

Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church of Vancouver, Washington, Bylaws

12513 SE Mill Plain Blvd.
Vancouver, WA 98684

Bylaws Nov. 15, 2020 *In process of update and revision beginning in Nov 2023.*
This draft version is from January 2024, prepped Oct 2025 for annual meeting Nov. 16

Article I

Name, Office, and Duration

The name of this congregation shall be Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church of Vancouver, Washington. The principal place of business and administrative office for Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church shall be located at 12513 Southeast Mill Plain Blvd, Vancouver, Washington 98684. The Corporation shall have perpetual existence.

Article II

Preamble and Mission

We, the baptized members of the Church of Christ, do hereby adopt these bylaws to expand and clarify the Constitution of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church of Vancouver, Washington. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, a congregation following in the way of Jesus, upholding ALL as beloved, is committed to:

- Provide worship opportunities at which the Word of God and the Sacraments are celebrated.
- Provide pastoral care and assist all members in the ministry.
- Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their faith through their daily lives, this congregation, and in the world.
- Teach the Word of God.
- Provide witness to the reconciling Word of God by reaching out to people of diverse backgrounds and provide a safe place for all people to gather and grow in faith and service in the name of Jesus. BSLC welcomes people of all cultures and ethnic backgrounds; people of all sexual orientations and gender identities; people of all ages and abilities; and people of any legal, economic, and marital status; with the intention to include and incorporate all those whom the world seeks to separate, divide, or isolate.
- Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.

Article III

Membership

- C8.05.01 A member who has not elected to fulfill for one year the provisions of membership described in C8.04 shall be placed on the membership concern list. They shall be contacted by the pastor and/or representatives of the congregation toward renewal of relationship and restoration of active membership. If, during the second year, the member does not respond, that member's name shall be removed from the active roster but retained on an inactive list as a person for concern.
- C8.05.02 A child, neither of whose parents or guardians is a member of the congregation, may be removed from the roster of baptized members if they fail to participate in the life and the worship of the congregation.
- C8.05.03 Membership in this congregation shall be terminated for sustained inactivity. Inactivity as a member is defined as failure to participate in the life of the church as described in C8.04 of the constitution and, additionally, a failure to respond after the provisions of C8.01.01 have been followed.

Article IV

Congregation Meeting

- C10.01.01 The annual meeting of this congregation shall be held during the fall of the year as called by the Congregation Council.
- a. Each organization of the congregation shall furnish a report to the secretary thirty days before the annual meeting. The report will include a summary of the year's activities, finances, and goals for the coming year.
 - b. A consolidated written annual report shall be given to the members at the annual meeting; it shall include:
 1. Pastor's Report
 2. President's Report
 3. Treasurer's Report
 4. Audit Committee Report
 5. Proposed Annual Budget
 6. Committee Reports
 - c. The agenda for the annual meeting shall be prepared by the president. It shall include:
 1. Opening Devotions
 2. Secretary's report
 3. Pastor's report
 4. President's report

5. Treasurer's report
6. Adoption of budget
7. Elections
8. Resolutions
9. Old business
10. New business
11. Benediction

Article V

Officers Duties

C11.01.01 The President shall:

1. Preside at all meetings of the Congregation, the Congregation Council, and Executive Committee meetings.
2. Encourage the coordination and effective working of Committees and Council Liaisons. Meet with Committee Chairs and liaison at least annually.
3. Call special meetings of the congregation or executive committee, as needed.
4. Conduct meetings according to parliamentary procedure, keeping meetings running smoothly and efficiently, and assist the Congregation Council and this congregation in discernment of God's will.
5. Encourage and support council members to perform their duties according to good order and Christian principles.
6. Represent the congregation in matters of business and sign or countersign all legal documents.
7. Deliver an annual report to the congregation.
8. Execute letters of call.
9. Ensure there is a plan in place proactively, to ensure coverage when there are extended absences of the administrative and pastoral staff (i.e., vacation, education, conventions, health).

C11.01.02 The Vice President shall:

1. Perform the duties of the president in the president's absence, or at the request of the president.
2. Perform or arrange for coverage of the duties of the recording secretary in the individual's absence.
3. Review and ensure property, casualty, and liability insurance is in good standing and sufficient for the needs of the congregation.
4. Actively aid the president in the administration of office.
5. Act as or arrange for a parliamentarian at congregational and Congregation Council meetings.

