

**ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH
OF
SYLVANIA, OHIO**

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I

The annual meeting will be held on the Sunday before Thanksgiving in November.

**ARTICLE II
STANDING COMMITTEES**

Section 1. At its first meeting each year, the Council shall appoint as many standing committees as the local and wider sources of the parish require. Each committee shall include one or more Council member(s) and other voting members of the congregation. These committees shall be representative of the entire parish. The pastor(s) has voice and vote with the exception of the nominating committee where he/she has voice only.

Section 2. Except as stipulated below, the duties of all committees shall be assigned by the Council. All actions are subject to Council review.

Section 3. EDUCATION MINISTRY. Christian education builds a foundation of faith through continual study of God's Word. The goal of each learning opportunity is individual spiritual growth which will equip us to share the message of salvation in Christ with the community. The Education Committee of St. Stephen Lutheran Church will recruit leadership for educational programs and maintain communication among that leadership, review and recommend programs and curricula for Christian growth. The committee will promote educational opportunities at St. Stephen to the congregation and to the community.

Section 4. PROPERTY MINISTRY. This committee shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation, and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair.

Section 5. EVANGELISM MINISTRY. This committee stimulates and leads all members in continuous and concerted efforts to reawaken the spiritually indifferent and to reach others with the Gospel. It shall devote itself to deepening spiritual life.

Section 6. FINANCE MINISTRY. There shall be a finance committee, of which the treasurer and a member of the stewardship committee shall be members ex-officio. The finance committee shall prepare a draft budget for the succeeding calendar year, including this congregation's full indicated share in support of the wider ministry being carried on its behalf by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Synod. This committee shall submit such a draft budget to the council for its action and later presentation to a congregational meeting for approval, prior to the calendar year. The committee shall exercise oversight of all financial affairs of the congregation to make sure that they are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations and to the forwarding of benevolence monies to the synodical treasurer. This committee shall, subject to the approval of the church council, be responsible for the congregation's investments and its total insurance program. This committee shall also provide for annual audits of the accounts of the treasurer and financial secretary, as well as of the accounts of the congregation. The financial secretary shall keep a record of all income from contributing members.

Section 7. SOCIAL MINISTRY. This committee extends Christian compassion and help to the ill, aged, orphaned, underprivileged, imprisoned and all in need. This committee enlists efforts of others in this work. This committee studies social conditions in the community in order to bring hope and healing and thoughtful Christian discussion.

Section 8. STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY. The Stewardship Committee shall be a standing committee with the financial secretary as an ex-officio member. The financial secretary shall keep a record of all income from contributing members. The purpose of the Stewardship Committee is to increase the awareness and understanding of what stewardship means. The committee should encourage all members at St. Stephen to prayerfully consider how they use their God-given gifts, including their time, talent and possessions, not only within the life at the Church, but in all aspects of their daily life. To accomplish this purpose, the stewardship committee should:

a. Work with Council, Christian Education, and the Pastor to promote the teaching of a comprehensive understanding of Stewardship.

b. Co-ordinate the administration of programs that encourage members to support the ministries of St. Stephen by giving of their time, abilities and resources based on this comprehensive understanding of stewardship. This includes, but is not limited to, the identification and co-ordination of volunteers, the planning

and administration of efforts that promote financial support of St. Stephen's, the receiving of gifts and offerings, and the process of thanking those who share what they have been given.

Section 9. WORSHIP AND MUSIC. There shall be a Committee on Worship and Music. this committee shall assist church council in seeing that the services of God's house are conducted regularly in accordance with God's word and the practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Competent ushers and layministers are recruited and trained, and hymnals and other devotional materials are provided and properly cared for. This committee shall supervise, and strive to advance the welfare and effective service of, the choirs of the congregation. This committee shall arrange for the care of paraments, vestments and musical instruments and in consultation with the pastor, the organist and the choir director, it shall furnish music supplies appropriate for use in the worship of a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Section 10. YOUTH MINISTRY. The purpose of this committee includes the following: to periodically evaluate the youth ministry at St. Stephen; to make program recommendations that will lead to the Christian growth of the youth of this congregation; to encourage and support active participation of our youth in the worship life of the congregation to be active participants in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to their neighbors.

Section 11. STAFF SUPPORT. The primary purpose of the Staff Support Committee is affirming and strengthening the mission of the congregation and the ministry of the staff. The committee is to listen, confer, and dialog with the pastor(s), associate(s) in ministry, and staff on a regular basis to help maintain a positive relationship among the staff and between the staff and the congregation. The committee will report regularly to the congregation council and provide a report of its activities at the congregational meeting. The committee will not set policy. Instead recommendations about annual salary, benefit packages, and specific duties for the coming year are developed and forwarded to council for approval.

ARTICLE III NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Nomination Committee shall consist of the full Stewardship Committee. The committee's responsibility shall be to recruit and present at the annual congregational meeting, a slate of candidates equal, but not limited to the number of vacant positions. The committee shall follow as closely as practicable the procedures prescribed herein.

Section 2. Criteria for the nominating committee and which the

nominating committee must consider in seeking prospective candidates include but are not limited to:

- a. Participation in the ministry of the church.
- b. Willingness to accept and carry out responsibility in the congregation's life and the church's ministry.
- c. Leadership abilities.
- d. Personal, professional, or vocational skills pertinent to such specific needs as may be evident or indicated by council at any given time in the congregation's planning and implementation of its mission.

Section 3. The committee shall encourage recommendations from members of the congregation for prospective candidates at least three (3) months prior to the annual meeting. Nominations will be accepted no later than the month prior to the congregational meeting.

Section 4. Persons desiring or willing to be considered as prospective candidates will be encouraged to attend the council meeting no later than the month prior to the congregational meeting.

ARTICLE IV OFFICERS

Section 1. The president shall preside at the meetings of the congregation and Council

Section 2. The vice-president shall preside in the event of the president's inability to serve. The vice-president shall also serve as parliamentarian of meetings of the congregation and Council.

Section 3. The secretary shall keep accurate minutes of all meeting of the congregation and of the Council in a volume provided by the congregation, which shall be preserved permanently in its archives.

Section 4. The treasurer shall keep the books of account of the congregation; shall record all funds received; shall make disbursements for all expenses properly approved by Council according to the budget approved by the congregation.

Section 5. The treasurer shall make written, monthly summary reports of all income and expenses to the Council and the congregation. An audit shall be conducted and presented to Council by March 31st of each year. The treasurer shall be covered by a fidelity bond provided by Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

ARTICLE V CONFIRMED MEMBERS

Section 1. a) Confirmed members shall be defined as those persons in Chapter 8: 8.02(c); and

b) Shall have renewed their commitment to the mission and vision of the congregation during the worship services in September or in conciliation with the pastor or

c) have joined the congregation through the Affirmation of Baptism since the previous September; and

d) Shall set an example by actively participating in the ministries of this congregation including attendance at Worship services, receiving Holy Communion, and through time, talent and financial gifts to the church.

ARTICLE VI
FISCAL MATTERS

The Council shall call a congregational meeting to discuss fiscal and stewardship issues within 30 days of the end of the fiscal quarter when year to date operating expenditures exceed year to date operating income by:

1st quarter	10%
2nd quarter	5%
3rd quarter	3%