

Constitution

and

By-Laws

Bethesda Mennonite Church

1992

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CONSTITUTION
Bethesda Mennonite Church
1992

PREFACE

Since we want to follow the word of the Lord in the family of God we use 1 Corinthians 14: 40 to guide us in all our meetings: "But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way." In the same spirit this constitution is intended to be a clear and orderly guide for us in working together.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of our congregation is Bethesda Mennonite Church of Henderson, Nebraska.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

We acknowledge Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and we accept the Holy Scriptures as our rule for faith and practice. Our purpose is to unite in building up God's Kingdom in our community and beyond. We will provide for the spiritual care and fellowship of all the members and the greater community through worship, through biblical instruction and such other activities as are useful in carrying out Christ's great commission in Matthew 28: 19-20.

ARTICLE III. GOVERNMENT

The government of our church is vested entirely in the body of believers of this congregation. For the added strength and stability found in fellowship with other churches we join the churches in the Central Plains Mennonite Conference and Mennonite Church USA, in mutual counsel and cooperation.

ARTICLE IV. OUR CONFESSION OF FAITH

We follow I Corinthians 3:11; "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." We also believe Ephesians 2:8-9; "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

We adhere to the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* as adopted at the delegate sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church, meeting in Wichita, Kansas, July 25-30, 1995.

The twenty-four articles of the *Confession* state what we believe, provide guidelines for the interpretation of scripture, guide the faith and life of the church, provide unity among members and

churches, offer an outline for instructing new members and inquirers, and help in discussing Mennonite beliefs with Christians and people of other faiths.

The summary statement is as follows:

CONFESSION OF FAITH IN A MENNONITE PERSPECTIVE
Summary Statement

1. We believe that God exists and is pleased with all who draw near by faith. We worship the one holy and loving God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit eternally. God has created all things visible and invisible, has brought salvation and new life to humanity through Jesus Christ, and continues to sustain the church and all things until the end of the age.

2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God become flesh. He is the Savior of the world, who has delivered us from the dominion of sin and reconciled us to God by his death on a cross. He was declared to be Son of God by his resurrection from the dead. He is the head of the church, the exalted Lord, the Lamb who was slain, coming again to reign with God in glory.

3. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal Spirit of God, who dwelled in Jesus Christ, who empowers the church, who is the source of our life in Christ, and who is poured out on those who believe as the guarantee of redemption.

4. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit for instruction in salvation and training in righteousness. We accept the Scriptures as the Word of God and as the fully reliable and trustworthy standard for Christian faith and life. Led by the Holy Spirit in the church, we interpret Scripture in harmony with Jesus Christ.

5. We believe that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, and that God preserves and renews what has been made. All creation has its source outside itself and belongs to the Creator. The world has been created good because God is good and provides all that is needed for life.

6. We believe that God has created human beings in the divine image. God formed them from the dust of the earth and gave them a special dignity among all the works of creation. Human beings have been made for relationship with God, to live in peace with each other, and to take care of the rest of creation.

7. We confess that, beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has disobeyed God, given way to the tempter, and chosen to sin. All have fallen short of the Creator's intent, marred the image of God in which they were created, disrupted order in the world, and limited their love for others. Because of sin, humanity has been given over to the enslaving powers of evil and death.

8. We believe that, through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life. We receive God's salvation when we repent and accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. In Christ, we are reconciled with God and brought into the reconciling community. We place our faith in God that, by the same power that raised Christ from the dead, we may be saved from sin to follow Christ and to know the fullness of salvation.

9. We believe that the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. It is the new community of disciples sent into the world to proclaim

the reign of God and to provide a foretaste of the church's glorious hope. It is the new society established and sustained by the Holy Spirit.

10. We believe that the mission of the church is to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God. Christ has commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to observe all things he has commanded.

11. We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin. Baptism is also a pledge before the church of their covenant with God to walk in the way of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Believers are baptized into Christ and his body by the Spirit, water, and blood.

12. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign by which the church thankfully remembers the new covenant which Jesus established by his death. In this communion meal, the church renews its covenant with God and with each other and participates in the life and death of Jesus Christ, until he comes.

13. We believe that in washing the feet of his disciples, Jesus calls us to serve one another in love as he did. Thus we acknowledge our frequent need of cleansing, renew our willingness to let go of pride and worldly power, and offer our lives in humble service and sacrificial love.

14. We practice discipline in the church as a sign of God's offer of transforming grace. Discipline is intended to liberate erring brothers and sisters from sin, and to restore them to a right relationship with God and to fellowship in the church. The practice of discipline gives integrity to the church's witness in the world.

15. We believe that ministry is a continuation of the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers and empowers them for service in the church and in the world. We also believe that God calls particular persons in the church to specific leadership ministries and offices. All who minister are accountable to God and to the community of faith.

16. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ is one body with many members, ordered in such a way that, through the one Spirit, believers may be built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

17. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to discipleship, to take up our cross and follow him. Through the gift of God's saving grace, we are empowered to be disciples of Jesus, filled with his Spirit, following his teachings and his path through suffering to new life. As we are faithful to his way, we become conformed to Christ and separated from the evil in the world.

