

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
Evangelical Covenant Church of Clay Center, Kansas

(Latest revision: October 14, 2012)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

(An historical statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church as adopted by the Evangelical Covenant Church in 2002.)

The Evangelical Covenant Church is a communion of congregations gathered by God, united in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the Great Commandment and the Great Commission. It affirms its companionship in faith with other church bodies and all those who fear God and keep God's commandments.

In continuity with the renewal movements of historic Pietism, the Evangelical Covenant Church especially cherishes the dual emphasis on new birth and new life in Christ, believing that personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the foundation for our mission of evangelism and Christian nurture. Our common experience of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ continues to sustain the Evangelical Covenant Church as an interdependent body of believers that recognizes but transcends our theological differences.

The Evangelical Covenant Church celebrates two divinely ordained sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Recognizing the reality of freedom in Christ, and in conscious dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit, we practice both the baptism of infants and believer baptism. The Evangelical Covenant Church embraces this freedom in Christ as a gift that preserves personal conviction, yet guards against an individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.

The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity, the Protestant Reformation, the biblical instruction of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, and the great spiritual awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These influences, together with more recent North American renewal movements, continue to shape its development and distinctive spirit. The Evangelical Covenant Church is committed to reaching across boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, and status in the cultivation of communities of life and service.

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church of Clay Center, Kansas.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be the Evangelical Covenant Church of Clay Center, Kansas.

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

The church is a member of the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) and its Midwest Conference (MWC). It is pledged to work in harmony with the ECC and MWC and to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of each.

ARTICLE III

Confession of Faith

We believe in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.

ARTICLE IV

Purpose

We covenant to cultivate a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, ethnicity, race, age, culture and class. In so doing, we covenant to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ—evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Membership in the church is granted as provided in the Bylaws to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations.

ARTICLE VI

Governance

The authority of the government of this church is vested in its membership acting through duly called congregational meetings. The management, administration and oversight of business and spiritual affairs are delegated by the congregation to appropriate leadership as delineated in the Bylaws. All elected leadership specified in the Bylaws shall be members of the church.

ARTICLE VII

Officers

The officers of the church shall be a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Financial Officer. All officers shall be members of the Leadership Team. The trustees of the church shall be the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VIII

Congregational Meetings

An Annual Meeting shall be held as near the first of the fiscal year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting, written progress reports shall be submitted by the Pastor(s), Ministry Staff, appropriate officers, and Ministry Teams. Reports on an independent review of financial records of the church and each of its organizations shall be submitted by the Auditors. Election for designated positions of responsibility shall be held. The church budget shall be submitted for action.

Additional congregational meetings shall be held not less often than annually. Items as required by the Constitution and Bylaws shall be submitted for congregational action.

Article IX

Assets of the Church

The congregation shall hold title to its own assets.

In the event of schism within the church—from which we earnestly pray God to spare us—where there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by this Constitution and Bylaws, as determined by the executive board of the MWC.

No action for the sale or transfer of assets may be taken when the closure of the church is under consideration without the prior approval of the MWC Executive Board. In the event the congregation votes to cease, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of the ECC and the MWC, shared equally for the furtherance of the mission of both in that region, primarily through church planting.

Article X

Amendments

Amendments in harmony with this Constitution, the Model Constitutions for local ECC Churches, non-profit laws of Kansas, and not in conflict with ECC principles and policies may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in an Annual Meeting of the congregation, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at the preceding Annual Meeting.

BYLAWS

Article I

Membership

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of membership is to join in an accountability relationship with other followers of Christ to build a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, race, ethnicity, age, culture and class. In so doing, the membership covenants together to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ—evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

Section 2. Responsibilities. The members of this church do covenant together by God's grace to live lives in a manner consistent with the standards of biblical teaching, including the support of this congregation in attendance, prayer, service, and giving, to live lives in word and deed that are an encouragement to others to know and be like Jesus Christ, to reflect in all our relationships the servant love of our Lord, and to support the broader mission of Christ through the Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) and Midwest Conference (MWC).

Section 3. Procedure for Admission.

