

# By-Laws and Constitution

(Revised and approved by Congregational Business Meeting May 21, 2022)

## Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren

1392 Robert Fulton Highway, Quarryville, PA 17566

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## PREAMBLE

The mission of the Church, as set forth in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) may be defined as having an inner and outer direction. The inner mission of the church is to nurture its members, seeking ever to bring them closer to maturity in Christ. The outer mission of the church, as God's instrument, is related to the problems and needs of the world. These two major functions of the Church — nurture and service — are achieved when under girded with stewardship of time, talent, and material resources.

The congregation is a basic unit of the Church at work in the world. Servants of the Lord must be alert to the needs and the opportunities about them. They must make their ministry relevant to the changing times and should always be creative in communicating the word and the love of God.

To these ends this congregation has developed its own constitution and by-laws clearly defining its organizations' structure and working procedures in harmony with Denomination and District policy, This Constitution is regarded as a statement of the fundamental principles of government adopted by the church. The by-laws and the areas of responsibility that follow them are detailed rules and regulations, which allow for effective working of the congregation within its basic organizational structure.

## CONSTITUTION

### **ARTICLE I - CORPORATE NAME**

This church shall be known as the Mechanic Grove Church of the Brethren, East Drumore Township of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and is incorporated under and pursuant to the Religious Corporation Act of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as of 1926. The corporation does not anticipate pecuniary gain or profit incidental or otherwise to its members.

### **ARTICLE II - AFFIRMATION OF FAITH AND PURPOSE**

1. There is but one God, a personal God who in Holy love creates, sustains, and orders all.
2. All persons are eternally separated from God without Christ (John 14:6), that Christ freely gave His life on the cross to pay the penalty of our sins, and that salvation comes only with acceptance of Christ as personal Savior and with commitment of life to Him. These facts we hold as the basis of the gospel message. The acceptance and commitment that result from the spiritual rebirth leads to a life of service.
3. The Holy Spirit is at work in the hearts and minds of believers, creating and sustaining the church through the Gospel, giving guidance and comfort, and uniting believers with their Lord and with one another.
4. The New Testament is its only creed and rule of faith. The Holy Scriptures record God's search for all people, climaxed in God's redemptive act in and through Christ. Through the Holy Word God still speaks and continues to accomplish His redemptive purposes.
5. The Gospel is the Good News and that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. The Gospel reveals God's sovereign will and Christ's redeeming grace.
6. The church is the body of Christ and is under the Lord's mandate to be faithful in accepting and transmitting the Gospel in word and deed.

7. All members of the congregation of the body of believers are responsible for the total ministry of the church.
8. The ministry of the church is to proclaim and fulfill the Gospel for all people both near and far and nurture individual believers in the Christian faith and life.

### **ARTICLE III - RELATIONSHIP TO THE WHOLE CHURCH**

#### **1. The Church Universal**

The local church is part of the larger whole that comprises the complete body of Christ. The local church, therefore, shall recognize other Christian bodies and denominations and shall seek to cooperate with and give direction to the united efforts of the church.

#### **2. The Church Denominational**

The congregation covenants to support faithfully the programs of the Church of the Brethren, recognizing Annual Conference enactments as having governing force in its life, and shall remain a member of the Church of the Brethren or its successor. The local church shall send delegates to those official conferences of the Church of the Brethren in which it is entitled to have representation.

In case of strife or division, if any part of the congregation refuses to abide by its obligation as a member of the Church of the Brethren, that part of the congregation continuing in unity with the Church of the Brethren shall retain possession of all the property of the congregation. If the congregation (a) disbands, (b) departs from membership in the Church of the Brethren, (c) so decreases in numbers and financial strength as to render the congregation unable to fulfill its purpose, the district of the Church of the Brethren in which it is located shall have the right to take charge and control of all property, and thereafter to hold, manage, and convey the same at the discretion of the district.

### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

#### **1. Meaning of Membership**

Church membership is not to be entered into lightly or unadvisedly because it is membership in the Body of Christ. Both the congregation and the member shall diligently strive to make membership meaningful and significant. Each applicant shall be instructed in the Word of God and the faith and practices of the Church of the Brethren before being received into membership in a service of spiritual dignity, beauty and meaning.

New members shall be active in seeking, and the church shall be diligent in helping them to discover, their rightful place in the ministry of Christ and His church. It is expected that members shall be faithful in discharging their Christian responsibilities by attending worship services, communions and other meetings of the congregation, and by stewardship of time, talent and treasure. Members shall remember in their daily work, and wherever they may be, that they are a part of the church, and therefore responsible for a witness that is Christian. The congregation expects the periodic renewal of vows and commitments for all members.

#### **2. Reception of Members**

Members may be received into the church in one of three ways:

- a. Confession of faith and baptism by triune immersion as practiced by the Church of the Brethren.
- b. Transfer of letter from another congregation of the Church of the Brethren or any other evangelical

denomination.

c. Reaffirmation of faith.

However, final membership requirements are to be vested with the Pastors and Deacon Board who are to interview individuals. Membership in the local church shall be open to all persons irrespective of race, gender, national origin, language, or of socio-economic status.

3. Membership Classifications

- a. *Active members* avail themselves of the public means of grace by regularly attending church services and communion and contribute to the support of the Gospel and the various enterprises of the church in ways, as they are able.
- b. *Non-resident members* are those who live at such a distance from the church as to make it impossible or impractical to discharge membership responsibilities. Ordinarily such members should seek a new church home where they may be actively involved and should move their letters to that congregation. The home congregation shall encourage non-resident members in this procedure.
- c. *Separated members* were received into the church as members, but no longer participate in the church's life or carry out the expected commitments, and for three consecutive years fail to respond to invitations to reaffirm or renew their relationship with the congregation.

4. Membership Termination

Membership in the Church of the Brethren may be terminated in one of the following ways:

- a. *Death*.
- b. *Transfer of Letter* - a transfer of letter is the property of the congregation and shall go from the granting to the receiving congregation. Either the letter or accompanying note should indicate whether the member for whom the letter is being sent is a member or separated member.
- c. *Withdrawal* - this action shall be taken by the local congregation at the written request of the individual.
- d. *Removal* - the name of a member may be "removed" or "dropped" from the membership rolls of the congregation when there is sufficient cause for taking such action upon approval by the Deacon Board and Pastors and with final approval by the congregation and notification of said member.

**BY-LAWS**

**ARTICLE 1 - CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING**

- 1. The Congregational Business Meeting is the final authority and governing body within the local congregation; it is the church in business session. The congregation in business meeting shall hear reports and evaluate past accomplishments, study present conditions, plan the future programs of the church, record the voice of the congregation on current issues where Christian witness is urgent, and provide opportunity for sharing and coordinating differing points of view. The business meeting shall also elect officers, adopt budgets, rule on policy and organizational matters, and authorize church officials to act on behalf of the congregation. Only active members shall be eligible to vote and make motions in the Congregational Business meeting.
- 2. The Congregational Business Meeting shall be held in May and in November. The meetings will be

publicized at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled dates.

3. Special meetings of the congregational sessions may be called by the Moderator, Church Board Chair or Pastors upon giving a ten (10) day written notice to the membership or upon written petition of ten percent (10%) of the members.
4. The Congregational Business Meeting may authorize temporary committees. When the specific assignment is achieved, the committee shall be dismissed.

#### **ARTICLE II - OFFICIALS OF THE CHURCH**

1. The officers of the Congregational Business meeting shall be the Moderator, Treasurer and the Church Clerk. They shall be elected by the Congregational Business meeting.
2. The legal officers for the corporate body shall be the Church Board Chair, Church Clerk, Treasurer and the chair of the Commission for Stewardship.
3. The legal officers are authorized to borrow money on behalf of the church.

