

Mennonite Church of Normal

CONSTITUTION

Revised, October 5, 2014

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this Congregation shall be Mennonite Church of Normal.

ARTICLE II

DOCTRINE

The Mennonite Church of Normal accepts the statement of faith and practice Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective (1995). A summary of this document is attached as an addendum to this Constitution.

ARTICLE III

PURPOSE

The Mennonite Church of Normal subscribes to the vision statement of the Mennonite Church USA, which is as follows:

TO BE A HEALING, GROWING AND WITNESSING MENNONITE CONGREGATION

Goals:

- To bring healing to individuals, to interpersonal relationships and to the world beyond our personal lives.
- To nurture the process of growing spiritually, intellectually and emotionally in order to strengthen our commitment to Christ and each other.
- To witness to the joy and hope of a new life in Christ at home, in the community and abroad both individually and collectively.

ARTICLE IV

AFFILIATIONS

This Congregation shall affiliate with the Mennonite Church USA and its Central District and Illinois Mennonite Conferences. Through these bodies we also participate in the Mennonite World Conference, Mennonite Central Committee and other inter-Mennonite organizations. We express our willingness to take counsel from and to support the activities of these Conferences in the building of Christ's Church.

The delegates to these Conferences shall be pastor(s) and lay delegates as outlined in the respective Constitutions of the Conferences.

In all these relationships this Congregation remains ultimately responsible before God in its decisions and commitments.

ARTICLE V ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1. BOARD, OFFICERS, COMMITTEES

A. Church Board

The Church Board shall consist of the Congregational Chairperson and six (6) individuals chosen from the membership of MCN. The Pastor(s) shall serve on the Church Board as advisor(s) and resource person(s) in an ex officio capacity. The Church Board shall select a Secretary from its members, and may also appoint a Recording Secretary from outside the Board.

The Church Board shall be responsible for long range planning, the division of responsibilities among the Committees, policies and overall vision. The Church Board shall be responsible for evaluation and policies for all employees.

The Church Board will in December of each year oversee the production of a written understanding of the various tasks of the Committees and ad hoc groups of the Congregation, with such document intended as a working handbook for the coming year.

The Church Board shall function for the Congregation between regular and/or special meetings as a consulting and decision-making body in matters of policy and program. The usual practice of the Church Board shall be monthly meetings. It shall report its activities to the Congregation and bring to the Congregation matters of program and policy that require congregational counsel and/or decision. The Church Board shall appoint the Leadership Selection Committee and any other committee or personnel as needed whose appointment is not specified in this Constitution. The Church Board shall fill vacancies in any selected offices which occur between annual business meetings.

B. Officers

1. The Chairperson, selected by the Congregation, shall a) serve as the official spokesperson for the Congregation; and b) preside at all meetings of the Church Board and at all business meetings of the Congregation. In the absence of the Chairperson at a meeting, the leadership responsibility shall be delegated to another member of the Church Board by the Chairperson. The Chairperson, using denominational guidelines and other information, shall prepare annual Memos of Understanding for pastoral and administrative staff.
2. The Secretary, selected by the Church Board, shall a) serve as the custodian of all current records and documents of the Congregation; b) be responsible with the Recording Secretary for keeping an accurate record of all proceedings of the Church Board and the congregational business meetings; c) notify the Congregation of congregational meetings; and d) notify all persons selected by the Congregation or appointed by the Church Board of their selection or appointment. Any or all of the above tasks may be assigned to the Recording Secretary.
3. The Treasurer, selected by the Congregation, shall a) receive, hold and disburse all money on behalf of the Congregation, making disbursements as authorized by the Church Board and the Congregation; b) keep accurate records and file periodic financial reports with the Financial Stewardship Committee; and c) serve as a member of the Financial Stewardship Committee. If necessary, an assistant to the Treasurer can be elected by the Congregation.

