

Lutheran Church in Great Britain

(Rules)

Individual Membership in a congregation of the LCiGB

Voting member

A voting member in a congregation of the LCiGB is a baptised person aged 18 years or over who has publicly confessed the Christian faith after a period of instruction in the teachings of the Lutheran Church, based upon Luther's Small Catechism, and who has been duly received into membership of the congregation by its council.

The council of the congregation will maintain a list of voting members and review it before every Annual General Meeting, removing the names of those who have died and, at its discretion, those who have not supported the life and worship of the congregation over a significant period of time or in a manner befitting a faithful follower of Christ. The council will terminate voting membership immediately if a person has resigned or formally transferred membership to another congregation.

Membership may be held in only one congregation of the LCiGB. Holding voting membership in another non-LCiGB congregation, however, will not in itself preclude voting membership of a congregation of the LCiGB, provided that the teachings of the other congregation are compatible with those of the Lutheran Church.

Baptised member

A baptised member is a person who has been duly baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The council will maintain a list of baptised members of the congregation and review it before every Annual General Meeting, removing the names of those who have died and, at its discretion, those who have not supported the life and worship of the congregation over a significant period of time or in a manner befitting a faithful follower of Christ.

Congregations and their membership in LCiGB

Definition of a congregation

1. A congregation is a community of baptised Christians who meet regularly for the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.
2. A congregation will participate in the universal mission of God by
 - a. Meeting regularly for worship, teaching and fellowship
 - b. Witnessing to the Gospel in the world
 - c. Serving God's creation
 - d. Providing pastoral care for members
 - e. Serving and ministering to the community
 - f. Reflecting the love of God by proclaiming and living the Good News in the wider world

Congregations within the LCiGB

1. The Council and Synod of the LCiGB will receive into membership and maintain the membership of those congregations that fulfil the following criteria. They:
 - a. Gather regularly as a community around the Word and Sacraments
 - b. Accept and uphold the Statement of Faith of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain
 - c. Accept and uphold the Governing Documents (Constitution and Rules and Regulations) of LCiGB
 - d. Accept and uphold as their own Constitution either the recommended LCiGB Congregational document, or one that is approved by the Council of LCiGB as being consonant
 - e. Support the life and work of LCiGB through prayer and with good stewardship of resources, time and talents
2. Functions of a congregation. Each Congregation of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain shall, as far as its resources and abilities make it possible, carry out these functions:
 - a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are administered
 - b. Provide pastoral care, and empower mutual care among its members
 - c. Enable all members to discern and carry out their own particular role within the priesthood of all baptised believers
 - d. Teach both adults and children through Bible studies, Confirmation and Baptism classes and other appropriate media
 - e. Encourage responsible and appropriate stewardship among members
 - f. Take part in the mission of the church through diaconal work (service and care for the world) and response to human need (justice and peace issues)
 - g. Reach out to others, both people in the local geographical area and members of the community gathered around the congregation (confessional, cultural or linguistic)
3. Governance.

Each Congregation of the Lutheran Church in Great Britain shall structure and govern itself in such a way as to comply with legal requirements, for example those concerned with charity, employment and taxation law.

Reception of new Congregations, or those transferring membership to the Lutheran Church in Great Britain.

Congregations shall be received into membership of LCiGB by the following process

- a. The process will at all times be governed by the Memorandum and Articles of LCiGB, especially Articles 6-21, and the LCiGB's Rules and Regulations.
- b. The Congregation shall write a letter to the Council of LCiGB, asking for admission to membership, and providing the following information:
 - i. Names and contact details for members of the Congregational Council
 - ii. Accounts (unaudited) for at least the previous 12 months
 - iii. Records of attendance at services for at least the previous 12 months
 - iv. Minutes of an authorised meeting approving the request to enter membership of LCiGB
 - v. A record of voting and baptised members as defined in the Rules of LCiGB
 - vi. The name of an Appointed Representative for meetings of the Synod of LCiGB
- c. After LCiGB Council has assessed the application, Synod, after due consideration, will either approve or refuse to nominate the Congregation for membership, and will inform the Council of its decision.
- d. The LCiGB Council will receive the Congregation into membership. In the event of the refusal of LCiGB Council to approve a decision of Synod, Article 10 of the Articles of Association will be observed.