18. We believe that to be a disciple of Jesus is to know life in the Spirit. As the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ takes shape in us, we grow in the image of Christ and in our relationship with God. The Holy Spirit is active in individual and in communal worship, leading us deeper into the experience of God.

19. We believe that God intends human life to begin in families and to be blessed through families. Even more, God desires all people to become part of the church, God's family. As single and married members of the church family give and receive nurture and healing, families can grow toward the wholeness that God intends. We are called to chastity and to loving faithfulness in marriage.

20. We commit ourselves to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid the swearing of oaths.

21. We believe that everything belongs to God, who calls the church to live in faithful stewardship

of all that God has entrusted to us, and to participate now in the rest and justice which God has promised.

22. We believe that peace is the will of God. God created the world in peace, and God's peace is most fully revealed in Jesus Christ, who is our peace and the peace of the whole world. Led by the Holy Spirit, we follow Christ in the way of peace, doing justice, bringing reconciliation, and practicing nonresistance, even in the face of violence and warfare.

23. We believe that the church is God's holy nation, called to give full allegiance to Christ its head and to witness to every nation, government, and society about God's saving love.

24. We place our hope in the reign of God and its fulfillment in the day when Christ will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead. He will gather his church, which is already living under the reign of God. We await God's final victory, the end of this present age of struggle, the resurrection of the dead, and a new heaven and a new earth. There the people of God will reign with Christ in justice, righteousness and peace forever and ever.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Requirements For Admittance

1. People may become members of this church who confess Christ as their Savior and Lord, and who show Christian conduct. When they confess their faith in Christ and are baptized, they may become members of Bethesda. (John 3: 16;14: 6)
2. People from other Mennonite churches or other Christian denominations, who want to become members, are to request a letter certifying good standing from their church. They may also be admitted by confession of faith with the recommendation of the pastors and deacons. Our church will provide instruction in our confession of faith and our practice.
3. People who live here temporarily and who are members of other Mennonite churches or other Christian denominations, but who wish to retain their home church membership, may become associate members, if that is acceptable practice in their home church and if they are in good standing there. They will have all the rights and duties of members, with the exception of voting in congregational meetings and holding congregational office or being appointed to a board.
4. We offer our members the privilege of keeping associate membership here while living elsewhere and attending a church there.

Section B. Duties and Privileges of Members

1. Live according to the Gospel of Christ and to attend the services of the church regularly and participate in communion.
2. "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6: 2) In that way to nurture mutual sympathy and concern.
3. Willingly join others in working at strengthening the life of the church in every way possible.
4. Contribute faithfully through financial gifts, time and talents as God has given you with a willing heart according to each one's ability, for the local church, Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Church USA, and other causes the

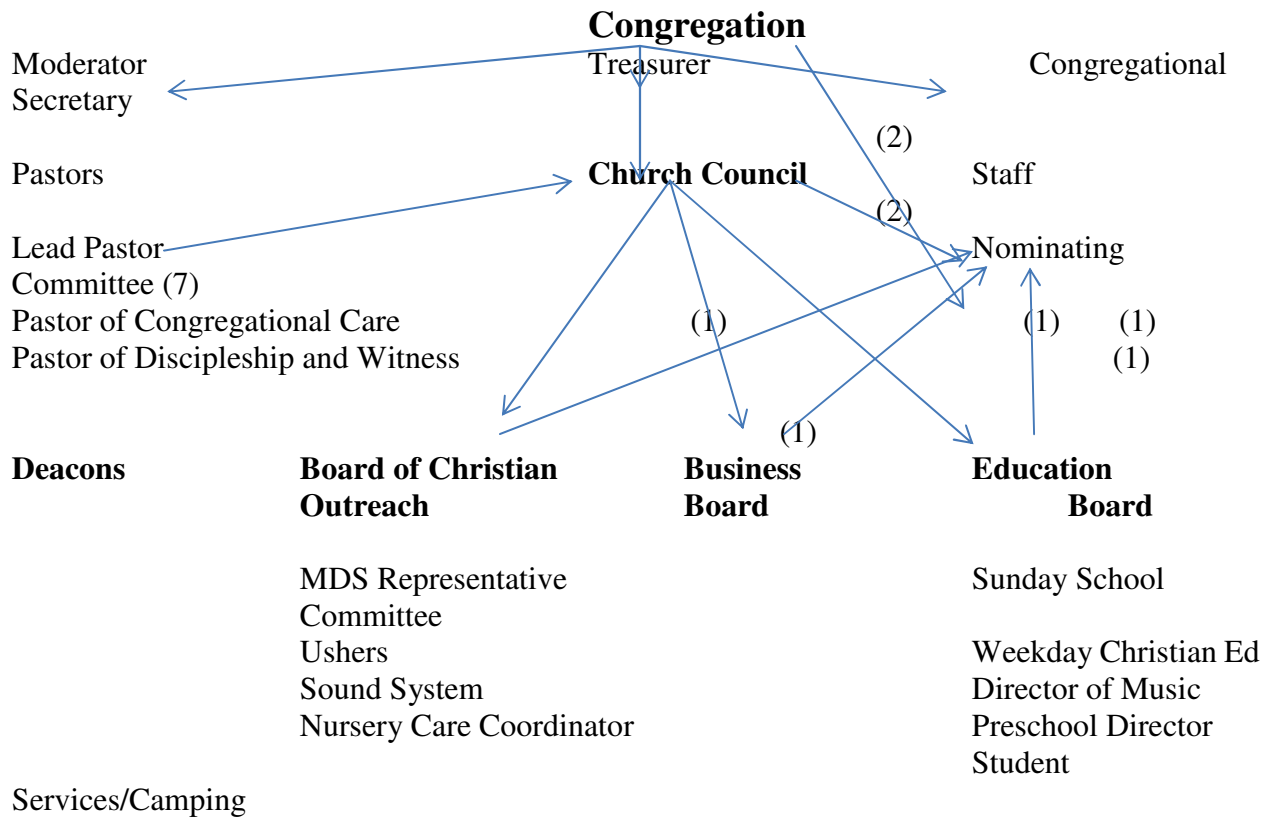
congregation supports.

