

By God's Grace, We Are...  
Created To Worship,  
Called to Teach,



2017 Annual Report

## LCC STAFF

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

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## NEW MEMBER WELCOME TEAM

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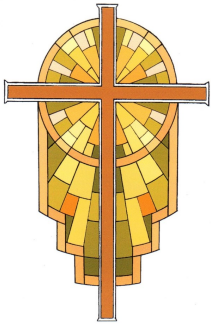
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## WORSHIP, ARTS & ENVIRONMENT

Chad Svenby

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# REV. JOEL BARANKO'S 2017 REPORT

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Greetings in the name of Jesus our Lord!

For my annual report reflecting on the mission and ministry of 2017, I'd like to focus from 3 different vantage points: personal, congregational, and vision for the future. Thank you for reading.

I can readily summarize 2017 in a word...grateful. I am deeply grateful for the gift of sabbatical rest LCC provided for me and my family. As 2016 was winding down, I knew that my spiritual, physical, and mental tanks were getting very low. I was finding that activities that typically give me life and energy were becoming exhausting and worn. LCC wonderfully and graciously acknowledges through its sabbatical policy that pastors do carry unique responsibilities and that we need rest and renewal in order to sustain a lifetime of public ministry. One of the worries I carried into sabbatical was the fear that I may not want to return to serving the church as a pastor. Through the time and space you gave me, my calling was renewed and affirmed through the intentional rest. I returned to serving the church with a new sense of energy and thankfulness that had been fading for no particular reason other than fatigue. Thank you for supporting me, my calling, and my family with this gift.

From the congregational perspective, we had a changing of the guard relating to the staff who serve the mission we all share. This changing happened for a variety of reasons, some of our choosing and others that happened upon us. I am thankful for the ongoing prayerful support of the Executive Committee who advise me in steering the ship through transition. The Lutheran model of congregational leadership is a wonderful example of clergy and lay members sharing the duty and delight of shaping a church's life and practice. I wouldn't want it any other way.

The congregation also took further steps in preparing for a long-term (65+ years!) partnership with the YWCA. I am pleased to share that the supportive housing project we've been planning for has been awarded the funding it needs to move forward. I'll be sharing this news and the details surrounding it in the coming weeks in church. LCC has a gifted and thoughtful group of folks who've been stewarding this project. I am certain you would be amazed at the YW Team's prayerful consideration of the needs of the congregation, the neighborhood, and the needs of women and children who will one day call our grassy strip of empty land home.

LCC continues to grow and thrive, but we do have some short-term and long-term challenges. I believe these staffing and financial challenges are exactly the kinds of opportunities that God uses to stir us up for growing deeper in faith, love, and service. In 2018, we are preparing for a period of congregational assessment. This will be an intentional time when you will be asked to reflect on the life of LCC: who are we, where have we been, what challenges need to be addressed, how can we strengthen our ministry, where are we going. It is also possible that the congregation may be gearing up for a financial appeal that would fund a renewed vision for future mission. Stay tuned!

Alongside of the regular rhythms of LCC's life is the search for an associate pastor. A call committee is formed, and our paperwork has been submitted to the Synod. This will make our congregation known to clergy who are discerning their own call. Pastoral transitions are a wonderful time to renew your commitment to praying for your church! Please hold this Spirit-led discerning work and the pastor God already has planned for us in your prayers.

I look forward to being able to share more with you about all of this in the upcoming "state of the congregation" sermons in services on Wednesday, Jan. 31st and Sunday, Feb. 4th. As always, if you ever have any questions, concerns, or reflections, my door is always open.

Peace & Joy,

Pastor Joel Baranko

# CHURCH COUNCIL 2017

This past year has been an exciting journey filled with new challenges and exciting possibilities at Lutheran Church of the Cross. God's fingerprints are everywhere in the work that is happening in and through our congregation. We are growing in new and exciting ways as we embrace living and loving like Jesus.

