

prior to July 1, 1996, will continue to be eligible for benefits from the Covenant Pension Plan, and for increases in accrued benefits that may in the future be approved. Years of service under the Canada Covenant Pension Plan after July 1, 1996, shall be credited for purpose of vesting to participants in the Covenant Pension Plan, but not for purpose of any benefits, as benefits are accrued under the Canada Covenant Pension Plan. Vested participants with service under both the Covenant Pension Plan and the Canada Covenant Pension Plan may be eligible for benefits from both plans.

Model Constitution for Local Covenant Churches— Board Form

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

*(A historical statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of
The Evangelical Covenant Church)*

“The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity as it emerged in the Protestant Reformation, in the biblical instruction of the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, and in the great spiritual awakenings of the nineteenth century. These three influences have in large measure shaped its development and are to be borne in mind in seeking to understand its distinctive spirit.

“The Covenant Church adheres to the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation regarding the Holy Scriptures, the Old and the New Testament, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. It has traditionally valued the historic confessions of the Christian church, particularly the Apostles’ Creed, while at the same time it has emphasized the sovereignty of the Word over all creedal interpretations. It has especially cherished the pietistic restatement of the doctrine of justification by faith as basic to its dual task of evangelism and Christian nurture, the New Testament emphasis upon personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the reality of a fellowship of believers which recognizes but transcends theological differences, and the belief in baptism and the Lord’s Supper as divinely ordained sacraments of the church. While the denomination has traditionally practiced the baptism of infants, in conformity with its principle of freedom it has also recognized the practice of believer baptism. The principle of personal freedom, so highly esteemed by the Covenant, is to be distinguished from the individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.”

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church of (place).

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be (local name if any) Evangelical Covenant Church of (town and state).

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

The church is a member of The Evangelical Covenant Church and its Conference and is pledged to work in harmony with the denomination and its decisions and to support its program, policies, and institutions.

ARTICLE III

Confession of Faith

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

ARTICLE IV

Purpose

Section 1. The purpose of this church shall be to unite Christians in fellowship for spiritual development, for the winning of persons to Christ, and for the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to serve one another, this community, and the world through Christian education, home and world mission, and the institutions conducted by The Evangelical Covenant Church and its local regional conferences.

Section 2. In order to achieve this purpose, the church, in the unity of the Spirit, shall use the gifts that God has given it and the means of grace which God has placed at its disposal: the Word of God, baptism, and Holy Communion.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Membership in the church shall be granted on application to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, and promise to support the total ministry of the church and to share its fellowship and obligations.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

The officers of the church shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a vice-secretary, a financial secretary, and a treasurer.

ARTICLE VII

Church Boards

The general administration of the church shall be vested in the executive board, the board of trustees, the board of deacons, and the board of Christian education and discipleship. Each of these church boards shall report to the congregational business meetings of the church. The executive board shall consist of the pastor, the chair, the vice-chair, the secretary, the vice-secretary, the financial secretary, the treasurer, the chairs of the other church boards, and the chair of Covenant Women Ministries. The executive board shall coordinate the workings of the other church boards. Matters to be presented by the other church boards to the congregational business meetings for action must be first considered by the executive board.

ARTICLE VIII

Congregational Business Meetings

Section 1. Regular congregational business meetings shall be held at stated intervals, at least once each quarter. The annual congregational business meeting shall be held as near to the first of the year as feasible. At the annual meeting, written reports shall be submitted by the pastor(s) and by each organization of the church. Audited financial reports shall be submitted by the treasurer of the church and by each of its organizations. Officers for the ensuing year shall be elected by ballot. The treasurer and the financial secretary, however, shall be elected by the trustees from among their own members.

Section 2. Notice of all congregational business meetings shall be mailed to members not less than two weeks prior to the meeting and shall include the date, time of the meeting, and an annotated agenda of business to be transacted.