#### **ARTICLE III - CHURCH OFFICERS' DUTIES**

1. All officers shall be members in good standing of the congregation and shall serve faithfully in their respective offices. The Moderator may be chosen from outside the congregation.
2. The Moderator shall be the official head of the congregation but shall recognize the Senior Pastor as the spiritual leader. The Moderator shall preside at the Congregational Business meetings, convene the Church Board for its organization, and perform all other duties that pertain to this office. He/she shall be an ex-officio member without vote at all board, commission, and committee meetings. In the event of an inability to perform the duties of the office, the Moderator shall request the Church Board Chair to serve as Moderator. The Moderator shall not serve as an elected member of the Church Board during his/her term of office.
3. The Church Board Chair shall preside at all Church Board and Executive Committee meetings. He/she shall be an ex-officio member of all commissions or committee meetings, without vote.
4. The Church Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of the congregational business meetings, Church Board and Executive Committee meetings. Minutes shall be kept in a volume provided for that purpose, which remains the property of the congregation. He/she shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Commission for Ministry.
5. The Treasurer shall be a member of the Church Board and shall keep a book of accounts of the congregation. He/she shall receive the Financial Committee's bank deposit slips for all contributions. The Treasurer shall disburse funds upon proper "order and treasury". The Treasurer shall make written reports to the Church Board and to the Congregational Business meetings annually or at such intervals as the Church Board may decide. He/she shall report the general state of the finances to the Church Board on call and shall also submit the accounts to a bi-annual inspection. A periodic audit will be done at the direction of the Church Board. He/she shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Commission for Stewardship.
6. There will be a Finance Committee consisting of six individuals, who are not immediately related. These

individuals will organize and appoint their own chair following the Fall Congregational Business Meeting. The individuals will serve a three-year term. They are not eligible to serve more than two terms in succession. The duties of these offices will be to count and deposit the weekly offering. At least two committee members are to be present at all times when the offerings are being counted. All offerings are to be counted promptly and deposited in the bank.

7. All official church records, pictures, tapes, documents, etc., shall remain the property of the church, and as books are filled, they shall be stored in the church archives.

#### **ARTICLE IV - CHURCH BOARD**

1. There shall be a Church Board consisting of twenty-seven (27) members elected by the Congregational Business Meeting, including Commission Members, the Board Chair and Chair-Elect, all with vote. In addition, the Chair of the Board of Deacons, the Chair of the COM Board, the Church Clerk and the Treasurer shall be ex-officio members, with vote. The Pastor(s), Director of Family Ministries, and Moderator shall be ex-officio members, without vote. The term of office for elected members of the Church Board and continuing committees shall be three years (with the exception of (a) below). They are not eligible to serve more than two terms in succession.

Approximately one-third of the membership of the board or continuing committees shall be elected in any one year.

- a. The Board Chair and Board Chair Elect will be nominated by the Gifts Discernment Committee, or from the floor at a Congregational Business Meeting, elected at a Congregational Business Meeting, and each serve a two-year term (with vote). The Chair Elect will serve two years as Chair Elect and two years as Chair.
  - b. In the event the Chair is unable to complete his/her term, he/she will be replaced by the Chair Elect. At the next regular Congregational Business Meeting a new Chair Elect will be elected to complete the term of the previous Chair Elect.
  - c. In the event the Chair is not fulfilling the responsibilities of the office to the satisfaction of the members of the Church Board, he/she may be recalled by way of a no confidence vote. To be recalled, 2/3 of the Board members must vote "no confidence" at two successive regularly scheduled meetings.
2. The Church Board shall be vested with administrative responsibilities to plan, coordinate, integrate, and supervise the program of the congregation. The Church Board shall be empowered to act on behalf of the Congregational Business Meeting ad interim except for those actions specifically reserved for the Congregational Business Meetings set forth by the constitution and by-laws.
  3. The Church Board shall meet a minimum of six times per year. Special meetings of the Church Board may be called by the Church Board Chair, the Moderator or Pastors with seven (7) days written notice. Commission and Committees shall meet regularly or as the Church Board may direct.
  4. The Church Board may authorize temporary committees. When the assignment is achieved, the committee shall be dismissed.

