

CONSTITUTION of NATIONAL LUTHERAN SECRETARIAT

PREAMBLE

The purpose of National Lutheran Secretariat is to foster and encourage renewal in the Christian faith in the Lutheran Church and in the larger world community by presenting the fullness of Christ's ministry by both laity and clergy. National Lutheran Secretariat aims to bring Christians to a fuller personal knowledge of, a fuller relationship with, and a deeper level of commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and the spreading of his word.

Via de Cristo provides a method that develops leaders and community in the Christian Church. This method uses meetings and groups of Christians who share their common life in Christ and their efforts to bring others to Him in order to make the world more Christ-like. Via de Cristo asks exactly what baptism and confirmation ask of us and provides a method to live out that commitment within the Church.

Via de Cristo grew out of the Cursillo® movement. National Lutheran Secretariat accepts as its norm the content and method of the Cursillo® movement as developed by Bishop Juan Jervas, Eduardo Bonnin and their friends. These developers provided a method by which Christians transform the world for Christ our King. This method calls Christians to live their lives in union with Christ supported by regular reunion with other Christians. We accept as normative the call to be Christ's witnesses in the world, the three-day weekend of fifteen talks, and the method of group reunion and Ultreya.

While our Constitution and Bylaws intend to safeguard these, we recognize that various customs and practices have grown up around the fifteen talks, the meditations and the worship during the three days. We also recognize that the three-day weekend often overshadows the apostleship activities of the Fourth Day. Therefore we need to improve our ability to evaluate these customs, practices and emphases. All affiliated secretariats are urged to examine these to guarantee that they support the basic aims.

National Lutheran Secretariat shall be the means by which the many Via de Cristo communities may be represented on Via de Cristo matters of national interest and the means by which National Lutheran Secretariat can effectively communicate with other structures within the Lutheran Church and with other organized bodies.

Ratified 2018

Article 1 -Name

1. The name of this organization shall be: National Lutheran Secretariat.
2. National Lutheran Secretariat shall be incorporated in Minnesota.
3. The Executive Committee shall appoint a registered agent and may change the registered agent as appropriate.

Article 2 -Purpose

National Lutheran Secretariat is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as they now exist or as they may be hereafter amended.

National Lutheran Secretariat is organized for the purposes of:

1. Supporting, strengthening and guiding the autonomous secretariats affiliated with it so that the Church may more effectively Christianize its community;
2. Assisting the affiliated secretariats in developing Christian leaders and their awareness of their responsibility to Christ, the local church, and the environment in which they live;
3. Coordinating the flow of information and resources among the various affiliated secretariats;
4. Encouraging the use of liturgy and rollo outlines which are in keeping with general Lutheran practice;
5. Providing organization and direction for affiliated secretariats; and
6. Expanding the Via de Cristo movement in the United States and throughout the world.

The Corporation considers itself to be united by a common faith in God, in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and in the Holy Spirit, and by a common love for all people. The Corporation shall receive and maintain a fund or funds of real or personal property, or both, subject to the restrictions hereinafter set forth, to use and apply the whole or any part of the income therefrom, and the principal thereof, exclusively for religious, educational and charitable purposes, either directly or by contributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and its regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.

Article 3 -Meetings

1. National Lutheran Secretariat shall have one annual meeting, the date being set according to the Bylaws.
2. Special meetings may be set according to the Bylaws of National Lutheran Secretariat.
3. Member secretariats shall send at least one delegate to the annual and any special meeting as stated in the Bylaws.
4. A quorum of the delegates shall be as stated in the Bylaws.
5. All member secretariats shall be notified of the annual meeting at least 90 days in advance of the annual meeting.
6. Exempt Activities Limitation - Notwithstanding any other provision of these By-laws, no director, officer, employee, member, or representative of this corporation shall take any or carry on any activity by or on behalf of the corporation not permitted to be taken or carried on by an organization exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as it now exists or may be amended, or by any organization contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of such Code and Regulations as it now exists or may be amended. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit or be distributable to any director, officer, member, or other private person, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the Articles of Incorporation and these By-laws.

Article 4 -Membership

1. Membership in the corporation National Lutheran Secretariat shall be open to any autonomous secretariat that wishes to be affiliated with the corporation and expresses its concurrence with the Constitution through formal ratification, whether or not the secretariat uses Via de Cristo in its name.
2. Delegates to the annual and to special meetings of National Lutheran Secretariat shall be elected or appointed by the governing body or membership of the affiliated secretariats.

