

International Lutheran Deaf Association

Constitution

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THE ILDA CONSTITUTION AND HANDBOOK

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I

PREAMBLE

We desire to be faithful people of God, led by Him and our blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, and inspired by the Word of God as it is brought to us in the doctrines, teachings and confessions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

We are committed to our Lord Jesus Christ and dedicated to serving God, our Synod and deaf people all over the world in a fellowship of love, devotion, lay work, evangelism and worship.

Our only common desire is to unite the efforts of deaf Lutherans and others in carrying out the programs, projects and plans to achieve our purposes.

We do not and shall not engage in partisan controversies or politics.

Our primary and broad goal is to enrich the lives of deaf people through spiritual growth and develop Christian leadership among all the people with whom we associate.

ARTICLE II

NAME

This association shall be known as the *International Lutheran Deaf Association* (ILDA).

ARTICLE III

LOCATION

The ILDA shall have as its primary address, 9907 Sappington Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63128, and such other places as the ILDA Board of Directors may designate.

ARTICLE IV

PURPOSE

The general and broad purposes of the ILDA shall be to coordinate and strengthen the religious activities and services in our congregations, helping promote their growth to the highest possible level in service to their Lord and Savior; and to promote the Christian faith and life of the Lutheran deaf people, all deaf people, and others with whom we associate; and to carry on our ministry throughout the world.

The Association is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes within the meaning of Section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE V

MEMBERSHIP

Section A – Classes

The ILDA shall be comprised of three classes of memberships: Active Members, Associate Members and Supporting Members. All are voluntary memberships, but are subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this Constitution. All members shall be dedicated towards carrying out the broad purposes of the ILDA.

Section B – Active Members

1. Active members shall be deaf Lutheran lay-people who are communicant members in good standing in a congregation and/or field of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and/or its partner churches.
2. Only active members may hold office in either the ILDA or its regional branches.
3. Only active members may propose and/or vote upon Constitution changes of the ILDA.
4. In general, it shall be understood that the ILDA and its regional branches are governed entirely by active members.

Section C – Associate Members

1. Associate members shall be deaf or hearing people who are communicant members of a Lutheran congregation and who are active in deaf Christian activities. These are divided into three classes:
 - a. Lutheran deaf lay-people who are not members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
 - b. Lutheran deaf persons in pastoral ministry of a Lutheran congregation, and
 - c. Hearing Lutheran lay-people and persons involved in pastoral ministry.
2. Associate members shall not be permitted to hold office in the ILDA or its regional branches, propose and/or vote upon the Constitution.
3. Associate members may propose and/or vote on matters concerning candidates, programs, projects and mission work of the ILDA.

Section D – Supporting Members

1. Supporting members shall be all those active in deaf Christian activities who wish to take part in and give support to the purpose and programs of the ILDA but do not qualify as active or associate members.
2. Supporting members may make proposals on matters concerning programs, projects and mission work but are not permitted to vote or hold office in the ILDA or its branches.

Section E – Requirements

All members are subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the ILDA Constitution.

Section F – Regulations

1. Only members with current membership cards shall be permitted to propose, vote or run for office at all ILDA conventions.
2. Dues shall be determined by the ILDA in convention.

ARTICLE VI

OFFICERS

Section A – Definition

The ILDA officers shall be known as: the president, the president-elect, the secretary and the treasurer. The obligations, responsibilities and duties of the officers shall be set forth in this Constitution and its Handbook. All officers must be deaf lay-people who are members in good standing of a deaf congregation and/or field of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, or one of its partner churches, and elected to office at a biennial convention of the ILDA under the terms and conditions set forth in this Constitution.

Section B – Officers and Terms of Office

1. No individual can serve more than one office in the ILDA and its regional branches at the same time.
2. Officers must be twenty-one (21) years of age or older.
3. No officer may hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms.
4. Any officer who has been removed from office shall not be permitted to run for or hold office in the ILDA or its regional branches for a period of five (5) years.

Section C – Removal From Office

1. All ILDA officers are subject to removal from office by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a Board of Directors meeting for any of the following reasons:
 - a. No longer member.
 - b. Wrong use of office.
 - c. Neglect of duty.
 - d. Misuse of ILDA funds.
 - e. Behaving as an unrepentant sinner.
2. To request an officer be removed from office, formal charges must be signed by the person(s) seeking the officer's removal and presented to the Board of Directors in documented form.
 - a. The officer shall be given a fair chance to respond to the charges before the Board.
 - b. The officer may require the accuser(s) be present and shall be privileged to cross-examine them.
 - c. The decision of the Board shall be final.
3. If the Board votes for removal an officer, it becomes effective immediately and the Board shall, at the same time, act to fill the office that has become vacant.

Section D – Filling Vacancies

If the office of the treasurer or secretary becomes vacant for any reason between terms, the Board of Directors shall elect an acting secretary or treasurer for the remainder of the term of the vacant office.

Section E – Installation of Officers

1. All newly elected officers shall be installed at the closing worship of the ILDA convention.
2. Before being accepted into office, they shall be required to agree to the following under oath as read to them by the pastoral advisor:

“As faithful servants of our blessed Savior you are fully aware of all the things contained in the ILDA Constitution and upon accepting office, you agree to follow all of these things for the best interests of the ILDA and faithfully perform the duties of your office with God’s help to the best of your ability. If so, then answer, ‘I will, God help me!’”

(Each officer shall so respond.)

