

MANTUA CENTER CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS, AS AMENDED

Preamble

We, the members of the Mantua Center Christian Church, a congregationally-governed body, in order to promote the work of the church in the spirit of Christ and thus advance his Kingdom, do hereby adopt this constitution.

Article I. **Name and Purpose**

Section A. **Name**

The name of this organization shall be the Mantua Center Christian Church, affiliated with the Regional, General, and World agencies of the denomination known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and committed to the historic principles of this body whose local congregations are variously known as Christian Churches, Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ.

Section B. **Purpose**

The purpose of this church shall be as revealed in their Statement of Calling and as implemented through their Ministry Plan (see appendix A).

Article II. **Membership**

The membership of this church shall consist of those who are identified now as members of the congregation and those who shall unite with it by baptism or by transfer of membership from other Christian traditions.

Article III. **Officers**

Section A. **Officers**

The following officers shall be elected by the church annually for a term designated for each position. Each group shall elect its own chairman.

1. **Chairman:** for a term of two years
2. **Vice-Chairman:** for a term of one year
3. **Trustees:** Not to exceed four in number, two elected each year for a term of two years.
4. **Church Co-Treasurers:** No more than three co-treasurers, one-third to be elected each year, for a term of two years.

Section B. **Functional Roles and Responsibilities**

The following positions shall be elected by the church annually for a term designated for each.

1. **Elders:** Not to exceed twelve in number, one-third to be elected each year for a term of three years, with one year in between terms.
2. **Secretary:** for a term of one year

3. **Deacons:** All people willing to serve, the number to be determined by the nominating committee, elected annually.
4. **Acolytes:** Youth not to exceed twelve in number, elected annually.
5. **Church Clerk and Historian:** For a term of two years.

Honorary Roles: Those whose service and consecration to the church merits the honor, may be retired from active responsibility, to be known respectively as Elder Emeritus.

Section C. **Duties of the Officers and Functional Roles**

1. The **chairman** shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer, call and preside at all regular and special meetings of the congregation, and serve as chairman of the general board.
2. The **vice-chairman** shall fulfill the usual duties of such an officer, call and preside at all regular and special meetings of the church in the absence of the chairman and serve as vice-chairman of the general board.
3. The **secretary** shall keep minutes of all regular or special meetings of the church, serve as secretary of the general board, keep a record of all its regular and called meetings, and perform such other duties as may be assigned.
4. The **Elders:**
 - a. Shall promote the growth and welfare of the church; give spiritual guidance to the members with respect to regular attendance at the Lord's Supper, visitation of the sick, give thoughtful consideration to policies of the church that will enable it to fulfill its complete mission; encourage by example and word the missionary, evangelistic, educational, and stewardship responsibilities of the church; serve at the Lord's Table; and perform such duties as may be assigned.
 - b. Shall meet annually to review and make recommendation to the general board concerning the minister's development and overall compensation.
 - c. Shall facilitate the operation of a pastoral care committee consisting of at least one Elder and two members of the congregation with five in total as designated by the Pastor in coordination with the Board Chair and Elder Chair.
5. The **Deacons** shall cooperate with the Elders in promoting the growth and welfare of the church, be responsible for greeting and ushering the worshipers, preparing and distributing the Lord's Supper, receiving the offerings, and assisting the ministry when called upon.
6. The **Acolytes** shall be responsible for lighting and extinguishing the candles in worship services, and other such duties as may be assigned.
7. The **Trustees** shall act as the local agents of the church in all business matters under the direction of the general board and subject to the approval of the church, and handle all business transactions related thereto, be responsible for the care and maintenance of church property. The board of trustees shall govern the use of the church by outside organizations or persons.
8. The **church clerk and historian** shall keep a complete record of the church membership and such vital statistics as births, deaths, baptisms, and weddings;

receive all applications for church letters and issue them under the authority delegated by the general board. Shall gather and preserve data pertaining to the history, life, and work of the church, making available for publication any historical materials authorized by the church.

