

THE
**German United
Evangelical Church**

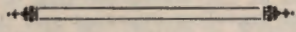
OF CANTON
East Avenue and Dillon Street
BALTIMORE, MD.



*Constitution
and By-Laws*

Adopted
DECEMBER 13, 1926

Constitution and By-Laws



Mindful of the Scriptural Injunction, "that all things be done decently and in order," we have adopted the following Constitution for our congregation:

ARTICLE I—NAME

The name of our church shall be The German United Evangelical Church of Canton, Baltimore, Maryland.

ARTICLE II—CREED

The congregation recognizes the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the Word of God and the sole and infallible guide of faith and of life, and accepts the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as given in the symbolic books of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, the most important being: The Augsburg Confession, and Luther's and the Heidelberg Catechisms, in so far as they agree; but where they disagree the congregation adheres strictly to the passages of the Holy Scriptures bearing on the subject, and avails itself of the liberty of conscience that prevails in the Evangelical Church.

ARTICLE III—AFFILIATION

Section 1: *Synodical Membership*

This congregation is or shall become a member of the Evangelical Synod of North America. Withdrawal from the Synod can only take place when two-thirds of all the voting members of the congregation shall favor such withdrawal.

present

Section 2: *Synodical Obligations*

- (a) This congregation shall contribute regularly towards the support of all branches of the District and Synodical work.
- (b) A delegate and an alternate from this congregation to the annual conference of the Atlantic District

of the Evangelical Synod of North America shall be elected at the March meeting of the congregation. The traveling expenses and the registration fees of both pastor and delegate shall be defrayed by the congregation.

ARTICLE IV—MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: *Conditions for Membership*

Any person may become a member of this congregation who—

1. Is baptized into the name of the triune God;
2. Accepts the articles of faith in Article II;
3. Agrees to pledge himself by his signature to this constitution.

Section 2: *Application for Membership*

Application for membership must be made in writing to the Church Council, who will act on the same.

Section 3: *Method of Admission*

Membership in the German United Evangelical Church may be obtained by

1. Confirmation after instruction in the Christian faith and doctrine according to the Evangelical Catechism; or
2. Public confession of faith based on the Apostolic Creed, before the assembled congregation, except in such cases where the Church Council deems it justifiable that this confession made before the pastor privately; or
3. Letter of transfer issued by a recognized Protestant Church, of which the applicant formerly was a member.

Section 4: *Reception of Members*

Applicants who have been approved by the Church Council shall be received into membership at a regular church service according to the ritual of the Evangelical Synod of North America except in such cases where the Church Council deems it justifiable that the applicant

make his confession before the pastor privately, in which case the pastor may receive him.

Section 5: *Duties of Members*

It is the duty of every member to take active part in all functions of the church to the glorification of God and the uplift of mankind. This includes:

1. Regular attendance at divine worship.
2. Devout use of the Holy Scripture.
3. Fervent prayer for the welfare of the Church.
4. Liberal financial contributions toward her maintenance and her benevolent undertakings.
5. Hearty moral support of all her activities.
6. Obedience to her established laws and orders.
7. Untiring zeal in bringing the unchurchly under her influence.
8. The spirit of Christian fellowship toward all her members.
9. Membership in all her organizations, wherever possible.

Section 6: *Voting Privileges*

- (a) Only members of good and regular standing who have attained the age of twenty-one years shall be qualified voters at any corporate or congregational meeting of the Church.
- (b) A member who has failed to contribute to the support of the Church for the preceding year without satisfactory explanation shall not be privileged to vote or hold office.

Section 7: *Dismissal*

A member who desires to sever his relations with this church shall apply to the Church Council for a letter of dismissal or transfer, which will be granted if, at the time, the member is in good and regular standing.

Section 8: *Suspension*

It shall be the duty of the Church Council to warn

any member for failure to fulfill his duties or for conduct unbecoming a Christian, in a brotherly spirit as set forth in Galatians, sixth chapter, verse 1. Should this warning prove futile it shall be the duty of the Church Council to suspend or expel the member. Any member who has been suspended or expelled by the Church Council shall have the right of appeal at the next congregational meeting.

