



# Concordia Deaconess Conference

Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

Constitution

By-Laws

Code of Ethics



# Concordia Deaconess Conference — Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

## **Constitution**

*Document updated June 2008*

**Article 1** The name of the organization is "Concordia Deaconess Conference—Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod" (hereinafter referred to as "CDC"). The organization is an ecclesiastical organization operating for church purposes only and not-for-profit.

**Article 2** The CDC and every member of the CDC accept without reservation:

1. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and of practice.
2. All the Symbolic Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and Unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God to wit: the three Ecumenical Creeds (the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Athanasian Creed), the Unaltered Augsburg Confessions, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Large Catechism of Luther, the Small Catechism of Luther, and the Formula of Concord.

**Article 3** The objectives of the CDC are as follows:

- A. To give all glory to God.
- B. To extend the kingdom of God.
- C. To aid The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (hereinafter referred to as "the Synod"), specifically in upholding and promoting deaconess service within the Synod.
- D. To provide opportunity for spiritual, professional and personal growth and fellowship for those who are deaconesses in the Synod.
- E. The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Article 4** The CDC is a free association of deaconesses.

- A. Membership in the CDC is contingent upon meeting the following criteria:
  1. Members shall be certified, commissioned, and rostered as deaconesses of the Synod or officially designated as deaconesses of a Partner Church of the Synod.
  2. Members shall be communicant members in good standing in a congregation of the Synod or a congregation of a Partner Church of the Synod.
  3. Members shall not hold membership in any other deaconess conference or association.
  4. Members will make application for CDC membership to the chair of the Membership Committee and must be accepted into CDC membership by the Executive Committee.
- B. Members are classified as Active, Emeritus, or Candidate, using as a standard the classification of The Synod.
- C. Membership in CDC accords the following privileges and responsibilities:
  1. Members are privileged to vote, hold elected and appointed office, and serve on committees of CDC.
  2. Members are responsible to do the following:
    - a. Uphold the Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Ethics of the CDC.
    - b. Attend the yearly conference of the CDC. Excuses should be made to the chair of the Membership Committee.
    - c. Report to the chair of the Membership Committee any changes in her roster status in the Synod or Partner Church.

D. Membership may be revoked or suspended by majority vote of the CDC membership as represented at a regular meeting of the membership, for failure to meet the above criteria, or for other just cause concurrent with the writings of the Constitution and By-Laws.

**Article 5** The CDC has the following elected officers:

- A. President
- B. Vice President
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer
- E. Member-at-Large for Annual Conference Logistics
- F. Member-at-Large for Spiritual and Professional Growth
- G. Member-at-Large for Membership

**Article 6** The CDC has the following appointed officers:

- A. Historian
- B. Parliamentarian
- C. Public Relations Coordinator

**Article 7** The CDC shall elect a Spiritual Counselor. The Spiritual Counselor shall be a pastor in good standing of the Synod.

**Article 8** The CDC shall engage the services of advisory counsel as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Executive Committee.

**Article 9** The CDC has the following regular committees:

- A. Executive Committee
- B. Membership Committee
- C. Spiritual and Professional Growth Committee
- D. Nominating Committee
- E. Constitutional Review Committee
- F. Public Relations Committee

**Article 10** The CDC shall hold regular meetings of the membership at least once per calendar year. Membership present at the regular meeting shall represent a quorum. No resolutions may be passed, elections held, or Constitutional or By-Law changes adopted in meetings where a quorum is not present. Notice of meetings of the CDC must be sent to the membership sixty (60) days in advance.

**Article 11** The CDC has adopted as its official logo the following symbol: [picture of cross insignia]. The CDC has an official pin, insignia, uniform, and motto to identify the CDC.

**Article 12** The CDC shall maintain a written Code of Ethics to establish clear standards and definitions for the professional behavior and practice of its members.

**Article 13** Amendments to the Constitution shall be presented to the membership at a regular meeting of the membership. Notice of the meeting and proposed constitutional changes shall be sent to the membership at least sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of the scheduled meeting. A two-thirds majority of the members present shall amend the Constitution.

**Article 14** The CDC will refer to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Synod for procedural direction when an issue arises that is not addressed in the Constitution and By-Laws of the CDC.

**Article 15** Inurement of Income: No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private persons except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered.