- a. Membership in the church is granted to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations. Prospective members may indicate their desire for membership by way of confession of faith or letter of transfer from another Christian church.
- b. Upon favorable completion of a membership class and any other stated requirements, persons desiring to apply for membership shall submit their applications to the Leadership Team. Applicants shall meet with members of the Leadership Team to give testimony of their personal faith in Jesus Christ. The Leadership Team shall, within one week of meeting with prospective members, notify the church members of its consensus regarding the granting of membership. Any member objecting to or having concerns over the granting of membership to an applicant shall communicate in writing such objection or concern to the Leadership Team within ten days after notification by the Leadership Team.

- c. If there is an objection to the granting of membership to an applicant, final action on an application for membership shall be taken by the Leadership Team within thirty (30) days of having received the testimony of the prospective member.
- d. Applicants who are received into membership of the church shall be welcomed at a service or congregational meeting and make public confession of their Christian faith, as outlined in The Covenant Book of Worship.

Section 4. Children. Children of the church shall be nurtured under its spiritual care. They shall receive instruction in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, normally using the confirmation/discipleship material of the ECC. At age 16, they may apply for church membership as outlined under Section 3 of this article.

Section 5. Discipline.

- a. Discipline of members. The Leadership Team shall be ultimately responsible for admonishing members who neglect their responsibilities to the church or who err in doctrine or conduct.
- b. Erring members. Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1. Any other member of the congregation having knowledge of such member's error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If the erring member does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Leadership Team, which shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member.
- c. After the above process has been completed, dismissal of a member remaining in gross error in doctrine or conduct may result by a two-thirds majority vote of the entire Leadership Team. Such action may be appealed by the erring member to the congregation for consideration at the next congregational meeting. A majority vote of the church members at that meeting shall uphold the Leadership Team's decision to dismiss the erring member.
- d. Forfeiture of rights. A member who has been properly dismissed from the church, or who has withdrawn membership, has forfeited all rights and privileges of membership in the church.

Section 6. Withdrawal and Removal of Membership. Any member desiring to transfer or withdraw from membership shall make such request in writing to the Pastor or Leadership Team. Letters of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor, if so requested and the member is in good standing. The Leadership Team shall annually review the membership roster to determine inactivity. Those determined to have neglected their responsibilities may be approached under the process outlined in Section 5 of this article. Those who because of distance or health limitations cannot participate directly in the function of the church will have their membership status considered on a case-by-case basis by the Leadership Team.

Section 7. Recording. The names of those joining and terminating membership shall be duly recorded and reported to the next congregational meeting following action.

Section 8. Non-Member Friends. Non-member friends of the church shall be enrolled as non-voting constituents by the church as a part of its total congregation. The church and its pastor shall serve them in all their spiritual needs, and they shall be encouraged to consider this church as their church home. They shall be kept informed of the activities of the church.

ARTICLE II

The Leadership Team

Section 1. Purpose. The Leadership Team shall be responsible for building, maintaining and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the congregation and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church.

Section 2. Composition. The Leadership Team shall be comprised of not less than five nor more than nine Leadership Team members, one of whom shall be the Lead Pastor (ex officio). The Leadership Team may appoint other pastors or staff members as non-voting advisors, and may remove the same.

Section 3. Qualification. Any member of the church meeting the Biblical standards of character and giftedness for church leaders may be nominated and elected to the Leadership Team. Serious consideration must be given to how well the person is known and how spiritually mature the person is before nomination and election. (See I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 2:1-8.)

Section 4. Election. Leadership Team members shall be nominated by the Nominating Team and elected by a two-thirds majority vote of those members voting at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose.

Section 5 Term and Tenure of Office. Leadership Team members shall be elected for a term of three years and shall not be elected for more than two consecutive terms. After at least one year off, a person may be eligible for subsequent service, subject again to the terms and tenure stated in this article. The terms of the Leadership Team members shall be staggered so that one or two members will be elected each year.

Section 6. Vacancies and Removal. A Leadership Team member may resign. A Leadership Team member may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of congregational members voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Vacancies created by resignation or removal may be filled by appointment through the vote of the Leadership Team, in collaboration with the Nominating Team. A Leadership Team member appointed to serve an unexpired term of less than half the remaining term shall not be precluded from being elected thereafter to two full consecutive terms.

Section 7. Notification of Meetings. Regular Leadership Team meetings shall be held at least monthly on a designated day. In addition, all Leadership Team members shall receive a minimum three-day advance notification of any extra meeting, including purpose, date, time and place of the meeting. In emergency situations, the three-day notice may be waived by the two-thirds majority vote of the entire Leadership Team.