- 5. Support the pastors in their ministry and respect the authority conferred on them by the congregation. (Hebrews 13: 17) Feel free to call on them for help, service or advice.**
- 6. Promptly report births, adoptions, deaths, changes of address, and other information to the office for inclusion in the records.**
- 7. Submit serious conflict between members to the pastors and deacons for resolution. Members are encouraged to settle disputes out of court. They should follow Christ's way as taught in Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 6: 1-8.**
- 8. Members in good standing may vote and hold office.**
- 9. Members who wish to transfer membership to another church, and request a letter of transfer from the pastors are entitled to have the letter sent to the church they want to attend.**
- 10. Every member has equal ownership in the property of the church. But the property cannot be divided, therefore when membership ends so does ownership in the property.**
- 11. Provide a safe haven for people who wish to come to Christ and the church.**
- 12. Identify those who attend the worship service for the first time and those who attend sporadically.**
- 13. Seek and identify prospective and inactive members.**
- 14. Engage in other activities which give a Christian witness.**

Section C. Discipline

Should a member, by unchristian conduct, bring reproach on Christ or persistently fail to show any visible interest in the church; then faithful efforts are to be made to bring that person to repentance and renewal. Such efforts at restoration are of concern to all the members but discipline shall be carried out under the direction of the pastors and deacons, and in the spirit of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18: 15-35.

Any person whose membership has been terminated may be restored with congregational approval when repentance is evident.



Groups/Committees and who they are responsible to:

- Board of Christian Outreach
 - MDS Representative
 - Ushers
 - Sound System Operators
 - Women's Ministries
 - Nursery Care Coordinator
 - Projects Committee
 - MCC Canner Committee

Education Board

- Sunday School Committee
- Music Committee
- Student Services and Camping
- Weekday Christian Education
- Head/Assistant Librarian
- Sunday Evening Committee
- Preschool Director

BYLAWS

Bethesda Mennonite Church

1992

Preface

The CONSTITUTION describes the nature of the church; it tells who we are. The following BYLAWS describe how we are organized so we can work together. To provide for smooth functioning of all the activities of our church, and to assure maximum understanding between the councils, boards, committees, and auxiliaries there needs to be coordination. Therefore, the bylaws begin with how coordination is achieved.

We want to describe carefully the difference between constitutions and bylaws. The difference goes beyond that described in the previous paragraph. That further difference can be seen in how congregations use the two. Congregations frequently amend the bylaws, almost never the constitution. That leads to the following observations:

First, bylaws are best understood as guidelines. They are not engraved in granite.

Second, bylaws are intended to free people to work for the church and find joy in it. Interpreting bylaws as law cripples the church.

ARTICLE I. CHURCH OFFICERS

- A. Moderator. The Moderator of the congregation shall be elected by the congregation for a term of three years. A moderator may serve two consecutive terms. The Moderator will preside at all congregational meetings and also be a member of the Church Council. The moderator shall give notice of meetings of the congregation and provide the agenda for them. In order to be informed of all activities the Moderator may attend the meetings of all boards, with the approval of the chair.

Accountability. The moderator is accountable to the congregation through the Church Council.

- B. Secretary. The congregational Secretary is to be elected by the congregation for a three year term and may serve two consecutive terms. The secretary's duty is to record minutes of all congregational meetings. The secretary is a member of the Church Council. Accountability. The secretary is accountable to the congregation through the Church Council.

- C. Treasurer. The treasurer shall be hired by the Church Council. The treasurer shall prepare a written report for all boards and Church Council prior to their monthly meetings.

Duties of the treasurer are; to sign all checks authorized by the boards and committees, to see to it that all monies collected are counted and deposited in the name and to the credit of the church, to disburse funds as designated, and to

coordinate a purchase order system. The treasurer shall give the congregation financial reports as directed by the Church Council, including an annual report.