C11.01.03

The Secretary shall:

1. Record the proceedings of the congregation and congregational council; distribute copies to members.
2. Be authorized and empowered, in the name of the congregation, to attest instruments that require certified, authorized signers so they may sign in lieu of the congregation president or pastor.
3. Retain and codify secretarial records to be filed permanently in the church office. Keep a duplicate personal set of records to be turned over to their successor.
4. Announce all congregational and council meetings and arrange for meeting places.
5. Ensure that a roster of voting members is available at each congregation meeting to verify quorum and eligibility.
6. Work with the pastor and congregation staff to ensure the storage and protection of all important documents and papers of the congregation (i.e., deeds, mortgages, articles of incorporation, constitution, bylaws, tax returns).
7. Keep attendance records of each council meeting, advise president of absentees and their reasons for absence; notify members having two unexcused absences,
8. Assist the president on agenda items, calling attention to matters deferred or referred to committees for further study, and their recommendations,
9. Assist the president in executing letters of call to pastors on behalf of the congregation.
10. Maintain a register of congregational and Congregation Council resolutions and policies.
11. Ensure the compilation of required data and the posting of the congregation's annual parochial report to the appropriate synod or churchwide designee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America by the reporting deadline (usually February).
12. Notify the Nominating Committee of all offices to be filled 90 days prior to the annual meeting at which elections take place.
13. Submit updated copies of constitution and bylaws to the Synod Office.
14. Carry out correspondence on behalf of the Congregation Council and the congregation as directed.

C11.01.03

The Treasurer Shall:

1. Serve as Financial Officer to the congregation.
2. Ensure monthly that all bills, invoices, and charges are paid in a timely manner and that all bookkeeping functions are in

order.

3. Prepare and submit a monthly statement of income and expenses to the Congregation Council, with comparisons to the annual budget.
4. Be a member of the finance committee and cooperate in its supervision of the financial procedures, records, and investments of the congregation.
5. Deliver an annual finance report to the congregation, including submission of the annual budget for approval.
6. Recommend written policies for cash management, annual budgeting, fund reporting, and annual audit to the finance committee and the Congregation Council.
7. Coordinate efforts of and advise the Accounts Receivable Financial Secretary and Accounts Payable Bookkeeper.
 - a. The Accounts Receivable Financial Secretary shall be responsible for the accounting and recording of all income and shall be a member of the Finance Committee.
 - b. The Accounts Payable Bookkeeper shall be responsible for paying all invoices in a timely manner and shall be a member of the Finance Committee.

Article V

Congregation Council

- C12.02.01 The members of the Congregation Council, shall be eligible to serve no more than three full terms consecutively.
- C12.02.02 Elections shall be staggered so that no more than half (6) of the council members are elected for regular vacancies in a given year.
- C12.04.01 Expectations of Congregation Council Members shall:
1. Be a member in good standing of the congregation, regularly attend worship services, and be actively involved in congregational life.
 2. Attend all meetings of the council.
 3. Seek to discover through prayer and discernment, along with other council members, what is best for the congregation according to God's will.
 4. Consider the well-being of the congregation when dealing with specific issues and ministries.
 5. Treat all matters relating to council deliberations as confidential, until such time as the information is determined to be a matter of public knowledge.
 6. Assist the pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the congregation.

7. Ensure that the decisions of the council are carried out.
8. Be a part of a united body by publicly supporting all decisions of the council, even when not agreeing with the decision.
9. Treat members of the council and staff as siblings in Christ.
10. Be familiar with the governing documents of the congregation.
11. Provide a leadership presence in the congregation.

Article VI

Congregation Committees

In response to C4.04. The Congregation Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of all committees, task force, or other organizational groups, and shall review their actions.

Attending to the Business of the Congregation

C13.01.01 The **Executive Committee** shall:

1. Deal officially with issues of the church which occur and need immediate action, and cannot be postponed until the next regular or specially called meeting of the council.
2. Make decisions based on unanimous vote of the members of the committee. In the event that one of the members cannot be reached for polling, another member of the council will be polled. In the event that a unanimous decision cannot be reached, the issue will be deferred until the next meeting of the council for determination. The actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported at the next council meeting.

C13.02.01 The **Nominating Committee** shall:

1. Be convened by the pastor as advisor, elect a chair from their midst who will call and preside at subsequent meetings.
2. Nominate two or more candidates for each office to be filled, as possible.
3. Ask candidates to serve the full term of office if elected.
4. Announce the nominees to the congregation.
5. Accept nominations from the floor, providing that the nominee is present at the meeting to consent to serve.
6. Provide nominations for:
 - a. Congregation Council members, keeping in mind the gifts needed to provide council leadership and to serve as committee liaisons.

- b. Nominating committee members.
- c. Call Committee, if required.
- d. Other offices which may be specified elsewhere in these bylaws, as needed.