Section 8. Quorum. A simple majority of Leadership Team members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 9. Decisions. The Leadership Team shall strive for unanimity. Matters shall be determined by a majority vote of a Leadership Team quorum, unless on a matter where the Constitution and Bylaws require a different percentage.

Section 10. Organization. The Leadership Team shall elect annually from among themselves a Chair, a Vice-Chair, a Secretary, and a Financial Officer (each office being renewable, as long as that person serves on the Leadership Team).

- a. Chair. The Chair shall preside at all congregational meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team. The Chair shall confer with the Lead Pastor in preparing the agenda for such meetings, and shall utilize the counsel that the Lead Pastor can give by virtue of training, experience, and calling.
- b. Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence, assist in the Chair's duties, and facilitate the Ministry Coordination Group.
- c. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep and preserve the minutes of all congregational meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team, conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated, and be responsible for the official seal and documents of the church.
- d. Financial Officer. The Financial Officer shall ensure proper policies, processes, reporting, and reviewing of all matters related to the finances of the church, including the submission of monthly financial reports to the Leadership Team. The Financial Officer shall work closely with the church's Treasurer to accomplish the above-listed duties and submit a financial report to the congregation at the Annual Meeting.

Section 11. Responsibilities of the Leadership Team. In being responsible to the congregation for building, maintaining and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the church and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church, the Leadership Team shall:

- a. Provide continuous spiritual leadership through seeking God by way of prayer and study of the Scriptures;
- b. Carry out ongoing strategic planning and vision casting for the purpose of furthering God's Kingdom;
- c. Present mission and ministry objectives at the Annual Meeting, in order to develop synergy among the whole congregation;
- d. Determine Ministry Teams needed to carry out the church's mission and ministry, and appoint appropriate leadership for the Ministry Teams;
- e. Approve church policies and procedures;
- f. Be responsible for representing the congregation in certain staff relationships including:
 1. Hiring and dismissal of staff, subject to the provisions of these Bylaws. Action shall be by two-thirds vote of the Leadership Team;
 2. Providing godly counsel or discipline, as required, to the Lead Pastor and other staff;
 3. Carrying out the annual review of current and new staff compensation, and other personnel expenses for any staff member or activity, and make recommendations concerning future compensation and expenses;
 4. Establishing and maintaining of personnel policies and procedures;
 5. Approving of changes in current staff job descriptions and approval of job descriptions for new staff positions;
 6. Maintaining current job descriptions for all staff members;

- g. Be responsible for overseeing the preparation and submission of a proposed budget for each fiscal year to the membership for approval. Upon approval of the budget by the membership, the Leadership Team shall be responsible for seeing that the budget is carried out as approved. The Leadership Team shall have the authority to appropriately adjust budget items and amounts where ministry objectives necessitate, but in no event shall total expenditures exceed the total authorized budget without prior permission of the church membership. The Leadership Team shall annually appoint a member of the church as Treasurer (not necessarily a Leadership Team member) to receive monies on behalf of the church and to disburse funds for church purposes in accordance with standard accounting procedures for non-profit organizations. The Leadership Team shall assure that an independent review of the financial records of the church and each of its organizations be carried out by the elected Auditors, who shall report such findings to the congregation.
- h. Hear and respond appropriately to concerns of members, as needed beyond Pastoral Relations Team duties;
- i. Be ultimately responsible for church discipline as outlined in Article I, Section 5 of these Bylaws;
- j. Act as the trustees of the church for the advancement and protection of its assets. The Leadership Team shall designate those Leadership Team members and any other members of the church who shall be authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of the church;
- k. Be responsible for action on applications for membership as outlined in Article I, Section 3 of these Bylaws;
- l. Appoint Search Teams and Interview Teams, as needed, and where designated to do so.

Section 12. Unity. Action by the Leadership Team shall be taken in such manner as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

ARTICLE III

Ministry Teams

Section 1. Purpose. Ministry Teams shall be formed as required to implement the varied ministries of the church.

Section 2. Establishment. Ministry Teams shall be established normally as groups of four-seven individuals (members and non-member friends), with consideration given to character, calling, giftedness, passion, and interest of potential Ministry Team participants. The configuration of Ministry Teams, including the Team Leader, shall be reviewed regularly by the Leadership Team, in accordance with the church's purpose, strategies, and objectives for mission and ministry.