Section 9: *Reinstatement*

Any member who has been dismissed, suspended, or expelled, may be reinstated upon application to the Church Council.

ARTICLE V—ADMINISTRATION

Section 1: *The Church Council*

Personnel:

(a) The Church Council of this Church shall consist of twelve members, six of whom shall be elected annually, for a period of two years. No member can serve more than three consecutive terms.

Eligibility:

(b) Only such members are eligible for nomination and election who have attained the age of twenty-four years and who have been members of the congregation for one year or more.

Nominations:

(c) 1. At the regular September congregational meeting the president of the Church Council shall appoint a nominating committee of five to select candidates for the vacancies from the Church Council. This committee shall be composed of one member of the Church Council, one member of the Junior Church Council, and three members from the congregation at large. They shall interview the candidates for office, secure their consent to serve, and report their nominees to the congregation at the special congregational meeting for the nomination of members of the Church Council.

2. Nominations may be made in writing or from the floor to the president of the Church Council at the special congregational meeting for the nomination of members of the Church Council

3. The names of the nominees shall be published on election which shall be by ballot, shall be held at a special meeting on a week day prior to the first Sunday preceding Advent. A majority of votes elect.

4. Any member of the Church Council shall be eligible for re-election after the lapse of one year after his term has expired.

Installation :

(d) The newly elected members of the Church Council shall be installed into office, in accordance with the prevailing custom by the pastor on the Sunday following their election.

(e) Vacancies :

1. The Church Council shall within two months fill any vacancy that occurs in its membership for the unexpired portion of the term.

2. The Church Council shall declare the office of any member vacant who is absent from three consecutive council meetings without a reasonable or acceptable excuse.

Section 2: *The Junior Church Council*

Personnel :

The Junior Church Council of this congregation shall be composed of six members, three of whom shall be elected annually for a term of two years.

Eligibility :

Only such members are eligible for nomination and election who have not yet attained the age of twenty-four years and who have been members of the church for at least one year.

Nominations, Elections, Etc.

(a) The nominations, elections, etc., of the Junior Church Council shall be governed by the rules specified in Article V, Section 1, paragraphs c, d and e.

(b) The committee appointed to make nominations for the Church Council shall also make nominations for the Junior Church Council.

(c) The Church Council shall within two months fill any vacancy that may occur in the Junior Church Council for the unexpired portion of the term.

ARTICLE VI—MEETINGS AND DUTIES OF THE COUNCILS

Section 1: *Regular Meetings*

The Church Council shall meet regularly on the first Monday of each month but may, in exceptional cases, change the date of meeting of any particular month.

Section 2: *Special Meetings*

The Church Council may be called in special meeting by its president at any time, and it shall be the duty of the president to call a special meeting on demand of three members of the Church Council or of four voting members of the Congregation, in good standing, or of the pastor.

Section 3: *Quorum*

The president or vice-president, together with six members, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 4: *Organization of Council and Duties of Officers*

All minutes, reports and records of the Church and its organizations shall be recorded in the English language.

(a) The Church Council shall organize by electing annually a president, vice-president, corresponding secretary, financial secretary, and treasurer, who shall hold office until their successors have duly qualified.

(b) *President*—It shall be the duty of the president to preside at all meetings of the Church Council and congregation. He shall sign, together with the financial secretary and treasurer, all cheques. He shall be ex-officio member of all committees.

(c) *Vice-President*—In the absence of the president, it shall be the duty of the vice-president to perform his duties. He shall be chairman of the committee on property.

(d) *Corresponding Secretary*—The corresponding secretary shall keep accurate minutes of the proceedings of the congregation and Church Council and shall read at each quarterly meeting the minutes of the preceding congregational meeting and those of the meetings of the Church Council for the preceding three months. He shall incorporate in the minutes of the Church Council all bills presented and the action thereon, reports from the finance committee shall be recorded in the congregational minutes, attend all correspondence and with the assistance of the financial secretary or parish worker send out all notices or communications. He shall keep a correct list of the members of the congregation, their addresses, the date of admission, resignation, suspension, dismissal, withdrawal, or death. He shall keep a record of all documents placed in the safe deposit box. He shall, at the expiration of his term of office deliver to his successor all records, books, papers, etc., belonging to the congregation which may be in his custody. He shall receive for his services the sum of thirty-five (\$35.00) per annum, payable quarterly.