ARTICLE IX

Property

In the event of schism within the church, from which we earnestly pray God to spare us, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group that abides by this constitution, as determined by the executive board of the conference. In the event of dissolution, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Conference.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

Amendments in harmony with this constitution and the Model Constitutions for Local Covenant Churches and not in conflict with Covenant 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. Articles IX and X may be amended only with the approval of the executive board of the regional conference.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Membership

Section 1. *Admission into membership.*

a) Application for membership.

Application for membership shall be placed with the pastor or a member of the board of deacons. After the applicants have completed the inquirers' classes, they shall appear before the board of deacons to give a confession of Christian faith, according to Article V of the constitution. When the board of deacons has reviewed their applications and received their testimonies favorably, their applications shall be submitted to the next congregational business meeting for approval.

b) Transfer of membership.

Applicants from other Christian churches shall submit letters of transfer, when available, to the pastor and/or the board of deacons, who shall act upon each application according to the requirements of paragraph a) of this section.

c) Reception of new members.

Applicants who are voted into membership of the church shall be welcomed at the next service of Holy Communion and make public confession of their Christian faith, as outlined in *The Covenant Book of Worship*.

Section 2. *Children of members.*

Children of the members of the church and its constituency shall be nurtured under its spiritual care. When they have reached confirmation age, they shall receive instruction from the pastor(s) in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, using the confirmation material of the Covenant Church. Following confirmation, they may apply for church membership as outlined under Section 1, paragraph a) of this article.

Section 3. *Responsibility of membership.*

All members of the church shall assume the responsibilities and obligations placed on them by the Word of God and the church. They shall, through witness and word, consecrated service, prayer, and financial support further the cause of Christ in the local church, regional conference, and the Covenant.

Section 4. *Discipline.*

a) Negligent members.

Members who willfully neglect their duties or fail to attend services of the church regularly or to contribute to its support according to their ability shall be admonished by the board of deacons. If this admonition is not heeded, they shall be dealt with as erring members.

b) Erring members.

Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the board of deacons, which shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member. If this fails, then the board of deacons shall recommend actions to a congregational business meeting. Discipline shall then be administered in the spirit of Christ with due regard for the welfare of the member as well as the church.

c) Dismissal of members.

Dismissal of a member under paragraphs a) and b) of this section must be acted on by the church, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a congregational business meeting is necessary for such action.

d) Forfeiture of rights.

A member who has been properly dismissed from the church, or has withdrawn membership, has forfeited all rights and privileges of membership in the church.

Section 5. *Transfer of members.*

Members who move to another community shall soon thereafter identify themselves with the local Covenant church. If there is not a Covenant church, they should identify themselves with some other evangelical Christian church. Application for transfer of membership shall be made in writing to the pastor, who shall issue the transfer to the church with which a member is uniting. Withdrawal of said membership shall be reported through the board of deacons to the next congregational business meeting, where it shall be made a matter of record.

Section 6. *Removal of membership.*

Request for withdrawal from membership in the church shall be made in writing to the pastor or the board of deacons. After careful consideration, the board of deacons may present a recommendation for withdrawal to a business meeting of the church.

Section 7. *Nonmember friends.*

Nonmember parish friends shall be enrolled by the church as a part of its total constituency. The church and its pastor shall serve them in all their spiritual needs, and they shall be encouraged to consider this as their church home. They shall be kept informed of the activities of the church.

ARTICLE II
The Pastor(s)

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

The pastor(s) of the church shall meet the New Testament requirements of the office (1 Timothy 3:2-7) and be members of the Covenant Ministerium and follow the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of The Evangelical Covenant Church. They shall by virtue of call be members of the church.

Section 2. *Duties.*

The pastor(s) shall devote themselves to the service of the church, preaching and teaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments, and faithfully giving themselves to pastoral work. They shall provide the church with an accurate record of their pastoral acts and present a written report to the congregational annual business meeting. They shall practice good administrative procedures and cooperate with the church boards. The senior pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all boards and committees of the church.

