriptive information about the congregation, e.g., history, pictures of the church and grounds, directory, map, congregational mission statement, annual reports and other pertinent information.
- c. Receive recommendations of nominees.
- d. Evaluate pastoral candidates by interview and other means; furnish information about the congregation and its mission to each candidate.
- e. Recommend one candidate to the Church Council at a meeting called for that purpose.

14.05 The Mutual Ministry (Article 14.05) shall:

- a. Meet as needed.
- b. Seek to give encouragement in concern for the spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being of all personnel of this Congregation, including paid employees.
- c. Shall offer support when personnel are experiencing personal or ministerial stress.
- d. Be receptive to communication from this Congregation concerning attitudes and conditions within this Congregation.
- e. The Pastor(s) will be non-voting member of the Mutual Ministry Committee, and can be excused at the request of the committee.

14.06 Other Congregational Committees shall be established as need by a majority vote of the Congregational Council.

14.07 This Congregation shall be served by Standing Committees. Each standing committee shall include a liaison from the Congregational Council, excluding members of the Executive Committee. The Standing Committees of the congregation shall be:

- a.** The Worship and Music Committee:
 - I.** Serves to ensure that the worship and music ministry of this congregation reflects the praise and service to Jesus Christ in whose Name we gather.
 - II.** Is primarily expressed through the Word and Sacrament.
 - III.** Shall oversee the following particular areas: chancel choir, handbell choir, children's choir, Altar Guild, assisting ministers, communion assistants, lay readers, ushers and any other areas appropriate to this committee as needed.

- b.** The Parish Education Committee:
 - I.** Serves to ensure that the learning and growing ministry of this congregation reflects a Christian and Lutheran understanding of the Gospel as offered through Jesus Christ crucified.
 - II.** Serves by offering educational opportunities for persons of all ages through programs of structured learning, youth programming, and community service.
 - III.** Shall oversee the following particular areas: Bible studies, Sunday School programs, confirmation instruction, Vacation Bible School, first communion instruction, Rally Day, subscriptions and devotionals, and any other areas appropriate to this committee as needed.

- c.** The Mission and Ministry Committee:
 - I.** Serves to ensure that the Gospel shared within this congregation is also shared publicly with this community, this nation, and this world.
 - II.** The service of this committee shall include evangelism, outreach, and service both to members of this congregation and to others apart from this Family of Faith.
 - III.** Shall oversee the following particular areas: witness, evangelism training, new member orientation, visitors, service projects, greeters, public relations, advertisements, and any other areas appropriate to this committee.

- d.** The Fellowship Committee
 - I.** Serves to ensure that the social, as well as spiritual needs of this congregation are met in Christian ways.
 - II.** Establishes opportunities for interaction between members of this congregation both to provide support and assistance in times of membership need, and for joy and celebration of the Faith we share.

- e.** The Stewardship and Finance Committee:
 - I.** Prepares the annual budget of the congregation in consultation with the other committees of the congregation for presentation to the Congregational Council.
 - II.** Provide for annual review of the insurance program which governs and protects this congregation.
 - III.** Shall be responsible for the annual fundraising drive.

- F.** The Property Committee:
 - I.** Serves in the overseeing, maintenance, and care of the physical items with which this congregation has been blessed.
 - II.** Share the vision for the acquisition, repair, and disposal of items in need, or no longer in need.
 - III.** Ensure that the property and grounds of this congregation are kept in neat, safe, and orderly fashion.

G. The Youth Committee serves that the educational and spiritual growth of the young people of this congregation is Gospel-based.

14.08 Each standing committee of this congregation shall meet regularly. The chairperson of each standing committee will communicate written summaries of the committees activities to the Council Liaison. Each standing committee shall seek guidance, and if necessary, spiritual and emotional support from the Congregational Council and congregation in carrying out its mission. Standing committees shall assist in developing the congregation's annual budget and each committee will have a budgeted amount that cannot be exceeded without the Congregational Council's approval. Budgeted funds cannot be spent until they are available as authorized by the Treasurer.