

# **Bylaws**

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## **Bethlehem United Church of Christ of Ann Arbor, Michigan**



# Bethlehem United Church of Christ Bylaws

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## **Bethlehem United Church of Christ Bylaws**

These Bylaws, along with the Articles of Incorporation, are the foundation for the governance of Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

### **Article I     Name**

The name of this organization shall be Bethlehem United Church of Christ of Ann Arbor, Michigan (referred to in these Bylaws as the “Church”).

### **Article II     Purpose**

It shall be the purpose of this organization to provide a Christian congregation for worship, to give glory to God, and to promote the teachings of Jesus Christ.

### **Article III     Affiliation**

The Church shall be a member of the United Church of Christ and shall be guided by the United Church of Christ’s Constitution and Bylaws,

In keeping with its mission and vision, and in accordance with the standards and guidelines of the United Church of Christ, BUCC has been designated as an “Open and Affirming” congregation of the United Church of Christ. (May, 2016)

### **Article IV     Doctrine**

The Holy Scriptures of the Bible are the foundation for the Church’s worship and practices.

### **Article V     Membership**

#### **Section 1 Eligibility**

BUCC is an open and affirming congregation, accepting into Church membership all who believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior without regard to age, race, nationality, ethnicity, economic circumstance, marital or family status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Membership in the Church shall be open to any person who has been baptized in the Christian faith and has either (1) been confirmed into a Christian Church or (2) made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Upon the recommendation of the Pastor, Members may be received into BUCC by Baptism, Confirmation, confession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or presentation of a letter of transfer from another church. All Members shall be welcomed into BUCC during a service of worship.

## **Section 2 Privileges**

1. All members are entitled to share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of the Church, to the services of the Pastor and any other ordained personnel of the Church, and to the Christian sympathy and support of all other members.
2. All members of the Church in good standing are entitled to voice and vote at meetings of the Governing Body.
3. All members in good standing, who have been members for at least one year, shall be eligible to hold elected office of the Church. No one may simultaneously hold more than one elected office of the Church. Neither the Pastor nor other ordained staff of the Church shall be eligible to hold elected office of the Church.

## **Section 3 Responsibilities**

Members shall be encouraged to participate in the Church's worship and celebration of Holy Communion; share in the life and work of the Church; contribute to the Church's support and benevolence; and support the spiritual welfare of the Church's membership and the community.

Members who are unable to meet these responsibilities due to age, military service, attendance at college, or illness or infirmity shall be exempt from these responsibilities.

## **Section 4 Release**

Any member in good standing shall be granted a letter of transfer upon request.

## **Section 5 Termination**

The Member Care Ministry Team shall every three years, review the membership rolls for the purpose of identifying members who appear to have not met the responsibilities of membership set forth in Section 3. The Member Care Ministry Team shall communicate with the members so identified to encourage their renewed participation in the life of the Church. Should such efforts not result in renewed participation, the Member Care Ministry Team shall recommend to the Leadership Council that the member be removed from the active member rolls. Upon majority vote of the Leadership Council, such member shall be removed from the active member rolls.

Members whose addresses are unknown or who have not communicated with the Church or contributed to its support for a period of three years, shall be transferred to an inactive list. From the date of this transfer such persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll. Members remaining on the inactive list for a period of three years shall, by a vote of the Leadership Council, be removed from the inactive member roll.

## **Section 6 Others Participating in the Bethlehem Community**

Individuals who are unable or otherwise not in a position to become members of the Church, or those who are on the inactive list, are welcome to attend worship, request and receive newsletters and other similar communications from the Church, participate in programs and other events offered by the Church, and otherwise participate in the life of the Church. Such individuals are eligible to serve as unelected members of Ministry Teams, and serve as appointed or volunteer members of task forces or other groups, including those created by the Governing Body, Leadership Council or the Pastor. Such individuals shall have the right to attend congregational meetings and, at the discretion of the President, voice their opinions, but shall not be entitled to vote.

## **Article VI     Governance**

### **Section 1   Governing Body**

#### **A.   How Assembled**

The Governing Body of the Church shall be the members of the Church assembled in a duly called congregational meeting. A quorum shall consist of 25 members. A quorum, once established at a duly called congregational meeting, shall exist until the meeting is adjourned. The Governing Body shall hold an annual meeting and may hold other meetings as set forth in these Bylaws. The vote of a majority of those present and voting at any such congregational meeting shall be the will of the Church.