Section 3. *Cooperation.*

The pastor(s) shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the Covenant, the regional conference, and other Covenant ministers.

Section 4. *Call.*

The pastor(s) shall be called at a regular or special congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two weeks in advance. The pastor(s) shall be nominated by a pastoral search committee. This committee shall be elected by a congregational business meeting. It shall be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members and shall work closely with the regional conference superintendent. The pastor(s) shall be called by ballot with a two-thirds vote required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time with a minimum of six weeks notice required by the church or the pastor(s) for termination of pastoral duties.

Section 5. *Charges against a pastor.*

Charges against a pastor shall be submitted in writing to the executive board, charging a pastor with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Covenant (Matthew 18:15-18). If in the judgment of the executive board of the church there is substance to the charges, the case shall be referred to the regional conference superintendent. The superintendent shall confer with the Covenant executive director of the ministry. These two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of The Evangelical Covenant Church regarding discipline, prior to further action by the church.

ARTICLE III
Officers

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

Officers of the church shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of the church, financially, and otherwise.

Section 2. *Chair.*

The chair shall preside at all business meetings of the church and of the executive board. The chair shall confer with senior pastor in preparing the agenda for such meetings, and shall utilize the counsel that the pastor can give by virtue of his or her

training, experience, and calling. The chair shall be responsible for leadership of the church services in the absence of the pastor.

Section 3. *Vice-chair.*

The vice-chair shall assume the duties of the chair in his or her absence, and assist in the chair's duties.

Section 4. *Secretary.*

The secretary shall keep and preserve the minutes of all business meetings of the church and of the executive board, and shall conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated and shall be responsible for the official seal and documents of the church.

Section 5. *Vice-secretary.*

The vice-secretary shall assume the duties in the absence of the secretary, and shall assist the secretary.

Section 6. *Financial secretary.*

The financial secretary shall receive, record, and transmit to the church treasurer all funds contributed to the church.

Section 7. *Treasurer.*

The treasurer shall be responsible for all funds committed to him or her and shall make disbursements as authorized by the church or the board of trustees. The treasurer shall also present a written report of the receipts and expenditures to each regular business meeting of the church.

ARTICLE IV
Boards

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

Members of all boards shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of the church, financially and otherwise.

Section 2. *Executive board.*

The executive board shall consist of the pastor, the chair, the vice-chair, the secretary, the treasurer, the financial secretary, the chairs of the other church boards, and the chair of Covenant Women Ministries. The board shall report to the congregational business meetings. The board shall not take over the responsibilities of the other boards and committees, except in emergency situations. The responsibility of the board shall include the following:

- a) To discuss and deliberate on such matters and problems that arise in the activities of the church, review the programs and ministries of the church, coordinate and oversee the work of the four church boards, receive reports and recommendations, and take action as needed.
- b) To ensure that decisions of the congregation are carried out.
- c) To encourage representatives of various groups and organizations within the church to present concerns and issues to the board for consideration.
- d) To appoint members to all standing committees and give direction to those committees.
- e) To review and coordinate the church calendar.
- f) In event of the resignation or death of an elected officer or board member, to appoint a replacement to serve until the next annual meeting.

Section 3. *Board of trustees.*

a) The board of trustees shall consist of men and women. The trustees shall report to the congregational business meetings of the church. The trustees shall direct the financial needs of the church, receive monthly reports of the church treasurer and the financial secretary, exercise proper supervision over church properties, arrange for adequate insurance coverage for all church properties and for possible liabilities, and arrange for payment of salaries, honorariums, purchases, and all other obligations authorized by the annual budget or the congregation at a business meeting.

b) The board of trustees shall present a budget to the congregation for its acceptance at the annual meeting of the church. They shall submit an inventory of all assets and liabilities to the annual congregational meeting. The trustees shall have the authority by their own decision to expend up to \$ for maintenance and repair of the church. If in a serious emergency more funds are needed, the trustees must confer with the executive board of the church for authorization to spend more funds. The trustees are not authorized to dispose of or purchase real property for the church except as directed by a duly called congregational business meeting.