Accountability. The treasurer is accountable to the Church Council.

- D. Non Profit Corporate Structure**
- 1. Directors – consist of Church Council Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary**
 - 2. Registered Agent – Office Manager**
 - 3. Officers – Moderator, Secretary, Church Treasurer**

ARTICLE II. CHURCH COUNCIL

- A. Membership. The Church Council members are:**
- 1. The moderator and secretary. The treasurer is an ex officio member. The moderator and secretary are elected and the treasurer hired.**
 - 2. Two members from the Board of Deacons.**
 - 3. Six members elected at large, two elected each year for a three year term, with a maximum of two terms (6 years). Individuals after an absence of one year may be re-elected.**
 - 4. The Pastoral Staff, as ex officio members.**
- B. Meetings. The Church Council meetings are monthly, or more often at the call of the chair.**

The Church Council shall organize with a chair, vice chair, and a secretary. None of these three shall be the congregational moderator, congregational secretary; nor is a deacon eligible to be chairperson.

- C. Duties:**
- 1. Represent the church and coordinate the work of the boards.**
 - 2. All boards, committees, and auxiliaries are accountable to the Church Council, but in turn the Church Council is responsible to help them do their work with loving support given in counsel and affirmation.**
 - 3. In consultation with the Board of Deacons and the Pastoral Staff, appoint a person, either from the Pastoral Staff or someone else, with administrative gifts to serve as administrator. The administrator will be accountable to the Church Council in that assignment.**
 - 4. Supervise the offering schedule.**
 - 5. The Nomination committee will consist of a member of Church Council (this person would chair the nominating committee), Board of Christian Outreach, Board of Education, and Board of Business Administration, 2 congregational members appointed by Church Council. This is a 2 year commitment.**
 - 6. The Council will appoint elected Council members to attend each of the following boards: Boards of Business Administration, Board of Education and Board of Christian Outreach.**
 - 7. Hire employees, other than pastors, such as music personnel, music coordinator, and other positions approved by the congregation.**
 - 8. Establish salaries and direct the treasurer to pay salaries of all church employees.**

9. Supervise the planning of budgets of all boards and committees.
 10. Approve delegates to the Central Plains Mennonite and Mennonite Church USA Conferences.
 11. Establish policies for use of the church facilities and for people or groups initiating projects and funds.
 12. Instruct all boards and committees to organize promptly after the Annual Meeting so the annual Yearbook can be prepared.
 13. Determine the cycle of all elections.
 14. Provide for annual auditing of the financial records.
 15. Prepare an annual report for the church.
 16. Request all boards and committees to regularly review and make recommendations to their policies.
 17. Appoint a registered agent for the Church Corporation.
- D. **Accountability.** The Church Council is accountable to the congregation and is responsible to all boards and committees to help them do their work.

ARTICLE III. PASTORAL STAFF

The congregation has established three pastoral positions: Lead Pastor, Pastor of Congregational Care, and Pastor of Discipleship and Witness. Titles may be changed and other positions may be established. Pastors are welcome, as ex-officio members, to attend meetings of all boards, committees and auxiliaries and offer them counsel. All pastors are to coordinate their daily work through the lead pastor.

A. Lead Pastor.

1. The lead pastor is to be called by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at a congregational meeting.
2. Qualifications are given in 1 Timothy 3: 1-7.
3. Upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the calling for the initial term is for five years. After the initial five year term, and upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons, the call, by the congregation with a two-thirds majority vote, may be for a deacon discerned term. If not recalled, the term will expire three months later, or as agreed upon by the deacons and the pastor.
4. If the lead pastor resigns, three months notice shall be given the congregation.

Calling Discernment/Evaluation: During the initial five year term, the Board of Deacons will do the first four annual evaluations. The fifth year evaluation is done by a committee made up as follows: three Deacons, the Church Moderator, Church Council Chair, one person from each board (except Church Council), and one person from the care team. This committee will report its finding to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation.

Annual evaluations after a deacon discerned term is in place shall be done by the board of Deacons for the next three years. The fourth year evaluation is done by the committee made up named above with a report going to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation. The Deacons will annually vote in their board. A two-thirds majority of the Deacons Board is needed for the pastor to continue his/her deacon discerned term. This three year/one year rotation will continue for as long as the pastor's deacon discerned term continues.

Detailed Lead Pastor job description is available in the church office.

Accountability: The lead pastor is accountable to the Board of Deacons and through them to the congregation. If designated as administrator by the Church Council, then the lead pastor is accountable to the Council for that work.

B. Pastor of Congregational Care

1. The Pastor of Congregational Care is "to care for the church of God." This pastoral position of Bethesda is modeled after the practice of Paul in Acts 20:28 where he called the leaders of the church at Ephesus to shepherd the church which God purchased with the blood of his own son (Acts 20:28).

Detailed job description for Pastor of Congregational Care is available in the church office.