(e) *Financial Secretary*—The financial secretary shall keep accurate records of all money received by authorized individuals, committees, etc., record the receipts from members for the payment of quarterly dues and the envelope system, the former, by the aid of the treasurer, and the latter, by the assistance of the envelope committee. Render a complete statement quarterly of the receipts and disbursements of the Church and all special funds. He shall be a member of the envelope

committee, ex-officio. He shall sign all cheques or vouchers together with the president and treasurer. He shall receive for his services the sum of thirty-five dollars (\$35.00) per annum, payable quarterly.

(f) *Treasurer*—The treasurer shall receive all money and issue receipts to the proper party, keep an accurate account thereof, make all disbursements as ordered by the Church Council. He shall keep a separate account for each fund. All money received by him shall be deposited by him promptly, and all disbursements after authorization shall be made by cheque when signed by the president, financial secretary, and treasurer. He shall report monthly to the Church Council his receipts and disbursements in each fund, together with the balance on hand at the beginning and the end of the month. He shall turn over to his successor all funds, books, accounts, papers, and property of the congregation in his custody at the expiration of his term of office. He shall furnish corporate bond in the penalty of two thousand dollars, the premium for which shall be paid out of the church fund. He shall receive for his services the sum of \$25.00 per annum, payable quarterly.

Section 5: *Duties of the Church Council*

The Church Council shall:

- (a) Promote the spiritual life and welfare of the church members.
- (b) Exercise due care that the Word of God be preached in accordance with the doctrine of the Evangelical Synod.
- (c) Set a good example of Christian living, in regular attendance at the divine services and at Holy Communion.
- (d) secure and preserve quiet and order in and about the church during divine services.
- (e) Represent the congregation in all business and legal transactions; have supervision over all church property; keep all buildings in good repair;

have charge of and preserve all documents of the congregation in a safe deposit box.

- (f) Have the right to make and pay bills for current expenses.
- (g) Have the power to borrow funds not exceeding in the aggregate (\$2,500.00) twenty-five hundred dollars, and execute the necessary papers under the seal of the church.
- (h) For improvement they shall be limited to the expenditure of the sum of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) for any single item.
- (i) Engage and exercise control over all employees and fix their salaries, and
- (j) Disburse at least every three months the funds received for Kingdom work. X

Section 6: *The Junior Church Council*

- (a) The Junior Church Council is instituted for the purpose of training and developing young people for future service as members of the Church Council and for giving the younger element adequate representation in the governing body of the congregation. In order that they may become acquainted with the spiritual and business affairs of the congregation the Junior Church Council shall sit in an advisory capacity at the meetings of the Church Council with voice in the deliberations, but no vote, except when granted by the Church Council. They may be appointed on committees composed exclusively of members of the Junior Council, or in conjunction with members of the Church Council. They shall be particularly chosen for committees for which they are particularly fitted by age, association, experience, such as music, young people's activity, Sunday School and ushering.
- (b) Any member of the Junior Council who meets the requirements as to age, and length of membership

shall be eligible to election to the Church Council
 In the event of the election of a member of the
 Junior Council to the Church Council, the vacancy
 so created shall be filled as provided in Article V,
 Section 2, paragraph c.

ARTICLE VII—THE PASTOR

Section 1: *Duties of the Pastor*

It shall be the duty of the pastor to set a good example
 to his congregation and to conduct all services on Sun-
 days, holidays and such days as the congregation may
 desire; to direct the work of religious education, ad-
 minister the Holy Sacraments, visit the sick, comfort the
 distressed, and to perform all such duties as belong to
 the office of a pastor of the Evangelical Synod. He shall
 keep accurate records of all services performed and file
 a quarterly report with the corresponding secretary, and
 present his records for inspection at the annual con-
 gregational meeting.