c) It shall be the responsibility of the board of trustees to provide the pastor(s) and staff of the church with equipment necessary for the efficient work of the church. They shall reimburse staff for reasonable expenses incurred in the service of the church according to the church budget. They shall annually review the salaries of the church staff in the process of planning the annual budget for the church.

d) The board of trustees shall be the stewardship committee of the church. They shall encourage and promote the practice of good stewardship in the congregation in all phases of its work and ministry. They shall support the ministry of the regional conference and the denomination.

e) The trustees shall immediately after the annual meeting of the church elect from their own number a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a financial secretary, and a treasurer.

Section 4. *Board of deacons.*

The board of deacons shall consist of men and women, who shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church and assist the pastor(s) in administering the sacraments; and in the absence of the pastor(s), together with the chair of the church, be responsible for the services of the church. The board shall be authorized to receive and administer benevolences and care for the sick and the needy. The board shall meet following the annual meeting and shall organize itself by electing a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a treasurer, and such other officers and committees as may be needed to conduct its work.

Section 5. *Board of Christian education and discipleship.*

The board of Christian education and discipleship shall consist of men and women. The board shall be responsible for the educational discipleship programs of the parish, its curriculum, teachers, counselors, and leaders. The board shall meet following the annual meeting of the congregation and elect its own chair, vice-chair, and secretary, and in general organize itself for effective service.

Section 6. *Executive board and church boards.*

The executive board and the other church boards shall meet at least once a year in a general planning session to study the programs and needs of the church and to coordinate the work and ministry of the church. This is not a legislative meeting. Any matters for action shall be referred to the appropriate board or committee.

ARTICLE V
Committees

Section 1. *Pastoral relations committee.*

The pastoral relations committee shall consist of the chair of the church and the chair of each church board. The committee shall evaluate the ministry of each pastor and work toward effective relationships between the congregation and the pastoral staff. The committee shall annually review the compensation of the pastoral staff and recommend adjustments to the budget committee.

Section 2. *Nominating committee.*

a) The nominating committee shall consist of the pastor, one representative each from the board of deacons, the board of trustees, and the board of Christian education and discipleship, and one member at large from the church elected at a business meeting of the congregation.

b) The nominating committee, after being convened by the church chair, shall elect from among its members a chair and a secretary. The responsibility of the committee shall include the following:

- (1) Prepare a ballot for the annual meeting of the congregation listing at least one qualified candidate for each office to be filled.
- (2) Confirm the willingness of each candidate to serve before listing his or her name on the ballot.
- (3) Present a complete ballot to the annual meeting of the congregation. This shall constitute completion of the committee's assignment, unless given specific responsibilities at said annual meeting.

Section 3. *Budget committee.*

The budget committee shall be appointed by the executive board. It shall consist of at least two members from each of the three church boards and other church organizations as decided by the executive board. The committees shall present a proposed budget to the board of trustees.

Section 4. *Missions committee.*

The missions committee shall organize and carry out the missions program of the church. It shall report to the executive board.

Section 5. *Evangelism committee.*

The evangelism committee shall assist the pastoral staff in developing and maintaining a continuing program of evangelism for the church. It shall report to the board of deacons.

Section 6. *Special committees.*

Special committees for specific purposes may be appointed by any duly constituted business meeting of the congregation or the board according to need, but shall be automatically terminated at the next annual meeting, unless specifically extended by said annual meeting.

ARTICLE VI
Meetings

Section 1. *Public services.*

Public services shall be conducted regularly on Sunday and, when deemed appropriate, on weekdays for worship, the preaching and teaching of God's Word, and prayer.