Article 5 -Officers and Executive Committee

1. The officers of National Lutheran Secretariat shall be President, Vice-President(s), Secretary, Treasurer and Spiritual Director. They shall be elected from among the delegates or names provided by the Nominating Committee -- in attendance at an annual meeting or by video teleconference -- persons who have attended an Annual Meeting as a delegate within five years of the year of the election, persons then serving on the Executive Committee, or persons who have served on the Executive Committee within five years of the year of the election.
2. The officers, acting together, shall constitute the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be the Board of Directors of National Lutheran Secretariat Corporation.

Article 6 -Committees

Standing or special committees may be designated by the president as necessary to assist the corporation to further its purposes. Their organization and purpose shall be as stated in the appointment.

Article 7 -Records

The corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall keep minutes of any and all meetings of its delegates or Executive Committee or committees. Such records shall be kept at the principal office of the corporation or place designated by the Executive Committee and shall be available for inspection by any person connected with National Lutheran Secretariat. Such records are to be retained in perpetuity. A yearly reconciliation of the financial records shall be conducted and submitted at the annual meeting. Additional guidelines may be stated in the Bylaws.

Article 8 -Bylaws

National Lutheran Secretariat shall adopt such Bylaws as may from time to time be necessary. No Bylaw may conflict with this Constitution.

Article 9 -Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the corporation, whether voluntary, involuntary or by operation of law, the Executive Committee shall, after paying all liabilities of the corporation, distribute all remaining assets, in equal portions, to Secretariats affiliated with National Lutheran Secretariat at the time of dissolution and are exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article 10 -Amendments

1. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Constitution of National Lutheran Secretariat may be amended by the delegates at any meeting thereof.
2. A proposed amendment of this Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee at least 120 days prior to the date of the annual meeting or any other legally called meeting to ensure time for review by the affiliated secretariats.
3. Any such amendment must be passed by two-thirds of the authorized delegates at a legally constituted meeting. The approved amendment must then be sent to all affiliated secretariats for formal ratification.
4. Formal ratification by two-thirds of all the recognized affiliated secretariats is required for the adoption of any amendment to the constitution. The time frame for such ratification shall be set by the members of National Lutheran Secretariat.
5. Except as otherwise provided by law, the Bylaws of National Lutheran Secretariat may be amended or adopted at any legally called and conducted meeting of National Lutheran Secretariat by a two-thirds majority of the delegates present.

Article 11 - 501(c)3 Compliance

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Third hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for

public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Article 12 -Formal Ratification

1. To express acceptance of this Constitution and Bylaws and to become an affiliated secretariat, or to express ratification of an amendment to the Constitution, affiliated or affiliating secretariats must bring the Constitution and Bylaws or amendment to a vote and then have both the Lay Director, President, Convener or Chairman, and the Spiritual Director sign below for that affiliated or affiliating secretariat.
2. The Executive Board shall provide two (2) copies of the Constitution and Bylaws, or amendment to the Constitution, to each affiliated secretariat for formal ratification; both are to be signed as in the paragraph above. Then one is to be sent back to the Secretary of National Lutheran Secretariat, and the other is retained by the ratifying secretariat.

We, the undersigned, ratify the Constitution and Bylaws, or amendment to the Constitution, in order to:

_____ Affiliate with National Lutheran Secretariat

_____ Ratify amendments made to the Constitution

Official Name of Secretariat _____

Lay Director, President, Convener or Chairman _____

Spiritual Director _____

Date: _____

BYLAWS of
NATIONAL LUTHERAN SECRETARIAT

Bylaws to Constitution Article 2

- 2.1 There shall be a National Lutheran Secretariat Newsletter to be published at least two times per year.
- 2.2 The Newsletter is to be posted on the National Lutheran Secretariat web site and notification e-mailed to all recipients. Each Secretariat is responsible for supplying National Lutheran Secretariat's Secretary and the editor of National Lutheran Secretariat Newsletter with the correct name, e-mail address, street address and secretariat office of each of the members of its governing body and of its prior year's delegates.