Section 2: *Selection of a Pastor*

(a) In case of a vacancy in the pastorate of the
 church, the Church Council shall notify the District
 President and receive from him the names of candidates.

(b) A committee of three shall be appointed by the
 congregation to guide it in its choice. This committee
 shall take due notice of the candidate's name by the
 District President. In addition it shall canvass the
 Synod for suitable pastors. Upon receiving a tentative
 choice the committee shall visit the ministers in their
 home fields of labor, interview them, hear them preach,
 ascertain their qualifications from personal observation
 and information that they may secure from reliable
 sources.

(c) Hereupon the committee shall decide on the min-
 ister who in their judgment is best qualified for the
 vacancy and recommend his election to the Church
 Council. The Church Council shall invite him to meet
 the members of the congregation informally, preferably

on some day other than Sunday. Every member of the congregation shall be invited by mail to meet the visiting minister.

Section 3: *Election of a Pastor.*

(a) Election of the pastor shall take place at a special meeting called within two weeks after the prospective pastor has visited the congregation. A majority vote of the members present shall be necessary for election. Voting shall be by ballot. Every member shall be notified by mail of the time, place, and purpose of this meeting. It shall be published from the pulpit at least one Sunday prior to the election.

(b) A written call stating requirements, salary, etc., signed by the president and secretary of the Church Council shall be sent to the pastor-elect.

(c) The Pastor-elect shall assume his duties within three months after his notification of election.

Section 4: *Severance of Relations of Pastor and Congregation*

(a) To sever the existing relations between pastor and congregation a three months' notice in writing shall be required by either party unless peculiar conditions necessitate an immediate separation.

(b) Upon the termination of his services as pastor, the latter must turn over to the secretary all books, papers, seals, and other property of the church in his custody.

ARTICLE VIII—CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1: *Regular Meetings*

(a) The regular quarterly meetings shall be held on the second Monday in December, March, June and September, provided, however, that in exceptional cases the Church Council may fix another date. The December meeting shall be known as the Annual Meeting. At this meeting each organization of the church shall present a written report of its aims and accomplishments.

Section 2: *Special Meetings*

(a) The president shall call a special meeting upon the demand of two-thirds of the members of the Church Council or of twenty-five voting members, in good standing. The latter demand must be made in writing stating the reasons therefore.

(b) Notice of such special meeting and its purpose shall be given from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays by the pastor. In case of emergency where a meeting is deemed necessary on shorter notice, notification may be made by mail and the notification from the pulpit omitted.

Section 3: *Quorum*

X Fifteen members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX—COMMITTEES

The president shall appoint at the Annual Meeting the following committees which shall organize according to their needs and report their organization to the Church Council:

1. *Auditing Committee.* The auditing committee shall consist of three members of the congregation appointed annually. They shall audit the books of the financial secretary and treasurer, and shall submit a report in writing. In this report they may express their opinion as to the financial condition of the church and shall be entitled to make suggestions that they may deem advisable to improve the method of handling funds or the general financial condition of the church.

2. *Committee on Charity.* The committee on charity shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be a member of the Church Council. This committee shall investigate all cases of distress brought to their attention and shall take such action as they may deem advisable. Request for necessary funds shall be made to the Church Council in its regular meetings. This committee shall open the alms boxes after each service and turn the

money over to the treasurer immediately. They shall report their activities at each congregational meeting.

3. *Envelope Committee.* The envelope committee shall consist of three members and the financial secretary ex-officio. This committee shall have charge of the purchase and distribution of the weekly offering envelopes. At the close of each service they shall take charge of the envelopes presented in the offering. They shall record at least monthly the amounts contributed by the members for current expenses and for Kingdom work. They shall keep an accurate record and shall turn the money over to the treasurer at once, taking his receipt therefor. At the conclusion of each fiscal year their record books shall be placed in the official files of the church.

4. *Finance Committee.* The finance committee shall consist of three members and the treasurer ex-officio. They shall prepare the annual budget covering current expenses and Kingdom work. This budget shall be presented to the Church Council for approval in its December meeting and to the congregational meeting in December for adoption. X ?