- C. The Pastoral Council shall be comprised of four members. It shall be responsible to provide support and counsel to the Pastor(s). It shall work with the Pastors(s) in dealing with personal, spiritual, relational and financial concerns of church members.
- D. Committees — There shall be six Standing Committees which shall have primary responsibility for recommending the work of the Congregation. These Committees shall be Worship, Fellowship, Education, Youth Ministry, Outreach and Financial Stewardship. Pastor(s) and staff persons will meet with Committee Chairs and with Committees as needed. Each Committee shall submit an annual spending plan proposal to the Financial Stewardship Committee.
1. The Worship Committee shall assess the worship needs of the Congregation and working with the pastor(s) be responsible for meeting the various needs for corporate congregational worship.
 2. The Fellowship Committee shall assess the fellowship needs of the Congregation and working with the pastor(s) shall be responsible for providing opportunities for fellowship experiences that will unite and strengthen the Congregation.
 3. The Education Committee shall assess the educational needs of the Congregation and develop and administer such programs as required to meet those needs.
 4. The Youth Ministry Committee shall develop, oversee and carry out the total Junior and Senior High youth ministry.
 5. The Outreach Committee shall assess service and outreach opportunities and be responsible for helping the Church become the church in mission.
 6. The Financial Stewardship Committee shall supervise the financial affairs of the Congregation, including the maintenance of the buildings and facilities, and stewardship promotion.

SECTION 2. PASTOR(S) AND THE DUTIES OF THE PASTOR

The duties of the Pastor(s) shall include preaching, teaching, counseling, administering the ordinances, and assisting the Congregation in administering its activities. The Pastor(s) shall serve as advisor(s) to the various elected and appointed officers of our Church. In performing these tasks, the Pastor(s) should strive to lead and equip the members of our Congregation to do the work God is calling each to do. Therefore, the Pastor(s) seek to discern the spiritual gifts God has given each believer and stand ready to lead our Congregation in such a way as to encourage and to allow these gifts to be used in the life and work of our Congregation.

SECTION 3. SELECTION PROCESS

Church Chairperson, Church Board, Pastoral Council, Treasurer and Committee members are to be selected by the process outlined in Article VII of this Constitution.

SECTION 4. TERM OF OFFICE The Church Chairperson and Church Board members shall serve three-year terms and are eligible to succeed themselves for one additional term. Pastoral Council members shall serve four-year terms and are eligible to succeed themselves for one additional term. The Treasurer shall serve a three-year term and is eligible to succeed him/herself for three additional successive terms. Standing Committee Members shall serve two-year terms and are eligible to succeed themselves for two additional successive terms. The Church Chairperson, Church Board members, Pastoral Council members, Treasurer and Committee

members may again serve in the same position after having been out of office for one year. Terms shall be staggered to provide for continuity.

SECTION 5.

Ex officio members of the Church Board and Committees shall serve without voting privileges.

ARTICLE VI MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. ELIGIBILITY

Any person who confesses Jesus as Lord and Savior, is baptized upon the confession of that faith, accepts the statement of faith of our Congregation, and declares a commitment to the practices, worship and service of the Congregation shall be eligible for membership. Decision of eligibility, including exceptions, will be made by the Pastor(s) and Pastoral Council members.

SECTION 2. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Each member is entitled to participate in all the activities of the Congregation, to vote on all questions, and to hold any elected or appointed offices.

SECTION 3. DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Members are expected to live a life of discipleship in accord with the spirit and teaching of the Scriptures, to encourage the growth of fellow members, and to actively participate in the work of the Congregation.

SECTION 4. ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Persons accepting the statement of faith and practice, who are members in good standing of other Congregations, and who desire to be associated with the Congregation, shall be received as associate members. Associate members are granted the rights of full membership and are expected to accept the duties of membership as long as their association with the Congregation is active.

SECTION 5. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the congregation may be terminated by voluntary withdrawal, by letter of transfer, or by action of the Congregation, upon recommendation of the Church Board. Membership termination may be pursued by the Congregation only in the spirit of scriptural concern and love. In addition, members who have not been involved in the life of the Congregation for five (5) years, who fail to respond to encouragement to renew involvement, and who fail to respond to written communications from the Congregation regarding a desire for continuing membership, shall be removed from Church membership. Full membership shall be granted upon their expressed desire for renewed active participation.

ARTICLE VII LEADERSHIP SELECTION

SECTION 1. LEADERSHIP SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Church Board shall appoint a five (5) member Leadership Selection Committee early in the new year. This committee is charged with the responsibility of leading the Congregation in selecting its volunteer leaders, being guided by the biblical process of identifying and affirming gifts. As part of this process, congregational members will be given an opportunity

to identify in writing the persons in the Congregation whom they feel possess the gifts necessary to fill each leadership role. This process shall also give opportunity for the volunteering of the individuals' own gifts and talents.