ARTICLE VII

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The Executive Council shall consist of the president, who shall be chairman; the president-elect, the secretary, who shall be secretary of the Executive Council; the treasurer; the Director of the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society; and the pastoral advisor. The Executive Council shall be responsible for the management and administration of business and activities of the ILDA as delegated by the ILDA Board of Directors, exercising all powers of the Board, within the policies of the Board and under the provisions set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE VIII

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The ILDA Board of Directors shall consist of the Executive Council and the president of each ILDA regional branch. The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the management of all ILDA business and activities, the conduct of the membership and other things specifically related to and set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE IX

COMMITTEES

Composed of only active members, the ILDA committees shall be:

1. Finance Committee
2. Law Committee
3. Mission Projects Committee
4. Nominating Committee
5. Right Hand Award Committee
6. Other committees approved by the Board of Directors

Before the end of the convention, the committees for the next two years shall be chosen and announced.

The Handbook will describe their election/appointment, duties and responsibilities.

ARTICLE X

REGIONAL BRANCHES

The ILDA will cooperate with the regional branches for the purpose of carrying out its programs, plans and projects; promoting its purpose; soliciting funds; and coordinating the efforts of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod or its partner churches, the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society, the ministry with deaf persons, regional branches, deaf congregations, people involved in the pastoral ministry and all the people of the ILDA. Regional branches shall be governed by the terms, provisions and conditions set forth in this Constitution.

ARTICLE XI

CONVENTIONS

The ILDA shall hold conventions every two (2) years in even-numbered years. Regional branches are encouraged to meet in odd-numbered years. The conduct as well as all plans, conditions and provisions shall be set forth in this Constitution and its Handbook. All of the ILDA conventions shall be self-supporting.

ARTICLE XII

VOTING

When voting on any ILDA issues, international or regional, issues shall be decided by a simple majority of voting members present unless otherwise defined in this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIII

MEETINGS

All ILDA meetings, the Executive Council, the Board of Directors, the various committees, and special meetings as to their frequency and purpose shall be defined in this Constitution and its Handbook. All meetings shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.

ARTICLE XIV

ILDA HANDBOOK

Section A – Description

1. The ILDA shall have a Handbook for the purpose of harmonizing the ILDA operations.
2. The Handbook shall contain articles on administration, operation, coordination, conventions, regional branches, congregations and/or fields, the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society, the ministry with deaf persons, public relations and any other things that might serve the purpose.
3. This Handbook shall be primarily for the purpose of assisting the ILDA in conducting its operations, carrying out its ministry and in achieving the goals set forth in the purpose of the Constitution.

Section B – Changes

1. The Board of Directors, by an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority may add, delete, change, modify or alter any of the articles in the Handbook as they believe necessary without convention approval.
2. Each section cannot be changed more than one time in any calendar year and all changes shall be printed in *The Deaf Lutheran*.
3. A section of rules may be repealed from this Handbook by a majority vote at the ILDA convention. Any repealed section cannot be changed by the Board of Directors, but must be approved by another ILDA convention before becoming effective.

Section C – Membership Obligation

All ILDA members shall agree to follow the articles in the Handbook to promote mutual understanding and agreement for the best interests of the ILDA.

ARTICLE XV

REAL ESTATE

1. The ILDA by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the voting members at an ILDA convention may buy, acquire or sell real estate, as long as it is maintained and operated entirely on a non-profit basis and is essential for carrying out the purposes of the ILDA.
2. An inventory of the ILDA and *The Deaf Lutheran (DL)* property shall be updated annually and given to the president and secretary.

ARTICLE XVI

MISCELLANEOUS

The ILDA may, by a two-thirds affirmative vote of voting members at an ILDA convention, absorb, take over and operate other associations, publications or groups on either a temporary or permanent basis providing that complete responsibility and authority to control such associations, publications or groups be given to the ILDA Board of Directors. And further providing that all administration, guidelines and operations of said associations, publications and groups be determined by the ILDA Board of Directors while under ILDA control.

ARTICLE XVII

DISSOLUTION

The ILDA may be dissolved upon an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the active members present and voting at an official and legally called ILDA convention. All assets and property of the ILDA upon dissolution shall be given to the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for deaf ministry.

Upon the dissolution of the Association, the Association shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all the assets of the Association exclusively for the purposes of the Association in such a manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501c(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Association is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE XVIII

DEBT

The ILDA or its regional branches shall be solely responsible for all debts incurred. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the Lutheran Deaf Mission Society are not responsible for any debt incurred by the ILDA or its regional branches.

ARTICLE XIX

LIABILITY

The ILDA shall not be liable for any accidents, injuries, illnesses or deaths to any members participating in the ILDA activities or at its events. Members do so entirely at their own risk.

ARTICLE XX

DEFINITION

We understand the word “*deaf*” as used in our Constitution to apply to all hearing impaired people.

ARTICLE XXI

AMENDMENTS

Resolutions proposing the amendment, modification, alteration or repeal to the articles of this Constitution may be made by regional branches, congregations and/or fields or the Law Committee.

All resolutions of amendment, modification, alteration or repeal must be given to the membership either through the pages of *The Deaf Lutheran* or by written letter to all congregations, fields and persons involved in the pastoral ministry with deaf persons of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at least ninety (90) days prior to the ILDA convention.

An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the active members present at a legally constituted meeting at the ILDA convention shall be required to amend, modify, alter or repeal the articles of this Constitution.