

# BYLAWS OF TRINITY MENNONITE CHURCH

ADOPTED: February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1989

AMENDED: June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2001

AMENDED: January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006

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# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

### A. Acceptance of New Members

Any person who professes faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and has been baptized on confession of that faith, is endeavouring to live a consistent Christian life, accepts the Constitution and these Bylaws, and is committed to the building of the Kingdom of God in fellowship with other members of this congregation, may become a member subject to acceptance by the membership of Trinity Mennonite Church (TMC).

### B. Associate Members

Associate Membership is available to members of other Christian Churches who have special reason for maintaining membership ties with their sending congregation but who would like to participate more fully in the worship and work of TMC. Application for Associate Membership shall be similar to that for full Membership with instruction as determined by the Pastor(s) and/or ~~Deacons~~Council, followed by a positive recommendation of the ~~Deacon~~Spiritual Life Committee, and formal acceptance by the membership of TMC.

The privileges and responsibilities of Associate Members will be the same as for full Members of TMC except that Associate Members will abstain from ~~sitting on Church Council and~~ voting on constitutional and bylaw amendments and capital ~~asset transactions~~investments. Associate Members will be included in Conference membership statistics unless they are counted elsewhere.

Associate Memberships continue as long as the need exists. At any point an Associate Member may ask for a formal transfer of Membership to TMC. If the Associate Member ~~leaves the city or~~ elects to discontinue fellowship with TMC, a formal motion of the ~~Deacon~~Spiritual Life Committee to TMC Council will close such membership.

### C. Withdrawal of Membership by Individual Members

Anyone wishing to terminate membership at TMC or transfer to another church may do so by requesting the same in writing to the leading Pastor(s), Congregation Chairperson, Church Council or other designated committee.

Voluntary withdrawal of membership will be assumed in the case of anyone who discontinues fellowship and association with TMC for more than five consecutive years and expresses no desire to remain a member of TMC despite repeated attempts by the church at reconciliation.

### D. Withdrawal of Membership by TMC

The membership of TMC is authorized to withdraw the membership of an individual whose life is at variance with the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the Constitution of TMC. Such withdrawal would be a last resort following repeated attempts at reconciliation.

Termination of membership shall be based on a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the membership of TMC at a duly constituted Congregation Meeting.

## E. Special Responsibilities of Members

- a) To participate in church services and functions as regularly as possible.
- b) To contribute generously towards the financial requirements of the church.
- c) To participate regularly in Congregation Meetings.
- d) To support the objectives of the church by generous contribution of time and exercise of spiritual gifts and abilities.
- e) To faithfully pray for the church, its program and purposes.

## F. Church Discipline

A sincere, biblically-based church discipline shall be applied whereby the membership of TMC accept, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the obligation of impartial disciplinary action intended to bring about repentance by the dissenting member and to enable spiritual growth of the church.

## ARTICLE II: SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services shall include Baptism, Holy Communion, Marriage, Child Dedication, Funerals, Ordinations, Commissionings, and such other services that assist in fulfilling the purposes of the church.

## ARTICLE III: CHURCH STRUCTURE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Day-to-day affairs of the church shall be administered by committees and/or personnel who are either elected by the membership of TMC, or appointed by either Council or a committee chair, and approved by the membership of TMC. These committees and/or personnel shall be ~~and~~ overseen by the Church Council, consistent with approved Charters (Job Descriptions) and with the Statement of Purpose as set out in the Constitution and the short and long-term goals and objectives of TMC as set out in a supplementary document. Details of TMC's structure, organization and accountability shall be as follows:

- a) The committees/personnel to be elected and/or appointed by TMC and the size of each elected committee needed shall be as set out in an Organization Chart approved by the membership of TMC.
- b) The Congregation Chairperson shall be the chair of the Church Council. The Vice-Chairperson shall assume the responsibilities of the chairperson when the chairperson is unavailable to meet those responsibilities.
- c) Committees that do not have voting representation on Council:
  - a) Such committees should be represented by one member at a minimum of two Council meetings each year: typically one in early September, and one early in the calendar year when the annual budget is being considered.