**Article 16** Legislative or Political Activities: No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the corporation shall not participate in or intervene (including the publishing or distribution of statements for any political campaign) on behalf of any candidate for public office.

**Article 17** No Personal Liability: The officers, advisors, and members of this corporation, if any, shall not be personally liable to any extent whatsoever for any debts or obligations of this corporation.

**Article 18** Operational Limitations: Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions, to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

**Article 19** Dissolution Clause: In the event that the Concordia Deaconess Conference shall dissolve, after all obligations have been met, any funds and or property remaining shall be transferred to an organization of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), to be used for furthering the work of deaconess ministry. 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 organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized, operated for such purposes.

# Concordia Deaconess Conference — Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

## ***By-Laws***

### **I. Duties of Elected Officers**

#### **A. President**

1. Shall attend and preside at all meetings of the CDC.
2. Shall appoint all members and chairs (where appropriate) to fill vacancies of the following committees with the approval of the Executive Committee.
  - a. Membership
  - b. Spiritual and Professional Growth
  - c. Constitutional Review
  - d. Nominating
  - e. Public Relations
  - f. Ad Hoc Committees
3. Shall appoint all non-elected officers of the CDC with the approval of the Executive Committee.
4. Shall be ex-officio member of all committees except Nominating.
5. Shall receive and approve all expense vouchers.
6. Shall assume leadership of the CDC and represent the CDC in matters of synodical concern.
7. Shall present a written annual report to the CDC each calendar year.
8. In the event of a vacancy in any elected office, shall appoint a new officer (with exception of the president) with the approval of the Executive Committee, who will fulfill the remaining term of the office.
9. Shall have been a member of the CDC for a minimum of three (3) years and have served on the Executive Committee prior to election for a minimum of one (1) year, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.
10. Shall ensure that all required reports to the State of Illinois in conjunction with the non-profit organization status of CDC are filed. Copies of all required reports will be kept by the CDC contact person in the state of Illinois and by the President.

#### **B. Vice-President**

1. Shall serve as assistant to the President and perform duties of the office in the absence of the President.
2. Shall chair the Executive Committee.
3. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
4. In the event of a vacancy in the presidential office, shall assume the office of President for the remainder of that term.
5. Shall have been a member of the CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.

#### **C. Secretary**

1. Shall prepare and keep a written report of the proceedings of all meetings of the CDC and shall distribute copies of said report to the membership within one (1) month of the close of each meeting.
2. Shall prepare and keep a written report of the proceedings of all meetings of the Executive Committee and shall distribute copies of said report to the committee members within one (1) month of the close of each meeting.
3. Shall keep a current membership roster and mailing list, and distribute copies to the membership annually.
4. Shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
5. Shall notify members of meetings at least sixty (60) days in advance for regular meetings, thirty (30) days for special meetings, and disseminate other information as necessary.

6. Shall conduct correspondence on behalf of the CDC.
7. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
8. Shall have been a member of CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.
9. Shall file all required annual reports, membership reports, and correspondence with the State of Illinois in conjunction with the non-profit status of CDC. The Secretary will make three copies of her reports, one for her files, one for the President and one for the CDC contact person in the state of Illinois.

#### D. Treasurer

1. Shall receive and deposit all moneys received by the CDC, except annual dues from membership and moneys received from the sale of pins and insignias, which are deposited by the Member-at-Large for Membership, and annual conference registration fees, which are deposited by the Member-at-Large for Conference Logistics.
2. Shall keep itemized accounts of all receipts and disbursements
3. Shall make payments from all budget line items, excepting those set aside as funds.
4. Shall refer any requests for payment seeming excessive in relation to past disbursements to the President for approval before expenses are incurred.
5. Shall submit a bi-annual financial report to the membership.
6. Shall annually submit records to an outside auditor selected by the Executive Committee.
7. Shall be a member of the Executive Committee.
8. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
9. Shall have been a member of the CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.
10. Shall file all required financial statements with the State of Illinois in conjunction with the non-profit organization status of CDC. The Treasurer will make three copies for her reports, one for her files, one for the President and one for the CDC contact person in the State of Illinois.