9. The **church co-treasurers** shall receive and disburse all funds of the church according to the authority designated to them by the general board and shall make monthly statements to the board and periodic reports to the church.

Section D. Election of Officers

A nominating committee composed of five members shall be appointed by the chairman of the board. The Vice-Chairman of the Board shall serve as Chairman of the committee. The committee shall be appointed at least three months prior to the required election.

1. The committee shall consider qualifications for and interest in the specific office, secure consent from nominees, and prepare a slate consisting of one nominee for each vacancy.
2. The nominating committee shall report its nominations to the board at a business meeting.
3. The election will be held at a congregational meeting.
4. Vacancies in any office of the church shall be filled for the unexpired term by nomination of the general board and election by the general board.

Section E. The General Board

1. The general board shall consist of:
 - a. the chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, clerk historian, and treasurers.
 - b. Chairperson of the trustees
 - c. Chairperson of the elders designee
 - d. Co-Chair of the Worship and Education Ministry Team
 - e. Co-Chair of the Community Ministry Team
 - f. Co-Chair of the Outreach Ministry Team
 - g. Co-Chair of the Center Support Team
2. It shall be the duty of the general board to:
 - a. consider and recommend general policies to the congregation
 - b. transact general business
 - c. administer the program of the church through the designated functional committees.
3. The general board shall perform its duties according to the authority granted in this constitution or designated to it by the church.
4. Regular reports shall be made to the congregation.
5. In the event that a board member cannot be present the group represented by that member may appoint an alternate member with voting privileges.
6. In the absence of the qualified representative, the chairman of the board is authorized to grant voting privileges to other representatives of the respective groups who may be present.

Article IV. **The Minister**

Section A. **Duties**

The minister of the church shall perform the duties which usually pertain to that office, and as spiritual shepherd of the church he shall be an ex-officio member of all groups, auxiliaries, and committees.

Section B. **Selection**

The minister shall be chosen by the church as hereinafter provided:

1. The Chairman of the Board and the Chairman of the Elders shall appoint at least eight people to serve along with themselves as a pulpit committee.
2. The committee shall work closely with the Regional Office of the Christian Church in Ohio.
3. It shall be the policy of the church to negotiate with only one prospective minister at a time.
4. The pulpit committee shall recommend the candidate to the General Board. The General Board has the responsibility to negotiate with the candidate on matters of salary and contract.
5. The General Board shall recommend the candidate to the congregation.
6. The recommendation of the General Board must be accepted by at least a two-thirds majority of church members present and voting in a regular or special business meeting of the congregation in order for a call to be extended.
7. The term of the contract shall be for an indefinite period and may be terminated by either party upon a minimum of sixty days written notice or by mutual agreement.

Section C. **Salary and Benefits**

The salary and benefits paid to the minister will be reviewed annually by the elders and the Chairman of the Church Board with their recommendations regarding salary and benefits to be submitted to the General Board. A written statement setting forth salary and benefits shall be on file with the treasurer.

Section D. **Pastoral Relations Committee**

A Pastoral Relations Committee shall be appointed by the Elder Chairman and Minister as defined above to offer support, care, counseling and development of the Minister. [Work on scope with Elder Chair and Minister]

Article V. **Meetings**

Section A. **Meetings to be held**

1. The church shall hold an annual business meeting.
2. Special meetings as required, such meetings shall be called by the chairman or vice-chairman or upon request of the General Board or written petition of three or more members of the church.

Section B. **Notice**

Written notice of all regular or special business meetings of the church shall be given at least one week in advance. Notice shall also be given at a regular Sunday service of the church.

Section C. **Rules of Order**

All business meetings of the church and the General Board under most circumstances shall generally be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.

Article VI. **Amendments**

This constitution may be amended, altered, or revised at any business meeting of the church by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting on the amendment, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment, alteration, or revision has been read or a printed copy made available at a regular Sunday service at least two weeks before the vote is taken. Copies of all proposed amendments, alterations, or revisions shall be filed in the church office and with the church secretary.