Section 2. *Celebrating the sacraments.*

The sacrament of Holy Communion shall be celebrated monthly or as determined by vote of the church. The sacrament of baptism shall be celebrated in keeping with Covenant policies and according to the needs of the constituency.

Section 3. *Congregation business meetings.*

Congregational business meetings shall be held regularly as stipulated in Article VIII of the constitution. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the chair of the church in consultation with the pastor or by the executive board of the church.

Section 4. *Board meetings.*

The church boards, the board of deacons, the board of trustees, and the board of Christian education and discipleship shall meet at least bimonthly, and more often if necessary.

Section 5. *Organizational meetings.*

Meetings and activities of the organizations of the church shall be planned and conducted regularly under the direction and supervision of the executive board of the church.

ARTICLE VII
General Provisions

Section 1. *Quorum.*

a) Twenty-five percent of the membership, but not less than ten members, present and voting at a congregational business meeting properly called shall constitute a quorum.

b) The quorum for all board and committee meetings of the church shall be a majority of its membership.

Section 2. *Tenure.*

The chair, the vice-chair, the secretary, the vice-secretary, the treasurer, and the financial secretary shall be elected annually for a term of one year and shall not succeed themselves more than twice in the same office. Members of the board of deacons, the board of trustees, and the board of Christian education and discipleship shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting for terms of three years each in such an order that approximately one-third of the terms of three years expire each year. They may not succeed themselves more than once on the same board.

Section 3. *Rules of order.*

All business meetings of the church and of the boards, committees, and organizations of the church shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

ARTICLE VIII
Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws not in conflict with the constitution or with the Model Constitutions for Local Covenant Churches may be adopted at any regular congregational business meeting or at a special business meeting called for that purpose by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting providing that such amendments have been presented in writing to the executive board of the church and at a preceding regular congregational business meeting.

Model Constitution for Local Covenant Churches— Council Form

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

*(A historical statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of
The Evangelical Covenant Church)*

“The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity as it emerged in the Protestant Reformation, in the biblical instruction of the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, and in the great spiritual awakenings of the nineteenth century. These three influences have in large measure shaped its development and are to be borne in mind in seeking to understand its distinctive spirit.

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This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church of (place).

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be (local name if any) Evangelical Covenant Church of (town and state).

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

The church is a member of The Evangelical Covenant Church and its Conference and is pledged to work in harmony with the Covenant and its decisions and to support its program, policies, and institutions.

ARTICLE III

Confession of Faith

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

ARTICLE IV

Purpose

Section 1. The purpose of this church shall be to unite Christians in fellowship for spiritual development, for the winning of persons to Christ, and for the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to serve one another, this community, and the world through Christian education, home and world mission, and the institutions conducted by The Evangelical Covenant Church and its local regional conferences.

Section 2. In order to achieve this purpose, the church, in the unity of the Spirit, shall use the gifts that God has given it and the means of grace which God has placed at its disposal: the Word of God, baptism, and Holy Communion.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Membership in the church shall be granted on application to those who through faith in God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, and promise to support the total ministry of the church and to share its fellowship and obligations.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

The officers of the church shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a financial secretary, and a treasurer.

ARTICLE VII

Church Council

Section 1. The general administration of the church shall be vested in a body known as the church council. In circumstances or where law requires action(s) by “trustees” the council shall be known as “the board of trustees” and the members of it as “trustees.” The council shall also serve as a board of deacons to supervise the spiritual life of the church, as stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Section 2. The council shall consist of the officers of the church (chair, vice-chair, secretary, financial secretary, and treasurer) and other members as specified in the bylaws. The senior pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the council.

Section 3. The council shall organize itself in a manner specified in the bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII

Congregational Business Meetings

Section 1. Congregational business meetings shall be held at stated intervals, but not less than semiannually. The annual congregational meeting shall be held as near the first of the year as feasible. At the annual meeting, written progress reports shall be submitted by the pastor and by each committee of the church. Audited financial reports shall be submitted by the treasurer for the church and each of its organizations. Officers of the church and council members for the ensuing year shall be elected by ballot. The church budget shall also be submitted for action.