In 2017, the church council and executive council team have been continuing to focus efforts on strategic planning. We are a young and growing church and while there is excitement in that, it is also imperative that we are thoughtful about what that means for our future. Decisions we make today impact the church of tomorrow.

This past spring I brought my then one month old baby to a meeting in which we were discussing the potential lease terms for the YWCA project. A comment was made that we would leave a decision up to members in attendance of that meeting that were around in 60 years when the lease expires. Needless to say that motion did not carry. But joking aside we are extremely fortunate for all the work done by the YWCA Task Force. Their decisions have been thoughtful and intentional. This group has invested countless hours to ensuring the future success of this project. We are truly grateful for the sharing of their time and talents to not only serve the church but also those who will utilize the YWCA services for years to come.

In nearly all of our meetings, the council and exec team are asking "What's next?". What are our finances telling us about what we can plan for the future? What will our partnership with the YWCA mean for our mission and the life of the church? What is needed to help us meeting our goals for increased giving? How can we work towards leveling off our finances so that the "summer slump" isn't so impactful?

2017 presented several opportunities for us to discern as a congregation potential revenue streams. We started the year with some discussions about the possibility of a cell phone tower on church property. These discussions stalled for awhile but have since reignited. More recently we were approached about the possibility of a daycare onsite at LCC. The council continues to learn more about this venture.

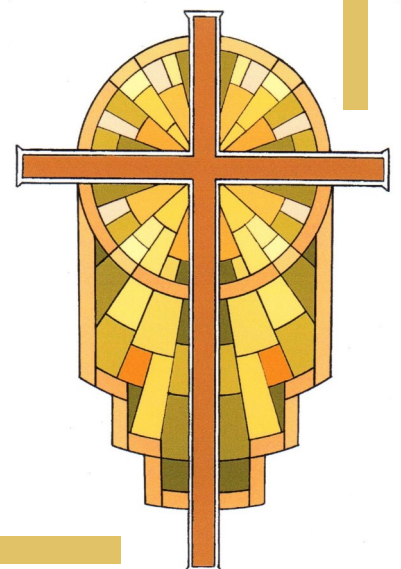
There was a great deal of work that also took place this year surrounding updates and revisions to our governing documents. A huge thank you to the team that made this happen! You will see the details of these changes as we progress through our annual meeting and voting as a congregation.

You may have noticed an influx of white coffee cups around the church lately! Beanedition Coffee Bar is up and running! We are excited about this new venture; we look forward to the fellowship it can foster. That being said, we continue to search for volunteers to help out in the making this mission a success. Consider going through the brief training to see if this opportunity to serve is right for you. Volunteers are critical in keeping our congregation caffeinated!

We feel blessed we were able to allow Pastor Joel the opportunity to take sabbatical this year. The past few years with the most recent appeal and building renovations have been busy for the church and our clergy. Being able to offer this much needed time for rest and rejuvenation speaks to our commitment as a congregation to doing the right thing in support of our pastors. It is truly a testament of the commitment of the staff and our lay leaders that the workings of the church continued in his absence.

In closing, I would like to say a personal thank you to the LCC family for your support this past year. I didn't know that three plus years ago when I met with Pastor Joel and discussed the possibility of joining the Exec Team, that I fully realized how this opportunity would enrich me personally. For that I am forever grateful. I look forward to continuing to grow in my faith and service to LCC in the coming year.

Teresa M. Duffy  
LCC Council President





# EDUCATION & FAMILY MINISTRY 2017

The year started with the presentation of Bibles to our 3rd Graders, and classes where the 3rd graders were taught how to use their Bibles.

On Ash Wednesday (March 1st), I started as Director of Education at LCC. And was warmly welcomed by everyone! Thank you all for that!

In March and April, our 2nd graders and other students learned, explored, and participated in Holy Communion through workshops and a Seder meal. On Maundy Thursday, we celebrated as a community as they received their First Communion.