- b) Such committees may request to have one of their members present at any other upcoming Council meeting to bring attention to one or more issues that require Council's attention/involvement. The committee representative attending the meeting will not have voting privileges at the Council meeting.
- c) Similarly, Council may request that a committee representative attend an upcoming Council meeting to address one or more topics that are relevant to that committee. The committee representative attending the meeting will not have voting privileges at the Council meeting.
- ~~c) Whenever the appointed Church Council Representative from a committee cannot attend a Church Council meeting, the appointed Church Council Representative shall appoint an alternate (a Member of TMC) from the elected members of the respective committee, to attend the Church Council meeting with full voting privileges.~~
- d) Council members and elected committee members shall serve for terms not exceeding two years, ~~except deacons, whose term shall be three years.~~ Terms of office within each elected committee shall be overlapping-staggered whenever possible, to ensure continuity within the committee from year to year. No one shall serve in the same capacity on Church Council or on the same elected committee for more than two consecutive terms. A break of at least one year must follow before serving in that same capacity again.
- ~~e) No one shall be elected to serve concurrently in more than one capacity.~~
- ~~f)e) Additional sub-committees, task forces and other appointments may be made by Church Council or by the elected committees. The term of any such appointments shall not exceed one year at a time and will end no later than June 30th.~~
- ~~g)f) All elected committees shall be accountable to the membership of TMC through Church Council. All other sub-committees, task forces and other appointees will be directly accountable to the body that appointed them.~~
- ~~h)g) Vacancies on elected committees, which exist after the spring Congregation Meeting, may be filled by Church Council appointment until the next spring Congregation Meeting.~~
- ~~i)h) The specific responsibilities of Church Council, elected committees, the leading Pastor(s) and other officers shall be set out in Charters (Job Descriptions) approved by Church Council.~~
- ~~j)i) All Charters (Job Descriptions) and Minutes shall be open for review by any member of the congregation.~~
- ~~k)j) Terms of office for all elected positions at TMC shall be from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.~~

## ARTICLE IV: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year regarding budgeting and finances shall be from January 1<sup>st</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## ARTICLE V: DECISION MAKING

### A. Congregation Meetings

There shall be at least two Congregation Meetings each year, one for elections and one to authorize an annual budget for the following-fiscal year. Other Congregation Meetings shall be called as the Church Council or Congregation Chairperson deems necessary.

## B. General Elections

The Congregation Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and members of elected committees shall be elected at a duly constituted Congregation Meeting. Details of the electoral process are as follows:

- i) ~~The Pastor Deacon Committee will act as the~~ TMC Council will designate a nomination committee and which will use prayer and gift discernment to solicit nominees for chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and committee members. These names will be published two weeks prior to the spring Congregation Meeting. Any individual who has been contacted in advance may be nominated from the floor.
- ~~ii) Nominees for the position of Deacon shall be solicited from the congregation at least one month prior to the spring Congregation Meeting. The Pastor Deacon Committee will use prayer and gift discernment when contacting these nominees and will forward these nominees to the members of TMC for affirmation or election.~~
- ii) General elections shall begin with the election of the Congregation Chairperson, followed by the election of the Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and then the elected committees/personnel.
- ~~iii) —~~
- ~~iv) iii) \_\_\_\_\_ Each new committee decides before the next council meeting who their chair will be. The committee will appoint a member to sit on Church Council. This member may or may not be the committee chairperson. All council appointees must be members of TMC.~~

## C. Employment of a Pastor

The decision to call an individual to serve as Pastor shall be based on a three-quarters (3/4) majority vote by the membership of TMC at a duly constituted Congregation Meeting.

## D. Decision Making Criteria

The Membership of TMC shall endeavour to make decisions by consensus insofar as this is possible. Key decisions should be registered by voting (show of hands or secret ballot when requested). Only members of TMC present at duly constituted Congregation Meetings shall be counted in the determination of a quorum. Decisions will be based on a simple majority or otherwise agreed to by the membership of TMC, unless otherwise set out in the Constitution or Bylaws.

Any member of TMC who wishes to vote, but is unable to attend the duly constituted Congregation Meeting, may vote on recommendations from Church Council, which have been presented as motions in writing to the Congregation at least two Sundays prior to the date of the Congregation Meeting. A written in-absence vote must be provided in a sealed envelope to the Chairperson prior to the start of the meeting. The vote must include the name of the voter, the voter's signature, and must clearly state whether the vote is in favour of or opposed to the posted motion. The Congregation Chairperson must ratify this written in-absence vote at the start of the Congregation Meeting. If the motion is amended in any way, the Chairperson and Secretary shall confer and rule on whether the intent of the written in-absence vote remains unaltered or whether it can no longer be relied upon to express the wishes of the voter.

## ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS

Any amendments to these Bylaws, whether by change of wording, additions or deletions, shall be made only in the following manner at a duly constituted Congregation Meeting:

- a) Written notice of proposed amendments must be distributed to every Active Member of TMC. Notice must be given in accordance with the provisions of the Province of Alberta's Religious Societies' Land Act.
- b) Amendments must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all ballots cast.

**ENACTED BY THE MEMBERSHIP OF TMC ON ~~January-May~~ 24<sup>th</sup>, ~~2006~~2026.**

This document is certified to be correct.

Signed,

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~~Rob Doerksen~~ Keith Hunsberger

Congregation Chairperson

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~~Peter Krøeger~~ Lois Epp

Congregational Secretary