Section 3. Duties. The duties of Ministry Teams shall be:

- a. Oversee and administer their particular ministry by being "player/coaches;"
- b. Meet as needed to plan and execute specific mission and ministry objectives;
- c. Recruit and train individuals to participate in that ministry;
- d. Define and provide the necessary materials required for ministry;
- e. Submit annually, to the Leadership Team, proposed budgets and objectives for the forthcoming year and manage them in a way that is consistent with approved budgets;
- f. Report, as requested, to the Leadership Team.

Section 4. Leadership.

- a. Ministry Teams shall be led by called and gifted church members who have committed themselves to the overall mission of the church and who specialize in that particular ministry. Serious consideration must be given to how well the person is known and how spiritually mature the person is before appointment to the Ministry Team Leader position. (See I Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 2:1-8.)
- b. The leader of a Ministry Team shall be a church member approved by the Leadership Team, in consultation with the Pastor(s) and the Nominating Team. The Ministry Team Leader will serve as liaison to the Leadership Team to provide reports and information when requested, and to forward requests to the Leadership Team when necessary. The Leadership Team, in consultation with the Pastor(s), may remove a Ministry Team Leader.
- c. Each leader of a Ministry Team will be a member of the Ministry Coordination Group (MinCo), participating in planning, training and coordinating of the church's ministry activities.

- d. Ministry Team members shall be selected by the Ministry Team Leader, advised by the Nominating Team, as appropriate. The Leadership Team may remove a Ministry Team member.
- e. Each Ministry Team shall organize itself, as required, to perform its ministry.
- f. The Leadership Team may appoint one of its members to be an ex officio member of any Ministry Team. Such person may also serve as that Ministry Team's leader.

Section 5. Term and Tenure. Ministry Team members shall commit to one-year terms, which may be renewed indefinitely. Ministry Team Leaders shall be appointed for one-year terms, renewable at the discretion of the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE IV

Pastors, Ministry Staff and Support Staff

Section 1. Purpose. Pastor and Ministry Staff servant-leadership positions are created to help the congregation fulfill Christ's purposes in the world and among its members.

Section 2. Pastor and Ministry Staff Qualifications. Pastors and Ministry Staff of the church shall meet the qualifications for character, giftedness, and call set forth in the Holy Scriptures. (See, e.g., I Timothy 3:1-7.) The Lead Pastor shall be a credentialed, ordained pastor (or in process of becoming an ordained pastor) in good standing with the ECC. Other Pastors and Ministry Staff may become credentialed by the ECC in accordance with their qualifications and duties. A credentialed Pastor or a credentialed Ministry Staff Member shall be a member of the church by virtue of the call to serve the church.

Section 3. Call of the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall be called at a regular or special congregational meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The meeting shall include the budget implications of the proposed position. The Lead Pastor shall be nominated by a Pastor Search Team, made up of church members. This Pastor Search Team shall have been elected at a previous congregational meeting. The Lead Pastor shall be called by written ballot, and a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting is required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time. When the church receives aid from the conference and/or denomination through appropriations, the call shall be with the approval of the MWC.

Section 4. Call of Additional Credentialed Pastors and Credentialed Ministry Staff. Additional staff members holding ministerial credentials shall be called at a congregational meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The meeting shall include the budget implications of the proposed position. A search team will recommend one candidate for a call, and the vote shall be by written ballot, with two-thirds majority vote required for call. The Leadership Team will establish the search team, made up of church members, and may serve as the search team. When the church receives aid from the conference and/or denomination through appropriations, the call shall be with the approval of the MWC. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time, unless otherwise noted at the time of the call.

Section 5. Selection of Non-Credentialed Ministry Staff and Support Staff. Upon congregational approval of funding for such a position, the Leadership Team shall appoint an Interview Team made up of church members, to screen applicants for a non-credentialed Ministry Staff position or a Support Staff position. The Interview Team shall then make a recommendation to the Leadership Team, who will select the person for the job. Non-credentialed Ministry Staff and Support Staff (e.g., Office Administrator or Custodian) shall be of good Christian character and capable in their positions. They are representatives of the church and therefore must conduct themselves in harmony with the purpose of the church. (See Article IV of the Constitution.) Non-credentialed Ministry Staff shall be church members. Church membership is not required for Support Staff.