In May, 44 9th Grade students affirmed their faith on their Confirmation Day. And we held a Senior Recognition Sunday for all the 2017 high school seniors.

Preschool/Kindergarten Vacation Bible School and 1st-6th Grade Day Camp was a week full of energy, learning, song, and games. Thank you to all our volunteers and the Camp Metigoshe staff who made this week a blessing to our kids!

The Fall began with a few changes: Church School Teachers for each class, new Wednesday Worship & Education times and 6th graders moved to Confirmation. We kicked off the program year by welcoming 235 Preschool-5th grade students to Church School and 146 6th-9th grade students to Confirmation. It takes a lot of volunteers to lead and teach 381 students! We are immensely grateful for our dedicated, patient, and loving Church School and Confirmation volunteers.

Our (2017-2018) 3rd graders were gifted and presented with Bibles in Worship this Fall. The 3rd graders along with their families gathered for a retreat to explore and learn how to utilize their Bibles. Also this fall, with the help of many generous donors, we were able to gift Spark Story Bibles to ALL of our Preschool students. This Bible is used each week in Church School, and now each Preschooler can re-read the story at home with their families.

Trunk or Treat in 2017 was a huge success! We saw 307 kids (plus adults) come through the line of trunks! This was WAY more than anticipated. We can't wait to adapt and grow for 2018.

To kick off the season of Advent, the family friendly Advent Festival was held. Cookie decorating, Bingo, lots of crafts, and lefse making (and tasting) were among the activities of the afternoon. Huge thank you to those who shared their gifts with this community!

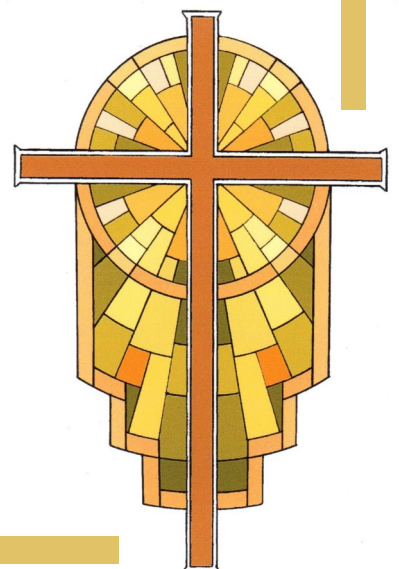
Through the FirstLink Giving Tree of Hope, we were able to provide 125 gifts for those in and around our community. Thank you for stepping up to live and love like Jesus!

We capped off 2017 with two Church School Christmas Program. All Preschool-5th Grade students were a part of this year's program. Some read scripture and prayers, and all were a part of the Church School choir. We shared the story of Jesus' coming into the world and gathered for Fellowship after.

Thank you to our Church School teachers, Confirmation Guides, VBS and Day Camp leaders, Education Team Members, and all volunteers who dedicate themselves and their time to do the work that God has given us. Thank you for supporting the faith formation of our children and youth!

Peace,

Chelsi Martian



# MUSIC AND ARTS MINISTRY 2017

Music and Arts Ministry has been and continues to be a primary driver of the worship experience here at Lutheran Church of the Cross. The aspects of worship that are determined by music and arts help to shape, either directly or indirectly, what our congregation experiences in worship and also what they take with them spiritually to their lives outside of the church. An important goal has always been to mesh the message and the music. Each week, through meetings between the pastors and music leadership, we identified a theme and then identified which pieces of music would best compliment and supplement that theme in worship. We have access to and utilized many outstanding resources to help us in our planning, including our current hymnal/song book, online worship guides, and several contemporary and secular music resources. Beginning in the fall of 2017, we made a change to our worship structure by adding more gathering music at the beginning of worship. Our goal was to give our members an opportunity to be welcomed into worship in a comfortable and positive way. They are able to participate in the music by singing along if they choose, or simply enjoy the music as they prepare for worship. I believe it has been a great success and is something we will continue to do.