5. *Canvass Committee.* The canvass committee shall consist of five members, one of whom shall be from the Church Council, one from the Junior Church Council, and three from the congregation at large. This committee shall prepare and conduct all canvassers and instruct them in their duties. They shall conduct some type of canvass every year and a financial canvass at least every two years. At the conclusion of each canvass a general or statistical report shall be compiled and submitted in duplicate to the Church Council.

6. *Property Committee.* The property committee shall consist of three members of the Church Council and the vice-president, as chairman. They shall at regular intervals make careful inspection of all church property and report the need of necessary repairs to the Church Council.

7. *Music Committee.* The music committee shall consist of three members, two of whom shall be members of the Junior Council. They shall assist the organist in maintaining a choir of adequate size. They shall assist the pastor and organist in planning suitable musical programs for regular and special services. They shall, to the best of their ability, promote the use of good music in all religious services, and use all means in their power to develop in the congregation a growing understanding and appreciation of truly good music in divine service.

8. *Fellowship or Ushering Committee.* The fellowship committee shall consist of eight members, four of whom shall be members of the Junior Council. They shall welcome the members of the congregation and all visitors at the services, conduct them to seats in the church, and insure their physical comfort. At the celebration of the Lord's Supper they shall usher the communicants to the Lord's Table. They shall receive the regular Sunday offering, except in the German services, when the Church Council shall attend to this duty.

X 9. *Committee on The United Endeavor.* The committee on united endeavor shall consist of three members, one of whom shall be a member of the Junior Council. They shall be authorized to receive payments for advertisements, subscriptions, and donations. They shall turn this money over to the treasurer at least quarterly and shall submit a report to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. They shall mail all copies monthly to subscribers and to others officially on the mailing list.

10. *Calendar Committee.* The calendar committee shall consist of two members, one of whom shall be from the Church Council and one selected by the president from the congregation. They shall maintain a calendar of activities of the organizations in the church. They shall receive requests for the use of the church property for special occasions and make recommendations to the Church Council. They shall use their influence to prevent an excessive number or a massing of social functions. All organizations of the church planning special

functions should consult this committee before fixing the date. Where they deem it advisable they may suggest to organizations suitable types and times for particular entertainments.

11. *Committee on Religious Education.*

(a) **Personnel.** The committee of religious education shall consist of four members appointed in this manner: Two are appointed for one year and two for two years, so that thereafter two vacancies are to be filled every year. The pastor, the superintendent of the Sunday School, the parish worker, and the president of the Church Council are ex-officio members with vote.

(b) **Duties.** It shall be the duty of this committee:

1. To promote and supervise the work of religious education in the church.
2. To organize the work of week-day religious education, especially Bible and Mission study classes, Daily Vacation Bible schools, Community school, and Christian Endeavor activities, in the most efficient manner and for the greatest number of hours per year.
3. To make a quarterly report to the Church Council and to the congregation.

ARTICLE X—AMENDMENTS AND BY-LAWS

(a) Amendments and By-Laws to this Constitution shall be submitted to the president, in writing, signed by three voting members of the congregation in good standing. The president shall present these at the next congregational meeting. Action on the proposed amendment or by-law shall be taken at the next meeting following the one at which they were read. A two-thirds vote of the members present is necessary for adoption.

(b) By adoption of this Constitution, all former constitutions, amendments and by-laws are declared repealed.

"May the Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen."

Revised and Adopted, December 13, 1926.

J. ELMER BERL, Chairman

GEORGE TRAUTNER

ALBERT SCHMEISER

ADAM A. TRAUTNER

JOHN SCHEUFEL

GEORGE BIEN

WILLIAM WATERS

GEORGE METZGER

Order of Business

1. Opening of meeting with prayer.
2. Reading of minutes of previous meeting.
3. Report of receipts and expenditures.
4. Report of committees.
5. Consideration of communications.
6. Proposals and election of new members.
7. Unfinished business.
8. New business.
9. Adjournment and prayer.