**Template for bylaw article dealing with Marriage and Human Sexuality**

*The following Article is a template made available by the Conference of Presidents for use by WELS congregations which wish to adopt a specific doctrinal statement on marriage and sexual relations as governed by the Scriptures. The inclusion of this article is a matter of freedom for each individual congregation to discuss and decide; the Conference of Presidents is neither encouraging nor discouraging such an amendment. Rather, it is making a template available so that the language of such bylaws can be as consistent as possible when adopted by WELS congregations.*

**Article X Marriage and Human Sexuality**

A. God instituted marriage at creation (Genesis 1:28; 2:22-24). God defines marriage as the lifelong union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:22-24; Matthew 19:4-6). God’s institution of marriage is valid for all time (Matthew 19:6).

B. Sexual relations are to be exercised solely within marriage between one man and one woman. All other sexual relationships are contrary to God’s will (Leviticus 18:22-23; 20:10-17,19,20; Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:10).

***Frequently Asked Questions:***

1. Why is this Article titled “Article X”?

This is simply following the naming convention of the WELS *Model Constitution and Bylaws*, which already

has nine articles—if added at the end, this would be the tenth article. Congregations should change this number to reflect the specific numbering of their own governing documents (cf. question 2 below).

2. Where should this Article be inserted into a congregation’s governing documents?

From a legal standpoint, any congregation which is registered with the state’s Corporation Commission must

operate according to its established Bylaws. This has the practical effect that a congregation’s Bylaws have

higher legal standing before the state than its Constitution. If this article is being inserted into a congregation’s governing documents in the hope of additional legal protection, the Bylaws is the appropriate

place to add it.

3. Does this Article provide additional legal protection for WELS congregations?

No one really knows. Some lawyers will argue that an established, duly adopted Article such as this provides protection against potential lawsuits from those who disagree with this teaching and practice. Other lawyers have argued that our overall Scriptural confession is already sufficiently clear from the sections in our Constitutions which deal with Articles of Faith, and that this addition is unnecessary. There is currently no established case law that we know of which answers this question definitively.