When unable to meet in person at Bethlehem UCC, providing that the Bylaws regarding scheduling of meetings is met, and that all who are participating have the ability to fully communicate, ie, hear and speak, meetings of ministry teams, special committees and congregational meetings may be conducted by electronic medium.

#### **B.   Roles and Responsibilities**

The Governing Body:

1. Shall hold an Annual Meeting as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
2. Shall hold other congregational meetings as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
3. Shall be responsible for calling a Pastor and shall have the right to terminate the Church's relationship with the Pastor.
4. Shall have sole authority to approve unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures of \$15,000.00 or more.
5. Shall have sole authority to approve the purchase or sale of real property.
6. May establish committees, task forces or other groups to further the purposes of the Church.
7. Shall have sole authority to merge with or enter into any agreement of formal association with another congregation.

## **Section 2 Leadership Council**

### **A. Composition**

The Leadership Council shall be a seven-member body, consisting of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and three at-large members.

At any duly called meeting of the Leadership Council, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the Leadership Council members. Once established at a particular meeting, a quorum exists until the meeting is adjourned.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Leadership Council:

1. Is responsible to the Governing Body.
2. Shall, in consultation with the Pastor, engage in strategic planning for the future of the Church and, in collaboration with the various Ministry Teams, set the overall policy and direction of the Church.
3. Shall work with the Pastor, other staff, the Ministry Teams, and other laypersons to implement that strategic direction.
4. Shall call an Annual Meeting of the Governing Body as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
5. Shall call special meetings of the Governing Body as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
6. May call other special meetings of the Governing Body at its discretion.
7. Shall meet within two weeks of the Annual Meeting of the Governing Body and shall meet regularly thereafter.
8. Shall keep a record of its proceedings.
9. Shall receive a recommended annual operating budget from the Finance Ministry Team and, upon approval, recommend the operating budget to the congregation.
10. Shall hire any interim Pastor, establish the terms and conditions of employment of any interim Pastor, and have the authority to terminate a relationship with any interim Pastor.
11. Shall establish the terms and conditions of employment of the Pastor. In establishing the financial terms of the Pastor's relationship with the Church, the Leadership Council shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team.
12. Shall establish and provide support to a search committee for a Pastor when there is a vacancy.
13. Shall conduct an annual performance review of the Pastor.
14. Unless otherwise directed by the Governing Body, shall consider and act on recommendations of the Pastor, within the financial parameters established in the budget and the strategic parameters set by the Leadership Council, to call ordained staff or to terminate a relationship with ordained staff.
15. May create committees and task forces to assist in carrying out the Leadership Council's responsibilities or other functions related to the Church.

16. Except as to the office of President, shall, in consultation with Nominations, appoint members to fill vacancies in unexpired terms of elected positions of the Church until the following Annual Meeting.
17. Shall coordinate with Ministry Teams and other groups of the Church considering policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church before any such actions are implemented.
18. Shall establish policies and procedures related to the overall strategic direction of the Church and shall review and revise existing policies and procedures related to the overall strategic direction of the Church. Upon adoption, the Leadership Council shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
19. Shall receive, review and act on requests from any Ministry Team or other group of the Church for unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures greater than \$5,000.00 but less than \$15,000.00. The Leadership Council may approve such requests if in its judgment the request is not an appropriately budgetable expenditure, the financial condition of the Church supports the expenditure, and the request is a valuable expenditure of Church resources. The Leadership Council may request the input of the Finance Ministry Team in making its determination. The Leadership Council shall advise the Governing Body of the request and approval at the next duly called meeting of the Governing Body.
20. Shall receive, review and promptly act on, in accordance with these Bylaws, reports from the Member Care Ministry Team with respect to members not meeting their membership responsibilities.
21. Shall annually, or more often if requested by the Governing Body, provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.
22. Shall serve as the Board of Directors of the Church.