Calling Discernment/Evaluation: During the initial five year term, the Board of Deacons will do the first four annual evaluations. The fifth year evaluation is done by a committee made up as follows: three Deacons, the Church Moderator, Church Council Chair, one person from each board (except Church Council), and one person from the care team. This committee will report its finding to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation. Annual evaluations after a deacon discerned term is in place shall be done by the board of Deacons for the next three years. The fourth year evaluation is done by the committee made up named above with a report going to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation. The Deacons will annually vote in their board. A two-thirds majority of the Deacons Board is needed for the pastor to continue his/her deacon discerned term. This three year/one year rotation will continue for as long as the pastor's deacon discerned term continues

C. Pastor of Discipleship and Witness

1. The Pastor of Discipleship and Witness is to lead the making of disciples and witnessing to Jesus Christ for children, youth and adults at Bethesda. To "make disciples" is rooted in the great commission of Jesus in Matthew 28:19, to lead congregational "witness" calls the associate to organize faithful and embodied witnesses to Jesus Christ across the street and around the world as declared by Jesus in Acts 1:8. We call the pastor to lead Bethesda where 1) our children become belief-full adults; 2) outsiders become insiders; and 3) forgetters again become rememberers.

Detailed job description for Pastor of Discipleship and Witness is available in the church office.

Calling Discernment/Evaluation: During the initial five year term, the Board of Deacons will do the first four annual evaluations. The fifth year evaluation is done by a committee made up as follows: three Deacons, the Church Moderator, Church Council Chair, one person from each board (except Church Council), and one person from the care team. This committee will report its finding to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation. Annual evaluations after a deacon discerned term is in place shall be done by the board of Deacons for the next three years. The fourth year evaluation is done by the committee made up named above with a report

going to the Board of Deacons who will report to the congregation. The Deacons will annually vote in their board. A two-thirds majority of the Deacons Board is needed for the pastor to continue his/her deacon discerned term. This three year/one year rotation will continue for as long as the pastor's deacon discerned term continues

ARTICLE IV. BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

SECTION A. BOARD OF DEACONS

The Church Council is the congregation's administrative body. In contrast the Board of Deacons is elected to work alongside the Pastoral Staff in leading the congregation spiritually. Their qualifications are indicated in Acts 6:3 and in I Timothy 3:8-13.

The Board of Deacons shall be composed of six members who serve for a term of three years. Two are elected each year and they will be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. After an absence of two years, they may be re-elected. The deacons are to organize to provide a chair, vice-chair, secretary, an Everence representative and appoint two deacons to the Church Council. They, together with the Pastoral Staff, shall meet monthly or when called by the chair or Lead Pastor.

DUTIES

1. Duties of the deacons when they work with the Pastoral Staff:

- a. Promote the spiritual welfare of the congregation.
- b. Review the qualifications of applicants for baptism.
- c. Grant requests for membership transfers and in receiving members from other churches by letter.
- d. Supervise the church's worship and invitations to visiting speakers.
- e. Work at church discipline, in Christ's way to bring repentance and renewal.
- f. In case of vacancies on the Deacon Board, appoint people to complete the term until the next deacon election.
- g. Provide a current job description for each pastor.
- h. Administer the Benevolent Fund.
- i. Provide Stewardship education in congregation. (Assist in providing information for estate planning and making wills.)
- j. Keep in contact with our district and Mennonite Church USA stewardship leaders and promote use of their resources.

2. Duties of the Deacons when they work alone:

- a. Prepare an annual report.
- b. Prepare the elements for communion.
- c. Recommend candidates for the Pastoral Staff as well as recommend continued discernment terms for them. The Deacons are responsible to find pastoral leaders, in cooperation with the Central Plains Mennonite Conference Minister and the Mennonite Church USA Office of Ministerial Services. The deacons may choose to use a search committee in finding pastoral candidates. Candidates are to be recommended to the congregation three weeks prior to voting.
- d. Maintain a relationship with the Pastoral Staff, hearing their concerns and offering counsel in ways that enable pastors to enhance their ministry.

Accountability. The Deacon Board is accountable to the congregation.

Deacon Election Process:

1. Eligible incumbent deacons may be affirmed by a congregational ballot vote on or before the first Sunday in October. A 2/3 affirming vote is necessary to retain an incumbent deacon. The results of the vote may leave 1, 2, or no vacancies on the Deacon Board. If there are any vacancies the deacon election proceeds as follows.
2. The congregation shall nominate deacons by open ballot. Individuals do not need to be contacted for permission to be nominated. The Ballot Committee shall determine and list the top 30 names in order of the nominations received. In the event of a tie or ties at the 30th position, the Ballot Committee shall determine the top 30 names and ties at the 30th level and list them in alphabetical order. This alphabetical list of 30 or more names shall be presented to the congregation.
3. Nominees on this list may decline their nomination by written request after being contacted by the Ballot Committee. After this, the congregation shall be presented an alphabetical list of names of those who are willing to remain on the ballot. Each congregational member shall then vote for four names in the event of two vacancies and two names in the event of one vacancy.
4. When there are two vacancies the Ballot Committee shall form the final ballot by personally contacting the four nominees and then listing them on the final ballot alphabetically and without pairing. These four names shall be presented on one ballot to the congregation, requesting one vote for each vacancy. The two with the largest number of votes are elected, attend Deacon meetings immediately, and assume office (immediately after the Bethesda annual congregational meeting in February.) This election shall take place on the second Sunday in December.
5. When there is only one vacancy the Ballot Committee shall form the final ballot by personally contacting the two nominees and then listing them on the final ballot alphabetically. These two names shall be presented on one ballot to the congregation, requesting one vote. The one with the largest number of votes is elected and assumes office immediately after the election. The final election shall take place on the second Sunday in December.

