

Introduction

Part 1 of this overview summarizes what RLC lay leaders and staff need to know to manage our congregation day-to-day. Part 2 is a reference guide should certain rare situations arise.

Part 1 – What you need to know

The constitution and bylaws establish the structure and processes necessary to sustain our congregation. It designates requirements for membership, identifies leadership roles and responsibilities, and specifies how leaders are selected and will serve. It establishes checks and balances to ensure the best interests of the congregation are represented, creating leadership continuity to help us pursue our mission and vision over the long term.

Key sections of the RLC Constitution are summarized below (with parenthetical references to relevant chapters should you desire to review the full text).

We are Roseville Lutheran Congregation, and are part of the ELCA

We believe in the Triune God. We believe the Bible to be inspired by God. We are here to worship God, to follow the leadership of Jesus Christ, and to do God's work here on earth. We are affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), St. Paul Area Synod (SPAS). (Chapters 1 through 4, and 6)

Membership

Members of RLC are persons who have been baptized or confirmed—either at RLC, another Lutheran congregation, or by affirmation of faith—are on the roll of the congregation, and have declared and maintain their membership.

Voting members are confirmed members who have contributed to the congregation during the most recent year. They can attend and vote at the Annual Meeting of the congregation and any special meetings. They may vote in elections, and are eligible for lay leadership positions, either through annual elections or through appointment by Council. (Chapter 8)

The congregation is in charge

The congregation elects members to represent them on Council and in three administrative committees—Nominating, Finance and Endowment. Council and these committees work with the pastors and staff to guide most planning and decisions regarding operations and ministries.

Certain decisions require a congregational meeting (Chapter 10), for which notice must be given at worship services on the preceding two consecutive Sundays, and by mail or electronic means to all voting members at least 10 calendar days in advance. A minimum of 100 voting members must be present to constitute a quorum, and decisions are generally made by majority vote.

One congregational meeting is required annually, usually assembling in August. The annual budget is presented for approval, and nominees are elected to open lay leadership positions.

Council may convene a special meeting when a congregational vote is required, such as to call a pastor. Less commonly, a vote may be needed to amend the constitution, to approve a real estate transaction, to terminate a pastor, or to terminate RLC's relationship with the ELCA. (Chapter 5)

Council makeup, roles and responsibilities

The Congregational Council is comprised of nine voting members elected by the congregation: three Executive Officers and six Representatives. Each Executive Officer is elected to a three-year rotating term. In the first year, each holds the title of Vice President, in the second President-Elect, and finally President. In general, duties of each officer are as follows:

- **President** — Partner with the lead pastor as stewards of RLC's mission and vision. Provide responsible oversight of resources and activities. Prepare the agenda for and preside over Executive Committee and Council meetings. Appoint Council representatives as liaisons to ministry teams and the Endowment Committee.
- **President-Elect** — Participate in Executive Committee and Council meetings. As Finance Committee Chair, assist the Treasurer in preparing the annual plan budget and overseeing periodic financial audits. Fill-in if the President is unavailable.
- **Vice President** — Participate in Executive Committee and Council meetings. Record and archive minutes for all Council meetings and Congregational Meetings. Act as Council liaison to the Nominating Committee.

Council Representatives are elected to two-year terms, with three representatives elected in alternating years. Council Reps participate in all Council and Congregational meetings as voting members. In addition, each Rep is assigned as a non-voting member of a specific ministry team or committee, acting as liaison between Council and that group. A Council Rep may serve no more than two consecutive terms. Once their term ends, an individual will be ineligible to serve again as a Council Representative for a period of two years. (Chapters 11, 12)

Administrative congregational committees

Lay leaders and staff partner on RLC committees, task forces and other groups to plan, develop and execute church activities. All organizations report to Council. Four committees are required by the constitution: Executive, Finance, Nominating and Endowment. Lay members of these committees are confirmed by congregational election at the annual meeting. (Chapter 13)

The general makeup and duties of these administrative committees are as follows:

- **Executive** — Includes the President, President-Elect and Vice President, working with the Senior Pastor. Duties are outlined above. (13.01)
- **Finance** — Three voting members, each serving a 3-year term. One is elected each year on a rotating basis. The President-Elect, the Director of Finance and Treasurer, and the Development Director are non-voting members. The Finance Committee is responsible for fiscal budgetary planning and management. (13.06.01)
- **Nominating** — Four voting members, each serving 2-year terms. Two are elected each year on a rotating basis. Second-year committee members are co-chairs. The Vice President is a non-voting member of this committee and acts as Council liaison. The committee identifies and recruits members to fill open lay leadership positions. They assemble the ballot of candidates for election at the annual meeting and keep records of current and past members who have served. Council may also ask the Nominating Committee to present recommendations for appointments to other open lay leadership positions. (13.02)
- **Endowment** — Nine voting members, each serving 3-year terms. Three are elected each year on a rotating basis. One Council Representative, a non-voting member of the committee, acts as liaison between Council and the committee. The committee is entrusted with oversight of the Endowment Fund (Chapter 5.05) contributions, investments and grant distributions.

Executive Summary of the RLC Constitution

What lay leaders and staff need to know

After determining funds available to grant each year based on investment income, they solicit and review grant requests and present recommendations to Council for approval. (13.03.02)

Ministry organizations

Organizations—committees, groups, teams, or task forces—may be formed to support key areas of RLC ministry, with lay leaders appointed by Council to work alongside staff leaders. The Senior Pastor and President are *ex officio* members of all congregational organizations. (13.08.)

All ministry organizations report through Council. Each group is to be guided by a clearly defined charter that is approved by Council. (13.07.) Council will provide a charter template, which groups may use to propose their purpose, objectives, responsibilities and scope of activities.

Ministry organizations may form member sub-groups or teams to plan, develop or execute programs and activities within their ministry area.

Council Representatives are assigned by the President as liaisons to key RLC ministry organizations. (Chapter 14)

Part 2 – Addressing contingencies

Following is a reference to chapters in the constitution that establish duties and processes to help navigate certain congregational challenges, in the unlikely event they should they arise. Most lay leaders and staff will never need to invoke these chapters of the RLC Constitution and Bylaws.

Topic	Chapter
Affiliation with ELCA and SPAS, and how to terminate this relationship.	6
Property ownership, purchase or sale by the congregation.	7
Duties of rostered ministers, and the process by which to call or terminate a pastor.	9
Grounds and processes for member discipline, suspension, or termination.	15
How to amend the constitution and bylaws.	16, 17
Enacting resolutions.	18
Indemnification of officers, members, and staff.	19
Uniting with another congregation to form a parish.	20