Section 6. Duties of the Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, provide missional leadership, and faithfully carry out pastoral work. The Lead Pastor shall direct the church staff, providing counsel, encouragement and Christian discipline so as to assist in the accomplishment of objectives for each staff member. All staff shall be responsible to the Lead Pastor, who shall provide annual written evaluations of the non-credentialed Ministry Staff and Support Staff. The Lead Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Leadership Team and of all Ministry Teams, Groups, and Committees. In such capacity, and as desired and/or needed, the Lead Pastor shall strive to establish and accomplish objectives and strategies in conjunction with the mission and purpose of the church.

Section 7. Duties of Additional Pastors and All Ministry Staff Members. Additional Pastors and Ministry Staff Members, as designated in their job descriptions, shall carry out specific areas of ministry under the direction of the Lead Pastor. They may be designated by the Leadership Team to be a leader or member of one or more Ministry Teams.

Section 8. Duties of Support Staff Members. Support Staff Members shall carry out the responsibilities designated in their job descriptions and as directed by the Lead Pastor.

Section 9. Cooperation. The Pastor(s) and Staff Members shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the ECC and the MWC.

Section 10. Resignation of a Pastor or Any Ministry Staff Member. A Pastor or Ministry Staff Member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Leadership Team. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, six weeks' notice is requested.

Section 11. Dismissal. The dismissal of a Pastor, any Ministry Staff Member or a Support Staff Member should be undertaken only after avenues of remediation have been pursued. (See Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1.)

- a. Dismissal of the Lead Pastor. The dismissal of the Lead Pastor shall be by congregational vote at a special meeting called for that express purpose. Such an agenda item cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other meeting. The congregational meeting for such an action may be called by the two-thirds majority vote of the Leadership Team, or through the request of the congregation accomplished by a petition for such a meeting signed by 20 percent of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50 percent of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The Lead Pastor shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A simple majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to dismiss the Lead Pastor.
- b. Dismissal of Additional Credentialed Pastors and Credentialed Ministry Staff. Additional credentialed Pastors and credentialed Ministry Staff Members called by the congregation may be dismissed by the two-thirds majority vote of the Leadership Team. A meeting to overturn the action of the Leadership Team may be called through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition signed by 20 percent of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50 percent of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The Pastor or Ministry Staff Member in question shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to overturn the action of the Leadership Team.
- c. Dismissal of Non-Credentialed Ministry Staff and Support Staff. Non-credentialed Ministry Staff and Support Staff may be dismissed by the two-thirds vote of the Leadership Team.

Section 12. Charges Against a Credentialed Pastor or Credentialed Ministry Staff Member. Charges against a credentialed Pastor or Ministry Staff Member shall be submitted in writing to the Leadership Team and the MWC Superintendent, charging a pastor with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the ECC. The Superintendent shall confer with the ECC Executive Minister of the Ordered Ministry. Prior to further action by the church, these two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Ordered Ministry of the ECC regarding discipline. A Pastor or Ministry Staff Member credentialed by the ECC may be suspended by the ECC during this process. However, any Ministry Staff Member who has not become credentialed with the ECC may be suspended or dismissed at any time, without prior notice, by the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE V

Designated Teams/Groups

Section 1. Ministry Coordination Group (MinCo).

- a. Composition. The Ministry Coordination Group shall be made up of the leaders of each Ministry Team as designated in Article III, Section 4, and the Vice-Chair of the Leadership Team, who shall facilitate the group. Also, Pastors or other Ministry Staff Members may be appointed by the Leadership Team to participate in the Ministry Coordination Group, as well.
- b. Term. Ministry Team Leaders shall be in the Ministry Coordination Group as long as they remain a Ministry Team Leader.
- c. Quorum. A simple majority of the Ministry Coordination Group members shall establish a quorum, when a rare vote is necessary. (The Ministry Coordination Group is not generally a decision-making body.)
- d. Notification of Meetings. The Ministry Coordination Group shall meet at least quarterly on a designated day. Additional meetings may occur, as necessary, provided a three-day advance notice is given to each Ministry Coordination Group member, stating the purpose, date, time and place. The three-day notice may be waived in emergency situations by the two-thirds vote of the entire Ministry Coordination Group.