There is meaning in music. It can have a huge impact on all levels, from an individual to the entire congregation. Being able to present ideas and messages through music is a wonderful and fulfilling experience. It will continue to be an important part of how we worship at LCC.

Within music leadership here at LCC, in all its forms, we are blessed to have many individual volunteers who give their time and talents to the church. We have a wide range of experience in our ranks, from those who have been leading music for several years to those who joined very recently. Each group or ensemble has its own identity but all are committed to the vision we have for music in worship.

Our Sunday worship ensemble leans a bit more toward the traditional but also incorporates contemporary and secular aspects into the music. We have been lucky to have a few new music leaders join this group in 2017. Their new voices and talents have been welcomed and appreciated by the congregation. We are excited about the opportunities they bring that we can develop in the future.

The Wednesday worship band brings a more contemporary approach to music. This group has been together in the same form for several years, so they are able to present music very solidly. There are opportunities with this group, too, as we begin to utilize the talents of our newer leaders on Wednesdays.

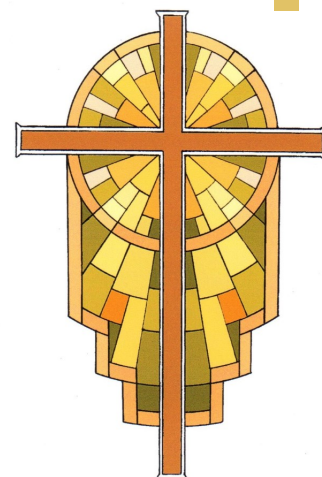
Our adult and bell choirs, directed by Maxine Beseler, blessed us with wonderful performances throughout the year. Some of our most important worship services (Easter, Christmas, etc.) would not be what they are without the choirs and their musical contributions. Again in 2017, the number of participants in the choirs increased, which is fantastic to see.

The LCC Youth Band, under the direction of Jackie Beller and Mary Hannah Aure, lead worship on four occasions in 2017. While the numbers of youth haven't grown as much as we would like, those that participate are very enthusiastic and do a wonderful job in leading worship.

Our production team continued to do a wonderful job of supporting worship in 2017. We were able to add some new volunteers but are always looking for additional help to ease the schedule for all those involved.