Nominees who tie in the final election:

The tie will cause a "drawing of the lot" the following Sunday which will be conducted by the Ballot Committee.

6. The Ballot Committee for the first step of the nomination process shall be composed of:
 1. Chair of the Church Council
 2. Congregational Moderator
 3. Congregational Secretary
 4. Additional members of the congregation as selected by the Congregational Moderator.
7. After the original list of names has been selected, and for the following steps in the nomination process, the Ballot Committee shall be determined by the Church Council in such a manner that no one who is within this list of names is on the Ballot committee. It is recommended that no current members of the Board of Deacons be on the Ballot Committee, but that ex-members may be included.

Prior to nominating, the congregation will need to know who the deacons are, whose term is expiring, who may be reelected, and which deacons and former deacons are not eligible.

SECTION B. BOARD OF CHRISTIAN OUTREACH

Six elected, two elected every year for a three year term. Can serve two terms. Plus one member from Church Council (non-voting).

Elect a Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary.

Appointments - (these appointees are non-voting but are encouraged to attend when there is a relevant agenda item) to be determined by chair.

MDS Representative

Head Usher/Assistant Usher/ushers

Nursery Care Coordinator

Sound System Manager/Assistant

Canner Committee Representative

Projects Coordinator

DUTIES:

- 1. Provide a safe haven for people who wish to come to Christ and the church.**
- 2. Identify those who attend the worship service for the first time and those who attend sporadically.**
- 3. Seek and identify prospective and inactive members.**
- 4. Engage in other activities which give a Christian witness.**
- 5. Consult with Pastoral Staff regarding literature:
a) Fund CareNotes
b) Have Bibles available through sources such as Faith and Life Bookstore and catalogs.**
- 6. Present programs at the Henderson Care Center. Dates and time shall be confirmed with the activities Director of the Henderson Care Center.**
- 7. Provide child care for children up to age three on Sunday morning and Sunday evening. Requests for child care for age three and younger during other worship services needs to be communicated to the Board of Christian Outreach.**
- 8. Supervise the sound system and appoint the assistant manager.**
- 9. Supervise the Sunday morning greeter ministry.**
- 10. Coordinate the work of the auxiliaries**
- 11. Be responsible for the church's work in missions, relief and mutual aid.**
- 12. Promote our relief program in cooperation with local efforts, the Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Central Committee.**
- 13. Encourage participation in the Voluntary Service program.**
- 14. Appoint a Mennonite Disaster Service representative.**
- 15. Write an annual report.**

Accountability: The Board of Christian Outreach is accountable to the Church Council.

SECTION C. THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Six elected, two elected every year for a three year term. Can serve two terms. Plus one member from Church Council (non-voting).

Sunday school superintendent and assistant superintendent are members of the Board of Education.

Elect a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer

The Board of Education organizes annually.

Duties:

- 1. Give general supervision to the church's educational program, coordinating and unifying the program.**
- 2. Determine policy regarding curriculum, leadership training and overall goals.**
- 3. Foster a wholesome relationship between the church and the home and promote Christian education in our homes.**
- 4. Make appointments to committees and positions accountable to the Board of Education, as specified under each committee so that committee membership rotates on a three year cycle.**
- 5. Recruit and train teachers and other workers.**
- 6. Prepare an annual budget based on recommendations of its committees.**
- 7. Promote the use of Mennonite Church USA literature and inform the congregation of denominational educational programs.**
- 8. Be responsible for the administration of the Bethesda Preschool, make recommendations to Church Council for the employment and dismissal of preschool staff, and approval of preschool curriculum and guidelines.**
- 9. Write an annual report.**

Accountability: The Board of Education is accountable to the Church Council.

Committees accountable to the Board of Education: It is each committee's responsibility to take issues/concerns to the Board of Education.

a. Sunday School Committee

This committee consists of the adult superintendent, assistant superintendent, Sunday School secretary, and the superintendents of the Sunday School departments.

At the Annual meeting, the congregation elects an assistant adult superintendent every other year for a two year term, who the third year becomes superintendent for two years and chairs the Sunday School Committee. Both the superintendent and the assistant superintendent are members of the Board of Education.

At the Annual Meeting the congregation also elects a Youth Department superintendent to a three year term, who will be a member of the Sunday School Committee.

In August, the Sunday School Committee appoints superintendents for a two year renewable term for the Early Childhood, Primary, Middler, Jr. Youth and High School Youth Departments. They are members of the Sunday School Committee.