#### E. Member-at-Large for Annual Conference Logistics

1. Shall serve as member of the Executive Committee.
2. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
3. Shall assist the CDC President as requested.
4. Shall chair a committee for logistical arrangements associated with the annual conference.
5. Shall collect registration information and fees for the annual conference.
6. Shall deposit registration fees in the CDC checking account and report all deposits to the Treasurer.
7. Shall have been a member of CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.

#### F. Member-at-Large for Spiritual and Professional Growth

1. Shall serve as member of the Executive Committee.
2. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
3. Shall assist the CDC President as requested.
4. Shall chair the Spiritual and Professional Growth Committee.
5. Shall have been a member of CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.

#### G. Member-at-Large for Membership

1. Shall serve as member of the Executive Committee.
2. Shall attend all regular meetings of the CDC.
3. Shall assist the CDC President as requested.
4. Shall chair the Membership Committee.
5. Shall notify members when dues are past due, in accordance with By-Law VII.B.

6. Shall notify the Secretary of membership status in accordance with By-Law VII.B.
7. Shall receive and deposit annual dues from members in the CDC checking account and report all deposits to the Treasurer.
8. Shall be responsible for the distribution and sale of pins and insignias and shall deposit all moneys received from these sales in the CDC checking account and report all deposits to the Treasurer.
9. Shall have been a member of CDC for a minimum of two (2) years prior to election, and shall not concurrently serve one of the synodical training programs as director, assistant director, or full-time staff.

## **II. Duties of Appointed Officers**

### **A. Historian**

1. Shall maintain the official archives of the CDC.
2. Shall submit appropriate documents and memorabilia to Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.
3. Shall maintain a photographic record of the membership.

### **B. Parliamentarian**

1. Shall ensure the use of parliamentary procedure at CDC meetings.
2. Shall review resolutions and amendments prior to their presentation.
3. Shall chair the Constitutional Review Committee.
4. Shall serve as advisory member of the Executive Committee.
5. Shall have been a member of the CDC for a minimum of one (1) year prior to appointment.
6. Shall be appointed to serve a two (2) year term of office concurrent with the term of the office of the CDC President.

### **C. Public Relations Coordinator**

1. Shall edit the CDC newsletter.
2. Shall submit press releases to synodical and District publications.
3. Shall arrange for Public Relations and information booths at appropriate conventions and gatherings of the Synod, its Districts, and its Auxiliaries.
4. Shall make requests for funds needed to the Treasurer through the President.
5. Shall chair the Public Relations Committee.
6. Shall be appointed to serve a two (2) year term of office concurrent with the term of the office of the CDC President.

## **III. The Spiritual Counselor**

- A. Shall provide spiritual nurture and guidance to the CDC.
- B. Shall serve as a resource person for the CDC.
- C. Shall be a consultant for planning of CDC meetings.
- D. Shall review any materials produced by the CDC for publication for theological content.
- E. Shall attend all regular CDC meetings.
- F. Serve as advisor to the Spiritual and Professional Growth Committee.
- G. Shall be knowledgeable about the history and current operational procedures of the Synod.
- H. Shall be elected from a slate of at least two (2) candidates presented and recommended by the Executive Committee.
- I. Shall be elected to a three (3) year term of office.
- J. Shall be limited to two (2) consecutive terms of office.
- K. CDC shall assume as much financial responsibility as possible for the Spiritual Counselor's expenses.

## **IV. CDC Advisors**

- A. Shall consist of such resource persons as the Executive Committee deems necessary.

- B. Shall be appointed to variable terms of service mutually agreed upon by the Executive Committee and the Advisor.
- C. Recommendations made by the CDC advisors shall in no way be binding upon the CDC.
- D. Shall meet with the Executive Committee as necessary.
- E. May attend meetings of CDC as needed or desired.

## V. Regular Committees

### A. Executive Committee

1. Shall consist of the Elected Officers. The Spiritual Counselor, the Directors of the Synodical Deaconess Programs, and the Parliamentarian may serve as advisory members.
2. Shall meet at least one (1) month prior to each regularly scheduled meeting of the membership and at other times as deemed necessary by the CDC President.
3. Shall have responsibility to carry out all valid resolutions passed by the CDC.
4. Shall accept new members and yearly review eligibility status of all members as recommended by the Membership Committee.
5. Shall recommend a slate of at least two (2) candidates for Spiritual Counselor to the membership for election as required.
6. Shall be chaired by the Vice-President.
7. Shall be consulted for planning conference meetings.
8. Shall select an outside auditor for Treasurer's books.
9. Shall have the power to waive an individual's membership dues in extreme and unusual circumstances.
10. Shall decide disbursements of "discretionary" moneys, namely those accumulated prior to the adoption of a budget by CDC, and "Unspecified gifts" (G-I).
11. Members, elected or advisory, may serve on only one other committee.
12. Shall, in consultation with Treasurer, determine the annual budget to be presented at the annual CDC business meeting for approval by the membership.