Bylaws to Constitution Article 3

- 3.1 The annual meeting of National Lutheran Secretariat shall be held between June 1 and August 31 for the purpose of transacting such business as may come before the meeting, including the presentation of committee reports. The time of the meeting shall be set by the Executive Committee.
- 3.2 Special meetings of National Lutheran Secretariat may be called by a majority vote of the Executive Committee or upon a written petition bearing authorized signatures of not less than 50 delegates with voting rights or 10% of the delegates with voting rights, whichever is less, delivered to the President or Treasurer. The purpose of the special meeting must be stated in the petition. The notice of such meeting shall state the nature of the business to be transacted at the specially called meeting, which shall be limited to the stated purpose. Within 30 days after receipt of a demand for a special meeting from voting members, the Executive Committee shall call a special meeting and hold it on notice no later than 90 days after receipt of the demand at the expense of the corporation.
- 3.3 The Executive Committee shall determine the place at which the annual meeting or special meetings will be held.
- 3.4 Written notice of the annual meeting shall be made stating the place, day and hour of such meeting. This notice shall be mailed to each member secretariat and delegate not less than 90 days prior to the meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be given to each member secretariat and delegate not less than 30 days prior to the meeting. Notice of meetings shall be deemed delivered when deposited in the United States mail and addressed to the delegate and the delegate's address as it appears on the records of National Lutheran Secretariat, with postage thereon paid. Notice of the annual meeting may be sent in the Newsletter.
- 3.5 A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of National Lutheran Secretariat shall consist of a majority of the delegates, laity and clergy, authorized to vote at the time of such meeting. The delegate is authorized by written appointment by the Secretariat they represent to the NLS Secretary. The act of a majority of the delegates at the meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of National Lutheran Secretariat, except when otherwise provided by law or these Bylaws.
- 3.6 Each delegate shall have one vote. Any questions as to voting rights will be settled by National Lutheran Secretariat as the first order of business at any meeting. The principals involved in any dispute on voting rights will not be permitted to vote on the matter.
- 3.7 The number of voting clergy delegates shall be limited to one-third of the total number of delegates, laity and clergy, in attendance. If the number of clergy

delegates attending totals more than one-third of the total number of delegates in attendance, all clergy delegates in attendance shall caucus before the meeting begins to determine among themselves which of them shall vote.

- 3.8 All meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition.

Bylaws to Constitution Article 4

- 4.1 Application for membership in the corporation of National Lutheran Secretariat shall be submitted to the Executive Committee. Membership applications shall be acted upon in conformity with the spirit and intent of the purposes of National Lutheran Secretariat. Upon acceptance of such application by the Executive Committee and by formal acceptance of the Constitution and Bylaws as provided in Article 11 the secretariat so applying shall become a voting member of the corporation.

- 4.2 Each affiliated secretariat may be represented by lay delegates based on the greater of either one of the following formulas:

One lay delegate for each one thousand persons who have attended a Via de Cristo through its ministry as a secretariat (e.g. 1-999 participants -one lay delegate; 1000-1999 participants two lay delegates, etc.)

-OR

The number of lay delegates, based on the number of weekends held the previous calendar year, are as follows: Number of Weekends Lay Delegates

0-4 1 5-8 2 9-12 3 13 or more 4

[Note: The recommended term of office for each delegate is not less than three years.]

- 4.3 Visitors from affiliated secretariats are welcome to attend meetings of National Lutheran Secretariat and may speak to any issue, but are not permitted to vote unless this Bylaw is suspended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates for the duration of the meeting.
- 4.4 Each affiliated Secretariat is entitled to one clergy delegate to attend the annual or special meetings of National Lutheran Secretariat as delegate with voting powers except as may be limited in Bylaw 3.7 to Article 3 of the Constitution.
- 4.5 National Lutheran Secretariat, by an affirmative two-thirds vote, may suspend or expel an affiliated secretariat for causes detrimental to the corporation's activities or if the affiliated secretariat is in conflict with the corporation's goals and objectives.
- 4.6 The Executive Committee may appoint up to three (3) delegates at large to attend a National Lutheran Secretariat Annual Meeting. Each delegate may serve for one year and is eligible for re-appointment. The travel and fee expenses of the appointed at large delegates shall be paid by National Lutheran Secretariat.

Bylaws to Constitution Article 5

- 5.1 The six officers of National Lutheran Secretariat shall be elected for a term of two years and shall hold office until their successors are duly elected. No officer shall be elected to more than two (2) consecutive terms for the same office. The terms of the officers shall be staggered, with three (3) officers being elected each year. In order to provide geographical balance, no more than two (2) officers shall be elected from any one state.
- 5.2 The spiritual director shall be an ordained and rostered Lutheran pastor and will give spiritual direction and guidance to National Lutheran Secretariat and to the Executive Committee and to any standing or special committees or task forces as requested.