Section 2. Notice of all congregational business meetings shall be mailed to

members not less than two weeks prior to the meeting and shall include the date, time of the meeting, and an annotated agenda of business to be transacted.

ARTICLE IX Property

In the event of schism within the church, from which we earnestly pray God to spare us, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by this constitution, as determined by the executive board of the conference. In the event of dissolution, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Conference.

ARTICLE X Amendments

Amendments in harmony with this constitution and the Model Constitutions for Local Covenant Churches and not in conflict with Covenant 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. Articles IX and X may be amended only with the approval of the executive board of the regional conference.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I Membership

Section 1. *Admission into membership.*

a) Application for membership.

A written application for membership shall be placed with the pastor or the enlistment chair of the council. The applicants should complete a course in the inquirers' classes, after which they shall appear before the council to give a confession of their Christian faith, according to Article V of the constitution. When the council has reviewed their applications and received their testimonies favorably, their applications shall be submitted to the next congregational business meeting for action.

b) Transfer of membership.

Applicants from other Christian churches shall submit letters of transfer, when available, to the pastor and/or the enlistment chair of the council, who shall act upon the applications according to the requirements of paragraph a) of this section.

c) Reception of new membership.

Applicants who are voted into membership of the church shall be welcomed at the next service of Holy Communion and make public confession of their Christian faith, as outlined in *The Covenant Book of Worship*.

Section 2. *Children of members.*

Children of the members of the church and its constituency shall be nurtured under its spiritual care. When they have reached confirmation age, they shall receive instruction from the pastor(s) in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, using the confirmation material of the Covenant Church. Following confirmation, they may apply for church membership as outlined under Section 1,

paragraph a), of this article.

Section 3. *Responsibility of membership.*

All members of the church shall assume the responsibilities and obligations placed upon them by the Word of God and the church. They shall, through their witness by life and word, consecrated service, prayer, and financial support further the cause of Christ in the local church, regional conference, and the Covenant.

Section 4. *Discipline.*

a) Negligent members.

Members who willfully neglect their duties or fail to attend services of the church regularly or to contribute to its support according to their means shall be admonished by the council. If this admonition is not heeded, they shall be dealt with as erring members.

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Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the brother or sister. If he or she fails to heed the counsel of the council, the error shall be brought before a congregational business meeting. Discipline shall then be administered in the spirit of Christ with due regard for the welfare of the individual as well as the church.

c) Dismissal of members.

Dismissal of a member under paragraphs a) and b) of this section must be acted on by the church, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a congregational business meeting is necessary for such action.

d) Forfeiture of rights.

A member who has been properly dismissed from the church, or has withdrawn membership, has forfeited all rights and privileges of membership in the church.

Section 5. *Transfer of members.*

Members who move to another community shall soon thereafter identify themselves with the local Covenant church. If there is not a Covenant church, they should identify themselves with some other evangelical Christian church. Application for transfer of membership shall be made in writing to the pastor, who shall issue the transfer to the church with which a member is uniting. Withdrawal of said membership shall be reported through the council to the next congregational business meeting, where it shall be made a matter of record.

Section 6. *Removal of membership.*

Request for withdrawal from membership in the church shall be made in writing to the pastor or the council. After careful consideration, the council may present a recommendation for withdrawal to a business meeting of the church.

Section 7. *Nonmember friends.*

Nonmember parish friends shall be enrolled by the church as a part of its total constituency. The church and its pastor shall serve them in all their spiritual needs, and they shall be encouraged to consider this as their church home. They shall be kept informed of the activities of the church.

ARTICLE II
The Pastor(s)

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

The pastor(s) of the church shall meet the New Testament requirements of their office (1 Timothy 3:2-7) and be members of the Covenant Ministerium and follow the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of The Evangelical Covenant Church. They shall by virtue of call be members of the church.