Every three years, the Sunday School Committee appoints a secretary to serve the Sunday School Committee for a three year, renewable term. (This appointment is approved by the Board of Education).

Duties:

- 1. Provide for effective operation of the Sunday School in curriculum, facilities, class size, and teachers.**
- 2. Be concerned for the spiritual welfare and growth of the Sunday School.**
- 3. Recommend curriculum to the Board of Education.**
- 4. Arrange regular teacher's meetings.**
- 5. Recruit and counsel teachers and evaluate teaching.**
- 6. Recommend to the Board of Education, appointments for Sunday School secretary, Sunday School financial secretary and departmental superintendents.**
- 7. Encourage professional growth for Sunday School workers through reading, conferences and workshops.**
- 8. Keep attendance and other records.**

b. Music Committee

The Music Committee will consist of the Director of Music and three elected members; one per year for a three year term.

Duties:

- 1. Be responsible for the music program of the congregation.**
- 2. Arrange special musical programs.**
- 3. Arrange for tuning and maintenance of the church's musical instruments.**
- 4. Encourage training for church pianists and organists and arrange practice schedules.**
- 5. Responsible for performance review of Director of Music.**

c. Student Services and Camping

This committee consists of three elected members. One member is to be elected each year to a three year term.

The committee is to organize with a chair, secretary, and treasurer

Duties:

- 1. Promote Mennonite schools and assist in solicitation for them.**
- 2. Work with the church staff in maintaining relationships with students.**
- 3. Maintain and administer student scholarship funds.**
- 4. Serve as liaison with the Central Plains Mennonite Conference retreat committee to promote camping and assist with travel to Swan Lake**

Christian Camp.

d. Weekday Christian Education Committee

Six elected, two elected every year for a three year term. Can serve two terms.

Duties:

- 1. Supervise the Weekday Christian Education program, recommend curriculum, teachers, class divisions and location.**
- 2. Supervise the Vacation Bible School and recommend to the Board of Education teachers and curriculum.**
- 3. Select teachers and determine class divisions.**

e. Library and Audio-Visual

The Head Librarian and Assistant Librarian will be appointed by the Board of Education.

Duties:

- 1. Promote and supervise the use of the library.**
- 2. Periodically evaluate library holdings.**
- 3. Purchase and promote Christian literature.**
- 4. Arrange for assistance in the library.**
- 6. Index library materials by the Dewey decimal system.**
- 7. Organize and maintain an audio-visual library and provide a check-out system and keep records.**
- 8. Be responsible for the use and maintenance of audio-visual equipment.**
- 9. Maintain a file of program helps and resource materials.**

f. Sunday Evening Committee

The Sunday Evening Committee consists of three elected members. One member is to be elected each year for a three year term. The committee is to organize with a Chair and Secretary.

Duties:

- 1. Develop/Coordinate the programs that take place on Sunday evenings; in coordination with the Pastoral staff.**
- 2. Provide resources for meaningful educational and fellowship experiences for the various age groups.**

g. Preschool Committee

The Preschool Committee consists of three elected members and two parent representatives, one from each age group. All members of this committee are

voting members. The Preschool director and teacher(s) will serve as non voting members of the committee.

Duties:

Members of the Preschool Committee will oversee the preschool, providing guidance and assistance to the preschool staff. Duties will include, but not be limited to:

- 1. Organize annually with - Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Treasurer**
- 2. Make recommendations to the Board of Education concerning curriculum and other program decisions.**
- 3. Make recommendations to the Board of Education concerning Director and teacher position performance reviews.**
- 4. Assure regular communication and cooperation between preschool staff and other church staff.**
- 5. Promote the preschool in the church and community.**
- 6. Appoint a fundraising committee as needed.**

SECTION D. BOARD OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Six elected, two elected every year for a three year term. Can serve two terms. Plus one member from Church Council (non-voting).

Elect Chair, Vice-chair, and Secretary and Financial Secretary.

Duties:

- 1. Hold in trust all property of the church and be responsible for it.**
- 2. Make necessary repairs and improvements of the property. Major changes (see policy BUS-020) on the grounds and buildings may be undertaken only with approval of the congregation.**
- 3. Make recommendations to Church Council for the hiring of custodians and conduct performance reviews.**
- 4. Write an annual report and present a budget for approval.**
- 5. Review and approve all bills presented by the Central Treasurer.**

Accountability: The Board of Business Administration is accountable to the Church Council.

ARTICLE V. AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

All organizations in the church formed for the purpose of ministry and who use church facilities are integral parts of the church. They are to work in cooperation with the boards and committees and be accountable to the Board of Christian Outreach.

Duties:

- 1. Auxiliaries may have their own constitution and membership.**
- 2. Elect their own officers as well as operate their own programs and budgets.**
- 3. Maintain a record of their funds and have the church Treasurer deposit and disburse their funds.**

Members contemplating forming a new organization shall present their plan to the Church Council for approval before an organization is formed.

Auxiliaries include: Women's Ministries, the Projects Committee, MCC Canner Committee, and Mennonite Disaster Service.