- e. Function. The primary components of a Ministry Coordination Group Meeting:
 - 1. Plan ways to advance the Kingdom of God through the various ministries;
 - 2. Train in ways to strategize and effectively carry out each of the ministries;
 - 3. Coordinate all of the ministries' purposes and schedules so that an efficient and unified effort is made toward advancing the Kingdom of God;
 - 4. Encourage one another and develop synergy among the Ministry Teams.

Section 2. Nominating Team.

- a. Composition. The Nominating Team shall consist of two Leadership Team members designated by the Leadership Team, the Lead Pastor and/or a Staff Member designated by the Lead Pastor, and two members at-large elected by a majority of the members voting at a congregational meeting. The Leadership Team shall annually designate one of the Nominating Team members to serve as Chair of the Nominating Team.
- b. Term. The terms of the Nominating Team members coming from the Leadership Team shall be at the pleasure of the Leadership Team. The at-large members shall serve two-year terms, and may succeed themselves, serving a maximum of three consecutive terms. The terms of the at-large members shall be staggered so that one at-large member will be elected each year.
- c. Quorum. A majority of Nominating Team members shall constitute a quorum.
- d. Responsibilities. The Nominating Team shall be responsible for the following:
 - 1. Nominate members of the Leadership Team, the at-large members of the Nominating Team, the at-large members of the Pastoral Relations Team, the Auditors, and any other positions (such as Lead Pastor Search Team members or Ministry Team Leaders) assigned to it either by the Leadership Team or the congregation;
 - 2. Develop an on-going process to identify ministry gifts, passions and interests among members of the congregation;
 - 3. Function as a human resource team, recommending individuals for areas of service based on giftedness, passion, interests, experience, and effectiveness;
 - 4. Prepare and distribute to the members, at least two weeks before the Annual Meeting or a special election, a list of candidates proposed for election to designated positions (at least one qualified candidate per position);
 - 5. Explain duties and expectations of a position to each potential candidate and confirm the willingness of that person to serve before listing his/her name on the ballot.
- e. Nominating Procedure. Any church member of appropriate character, giftedness, and call may be considered for any position, keeping in mind how well the person is known and how spiritually mature the person is before being nominated. (See I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 2:1-8.) One or more candidates for positions on the Leadership Team shall be nominated by the Nominating Team annually. One of the candidates for the position of at-large member of the Nominating Team shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Team. One of the at-large positions on the Pastoral Relations Team shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Team. One of the Auditor positions shall be nominated annually by the Nominating Team. Voting members of the congregation may make nominee suggestions to the Nominating Team for any elected positions, no later than 60 days before the next Annual Meeting or ten days before a special election.
- f. Unity. Actions by the Nominating Team shall be taken in such manner as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Section 3. Pastor Search Team. The Lead Pastor candidate shall be nominated by a Lead Pastor Search Team, made up of church members. The nominee shall meet the criteria set out in Article IV, Section 2 of these Bylaws. Candidates for the Lead Pastor Search Team shall be presented by the Nominating Team, and that search team shall be elected at a congregational meeting. The Lead Pastor Search Team shall be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members, including the Leadership Team Chair. It shall work closely with the Regional Conference Superintendent.

Other Pastor Search Teams or Interview Teams, as needed, will be appointed by the Leadership Team.

Section 4. Pastoral Relations Team. The Pastoral Relations Team shall work toward a vital, healthy, mutually beneficial relationship between the congregation and the Pastors and Ministry Staff. The Pastoral Relations Team shall have these main areas of responsibility:

- a. Give care and encouragement to the Pastors, Ministry Staff, and their families;
- b. Receive the perspectives and areas of concern of each Pastor and Ministry Staff member relative to the congregation and ministry;
- c. Communicate the perspectives and concerns of the congregation to each Pastor and Ministry Staff Member relative to that person's ministry;
- d. Periodically review staff personal goals and church goals;

e. Provide annual written evaluations of the Lead Pastor and other credentialed Ministry Staff members;

f. Report, as needed, to the Leadership Team.

The Pastoral Relations Team shall be made up of two members of the Leadership Team, selected by the Leadership Team annually, and three at-large church members, each elected at an Annual Meeting. Leadership Team members may be appointed, each year, to the Pastoral Relations Team for as long as they serve on the Leadership Team. Elected at-large members shall each serve a three-year term (staggered) and may not succeed themselves, as at-large members. The Leadership Team shall annually designate one of the Pastoral Relations Team members to serve as Chair of the Pastoral Relations Team.