#### **CHURCH BOARD FUNCTIONS**

THE BOARD SHALL:

1. Fulfill the directives of the Congregational Business Meeting.

2. Assign, supervise and coordinate the work of the commissions.
3. Project long-range planning, set goals and initiate new programs.
4. Interpret rules of procedure for commissions and committees.
5. Make all appointments for which the Church Board is responsible.
6. Prepare the ballot for use by the Congregational Business Meeting and personnel committee members.
7. Fill all vacancies in elective offices occurring between Congregational Business Meetings and fill other vacancies not otherwise provided for.
8. Review the budget for presentation to the Congregational Business Meeting.
9. Approve and supervise, within the limits established by the Congregational Business Meeting, the treasury funded expenses and specifically funded items.
10. Provide for the periodic audit.
11. Allocate and define authority with respect to the establishment of bank accounts and the signing of checks and other legal documents.
12. Receive, consider and make disposition of concerns brought by any group or individual member.
13. Report its activities and actions at the Congregational Business Meetings.
14. Bring recommendations to the Congregational Business Meeting when major church policy needs revision or is involved.
15. Enlist the help and the counsel of the district executive and other district personnel in program planning and handling special concerns.
16. The Church Board will prepare a ballot with individuals to serve on the Gifts Discernment Committee.

#### **ARTICLE V – COMMISSIONS**

1. Individuals shall be elected at a Congregational Business Meeting to serve on each of the five Commissions: Ministry, Nurture, Property, Stewards, and Witness. Each Commission is comprised of five elected members serving three-year terms. One or two members per Commission should be elected each year. No individual may serve more than two consecutive three-year terms as a Commission member. The Moderator and Pastors serve as ex-officio members of each of the Commissions without vote. The Treasurer serves on the Commission for Stewardship, the Church Clerk serves on the Commission for Ministry both with voting privileges.
  - a. Candidates for positions on a Commission will be nominated by the Gifts Discernment Committee or from the floor at a Congregational Business Meeting.
2. The Commissions will reorganize themselves following the Fall Congregational Business Meeting. They will each elect a Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. No first year member shall be eligible to serve as chairperson of a Commission.

Each Commission shall prepare annually a tentative budget for the program areas that shall be submitted to the Commission for Stewardship for their use in preparation of the total church budget. Along with the responsibilities herein listed, additional duties and instructions may be assigned to the Commission by the Church Board and the Church Congregational Business Meeting.

#### **ARTICLE VI - COMMISSION RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### Commission for Nurture

The Commission for Nurture shall be responsible for fostering the spiritual growth of the congregation through education and fellowship in conjunction with the Pastors and Director of Family Ministries.

1. Responsibilities of the Commission shall be:
  - a. Sunday school
    - 1) Approve nominees, supervise elections and make appointments of teachers and assistants.
    - 2) Select or approve curricula.
    - 3) Purchase and maintain supplies.
    - 4) Provide leadership and training for teachers.
  - b. Vacation Bible School
  - c. Camp promotion – both Camp Swatara and Black Rock Retreat
  - d. Fellowship Groups (Youth, Junior High, and Young Adults)
  - e. Church Library
  - f. Annual picnic
  - g. Children's church
  - h. Roots programming, children & youth programs, oversight, and approval of adult programs as requested
  - i. Provide oversight for congregational care groups
2. The Commission shall appoint:
  - a. Bible School Directors
  - b. Camp Swatara Representative
  - c. Children's Church Committee
  - d. Junior High Advisors
  - e. Librarian
  - f. Nursery Committee
  - g. Sunday School Directors/Coordinators (Children's, Youth, Adult)  
Each director/coordinator will serve a term of three years and may be re-appointed to successive terms.
  - h. Youth Advisors
3. The Commission shall provide oversight and receive input from the Director/Pastor of congregational care ministries.