Chad Svenby

Director of Music and Arts Ministry



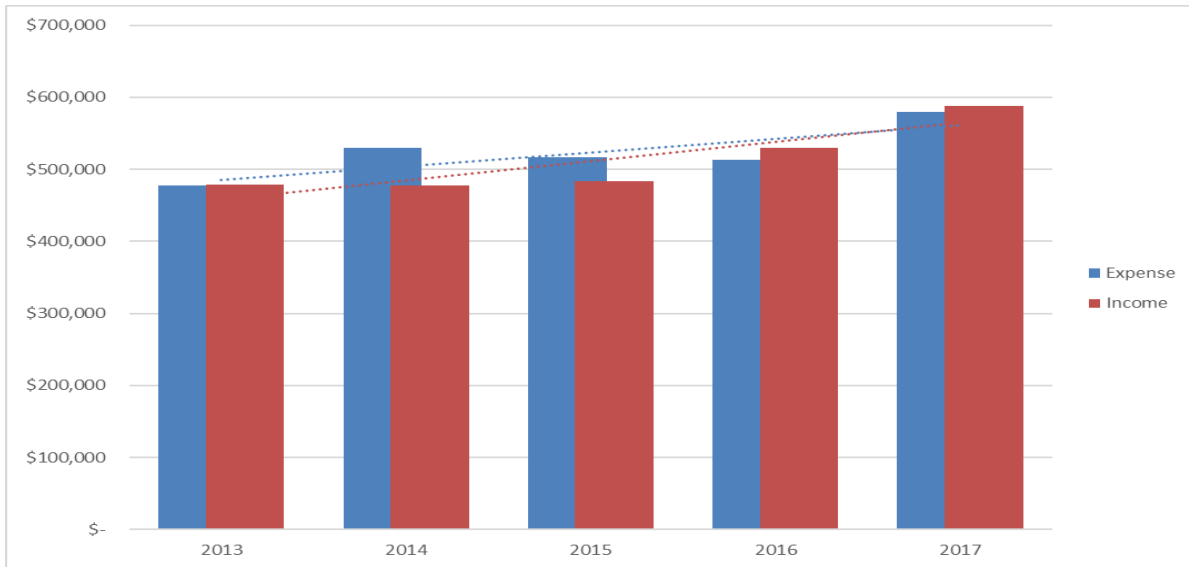
# FINANCE REPORT 2017

What an amazing year for Lutheran Church of the Cross!

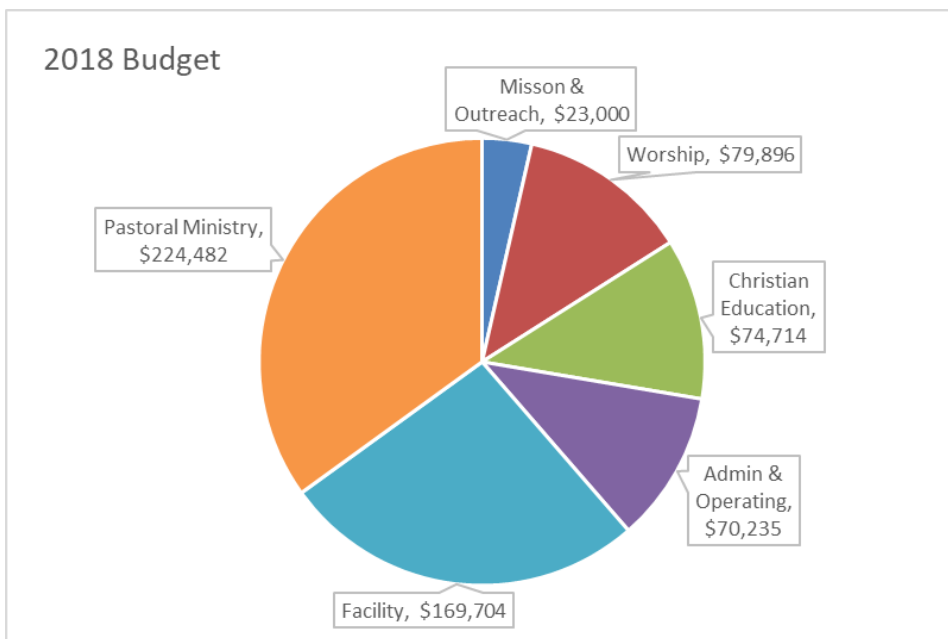
Overall, compared to 2016, giving was up 10% and expenses were up 1%. Add in the continued giving to our appeal fund and the generosity and support is nothing short of spectacular.

While 2017 did present some challenges and a few tight months where we experienced extremes to the normal ebb and flow of giving versus expense, we were able to close out the year with nothing owed to our bank, made our appeal account whole (used as summer cushion) and very little owed to our own savings. We are on track to repay ourselves in January.

The graph shows the actual income and expenses (less any capital appeal elements) for the last five years.