ARTICLE VI. MEETINGS

SECTION A. PUBLIC WORSHIP

- 1. Public services shall be held on Sunday.**
- 2. Communion is observed three times a year, unless others are set by the deacons and pastors. Visitors who have found forgiveness in Christ shall be invited to participate.**
- 3. Special services and meetings may be arranged by or with the consent of the deacons and pastors.**
- 4. No church offering shall be designated without prior approval of the Church Council.**

SECTION B. BUSINESS MEETINGS

- 1. The annual Congregational Meeting shall be on, or near, February 1. At this meeting the annual reports of the boards, committees and auxiliaries shall be given, the church election held, and other business transacted. The fiscal year shall end December 31.**
- 2. Financial and other reports are due by January 10, in order to have the Annual Report ready to give to the congregation on the Sunday prior to the Annual Meeting.**
- 3. The members present at a meeting of the congregation constitute a quorum.**
- 4. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Church Council, Board of Deacons with the Pastoral Staff, or with written request of five percent of the members. Special Congregational meetings and their purpose are to be announced at least two weeks before the meeting and at two previous Sunday morning services. The agenda for the congregational meeting may have items added or deleted for discussion only with the approval of those present. A congregational vote may only be made on these items related to the original purpose of the meeting.**
- 5. Members are urged to be present at business meetings. If they cannot attend they may vote by absentee ballot for nominees or on issues announced prior to the meeting.**
- 6. Meetings are to be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order, as a guide, where they are applicable and are not inconsistent with the church's rules of order.**
- 7. Absentee ballots must be requested by the member in writing (email permissible), in person, or by phone. The request should be made to the Congregational Moderator or the office staff during office hours. Absentee ballots shall be made available at least two weeks before the meeting. Absentee ballots must be picked up and signed for by someone representing the member doing the requesting. Absentee ballots will not be mailed out by the church office. Deadline for returning absentee ballots will be set by the Congregational Moderator or the Church Council. Late ballots will not be valid.**

SECTION C. CHURCH ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES

The regular election of officers, boards and committee members (except for deacons) is held at the Annual Meeting. Nominations shall be made by the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee consists of six members. Each Board will provide one representative to the Nominating Committee (Church Council, Christian Outreach, Business Administration, Education) as well as two congregational representatives who will serve a two year term, appointed by Church Council. Members eligible for reelection cannot serve on the Nominating Committee, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws. The Church Council representative will be the chair of the Nominating Committee.

At least one candidate should be nominated for each vacancy, with allowance made for additional nominations from the floor. Nominations from the floor must be cleared with the nominee. Nominees receiving a majority of the votes are elected. If no candidate receives a majority, a runoff election shall be held between the two candidates with the most votes.

For those positions where incumbents are eligible for reelection and are willing to continue for another term the incumbents should be placed on the ballot unopposed. Nominations for that position may be made from the floor if the nominee has consented to the nomination.

No one may serve concurrently on more than one board of the church. People may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Vacancies in any elected position, except on the Pastoral Staff and Board of Deacons, are to be filled by the Church Council to complete the term. They are not considered incumbents for purposes of the next election and may serve an additional two consecutive terms.

Vacancies of any appointed position are to be filled by the parent board.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

Resolutions and decisions of the church passed prior to adoption of this constitution and bylaws, which conflict with any part of this constitution are hereby repealed.

The constitution and bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority of votes cast. Proposed amendments shall be announced at least two weeks before the meeting and at two Sunday morning services preceding such a meeting. Proposed amendments are to be read or presented to the congregation in written form, at least once prior to the meeting where the vote is taken.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

**OF
Bethesda Mennonite Church
of
Henderson, Nebraska**

The undersigned, acting a incorporators of a corporation under the Nebraska Non-Profit Corporation Act, hereby adopt the following Articles of Incorporation for such corporation:

ARTICLE I

The name of this corporation shall be Bethesda Mennonite Church of Henderson, Nebraska.

ARTICLE II

The corporation shall have perpetual existence.

ARTICLE III

The purpose for which this corporation is organized is to own and operate a church for religious purposes in Henderson, Nebraska.

ARTICLE IV

The internal affairs of this corporation shall be regulated by members of the congregation of the said Bethesda Mennonite Church of Henderson, Nebraska, and by its elected Board of Trustees, consistent with the Statutes of the State of Nebraska and the Nonprofit Corporation Act of the State of Nebraska.

ARTICLE V

The address of this corporation's registered office is 930 -- 16th Street, Henderson, Nebraska 68371, and the name of its registered agent at such address is Carl Epp.

ARTICLE VI

The Board of Trustees, constituting the Directory of this corporation, shall consist of five (5) members, and the names and addresses of the Board of Trustees of this corporation are as follows, the following also to be the incorporators of this corporation, to wit:

Signed,

**Carl Friesen, Henderson
Ruben H. Friesen, Aurora
Carl Epp, Henderson
Arvid Janzen, Henderson
Stanley Voth, Henderson**

Dated this 2nd day of October, 1973