#### Commission for Witness

The Commission for Witness shall be responsible for directing the congregation's witness to the world through evangelism, church planting, ecumenical relations, missions, social action and ministry to the needy and daily vocations.

1. Responsibilities of the Commission shall be:
  - a. Promotion of Denomination and District programs such as missions, peace action, social action, Brethren Volunteer Service, cultural exchanges, and temperance
  - b. Relief collection
  - c. Evangelism in the church and community.
  - d. Roots meal
2. The Commission shall appoint representatives as needed for various ministries under the commission's direction (examples: 2 Cent per Meal, Brethren Housing Association, COBYS, Peace Advocate, Solanco Neighborhood Ministries Food Bank, CROP Walk, Disaster Relief)

#### Commission for Stewardship

The Commission for Stewardship shall be the legal trustee of the congregation with responsibility for acquiring, holding and conveying property in accordance with the decision of the Church Board and/or Congregational Business Meeting.

1. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member with a vote.
2. Responsibilities of the Commission shall be:
  - a. Receive, disburse and record all funds of the congregation.
  - b. Plan the annual budget for board and congregational vote.
  - c. Contract and implement adequate insurance coverage, utility, emergency services and other expenses not limited to loans, payroll and tax services that may yield cost-savings for the congregation.
  - d. Review and make recommendations on requests for funds from departments within the church and agencies outside the church.
  - e. Develop Christian stewardship programs and supervise offering envelope distribution.
  - f. Provide financial reports to the Congregational Business Meetings.
  - g. Inspect general fund and COM accounts of the church twice a year through the Financial Review Committee prior to Congregational Business meetings.
  - h. Inspect the financial accounts of all other organizations in the church once a year through the Financial Review Committee prior to Fall Congregational Business meetings.
  - i. Keep separate records and accountings of all special gifts given for the church improvements.
  - j. Develop and monitor investment strategies to support future property needs.
3. All checks disbursed from the church funds shall be signed by two legal officers of the church. They shall be the Treasurer and the Chair of the Commission for Stewardship. In the absence of the Chair of the Commission for Stewardship the second co-signer shall be the Chair of the Church Board or the Church Clerk.
4. The Commission shall appoint:
  - a. Financial Review Committee of three members for three-year terms, one of whom shall be appointed each year. They may serve two consecutive terms.

#### Commission for Property

The Commission for Property shall provide overall management of the church property.

Responsibilities of the Commission shall be:

1. Provide for maintenance and repair of all church property.
2. Make a yearly inspection of all properties
3. Hire and evaluate custodial personnel and make recommendations regarding salary to the Commission for Ministry.
4. Purchase and maintain supplies and materials
5. Purchase, repair, and maintain furnishings and equipment, including A-V
6. Act upon requests for building and grounds use
7. Develop a long-term plan for property repair, renovation, and expansion
8. Supervise custodial care of the property, including contracting grounds-keeping personnel and snow removal services.
9. The Commission shall oversee:

- a. Memorial Committee of four members, at least one of whom shall be elected each year. They may serve two consecutive terms. All memorials shall be accepted by the Memorial Committee before becoming part of the church property.
  - 1) Duties and responsibilities of the Memorial Committee are as follows:
    - a. Meet as needed and file a written report for the Congregational Business meetings, with a copy given to the Commission for Property.
    - b. Elect a chair and secretary annually to administer meetings and record the decisions and activities of the committee.
    - c. Follow-up with thank you notes, where applicable.
    - d. Receive suggestions for memorials.
    - e. Provide family of decedent with a list of donors that includes donor addresses and a total of all donations given.
    - f. If donated property or property purchased with memorial funds becomes worn, outdated or incompatible with newer technology, the Commission for Property may recommend to the church Board that said property be discarded. With an affirmative vote of the Church Board the property in question may be discarded.
  - b. Kitchen Committee - Commission for Property will determine committee membership with recommendations from Women's Ministry. Committee members will serve a term of three years and may be re-appointed to successive terms.