- 5.3 The president shall preside at all National Lutheran Secretariat meetings, have general supervision over the affairs of the corporation, facilitate and coordinate expansion activities, and shall perform all such other duties as are incident to his or her office.
- 5.4 There shall be two vice presidents, one for administration and one for outreach. In the event of the temporary absence or disability of the president, the duties of the president shall be performed by the vice-president for administration.
- 5.5 The secretary shall issue notices of the Executive Committee, annual and special meeting notices and shall, if requested, attend and keep the minutes of such meetings. He or she shall have charge of all the corporate books, records, the database, and other papers, and shall be the custodian of the corporate seal, if any. He or she shall attest with his or her signature all written contracts and other documents of the corporation, and shall perform all such duties as are incident to the office.
- 5.6 The treasurer shall have the custody of all the monies and securities of the corporation and shall give bond in such sum and with such sureties as the Executive Committee may require. He or she shall sign all checks of the corporation, shall keep regular books of account, and shall submit that together with all vouchers, receipts, records and any other papers to the Executive Committee or Delegates for their examination and approval as often as the Executive Committee or Delegates may require, is authorized to sign such government, financial and tax forms as are required to be filed, and shall perform all such other duties as are incident to the office.
- 5.7 After their election, the officers are not required to be delegates from their areas. The officers are considered voting members of National Lutheran Secretariat.
- 5.8 If a vacancy exists on the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee may, by appointment, fill the vacancy until the next annual meeting.
- 5.9 The Executive Committee shall engage an Executive Director to coordinate the operations of the organization and its affiliated secretariats and publically represent them.
- 5.10 In order to comply with Minnesota law, all meetings of the Executive Committee shall comply with these requirements:
 - a. The annual meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held in conjunction with the annual of meeting of the delegates at or near the place where the annual meeting of the delegates is conducted. The Executive Committee may conduct business as may properly come before it. If there is no annual meeting of the delegates, the annual meeting of the Executive Committee shall be held each year at such time and place as the Executive Committee may designate, and the Executive Committee may conduct such business as may properly come before it.
 - b. Regular meetings of the Executive Committee may be held from time to time at such place as the Executive Committee shall designate.
 - c. A special meeting of the Executive Committee may be called at any time by the President or upon written request of any two or more Officers of the corporation.
 - d. A special meeting of the Executive Committee may be called for any purpose at any time by the President or upon written request of any two or more Officers of the corporation. Upon request in writing to the President or the Secretary by any two or more Officers, such Officer shall cause to be given to the Executive Committee notice of a meeting to be held at such time, not less than five days after receipt of such request, as such Officer may fix. Special meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held at the principal office or at such other place as the Executive Committee may designate.
 - e. Written notice of each regular and special meeting of the Executive Committee stating the date, time and place and, in the case of a special meeting, its purpose,

shall be delivered, mailed, e-mailed or faxed, not less than five days prior to the meeting, to each Officer entitled to vote at the meeting at his or her last address according to the available records of the corporation. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except that which has been specified in the notice of the meeting.

f. An Officer may waive notice of a meeting of the Executive Committee. A waiver of notice by an Officer entitled to notice is effective whether given before, at, or after the meeting, and whether given orally, in writing, or by attendance. Attendance by an Officer at a meeting is a waiver of notice of that meeting unless the Officer objects at the beginning of the meeting to the transaction of business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened and does not participate in the meeting.

g. At each meeting of the Executive Committee, the presence in person of a majority of the Officers shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. In the absence of such a quorum, any meeting may be adjourned from time to time by a majority of the Officers present. If a quorum is present when a duly called or held meeting is convened, the Officers present may continue to transact business until adjournment, even though one or more Officers withdraws from the meeting leaving less than a quorum.

h. Each Officer shall have one (1) vote. Except as otherwise provided in the Minnesota Statutes, the Articles of Incorporation of the corporation, or these Bylaws, all questions at a meeting of the Executive Committee at which a quorum is present shall be decided by the affirmative majority vote of the Officers present in person at the meeting.

i. If any meeting of the Executive Committee is adjourned to another time or place, no notice as to such adjourned meeting need be given other than by announcement at the meeting at which such adjournment is taken. At an adjourned meeting at which a quorum is present, any business may be transacted that might have been transacted at the meeting as originally noticed.

j. A conference among Officers by means of communication through which the Officers may simultaneously hear each other during the conference is an Executive Committee meeting if the same notice is given of the conference as would be required for a meeting and if the number of Officers participating in the conference is a quorum. Participation in a meeting by this means is personal presence at the meeting.

k. Any action required or permitted to be taken at a meeting of the Executive Committee may be taken by written action signed by the number of Officers who would be required to take the same action at a meeting of the Executive Committee at which all Officers were present; provided, however, that all Officers must be notified immediately of its text and effective date. The written action is effective when signed by the required number of Officers, unless a different effective time is provided in the written action. Failure to provide the notice does not invalidate the written action. An Officer who does not sign or consent to the written action is not liable for the action.

l. The Executive Committee shall conduct all of its meetings and business in accordance with the conflicts of interest provisions and requirements of the Minnesota Nonprofit Corporation Act. [Bylaw 5.10 is to comply with provisions in Minnesota law.]