C13.03.01 The **Audit Committee** shall:

- 1. Audit the financial books and procedures of record *prior* to the annual meeting and at least once every three years without prior announcement, or as called for by the Congregation Council.
- 2. Follow the written audit procedures adopted by the Congregation Council.
- 3. Report its findings to the congregation by means of the annual report.
- 4. Whenever there is a change of Treasurer, the books shall undergo formal audit that the treasurer will sign off on as duties are transferred.
- 5. All scheduled audits will take place in the first quarter of the calendar year.

C13.04.01 The **Mutual Ministry Committee**

- a. Mutual Ministry Committee members will hold no other office in the congregation during their term and may serve up to two consecutive terms.
- b. The primary purpose of the Mutual Ministry Committee is to affirm and strengthen the mutually held mission and ministry of the congregation and staff. This is done through listening, sharing, clarifying, advising, conferring, reflecting, recommending, affirming, caring, and forgiving. Work of the committee includes:
 - 1. promoting open and accountable communication between congregation, pastor, and other staff of the congregation;
 - 2. serving as a sounding board for the pastor, staff, and members of the congregation, through which to process ideas and possibilities;
 - 3. serving as a listening post for pastor, staff, and congregation to share developing concerns, when needed;
 - 4. creating a climate conducive of healthy relationships and a culture nurturing of spiritual growth between pastor, staff, and congregation;
 - 5. providing early warning awareness when misunderstandings are developing;
 - 6. ensuring conflict resolution support is available if needed;
 - 7. offering support to the pastor and staff in times of personal or professional stress and in times of congregational crisis;

8. encouraging spiritual, emotional, and physical care practices for the pastor and staff;
9. praying regularly for the pastor, staff, and congregation;
10. celebrating the work of the pastor and staff.

C13.06.01 In addition to those committees called for in the model constitution (Executive, Nominating, Audit, Mutual Ministry, and Call Committees), the following committees are approved by the Congregation Council through which to carry out the work of the congregation (duties are outlined in a later section):

- A. Stewardship
- B. Finance
- C. Endowment
- D. HR
- E. Property
- F. Fellowship
- G. Worship and Music
- H. Christian Education
- I. Outreach
- J. Social Ministry

Committees Resourcing and Supporting Mission & Ministry

A. Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee, composed of at least four voting members of the congregation.

1. Promote a broad whole-life understanding of stewardship, including the stewardship of Christian faith and grace in daily living.
2. Develop and implement a plan for stewardship education including the Christian use of money, material possessions, time, skills, and spiritual gifts.
3. Connect the giving of the congregation to the work of local, national, and worldwide ministries through stories.
4. Encourage all members to prayerfully consider growth and proportionate generosity.
5. Provide leadership for an annual financial response emphasis and other congregational efforts to encourage grateful giving. The treasurer shall be an ex officio member when financial response is invited from the congregation.

B. The Finance Committee

1. The treasurer will chair this committee, which also includes, at minimum, the financial secretary and at least one additional member of the congregation. At least one member must be an elected member of council.

2. Hold meetings at least quarterly and as such other times as the chair deems necessary,
3. Prepare and recommend the annual budget to the congregation council.
4. Make recommendations to the council regarding expenditures.
5. Advise the Congregation Council regarding any financial matters that may arise, including investments.
6. Provide for the counting and banking of collections and donations, ensuring there are two unrelated persons who are not affiliated with other financial responsibilities of the congregation, available each Sunday or within twenty-four hours of any service where contributions are received.

C. Mission Endowment Committee shall:

1. Make investment decisions regarding new and existing income.
2. Develop protocols for the application for and distribution of investment gains of the Mission Endowment Fund to qualified recipients, in accordance with the policies governing the Mission Endowment Fund.
3. Serve as advocates of growing the Mission Endowment Fund as a venue through which to extend the ministry of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church.

D. HR Committee

- a. The HR Committee shall be made up of at least three voting members of the congregation.
- b. The pastor serves as head of staff, working with the HR Committee to provide support and oversight.
- c. The president also participates as an ex officio member of this committee.
- d. The HR Committee shall:
 1. Develop staff job descriptions for positions not described in the constitution.
 2. Provide biannual assessment/feedback for pastor and staff.
 3. Help pastor and lay professionals plan continuing education and sabbaticals that benefits both the mission of the congregation and the ministry of the staff.
 4. Annually assess working conditions, compensation, housing (pastor), and benefits provided to the pastor and staff, and make recommendations to the Congregation Council.