#### Commission for Ministry

The Commission for Ministry shall be responsible for the fostering of the spiritual life of the congregation through worship and pastoral care and encourage daily family devotions.

1. The Church Clerk shall be a voting ex-officio member of this Commission.
2. Encourage people to enter the field of pastoral ministry and other church related vocations.
3. Responsibilities of the Commission shall be:
  - a. Recommend pastors for hiring and negotiate contracts for congregational approval in cooperation with a search committee, which shall generally include all members of the Executive Committee and all members of the Commission for Ministry. The composition and number of members on the Search Committee may be modified for good cause. The Executive Committee may propose a modification of the Search Committee to the entire Church Board and such modification may only be accomplished with a 2/3 vote of the Board.
  - b. Establish and maintain position descriptions for pastors, which are current with the needs of the congregation.
  - c. Provide adequate professional staff and make recommendations to the Church Board on salaries for the Pastors, church administrative assistant/bookkeeper (in consultation with the Commission for Stewardship), Music Coordinator, Technology Coordinator, and COM Administrator (in consultation with the COM Board), and custodial personnel (in consultation with the Commission for Property).
  - d. Serve as advisors to the Pastors.
  - e. Meet with the professional staff no less than annually for evaluation.
  - f. Approve all programs to be presented to the congregation by anyone other than those approved by the Church Board or Deacon Board.
  - g. Assist the Pastors in planning and coordinating the overall programs of the church in cooperation with other Commissions.
  - h. Provide for inspiring worship programs.
  - i. Supply speakers in the absence of the Pastors.

- j. Oversee office procedures.
  - k. Oversee ushering procedures.
4. The Commission shall appoint:
- a. Church Historian
  - b. Coordinator for Sanctuary Greeters
  - c. Wedding Coordinators
  - d. Worship Center Decorating Committee

**ARTICLE VII - ADDITIONAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

Additional committees shall be elected by the Congregational Business Meeting from a ballot prepared by the Church Board. Depending upon the workload a Commission may seek authorization from the Church Board for continuing or short-term committees to carry specific Commission assignments. Where possible Commission members shall serve as committee chairpersons.

**ARTICLE VIII - BOARD OF DEACONS**

The office of Deacon is a worthy one and merits faithful and conscientious service. Those chosen should be faithful and loyal members of the church, sincere and spiritually minded, with wisdom and judgment in all work of the church. A person elected to the position of Deacon is elected in his/her own right. The position of Deacon is open to individuals regardless of gender or marital status. Married couples may be elected and serve as a Deacon unit if they wish.

The board shall be responsible for assisting the Pastor(s) in the service of baptism, anointing, and other ordinances of the Church of the Brethren, for planning and preparing love feast and communion services, and for ministering to the sick, needy and others of the congregation and community.

1. Tenure
  - a. Deacons or Deacon couples shall be elected for tenure of three years, with additional three year terms upon review of the Deacon Board.
  - b. Deacons shall be installed on or before the second Sunday of January.
2. Deacon Board Offices:
  - a. The Deacon Board shall elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary.
  - b. Individuals/couples eligible to serve in a Deacon Board office must have served on the Deacon Board the previous year and serve on the board during the office.
3. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the size and need of the congregation.
4. Deacons may also serve on Church Board commissions and committees.
5. Deacon Board Responsibilities:
  - a. Counsel with the Pastor(s) on matters of spiritual welfare within the church.
  - b. Arrange for and prepare for Love Feast, baptism and assist in anointing.
  - c. Periodically review the church membership list and make appropriate recommendations to the Congregational Business Meeting.
  - d. Review candidates for church membership as requested by Pastors.
  - e. Health and Wellness Ministry Program

**ARTICLE IX - CHILDREN'S OUTREACH MINISTRIES BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

1. The Children's Outreach Ministries Board (the COM Board) is a body that provides guidance and oversight to varying children's ministries. Those ministries are: Preschool, Childcare, CLASP, Summer

CLASP and Primary Program.