Section 5. Auditors. Two at-large representatives from the congregation shall act as Auditors. The Auditors shall provide annual (fiscal year-end) independent reviews of financial records of the church and each of its organizations. One at-large representative from the congregation shall be elected at each Annual Meeting as Auditor for two years, thereby having a staggered term with the other Auditor. Auditors may not succeed themselves for an additional term.

ARTICLE VI

Congregational Meetings

Section 1. Annual Meeting. An Annual Meeting shall be held as near the first of the fiscal year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting, written progress reports shall be submitted by the Pastor(s), Ministry Staff, appropriate officers, and Ministry Teams. Reports on an independent review of financial records of the church and each of its organizations shall be submitted by the Auditors. Election for designated positions of responsibility shall be held. The church budget shall be submitted for action.

Section 2. Other Congregational Meetings. Other congregational meetings (not less often than annually) may be called by the Leadership Team or by written request signed by ten percent of the membership, unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws.

Section 3. Notification of Congregational Meetings. As a rule, and when reasonable, congregational meetings shall be announced to the membership at least two weeks prior to the meeting date and shall include the meeting purpose, date, time, and place.

Section 4. Conduct of Congregational Meeting. the Chair of the Leadership Team, or the Vice Chair in the Chair's absence, shall serve as Chair of any meeting of the membership.

Section 5. Voting. Each member—and only members as designated by Article I, Section 3 of these Bylaws—shall be entitled to cast one vote on any matter at hand at any meeting of the membership. Such votes must be cast in person. Vote by proxy shall not be allowed. The Chair of the meeting may call for open balloting where no objection is raised. Otherwise, written ballots shall be used.

Section 6. Quorum. Unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws, 25 percent of the voting membership, present and voting at a properly called congregational meeting, shall constitute a quorum. Non-member friends shall not be counted when constituting a quorum.

Section 7. Rules of Order. Congregational meetings of the church shall be conducted according to the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 8. Final Voice. The congregation reserves for itself final authority in any matter of its choice. A member may advance an item to the agenda of a congregational meeting by the majority vote of the membership at that meeting, providing that the item is not in conflict with other provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws. An item brought to the agenda in this way shall be decided by a majority vote of the membership, unless the item requires a different percentage as outlined elsewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws, in which case that percentage shall be used.

ARTICLE VII

Assets

Section 1. Title. The congregation shall hold title to its own assets.

Section 2. Acquisition. Assets acquired through budgetary provisions do not need additional congregational approval. Assets acquired beyond budgetary provisions, particularly land or facility acquisition, require the approval of the congregation by majority vote.

Section 3. Disputed Assets. In the event of schism within the church—from which we earnestly pray God to spare us—where there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by this Constitution and Bylaws, as determined by the Executive Board of the MWC.

Section 4. Assignment of Assets. No action for the sale or transfer of assets may be taken when the closure of the church is under consideration without the prior approval of the MWC Executive Board. In the event the congregation votes to cease, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of the ECC and the MWC, shared equally for the furtherance of the mission of both in that region, primarily through church planting.

ARTICLE VIII

Closure

Section 1. Collaboration. Should congregational attendance stand below 25, the MWC Executive Board may appoint an ex officio member from its ranks to the church Leadership Team.

Section 2. Action Needed for Closure. The congregation may terminate its existence by a simple majority vote of the membership present and voting at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

Section 3. Meeting Provisions. The decision on whether to close the church cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other meeting. The congregational meeting for such a vote may be called by the Leadership Team or through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition for such a meeting signed by 20 percent of the membership.

Section 4. Notification. All members of record must be notified of the closure meeting through first class mail at least two weeks in advance.

Section 5. Quorum. The quorum for such a meeting shall be all members of record who are present at the meeting.

Section 6. Asset Distribution. Upon the vote to close, the assets of the congregation shall be transferred according to Article VII, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

ARTICLE IX

Amendments

Section 1. Procedure. These Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds majority of the membership present and voting at a duly called meeting for that purpose. A proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be presented in writing to the membership not less than 30 days prior to the meeting called for the purpose of voting on Bylaws changes.