SECTION 2. THE SELECTION PROCESS

The results of the above expressions by the Congregational members shall guide the Leadership Selection Committee as they then explore with individuals their particular sense of call to serve in given leadership roles. The Leadership Selection Committee shall be responsible for the discernment and calling of the Church Chairperson, Church Board members, the Pastoral Council, Treasurer, and Committee Chairpersons. The Leadership Selection Committee shall work in conjunction with committee chairs, pastors and others to discern and call non-chair committee members. The Leadership Selection Committee shall present to the congregation those persons whom they have discerned to fill each role. The congregation shall be given the opportunity to affirm those selected.

ARTICLE VIII CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1. ANNUAL MEETING

An annual meeting is to be held within one month of the end of the Congregation's fiscal year.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

With two Sundays' advance notice to the Congregation, additional congregational meetings may be called by action of the Church Board. Quarterly meetings of the Congregation shall be encouraged.

ARTICLE IX PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

SECTION 1. SELECTION

The Pastor(s) shall be selected by the Congregation.

SECTION 2. RECRUITING AND CALLING A PASTOR

The Church Board, in consultation with Conference Minister(s), shall be responsible for the process of identifying, screening and recommending persons with potential for pastoral leadership to the Congregation. A call must be extended as a result of formal congregational action, with a two-thirds (2/3) vote necessary for a call to be extended.

SECTION 3.

The call of the pastor shall be reviewed by congregational vote every three (3) years, with a two-thirds (2/3) vote necessary for continuation. After a pastor has served two (2) three-year (3) terms, the succeeding calls will be for five-year (5) terms.

SECTION 4. TERMINATION OF PASTORAL RELATIONSHIPS

If agreement on an annual Memo of Understanding cannot be reached, or if the Congregation wishes to terminate the pastoral relationship, a recommendation for the termination of the Pastor(s) shall be brought by the Church Board to the Congregation for a vote. A majority vote is necessary for termination. If at any time either the Congregation or the Pastor(s) desires to terminate the pastoral relationship, a notice of at least three (3) months shall be given, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

ARTICLE X DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Decisions shall be made by either consensus or voting, with consensus being encouraged where possible. When issues that will need a decision are approached, an early definition shall be made as to the process which shall be used. At all meetings, both of the Congregation and other groups, consensus may be substituted for voting, providing the members present are all agreed to work in this fashion. When the voting process is used, congregational decisions shall be based on at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority, and elections are based on a simple majority unless otherwise agreed and announced in advance. Members present at duly called meetings of the Congregation constitute a quorum. Although presence at meetings is strongly encouraged, in those cases where specific recommendations have been published for at least two (2) weeks in advance of an announced congregational meeting, members who are unable to attend may request absentee ballots. Absentee ballots may be obtained from the church office within two (2) weeks of the announced meeting and must be returned prior to the meeting. NOTE: If the recommendation is changed in any way at the meeting, absentee ballots related to that issue would not be valid.

ARTICLE XI SUCCESSOR IN INTEREST

The Mennonite Church of Normal shall be and is successor of interest to the First Mennonite Church of Normal, Normal IL, and the Bloomington Mennonite Church, Bloomington IL, and the Mennonite Church of Normal shall succeed to all rights, titles, and interest in and to any and all property heretofore owned or hereafter to be acquired, by either the First Mennonite Church of Normal or the Bloomington Mennonite Church, and that for all legal intents and purposes, the Mennonite Church of Normal shall stand in the place of and be the equivalent of what was heretofore known as the First Mennonite Church of Normal and the Bloomington Mennonite Church. The Mennonite Church of Normal shall be dedicated to and charged with carrying out the purposes and goals of the First Mennonite Church of Normal and the Bloomington Mennonite Church, and shall apply any funds heretofore or hereafter given to the First Mennonite Church of Normal or the Bloomington Mennonite Church, to the purposes, goals and charities intended by the donors of any such gifts.

ARTICLE XII REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of those members voting on any proposed change. All amendments must be proposed and distributed in writing at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting called for their adoption.

October 5, 2014
Church Board/Constitution