2. The COM Board, nominated by the Gifts Discernment Committee and affirmed at a Congregational Business Meeting, shall include six members. Those members include: Church Board Vice-Chair, ex-officio member with vote; a treasurer, and four other elected members. The Associate Pastor and the Administrator of the Children's Outreach Ministries will serve as ex-officio members without vote. The members will serve a three-year term. They are not eligible to serve more than two terms in succession, except in the case where a Board member assumes the role of treasurer. The Board may then request the Church Board approve another term for the treasurer as ex-officio with no vote during the subsequent terms. The COM Board may then name a new treasurer, should the Board or the treasurer choose not to extend a subsequent term from its members or may request that the Gifts Discernment Committee nominate a new ex-officio Treasurer with no vote.

The COM Board shall:

1. Establish and monitor the consolidated budget(s) of each of the children's outreach programs. Budget(s) shall be submitted to the Commission for Stewardship and presented to Church Board for approval at a Congregational Business Meeting.
2. The COM Board shall meet a minimum of nine (9) times per year. Extra meetings may be called as deemed necessary by the Chair and Administrator or by consensus of two Board of Director members.
3. Have personnel authority over the Administrator for Children's Outreach Ministries.
  - a. Will establish salary in consultation with Commission for Ministry.

Line of Authority:

1. The Administrator for Children's Outreach Ministries will report to the COM Board.
2. The Administrator for Children's Outreach Ministries has supervisory authority over the individual children's outreach program directors and staff.
3. The Administrator of Children's Outreach Ministries may delegate authority in hiring issues.
4. The COM Board Chair will report to the Church Board.
5. The COM Board will elect its own officers.
6. The COM Board may authorize temporary committees.

#### **ARTICLE X - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Church Board Chair shall act as chair of the Executive Committee and vote only in case of tie. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the Church Board Chair, Chair-elect, Deacon Board Chair, COM Board Chair, and the five commission chairs. The Church Clerk and Treasurer shall be ex-officio with vote. The Pastors and Moderator shall be ex-officio without vote.

The Executive Committee shall report to the Church Board and the Congregational Business Meeting following its meetings.

The Executive Committee shall:

1. Review by-laws every five years.
2. Prepare the agenda for the Congregational Business Meeting.
3. Serve the Church Board at interim.
4. Act as a sounding board for Commissions concerns as needed or requested.
5. Provide an arena for envisioning long-term goals.
6. Assist Chairs and Pastors in coordinating and interpreting program responsibilities and needs.

#### **ARTICLE XI – GIFTS DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE**

There shall be a Gifts Discernment Committee consisting of six members elected by the Congregational Business meeting from a ballot prepared by the Church Board.

The Pastors and the Moderator shall serve ex-officio. Elected members of the committee shall not hold membership on the Church Board. The committee shall diligently seek to nominate qualified persons representing all ages and interests in the congregation. They shall be knowledgeable of the duties of the position for which nominations are to be made.

#### **ARTICLE XII - PERSONNEL SELECTION AND TENURE**

1. The Gifts Discernment Committee shall maintain a personnel file, indicating the interest, aptitude and record of service of all members. The Committee shall also prepare a ballot for the use of the Congregational Business Meeting in the election of:
  - a. Officials of the church (with the exception of those appointed by the Church Board, Executive Committee and those nominated for membership on the Board of Deacons).
  - b. Church Board members
  - c. Children's Outreach Ministries (COM) Board members
  - d. Delegates to District Conference and Annual Conference.
  - e. Such other officers as are required by the Congregational Business meeting. The Gifts Discernment Committee shall be available for consultation for all appointments made within the Commissions. They shall serve as tellers at Congregational Business Meetings. They shall elect their own Chair and Secretary and meet as required.
2. All nominees shall be contacted before their names are placed on the ballot.
3. The term of office for all officers of the Congregational Business Meeting shall be three years. Officers shall not be eligible to serve more than two terms in succession.
4. The term of office for elected members of the Church Board and continuing committee shall be three years. No first year members shall be eligible to serve as Chair of a Commission. They shall not be eligible to serve more than two terms in succession. If any Church Board member or committee member is absent from meetings without cause for six months, his office shall be declared vacant.
5. Approximately one third of the membership of the board or continuing committees shall be elected in any one year.