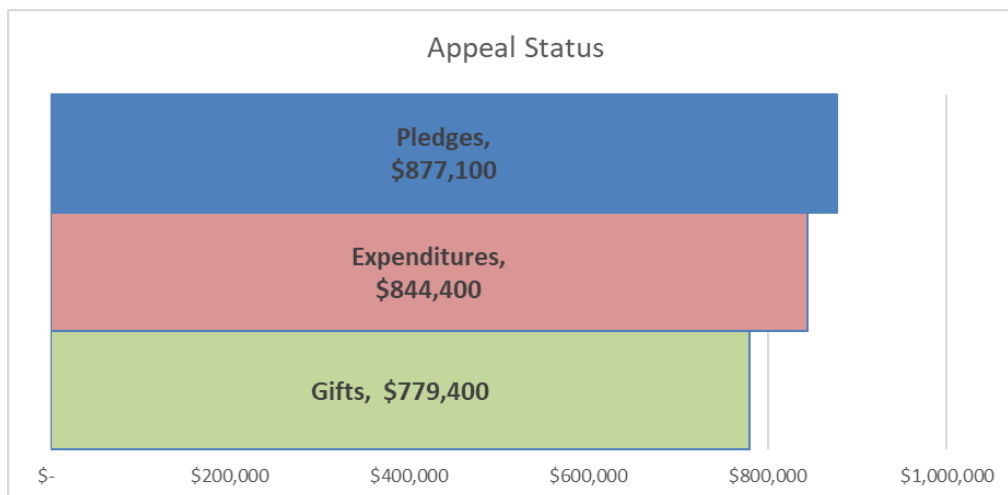
The proposed 2018 budget is one of maintenance. We anticipate flat expenses in total. On the income side, our appeal activities have supplemented or provided cushion over the last 5 years, without that option, we are calling on our members for an increase in giving of 9% to enable us to maintain our current path of staff, mission and service. This level of increase is reflective of the actual increases we have seen the last two years – all while supporting our appeal projects too. The total budget is \$642,631, broken out into the following areas.





# FINANCE REPORT 2017

Our current capital appeal is in its final stretch. Using the member pledges from three years ago as the starting point, we have expenditures at roughly 95% of the amount pledged and currently have about \$60,000 in unfulfilled pledges. When we started our projects, we received a cash advance from a member, that is the remaining obligation.



As our YWCA project draws near there is an associated lump sum lease payment. When that finalizes, any remaining appeal obligation will be forefront in the conversation of how to utilize those funds.

Thank you for all the ways you have contributed to the mission God has given us at Lutheran Church of the Cross. We are looking forward to an exciting year of putting the investments we have made into our staff and facilities to work serving our membership, our community and the entirety of God's creation.

LCC Treasurer.....Jason Kraft

Lutheran Church of the Cross Budget Sections	2017		2017		2018		Change vs. Budget		Change vs. Actual	
	Grand Total	% of Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget	\$	%	\$	%
WORSHIP INCOME	\$ 573,344	99%	\$ 576,805	\$ 628,531	\$ 51,726	9%	\$ 55,187	10%		
EDUCATION INCOME	\$ 12,019	120%	\$ 10,000	\$ 12,000	\$ 2,000	20%	\$ (19)	0%		
ADMINISTRATIVE INCOME	\$ 72	72%	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ -	0%	\$ 28	38%		
BUILDING/PROPERTY INCOME	\$ 1,980	99%	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ -	0%	\$ 20	1%		
Appeal Reimbursement	\$ -	0%	\$ 50,000	\$ -	\$ (50,000)	-100%	\$ -	0%		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 587,415</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>\$ 638,905</b>	<b>\$ 642,631</b>	<b>\$ 3,726</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>\$ 55,216</b>	<b>9%</b>		
MISSION SUPPORT	\$ (20,201)	95%	\$ (21,200)	\$ (23,000)	\$ (1,800)	8%	\$ (2,799)	14%		
WORSHIP EXPENSE	\$ (4,061)	97%	\$ (4,200)	\$ (4,500)	\$ (300)	7%	\$ (439)	11%		
EDUCATION EXPENSE	\$ (8,078)	92%	\$ (8,800)	\$ (9,300)	\$ (500)	6%	\$ (1,222)	15%		
MUSIC/CHOIR EXPENSE	\$ (2,007)	67%	\$ (3,000)	\$ (2,900)	\$ 100	-3%	\$ (893)	45%		
ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSE	\$ (29,341)	103%	\$ (28,550)	\$ (31,300)	\$ (2,750)	10%	\$ (1,959)	7%		
BUILDING/PROPERTY EXPENSE	\$ (143,885)	102%	\$ (140,999)	\$ (143,814)	\$ (2,815)	2%	\$ 71	0%		
STAFF/CONTRACT LABOR EXPENSE	\$ (400,732)	94%	\$ (426,374)	\$ (418,217)	\$ 8,157	-2%	\$ (17,485)	4%		
ACTIVITY EXPENSE	\$ (1,321)	106%	\$ (1,250)	\$ (500)	\$ 750	-60%	\$ 821	-62%		
YOUTH EXPENSE	\$ (3,999)	74%	\$ (5,400)	\$ (9,100)	\$ (3,700)	69%	\$ (5,101)	128%		
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ (613,625)</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>\$ (639,773)</b>	<b>\$ (642,631)</b>	<b>\$ (2,858)</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>\$ (29,006)</b>	<b>5%</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ (26,210)</b>		<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>		<b>\$ 26,210</b>			



# PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

In early 2017 the Church Council asked a task force to review our Constitution and Bylaws. The work was completed in the fall, and the proposed changes as approved by the Church Council are outlined below. A summary explanation of the proposed changes are:

- Replace any occurrences of “Senior Pastor” with “Lead Pastor” as that’s the official position title at LCC.
- Remove any articles pertaining to the Cross Way Center governing board. This board was dissolved when Holy Cross Catholic moved locations.
- Clarify the role of Lead Pastor by bringing the governing documents in line with current expectations and practice.



LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE CROSS  
WEST FARGO, ND

PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

18 January 2018



*Live and Love  
like Jesus*



**Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

## CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

C10.02 Insert the word “lead” before “pastor” in the first sentence of the paragraph.

**C10.02.** A special Congregation Meeting may be called by the lead pastor, the Congregation Council, or the president of this congregation, and shall be called by the president of the congregation upon the written request of 50 voting members of the congregation. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.

C12.08 Replace “be responsible” with “institute policies and procedures” in first sentence of the paragraph.

**C12.08.** The executive committee of the Congregation Council shall be responsible institute policies and procedures for the employment and supervision of the staff of this congregation. Nothing in this provision shall be deemed to affect the congregation’s responsibility for the call, terms of call, or termination of call of any employees who are on a roster of this church.

C13.01 Insert the word “lead” before “pastor.”

**C13.01.** The officers of this congregation and the lead pastor shall constitute the ***Executive Committee***.

C13.08 Replace the word “senior” with the word “lead” before “pastor.”

**C13.08.** The Senior Lead Pastor of this congregation shall be *ex officio* a member of all committees and boards of the congregation.

## BY-LAW CHANGES

VII, e. Replace the title “Senior Pastor” with “Lead Pastor.”

A candidate for an associate pastor position may not become a candidate of choice without concurrence of Senior Lead Pastor.

VIII, f., i. Replace the title “Senior Pastor” with “Lead Pastor.”

The Vice President, together with Senior Lead Pastor, shall serve as the Human Resources directors. In collaboration on behalf of the congregation, they shall be responsible for stewarding the following:

IX. REMOVE ENTIRE CURRENT SECTION IX, as it pertains to the Crossway Center Board.

IX. Replace current Section IX with new paragraph concerning the role of the Lead Pastor:

### **Role of The Lead Pastor**

LCC calls its Lead Pastor to serve as Head of Staff. Specifically, the Executive Committee delegates the authority for writing job descriptions, setting staff goals, conducting staff evaluations, as well as conducting staff searches and staff termination. It is expected, but not required, that this be done in consultation with the Executive Committee. The Head of Staff is expected to work with staff to accomplish Council’s priorities, goals, and mission, to supervise the staff, and to direct and manage the day-to-day work of the church including making decisions about money (within the goals of the congregational-approved budget), time, and space. The Head of Staff is accountable to the Executive Committee and Council for his/her performance as well as the performance of the entire staff.