### **C. President**

The President:

1. Shall preside over all congregational meetings.
2. Shall preside over all Leadership Council meetings.
3. Shall, in consultation with the Pastor and other members of the Leadership Council, set the agenda for Leadership Council meetings.
4. Shall serve as a member ex officio of all Ministry Teams and may attend meetings of the various Ministry Teams in consultation with the chair of the various Ministry Teams, offering counsel as appropriate.
5. May delegate his or her responsibility to the Vice President to preside over congregational meetings or Leadership Council meetings should the President be unable to attend.
6. To the extent authorized by the Governing Body or these Bylaws, shall, with the Secretary, sign all deeds and all contracts in excess of \$15,000 on behalf of the Church.



#### **D. Vice President**

The Vice President:

1. Shall preside over congregational meetings or Leadership Council meetings upon delegation of the President due to the President's inability to attend.
2. Shall preside over any congregational meeting or portion of such meeting where the business of the meeting pertains to the President.
3. Provides advice and counsel to the Pastor with respect to personnel matters of the Church staff.

#### **E. Secretary**

The Secretary:

1. Shall keep a record of all meetings of the Governing Body and the Leadership Council.
2. Shall promptly prepare and distribute minutes of meetings of the Governing Body to the congregation.
3. Shall promptly prepare and distribute minutes of meetings of the Leadership Council to the Leadership Council.
4. Shall serve as a repository for and keep and maintain a current set of policies of the Church.
5. Shall receive, review, and process all official correspondence of the Church.
6. To the extent authorized by the Governing Body or these Bylaws, shall, with the President, sign all deeds and all contracts in excess of \$15,000 on behalf of the Church.

#### **F. Treasurer**

The Treasurer:

1. Shall be responsible for all monies of the Church.
2. Shall coordinate regularly with the Finance Ministry Team concerning the finances of the Church.
3. Shall make monthly reports to the Leadership Council concerning the finances of the Church.
4. Shall make an annual report to the Governing Body concerning the finances of the Church.
5. May, in consultation with the Pastor, utilize the support of designated office staff in carrying out the Treasurer's responsibilities.

### **Section 3 Finance Ministry Team**

#### **A. Composition**

The Finance Ministry Team shall be composed of three members elected by the Governing Body and such other individuals as the Finance Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities. The Finance Ministry Team shall elect a Chair from its elected members.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Finance Ministry Team:

1. Shall secure the funds necessary and appropriate to support the Church.
2. Shall annually prepare, in consultation with the Leadership Council, other Ministry Teams, the Pastor, and other ordained staff, an operating budget for consideration and approval by the Leadership Council.
3. Shall, after approval by the Leadership Council, present the annual budget to the Governing Body for its consideration.
4. Shall coordinate with and support the Treasurer in fulfilling the Treasurer's roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall encourage giving toward and oversee the Church's monetary funds, including Memorials and Gifts, investments, and any endowment funds.
6. Shall ensure that the monetary funds of the Church are prudently invested.
7. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out the Finance Ministry Team's roles and responsibilities.
8. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Finance Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
9. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
10. Shall cooperate with Bethlehem Cemetery Board with respect to the investment of funds overseen by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.
11. Shall receive and review requests for unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures not to exceed \$5,000.00. The Finance Ministry Team may approve such requests if in its judgment the request is not an appropriately budgetable expenditure, the financial condition of the Church supports the expenditure, and the request is a valuable expenditure of Church resources. The Finance Ministry Team shall promptly advise the Leadership Council of the request and the Finance Ministry Team's approval of the request.
12. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.
13. Shall work in conjunction with an external auditor for audits to be performed at least every three years to verify the proper handling of Church funds and the accuracy of the financial records of the Church.
14. Shall promptly report audit findings and recommendations to the Leadership Council and the Governing Body.

## **Section 4 Facilities Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Facilities Ministry Team shall be composed of three members elected by the Governing Body and such other individuals as the Facilities Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities. The Facilities Ministry Team shall elect a Chair from its elected members.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Facilities Ministry Team:

1. Shall develop and implement plans to maintain, preserve and improve Church properties, except Bethlehem Cemetery.
2. Shall coordinate the use and management of the facilities.
3. Shall evaluate and procure appropriate insurance for Church properties.
4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Facilities Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 5 Education Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Education Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Education Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Education Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with designated staff to support children's Christian education programs, including confirmation programs.
2. Shall work with designated staff to support adult Christian education programs.
3. Shall be responsible for granting educational scholarships from designated funds, if any.