### B. Membership Committee

1. Shall review credentials of prospective members and recommend applicants to the Executive Committee.
2. Shall review the status of members yearly and give a report to the Executive Committee.
3. Shall contact members who have not been active and encourage their participation.
4. Shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) being the Member-at-Large for Membership, who shall chair this committee.
5. The remaining committee members shall be appointed by the CDC President to a two (2) year term of service. One (1) member shall be appointed in the even calendar years and one (1) in the odd calendar years.
6. Committee members shall not serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms in that capacity, and shall have been members of the CDC for a minimum of one (1) year prior to their appointment.
7. Shall develop and update procedures and forms for applications made for membership.
8. Upon readmission, membership privileges and status of the readmitted member shall be that of a first-time member.

### C. Spiritual and Professional Growth Committee

1. Shall arrange spiritual and professional growth programs, including schedules and speakers, at regular CDC meetings and as requested by the Executive Committee.
2. Shall submit articles pertaining to the spiritual and professional growth of the membership to the editor of the CDC newsletter.
3. Shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) being the Member-at-Large for Spiritual and Professional Growth, who shall chair this committee.
4. The remaining committee members shall be appointed by the CDC President to a two (2) year term of service. One (1) member shall be appointed in the even calendar years and one (1) in the odd calendar years.

5. Committee members shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in that capacity, and shall have been members of the CDC for a minimum of one (1) year prior to their appointment.
6. The Spiritual Counselor shall serve as an advisor to this committee.

#### D. Constitutional Review Committee

1. Shall regularly review the Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Ethics of the CDC and submit to the membership proposed changes of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Code of Ethics as deemed necessary.
2. Shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) being the CDC Parliamentarian who shall chair this committee.
3. The remaining committee members shall be appointed by the CDC President to a two (2) year term of service. One (1) member shall be appointed in the even calendar years and one (1) in the odd calendar years.
4. Committee members shall not serve more than two (2) consecutive terms in that capacity, and shall have been a member of the CDC for a minimum of one (1) year prior to their appointment.

#### E. Nominating Committee

1. Shall issue the call for nominations within the CDC and will subsequently contact the nominated members to run for various positions. If no nominations are received, then the committee will directly contact members of CDC to run for various elected positions within CDC.
2. Shall accept nominations for elected positions from members of CDC no later than sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of a regular meeting in which elections are held.
3. Shall present a slate of at least two (2) nominees per position for each regular election.
4. Shall provide a slate of nominees to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of a regular meeting in which elections are to be held. No floor nominations will be accepted or withdrawn from the floor.
5. Shall be responsible for the preparation and distribution of ballots; for receiving the absentee ballots; and shall supervise the elections and the tabulation of the votes. Absentee ballots must be received no later than 15 days prior to the commencement of a regular meeting in which elections are to be held.
6. Shall present the committee's report at the CDC meeting and will give a copy to the Secretary. The number of absentee ballots shall be recorded in the minutes.
7. Shall consist of a chair and two (2) committee members, appointed by the CDC President.
8. Shall serve a two (2) year term of service. Two (2) members shall be appointed in the even calendar years and one (1) in the odd calendar years.

#### F. Public Relations Committee

1. Shall consist of three (3) members, one (1) being the Public Relations Coordinator, who shall chair this committee.
2. The remaining two (2) committee members shall be appointed by the CDC President for a two (2) year term of service. One (1) member shall be appointed in the even calendar years and one (1) in the odd calendar years.
3. Committee members shall not serve more that two (2) consecutive terms, and shall have been members of the CDC for a minimum of one (1) year prior to their appointment.
4. Shall assess the public relations and communication needs and priorities of the CDC in consultation with the Executive Committee.
5. Shall carry out all assigned public relations and communication projects.
6. Shall establish and maintain the official CDC website.
7. Shall report to the Executive Committee and the members of CDC as requested by the President.