5.11 National Lutheran Secretariat Executive Committee, by an affirmative two-thirds vote, may suspend or expel an affiliated secretariat for causes detrimental to the corporation's activities or if the affiliated secretariat is in conflict with the corporation's goals and objectives

Bylaws to Constitution Article 6

- 6.1 The chairpersons of committees shall be named by the president, with the consent of the Executive Committee, and will serve at the discretion of the president.
- 6.2 Any action taken by any standing or special committee designated by the President or the Executive Committee shall be subject to the approval of National Lutheran Secretariat.
- 6.3 The standing committees may be one or more of the following:
 - a. Palanca
 - b. Leadership
 - c. Communications
 - d. Public Relations
 - e. Post Weekend
 - f. Newsletter
 - g. New movement Outreach
 - h. Operations and finance
 - i. Revitalization of Secretariats

Bylaw to Constitution Article 7

- 7.1 The funds of the corporation shall be deposited in such bank or depository as the Executive Committee may designate and shall be withdrawn upon the signature of the treasurer and upon the signature of such other person or persons as the Executive Committee may authorize.

Bylaw to Constitution Article 8

- 8.1 The corporation shall operate on a fiscal year ending May 31st.

National Lutheran Secretariat Leadership Endowment

Section A - Endowment Fund Board

The National Lutheran Secretariat (NLS) Leadership Endowment Board (hereafter referred to as the "Board") shall consist of five members, all of whom shall be a member of an NLS affiliated Secretariat. The term of each member shall be three years. Upon adoption of this resolution by a majority of delegates at an official NLS Annual Meeting, the NLS Executive Committee shall appoint five members of the Board: two for a term of three years; two for a term of two years; and one for a term of one year. Thereafter, annually the Executive Committee (EC) shall appoint the necessary number for a term of three years. No member shall serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. After a lapse of one year, former Board members may be re-appointed for no more than one additional term. The NLS President and its Executive Director shall serve as non-voting Board members.

In event of a Board vacancy, the NLS EC shall appoint a replacement member. The Board

shall meet at least semi-annually. A quorum shall consist of three members. When only three members are present, a unanimous vote shall be required to carry any motion or resolution. The Board shall elect from its membership a leader to facilitate meetings and a recording secretary to maintain complete and accurate minutes of meetings. The Board shall report on a semi-annual basis to the NLS EC and annually at the NLS Annual Meeting. The Board may request other members of affiliated Secretariats to serve as advisory members as it deems in the best interest of the Endowment Fund assets (hereafter referred to as the "Fund"). The Board should educate affiliated Secretariats about the Fund, promote the Fund, solicit donations in an appropriate manner and create additional Funds as may be needed to fulfill specific requirements of donors.

Section B - Endowment Fund Management

The Board shall manage the Fund and shall use its best judgment to invest the Fund in a wise and prudent manner. The Board may choose to employ professional management on investments, accounting, and legal matters.

No member of the Board shall engage in any self-dealing or transactions with the Fund in which the member of the Board has direct or indirect financial interest and shall at all times refrain from any conduct in which his/her personal interest would conflict with the interest of the Fund.

There shall be an annual review of the Endowment Fund activities by a committee of three appointed by the NLS EC. None of these persons shall be members of the Board. The committee may enlist professional assistance as necessary. Payment for any professional assistance shall be made from the Fund itself.

Section C - Distributions from the Fund

❖ Annual Distributions from the Fund. The Board shall determine distributions from the Fund. Distributions shall be made with particular emphasis on funding the needs of the Executive Director to enhance and extend the life and mission of the Via de Cristo. It is not intended that Fund distributions be used for the day-to-day operations (i.e., for items normally included in the operating budget). The Board may distribute up to five percent of the Fund annually.

❖ Emergency Distribution from the Fund. The Board may distribute more than five percent of the Fund only when it deems that circumstances are such that the future of the NLS Executive Director is at stake and that the only recourse seems to be the use of the Fund. A two-thirds vote of members present at an NLS EC meeting is required for such use.

❖ The NLS Treasurer or his/her designee shall make fund deposits and disbursements. Whoever is responsible for deposits and disbursements shall be bonded.

Section D - Amending the Resolution

Any amendment to this resolution shall be adopted by two-thirds vote of the delegates present at an NLS Annual Meeting.

Section E - Disposition or Transfer of FUND

Dissolution of the NLS will automatically cause the Fund to be dealt with as any other asset of the NLS as stated in its Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, and Bylaws.

Amended and ratified 2017