

Constitutional Process for Considering Church Affiliation Questions

Question: Our congregation's constitution hasn't been updated in line with the latest edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Are we still bound by the provisions of the Model Constitution, Chapter 6?

Answer: It is always good for a congregation to keep its constitution and bylaws "up to date" with the current edition of the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. Nevertheless, the governing process for all congregations of the ELCA is the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, Sections 9.60 and 9.70 on pages 64-65. These sections "trump" whatever is in a congregation's constitution.

The process described in Sections 9.60 and 9.70 is the same as what's in the *Model Constitution for Congregations*. It is in the ELCA churchwide constitution to cover those cases where this process may not be covered in congregational constitutions. By virtue, therefore, of being a part of the ELCA a congregation obligates itself to follow this process.