Termination of Membership

A Congregation's membership of LCiGB may be terminated by LCiGB under the terms of Articles 20 and 21. A Congregation may terminate its membership by the following process:

1. The Congregation shall hold a legally called and convened Special Meeting to discuss the withdrawal, and shall vote by a two thirds majority of the voting members present to terminate its membership of LCiGB
2. The Council of the Congregation shall write to the Council of LCiGB, stating its intent to withdraw from LCiGB, and the reasons for so doing
3. During a period of at least 90 days from receipt of the notification the Bishop and/or the Dean of LCiGB, or if appropriate the Officers of LCiGB, shall meet with the Council and members of the congregation to discuss the reasons for withdrawal and to try to find a path of reconciliation. The consequences for the Congregation must be clearly understood by all voting members and by the Council of LCiGB. During this period, times of mutual conversation and counselling are encouraged.
4. At the end of 90 days, the Congregation shall hold another legally called and convened Special Meeting in the presence of the Bishop and/or Dean. The vote shall be held again, and if a two thirds majority again vote to leave LCiGB, the Congregation shall be deemed to have made its decision.

LCiGB Rules

The Annual Synod

The Annual Synod of the LCiGB is a meeting of congregations or persons that have been duly approved, elected or appointed and are entitled to vote at the meeting. The members of the Synod are:

- Congregations of the LCiGB
- All ordained pastors who have been approved by the LCiGB
- The board of trustees of the LCiGB
- Other individuals who have been nominated by synod and approved by the board.

Congregations of the LCiGB must choose an Appointed Representative to vote and act on their behalf at synods and general meetings. Normally Appointed Representatives should serve in that capacity for three years but congregations may replace them sooner if necessary. The full name and current address of each congregation's Appointed Representative must notified to the LCiGB. Only those persons whose names and addresses have been notified to the LCiGB at least 30 working days before a Synod or other general meeting will be entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

The Annual Synod consists of two parts:

1. The Annual General Meeting

An annual general meeting (AGM) must be held each year, at a time and place approved by the board of trustees. Annual general meetings are a constitutional requirement for the LCiGB.

At the annual general meeting, members of the Synod (including Appointed Representatives of congregations) will:

- Elect trustees
- Receive the trustees' annual report and the audited or examined accounts
- Appoint an auditor or examiner or authorise the board to do so
- Authorise the trustees to fix the remuneration of the auditor
- Approve amendments to the Memorandum or Articles of Association
- Vote on duly submitted resolutions
- Advise the trustees

Resolutions from members may be considered at any annual general meeting, provided that they have been duly requested (as required by the Companies Act). Members representing 5% of the voting rights may request that a written resolution be circulated to members and be put to the AGM; they may circulate a statement of up to 1000 words about any resolution. The

signed resolution and statement must be delivered to the registered address of the LCiGB at least six weeks before the AGM at which it is to be proposed. The resolution and statement must then be circulated with the notice of the meeting.

2. The Church Session

The Church Session will consider the spiritual programme and leadership of the LCiGB, which is the constitutional responsibility of the bishop, the dean and the synod.

Its regular agenda will include:

- Worship
- Theological issues
- Outreach, missions & service
- Training of pastors and other ministers
- Congregational developments
- Communications
- Relationships with other Lutheran churches
- Ecumenical relationships
- Other matters pertaining to the spiritual growth of the LCiGB

Special general meetings may be called by the board of trustees at any time or by the written request to the trustees of at least 10 members of the Synod or 10 % of the membership of Synod, whichever is the greater. The request must state the nature of the business to be discussed. If the trustees fail to hold the meeting within 28 days of the request, the members may call a special general meeting. In so doing, they must comply with the provisions of the Articles of Association (Articles 22-66 on General Meetings).