By-Laws

I. The church fiscal year shall begin on January first of each year.

II. The General Board shall:

- A. Hold its meetings on a regular quarterly schedule.
- B. Hold special meetings as required on call of the chairman or vice-chairman or upon the request of two or more members of the General Board.
- C. Consider seven members of the General Board as constituting a quorum.
- D. Observe the following order of business at regular meetings:
 1. Meeting called to order by the presiding officer.
 2. Devotions and prayer.
 3. Reading and approval of minutes of previous meeting.
 4. Minister's report
 5. Report of church clerk and historian and approval.
 6. Report of treasurer and approval.
 7. Regular and special committee reports.
 8. Action on recommendations growing out of reports.
 9. Consideration of unfinished business carried over from previous meetings.
 10. New business and program suggestions for future activities.
 11. Adjournment
 12. Pastor's inspirational moment and benediction.

III. The procedure for administering the church program shall be as follows:

- A. The task of facilitating the Ministry Plan of the church may be delegated to the following Ministry Teams:
 1. Worship and Education Ministry
 2. Community Ministry
 3. Outreach Ministry
 4. Center Support Ministry

- B. Special committees shall be appointed when needed.
- C. The membership of each committee shall be selected in the following manner, subject to the confirmation of the General Board:
 - 1. The chairman and minister shall select the respective committee chairmen.
 - 2. The chairman and minister shall then act with the respective committee chairmen in the selection of committee members.
 - 3. Chairmen of all committees shall be selected from members and participating non-members of the church. Members of each committee shall be selected on the basis of qualifications and willingness to serve.

- D. Each Ministry Team shall organize itself to conduct the business for which it is responsible, meet regularly to attend to its business, and plan its general program which shall be presented to the General Board. Upon approval by the General Board the committee shall proceed to administer its program in cooperation with the other committees. A written report of each committee's work shall be given at the annual business meeting. The chairman may request additional reports.

The Ministry Teams' work will be coordinated through the Church Board, convened by the Board Chair with representation from each Ministry Team. The Board will ensure all efforts are focused on supporting our Statement of Calling and Ministry Plan. The Board will be charged to think and act strategically, and be in constant prayerful discernment about the direction, needs and focus of our calling at Mantua Center Christian Church. The defined responsibilities of each Ministry Team are as follows:

- 1. Worship and Christian Education Ministry Team
 - a. It shall be responsible for the church nursery
 - b. It shall maintain a church library and encourage its use
 - c. Focused on worship experiences that challenge, uplift and transform us as Christians in our individual and collective faith journeys.
 - d. Responsible for developing and promoting Christian education opportunities for the entire congregation from children to adults through teaching, study, special programs and participative outreach.
 - e. Encourage ones spiritual journey, helping to discover, acknowledge, & refine one's gifts for ministry.
- 2. Community Ministry Team
 - a. It shall integrate new members into the total life of the church.
 - b. Focused on increasing the engagement of the existing worshippers and those searching for involvement opportunities in the ministries of the church.
 - c. Communicating to the congregation, the greater community and the world the spirit of Mantua Center Christian Church in a manner that welcomes all who seek to come to the table and become a part of our church family, and the greater body of Christ.

3. Outreach Ministry Team

- a. This committee shall stimulate the widest possible interest in the support of the church's plan of missions and benevolence at all levels, from local to world.
- b. Responsible for coordinating all outreach ministries.
- c. Support the existing outreach ministries, encouraging and celebrating their success.
- d. Enable new outreach initiatives, while exploring and listening to the community for additional or more impactful outreach opportunities.
- e. Educating the congregation about denomination and community outreach programs and needs.

4. Center Support Ministry Team

- a. It shall be the purpose of this committee to develop within the membership an understanding of the full meaning of Christian stewardship and so to direct the financial program of the church so that it will not only supply the financial needs but prove a means of spiritual enrichment and character building for each one participating.
- b. Responsible for maintaining and enhancing the tangible and intangible assets of the church

The End