Section 2. *Duties.*

The pastor(s) shall devote themselves to the service of the church, preaching and teaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments, and faithfully giving themselves to pastoral work. They shall provide the church with an accurate record of their pastoral acts and present a written report to the congregational annual business meeting. They shall practice good administrative procedures and cooperate with the church council. The senior pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the council and all committees of the church.

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The pastor(s) shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the Covenant, the regional conference, and other Covenant ministers.

Section 4. *Call.*

The pastor(s) shall be called at a regular or special congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two weeks in advance. The pastor(s) shall be nominated by a pastoral search committee. This committee shall be elected by a congregational business meeting. It shall be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members and shall work closely with the regional conference superintendent. The pastor(s) shall be called by ballot with a two-thirds vote required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time with a minimum of six weeks notice required by the church or the pastor(s) for termination of pastoral duties.

Section 5. *Charges against a pastor.*

Charges against a pastor shall be submitted in writing to the church council, charging a pastor with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Covenant (Matthew 18:15-18). If in the judgment of the church council there is substance to the charges, the case shall be referred to the regional conference superintendent. The superintendent shall confer with the Covenant executive director of the ministry. These two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of The Evangelical Covenant Church regarding discipline, prior to further action by the church.

ARTICLE III
Officers

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

Officers of the church shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of the church, financially, and otherwise.

Section 2. *Duties.*

a) Chair.

The chair shall preside at all business meetings of the church and meetings of the council. Care shall be taken to confer with the senior pastor in preparing the agenda

for such meetings, and shall utilize the counsel that the pastor can give by virtue of his or her training, experience, and calling. The chair shall be responsible for the leadership of the church services in the absence of the pastor.

b) Vice-chair.

The vice-chair shall assist the chair, and during his or her absence assume that office and its duties.

c) Secretary.

The secretary shall keep and preserve the minutes of all the congregational business meetings of the church and meetings of the council, and shall conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated to the secretary. The secretary shall also be responsible for the official seal and documents of the church.

d) Financial secretary.

The financial secretary shall receive, record, and transmit to the church treasurer all funds contributed to the church.

e) Treasurer.

The treasurer shall be responsible for all funds committed to him or her and shall make disbursements as authorized by the church or the council. The treasurer shall also present a written report of the receipts and expenditures to each regular meeting of the council and to each congregational business meeting.

Section 3. *Election and tenure.*

At the annual congregational business meeting, the chair, vice-chair, secretary, financial secretary, and treasurer shall be elected for terms of one year and shall serve not more than three consecutive terms. Any officer who has served the term limit will be eligible for reelection to that office after a lapse of one year.

ARTICLE IV
Church Council

Section 1. *Qualifications.*

Members of the council shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of the church, financially, and otherwise.

Section 2. *Size, composition, election, and tenure.*

a) The council shall consist of . . . members, both men and women, not including the senior pastor, who is an ex-officio member.

b) Those members shall include the five (5) church officers who shall be elected annually to their specific offices (chair, vice-chair, secretary, financial secretary, and treasurer) in accordance with Article III, Section 3, and other members who shall serve for terms of three (3) years in such a manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members shall expire each year. They shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Section 3. *Organization.*

Following the annual congregational business meeting the council shall convene to appoint from its own number chairs for the administrative committees.

Section 4. *Duties.*

The council in its administrative responsibility in cooperation with the pastor shall fulfill the functions defined by the constitution and bylaws, including the following:

a) Supervise church membership, including recommendations relative to reception or removal of members.

- b) Assist the pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the church and in the service of communion as planned by the pastor, in cooperation with the worship chair.
- c) Establish administrative and program policies in conformity with the spirit of the church constitution.
- d) Evaluate the total church program on a continuing basis.
- e) Plan and recommend the annual budget and stewardship opportunities for the church.
- f) Review and approve the schedule of the church activities and personnel.
- g) Appoint administrative committee members and church workers as defined by the bylaws for the administrative committees, as the council may deem appropriate.