#### **ARTICLE XIII - THE PASTORS**

The Pastors shall be called, licensed, and ordained in keeping with the policy established by the Denomination and the District. They shall function as persons especially set apart as priestly and prophetic servants of the church. Their office is governed by the District both as to selection and tenure.

#### **ARTICLE XIV - EMPLOYED STAFF**

1. Pastor(s)
  - a. The congregation shall employ Pastor(s) when needed. They shall be persons whose faith, aptness to teach, preach, counsel and administer, and educational qualifications have been examined in consultation with the appropriate authorities in the Church of the Brethren. They shall be properly ordained. The Pastor(s) shall accept and adhere to the faith and practices of the Church of the Brethren and the local congregation as set forth in Article II of this Constitution and their life and conduct shall witness in their Christian faith.
  - b. The Pastor(s) shall be the spiritual shepherds of the congregation and they shall direct the church

programs. They shall be an ex-officio member of all boards, commissions and committees, but are not expected or required to attend all such meetings. Normally, the Pastor(s) shall preach and teach, administer the ordinances, visit and counsel, and in various other ways aid the congregation in worshipping and serving God.

- c. The selection and call of the Pastor(s) as well as the termination of their services to the congregation shall be done in keeping with the approved Denomination procedures and after seeking the counsel and guidance of the authorized officials of the Church of the Brethren.

#### 2. Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper

The church shall provide administrative assistance for the Pastor(s) and the church. The administrative assistant/bookkeeper shall be employed by the Church Board and be responsible to the Commission for Ministry and Commission for Stewardship, in consultation with the Pastor(s).

#### 3. Custodian

Custodial services shall be provided for the care of the building and grounds. The custodian shall be employed by the Church Board and be responsible to the Commission for Property (and Commission for Ministry for salary), in consultation with the Pastor(s).

#### 4. Additional Professional Staff

Additional professional staff shall be provided when the needs of the congregation merit it. The selection and call for such persons, as well as the termination of their services to the congregation, shall be done in keeping with the approved Denomination procedures and after seeking the counsel and guidance of the authorized officials of the Church of the Brethren. The terms of employment for all employees shall be carefully stipulated and reviewed annually. When the terms have been mutually accepted such terms shall be set forth in writing on approved forms and shall be considered an agreement between the contracting parties.

### **ARTICLE XV - OTHER ORGANIZED GROUPS**

Various other special interest groups or age groups may be organized upon the authorization of the Church Board. Where such groups may represent a change in organizational goals or policies the approval of the congregation is required. All organizations within the congregation shall exist to aid in fulfilling the mission of the Church and are subject to the oversight and direction of the Church.

### **ARTICLE XVI - FISCAL YEAR AND THE CHURCH YEAR**

The fiscal year and the church year of the congregation shall coincide with the accepted practice of the Brotherhood. Prior to the beginning of each fiscal year each Commission shall submit a proposed budget to the Commission for Stewardship. The Commission for Stewardship shall then review the financial request of each Commission and compile a proposed budget for the Church Board's examination and presentation to the Congregational Business Meeting.

### **ARTICLE XVII - QUORUM**

1. Although it is desirable to have as many members present as possible for the Congregational Business Meeting, no quorum shall be required except as might be specified by law.
2. For meetings of the Church Board and the Commissions a majority of elected members shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE XVIII - RULES OF ORDER**

Unless otherwise specified in their by-laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the official rules of order for the Congregational Business Meeting and the Church Board Meetings.

**ARTICLE XX – AMENDMENTS**

The Constitution and the By-Laws of the congregation may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any regular session of the Congregational Business Meeting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been given in the call of the meeting issued at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

NOTES