E. Property Committee

The Property Committee shall consist of at least four voting members of the congregation, appointed by the Congregation Council:

1. Take responsibility for the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation.
2. Ensure that all property of the congregation is kept in good repair.
3. Schedule and promote congregational participation in semi-annual cleanup days for spring and fall.
4. Develop a team to share the responsibility for lawn mowing.
5. Encourage all members of the congregation to utilize their talents toward fulfilling the responsibilities listed above, and coordinate their efforts.
6. Approve, supervise and coordinate any proposed property improvements.

Committees Nurturing Relationships within the Congregation

F. Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee shall:

1. Organize and coordinate fellowship activities with the congregation aimed to bring the congregation closer together.
2. Coordinate meals and cleanup for Wednesday evening gatherings (monthly, weekly, or quarterly) throughout the program year (Sept.-May) as the committee decides is feasible.
3. Serve as a resource for committees' planned events.
4. Support the ministry of the congregation's *Care Team*, *Funeral Reception Task Force*, and other caregiving ministries of the congregation.

Committees Deepening Our Relationship with God

G. Worship and Music Committee

The Worship and Music Committee shall:

1. Assist the pastor to develop creative and meaningful worship experiences.
2. Within the framework of the ELCA, work to maintain and cultivate an appreciation of Lutheran tradition through liturgy and music.
3. Support and guide the music ministry of the congregation.
4. Work with the pastor and staff to select resources appropriate for use in the worship life of this congregation.
5. Be responsible for the training, support, and scheduling of ushers, greeters, readers, acolytes, communion assistants and assisting ministers.

6. Support the ministry of the **Altar Guild**, which in collaboration with the pastor, shall:
 - a. Prepare and care for chancel appointments, including changing paraments according to the liturgical season or festival day.
 - b. Set up all that is needed to provide weekly Holy Communion.
 - c. Ensure the availability of the elements of Holy Communion: bread, gluten free bread, wafers--as requested, wine, and grape juice.
 - d. After worship, appropriately disperse or share the remaining elements.
 - e. Clean communion ware according to best sanitization practices.
 - f. Coordinate a schedule for altar flowers and make recommendations about what is acceptable
 - g. Maintain the candles, including the "eternal light."

H. Christian Education Committee

The Christian Education Committee, consisting of at least the chair, pastor, youth director, council liaison, and others providing faith formation activities in the congregation, shall:

1. Plan and oversee Sunday school, youth, and adult education activities within the congregation.
3. Provide support, direction, and resources to all who take on responsibility for the education and faith development of children, youth, and adults in the congregation.
4. Establish, review, communicate, and enforce "safe congregation" protocols and policies governing all work done with children or youth.
5. Encourage the application of faith formation practices in everyday life.
6. Provide adult coordination of and support for youth activities to encourage leadership development, faith formation, and relationships with and among the youth of the congregation.

Committees for Growing Relationship with Those Not Yet Among Us

I. Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee shall:

1. Help the church welcome and encourage all people wherever they are on their spiritual journey.
2. Help newcomers connect to the community of Christ through the ministries of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church.
3. Study the surrounding community as a context for outreach

- and promote changes in the ministry accordingly.
4. Support the ministry of the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Team, which shall:
 - a. Provide education and information to the congregation.
 - b. Explore opportunities to advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community.
 - c. Explore ways to reach out to members of the LGBTQIA+ community and invite them to become part of Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church.

J. Social Ministry

The Social Ministry Committee shall:

1. Act as an extension of our church body to serve the needs of both the local and worldwide community, having primary responsibility for helping the congregation live into its service to Christ.
2. Authorizing the dissemination of funds to various groups and organizations, as aligns with the mission of this congregation and social ministry committee.
3. Evaluate the social needs of those being served through this ministry. Receive direction from the congregation. Involve as many members as possible in participation in active service-related ministries.
4. Support the ministries of the following Ministry Teams through participation, oversight, and resourcing:
 - a. Lutheran World Relief (LWR), which works to
 - Recognize and identify needs within both the local and global community.
 - Utilize the skills and talents of the congregation to provide material aids to a larger community that stretches around the world.
 - b. Peace and Justice
 - c. Community Garden
 - d. Mexico Mission
 - e. Winter Shelter (SOS)

C13. 07.01 The duties of all committees shall be assigned by the Congregation Council, along with such instructions as is in its judgment are in the best interests of the congregation.

- a. All actions of committees are subject to review by the council, except the Executive Committee, which will have limited authority to act when necessary to expedite important issues.
- b. Committees shall consist of at least three members and meet

at least quarterly, to be considered active and functioning.

- c. Committee chairs will report to their council liaison monthly unless the liaison participated in that month's activities.
- d. Committee chairs shall submit an annual report to the church office by Oct. 1 each year.