Section 5. *Administrative committees.*

Implementation of policies and programs established by congregational or council action may be accomplished through the following administrative committees:

- a) Worship and Music Committee
- b) Evangelism and Enlistment Committee
- c) Fellowship and Service Committee
- d) Education, Discipleship, and Personnel Committee
- e) Mission Committee
- f) Social Action Committee
- g) Stewardship and Properties Committee

Council members shall serve as chairs of the committees to which they are appointed and assume responsibility for directing all congregational activities which fall within that functional category, in cooperation with the pastor(s).

**ARTICLE V
Committees**

Section 1. *Executive committee.*

The executive committee, consisting of the church chair, the secretary, and the treasurer, together with the senior pastor of the church, shall strive to promote effective working relations and communication in the church. The committee shall have no legislative power, but shall function in an advisory capacity to the council, unless specific responsibilities shall have been assigned to it by the council or the church.

Section 2. *Nominating committee.*

The nominating committee shall consist of not less than three (3) members who shall be elected at a business meeting at least three (3) months prior to the annual meeting. The senior pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the committee. After being convened by the church chair, committee members shall elect their own chair and secretary. The responsibility of the committee shall include the following:

- a) Prepare a ballot for the annual meeting of the congregation listing at least one qualified candidate for each office to be filled.
- b) Confirm the willingness of each candidate to serve before listing his or her name on the ballot.
- c) Present a complete ballot to the annual meeting of the congregation. This shall constitute completion of the committee's assignment, unless given specific responsibilities at said annual meeting.

Section 3. *Pastoral relations committee.*

The pastoral relations committee shall consist of the members of the executive committee and shall meet at least semiannually in keeping with the program and purpose of the Covenant Commission on Pastoral Relations as adopted by the Annual Meeting.

Section 4. *Special committees and task forces.*

Special committees or task forces for specific purposes may be appointed by any duly constituted business meeting of the congregation or by the council according to need, but shall be automatically terminated at the next annual meeting unless specifically extended by said annual meeting.

**ARTICLE VI
Meetings**

Section 1. *Public services.*

Public services shall be conducted regularly on Sundays and, when deemed appropriate, on weekdays for worship, the preaching and teaching of God's Word, and prayer.

Section 2. *Celebrating the sacraments.*

The sacrament of Holy Communion shall be celebrated monthly or as determined by vote of the church. The sacrament of baptism shall be celebrated in keeping with Covenant policies and according to the needs of the constituency.

Section 3. *Congregational business meetings.*

Congregational business meetings shall be held regularly not less than semi-annually, as specified in Article VIII of the constitution. Special congregational business meetings may be called by the chair of the church in consultation with the senior pastor or by the council.

Section 4. *Church council and administrative committee meetings.*

Regular meetings of the council shall be held not less than monthly. Administrative committees, special committees, and task forces shall meet not less than at a frequency specified by the council. Special meetings of the council, the executive committee, the administrative committees, and the task forces may be called by their respective chairs.

Section 5. *Organizational meetings.*

Meetings and activities of the organizations of the church shall be planned and conducted regularly under the direction and supervision of the council.

**ARTICLE VII
General Provisions**

Section 1. *Quorum.*

- a) Twenty-five percent of the membership, but not less than ten members, present and voting at a congregational business meeting properly called shall constitute a quorum.
- b) The quorum for the council, committee, and task force meetings shall be a majority of their respective memberships.

Section 2. *Rules of order.*

All business meetings of the church and of the boards, committees, and organizations of the church shall be conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order*.

ARTICLE VIII
Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws not in conflict with the constitution or with the Model Constitutions for Local Covenant Churches may be adopted at any regular congregational business meeting or at a special business meeting called for that purpose by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, providing that such amendments have been presented in writing to the executive committee of the church and at a preceding regular congregational business meeting.