### **VI. Election of Officers**

- A. Terms of office shall be two (2) years, with the President, Secretary, and Member-at-Large for Spiritual and Professional Growth elected in the even calendar years and the Vice-President, Treasurer, Member-at-Large for Membership, and Member-at-Large for Annual Conference Logistics elected in the odd years.

- B. Elections will be held at the regular annual meeting of the CDC. A slate of candidates and official absentee ballots shall be sent to the membership at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled election.
- C. Regular terms of office for all elected officers except the Treasurer shall commence with installation at the close of the CDC meeting in which the officer is elected. Terms of office for all elected officers except the Treasurer shall cease at the close of the CDC meeting in which a successor is elected. The term of office for Treasurer will coincide with the fiscal year of the CDC budget, being July 1 – June 30. The elected Treasurer shall assume her office on July 1 of the year in which she is elected.
- D. No officer may serve more than two (2) successive terms in the same capacity.
- E. In order for an election to be held, at least fifty percent (50%) of the membership must cast a ballot.
- F. A majority vote of ballots cast shall constitute an election.
- G. In the event that no nominee obtains a majority, the following procedure will be followed for run-off elections:
  1. A run-off election will be held between the two candidates receiving the most votes at conference and from the absentee ballots sent in.
  2. This run-off election will take place immediately following the announcement of the need for such an election with the voting members who are present and with ballots sent to those who had requested absentee ballots for the election within five (5) days of the close of conference.
  3. The absentee ballots are to be returned to the Secretary within forty (40) days of their being sent. The Secretary will publish the results of the election either by a special mailing or in the *Blues News* and contact the newly elected deaconess to inform her of her position.

## VII. Dues

- A. Membership dues shall be paid by all members each January for that calendar year. New members received during the year shall not pay dues until the next January.
- B. Members who fail to pay dues by February 15 shall receive a written reminder from the Member-at-Large for Membership. Members who fail to pay dues by March 15 will have privileges of membership suspended until dues are paid. Written notice of the suspension of membership privileges shall be sent to the member by the Member-at-Large for Membership via registered mail, such notice to be postmarked not later than March 31. A failure to pay dues by June 30 shall be regarded as intent to withdraw from the CDC and membership will be automatically terminated. The Member-at-Large for Membership shall inform the Secretary of any members who have failed to pay dues by the June 30 deadline. Notice of termination of membership and information on the membership re-application process shall be sent by the Member-at-Large for Membership via registered mail, such notice to be postmarked not later than July 31.
- C. Dues shall be set by majority vote of members present at the regular meeting of the membership in which such a resolution is considered.
- D. In extreme and unusual circumstances, dues for an individual may be waived by approval of the Executive Committee. Waivers (with need explained) shall be requested in writing to the Member-at-Large for Membership before February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- E. Emeritus Members are exempt from paying dues.

## VIII. Code of Ethics

- A. The Code of Ethics shall always be published along with the Constitution and By-Laws of CDC.
- B. Regular review of the Code of Ethics shall be done by the Constitutional Review Committee.
- C. Amendments to the Code of Ethics will be sent to the membership thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of a regular meeting of the membership at which such a change shall be considered. A two-thirds majority vote of the membership present shall amend the Code of Ethics.

## IX. Amendments

Amendments to the By-Laws will be sent to the membership thirty (30) days prior to the commencement of a regular meeting of the membership at which such a change shall be considered. A majority vote of the membership present shall constitute a change in By-Laws.

# Concordia Deaconess Conference — Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

## ***Code of Ethics***

### **Purpose**

The Concordia Deaconess Conference (CDC), affirming its desire to glorify the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – and to reflect His love and grace in Christ, establishes this Code of Ethics. The Code, rooted in Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, is intended to establish clear standards and definitions for the professional behavior and practices of its members. This Code of Ethics expresses the Concordia Deaconess Conference's unity of belief and outlines members' responsibilities and obligations to God, to the church, to colleagues and to each individual who is to be served. This Code serves the conference as a mirror, rule and curb, and is intended to teach, strengthen and affirm its members.

