



Arizona-California  
**DISTRICT**  
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

## **WELS AZ-CA District Committee on Constitutional Matters**

### **Report to the 2016 WELS Arizona-California District Convention by the WELS AZ-CA District Committee on Constitutional Matters**

The purpose of the WELS Arizona-California District Committee on Constitutional Matters is to help congregations in our district as they work through the process of creating or revising governing documents which establish the structure and regular operations of their ministry. This is in keeping with Article XIX, section 2 of the Constitution of our District, which states:

“The committee shall examine the constitution and bylaws of congregations applying for membership in the district and make its recommendation to the convention. ... The committee shall also approve revisions of constitutions and bylaws of congregations of the district.”

During this past biennium, the WELS AZ-CA DCCM reviewed and approved initial governing documents for the following new congregations/organizations:

Southern California Lutheran Elementary Association (Constitution and Bylaws) – May 2015  
Our Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Cornville, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – August 2015  
Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Fresno, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – May 2016  
Christ’s Gospel Ev. Lutheran Church, Clovis, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – May 2016

During this past biennium, the WELS AZ-CA DCCM reviewed and approved changes to governing documents for the following congregations:

St. John Ev. Lutheran Church, Vacaville, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – January 2015  
Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Glendale, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – January 2015  
Cross of Glory Ev. Lutheran Church, Peoria, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – January 2015  
Star of Bethlehem Ev. Lutheran Church, Santa Maria, CA (Bylaws) – January 2015  
Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Cottonwood, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – April 2016  
Deer Valley Ev. Lutheran Church, Chino Valley, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – April 2016  
Gethsemane Ev. Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – April 2016  
Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tucson, AZ (Constitution and Bylaws) – April 2016  
Shepherd of the Hills Ev. Lutheran Church, La Mesa, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – May 2016  
St. Andrew Ev. Lutheran Church, Sacramento, CA (Constitution and Bylaws) – May 2016

The following congregation has submitted changes to its governing documents and is currently in the process of review:

Beautiful Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV (Constitution and Bylaws)

Because of the current legal and political climate, the DCCM recommends that your congregation review and adopt a facilities use agreement and a statement on marriage and human sexuality as soon as possible. The District Secretary has already sent examples of these documents to your congregation, but you can also find them at <http://synodadmin.welsrc.net/tag/policies> and <http://synodadmin.welsrc.net/download-synodadmin/marriage-documents>. Since the documents found on the synod website have already been vetted, it may be advantageous to use those documents. Please note that such policies don't require the review of our committee but we are happy to look at them. They are not part of the constitution and bylaws but stand alone as a separate document.

If your congregation is considering establishing an endowment fund, the MCG provides a fully vetted, usable form for updating bylaws. Congregations can use this approved wording without seeking additional DCCM approval. If you are going to deviate from this form, we would suggest that you run it by our committee and submit your bylaws for formal review. In all cases an updated electronic copy of the bylaws should be submitted to the DCCM.

If any congregation of our district is considering revisions to their own governing documents, we ask that they would contact our committee's chairman early in the process. We also suggest that they refer to the *Model Constitution and Bylaws* which is available for order from Northwestern Publishing House in printed and/or CD-ROM versions. Upon their request, we are happy to provide congregations with any additional information which may assist them in their revisions. We want to remind our district congregations that our district has agreed that no changes or revisions to a congregation's governing documents should be approved by the voters of that congregation until those changes have been reviewed and approved by our committee.

We thank you for the privilege of assisting the congregations of our district in this way. To God alone be the glory!

Serving you in Christ,

Rev. Joshua E. Stahmann, Chairman  
Rev. Martin P. Spaude  
Rev. Paul R. Schroeder, Secretary