### **Preamble to the Code of Ethics**

The primary mission of the CDC is to support deaconesses as they bring Christ's caring presence, love, and perspective to others. A deaconess points to Christ, who is present in Word and Sacrament, provided by the Office of the Public Ministry.

Biblical history and the tradition of the LC-MS have shaped CDC's Code of Ethics. Diaconal service is mentioned in the New Testament, as in the case of Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea (Romans 16:1). Throughout subsequent centuries, interest in formal diaconates flourished and waned. Following a revival of diaconal ministry in nineteenth-century Europe, German Lutherans brought their vision of diaconal service to the United States. In 1919, the Lutheran Deaconess Association within the Synodical Conference was established, and in 1934, the Lutheran Deaconess Conference was founded. Changes within these two groups prompted nine deaconesses to establish the CDC in 1980, after the LC-MS voted to establish its own deaconess training program in 1979.

Members of the CDC support the Office of the Public Ministry and serve in an auxiliary office. Commissioned by the church, a deaconess provides diaconal service with emphasis on spiritual care, teaching the faith, and works of mercy. In this way Christ's own peace, hope and mercy are conveyed to those in need. A deaconess may be called to serve in the parish, in institutional settings, or in foreign and domestic missions.

The following statements are an expression of these principles regarding the professional conduct of a deaconess.

### **Theological Ethics**

In her promises made at commissioning, a deaconess commits herself to serve in accordance with the Word of God, the Ecumenical Creeds, and the Confessions of the Church. Therefore, a deaconess of the CDC is a woman who:

1. Believes, teaches, and confesses the Scriptures as the infallible and inerrant Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of that Word.
2. Points others to Word and Sacrament provided by the Office of the Public Ministry.
  - A. Upholds the deaconess office as auxiliary to the Office of the Public Ministry which it supports and assists.
  - B. Refrains from performing the distinctive roles of the Office of the Public Ministry: public preaching of the Word, administering the Sacraments, and exercising the Office of the Keys.
3. Maintains a life rooted in Word and Sacrament through worship, confession and absolution, study and prayer.
4. Is a communicant member in good standing in an LC-MS congregation or Partner Church.

## Professional Ethics

By the grace of God a deaconess is committed to grow in love for those she serves, to strive for excellence in her skills, and to adorn the Gospel with a godly life (John 13). In accord with the promises made at her commissioning, a deaconess of the CDC shall strive to:

1. Aptly express the faith in word and deed.
2. Properly apply the distinction between Law and Gospel in her care-giving and teaching.
3. Continue education in the Scriptures and theology.
4. Continue education that is necessary to provide excellent service in her setting.
5. Demonstrate a servant attitude, e.g., loving, compassionate, hospitable, selfless, sincere, humble, respectful, approachable, encouraging, nurturing.
6. Maintain standards of professional integrity, e.g., uses appropriate language, speaks the truth in love, is trustworthy, manages time well, fulfills responsibilities, works diligently, and resolves conflict according to Biblical principles. A deaconess respects the work of her colleagues, speaks the truth in love, and uses appropriate channels to express differences.
7. Maintain confidentiality, except in cases where immediate danger is perceived or safety becomes an issue.
8. Maintain government standards as they apply to her position; i.e., mandatory reporting, privacy and confidentiality laws.
9. Seek opportunities to extend the Church's hand of mercy to the household of faith and the community.
10. Exercise servant leadership without prejudice or favoritism.
11. Uphold the sanctity of human life from conception to death.
12. Demonstrate competency in her areas of responsibility; i.e., youth, music, education, care-giving, developmental disabilities.
13. Make use of allotted time for vacation and time off, maintaining healthy limits and boundaries for personal and family life.
14. Be devoted to the well-being of others: physically, spiritually, and emotionally.
15. Remain within her competence in counseling situations and refer to other professionals when needed.
16. Strive to avoid overlapping relationships that result in the impairment of professional discretion and impartial judgment.
17. Maintain appropriate sexual boundaries.
18. Limit sexual intimacy to heterosexual marriage as instituted by God.
19. Neither accept nor offer gifts that involve expectations that would extend, curtail or alter the service offered.
20. Encourage and uplift sister deaconesses.
21. Demonstrate commitment to her professional organizations, including the CDC.
22. Be aware of warning signs in her own behavior and mood and seek help to address these needs.

*Adopted May 18, 2005*