4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Education Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 6 Worship Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Worship Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Worship Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Worship Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with the Pastor and other ordained staff to support the spiritual life of the congregation through worship.
2. Shall assist the Pastor and other ordained staff with respect to Holy Communion and Baptisms.
3. Shall assist the Pastor and other ordained staff with other aspects of regular and special worship services with the goal of making such worship experiences meaningful and fulfilling.
4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Worship Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 7 Member Care Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Member Care Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Member Care Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

## **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Member Care Ministry Team:

1. Shall encourage the involvement of new and continuing members in the life of the Church.
2. Shall regularly review member attendance and take action to connect with members becoming less active.
3. Shall engage in and coordinate activities to support members in need due to health and other reasons.
4. Shall ensure records of members, transfers, terminations of membership, marriages, deaths and baptisms are maintained.
5. Shall conduct a review of the membership rolls of the Church every three years to determine whether members are meeting their membership responsibilities; if it appears they are not, encourage their renewed commitment; in the absence of a demonstrated commitment advise the Leadership Council for its consideration and action according to these Bylaws.
6. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
7. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Member Care Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
8. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
9. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 8 Welcome Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Welcome Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Welcome Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Welcome Ministry Team:

1. Shall encourage a welcoming environment to prospective members in the community and within the Church building.
2. Shall foster a positive impression for visitors.
3. Shall develop and implement plans for membership growth and assimilation.
4. Shall coordinate activities of the ushers.
5. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles.
6. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Welcome Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
7. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
8. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 9 Outreach Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Outreach Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Outreach Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Outreach Ministry Team:

1. Shall identify opportunities for and inspire involvement in demonstrating Christian love by supporting our neighbors.
2. Shall coordinate with and support other Church groups with respect to their outreach activities.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Outreach Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 10 Fellowship Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Fellowship Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Fellowship Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Fellowship Ministry Team:

1. Shall develop and implement programs and activities to provide fellowship opportunities for the Congregation, including opportunities for youth, adults and families.
2. Shall foster additional fellowship activities by serving as a resource for other individuals and groups interested in planning activities and programs.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Fellowship Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 11 Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team**

### **A. Composition**

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with designated staff to develop and implement regular programming and activities to empower and encourage fellowship, faith development and leadership opportunities among youth in middle school, high school, and other young adults.
2. Shall coordinate with other ministry teams to involve and integrate younger people into the wider life and ministries of the Church.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.

4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 12 Bethlehem Cemetery Board**

### **A. Composition**

The Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be composed of six members elected by the Governing Body. The Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer from its members.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Bethlehem Cemetery Board:

1. Shall be responsible for the administration and maintenance of Bethlehem Cemetery and the funding of those activities.
2. Shall designate a member to serve as a liaison to the Finance Ministry Team with respect to the investment of funds overseen by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.
3. Shall be responsible for developing, reviewing, revising and maintaining its own policies and procedures related to the administration and maintenance of Bethlehem Cemetery.
4. Shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

## **Section 13 Nominations Committee**

### **A. Composition**

The Nominations Committee is a standing committee and shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall serve as the Chair, and at least two other members, who shall be members of the Church and shall be identified by the Chair in consultation with the Leadership Council. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not hold any other elected position within the Church while serving on the Nominations Committee.

### **B. Roles and Responsibilities**

The Nominations Committee:



1. Shall be responsible to the congregation to identify and present at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting one or more eligible candidates to fill all open elected positions identified in the Bylaws.
2. Shall advise the Pastor and Leadership Council of the candidates for the open elected offices prior to the Leadership Council's call of the Annual Meeting.
3. Shall, upon request, assist the various Ministry Teams and the Auditing Committee in identifying individuals with the aptitude for and interest in serving as unelected members.

## **Article VII    Terms of Elected Office and Term Limits**

All terms of office begin upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting at which the individual is elected and run until the adjournment of the Annual Meeting at which the individual's successor is due to be elected.

### **Section 1   Leadership Council**

#### **A.   President**

The President's term shall be one year. The President shall be eligible to serve no more than three consecutive elected one-year terms.

If there is a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall fill the responsibilities of President until the next Annual Meeting.

#### **B.   Other Leadership Council Positions**

The terms of Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and the three at-large positions on the Leadership Council shall be three years. The terms of the Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year. The terms of the three at-large positions on the Leadership Council shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year. Individuals elected to these Leadership Council positions shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Leadership Council for more than seven consecutive years, exclusive of any time spent serving as President.

### **Section 2   Finance Ministry Team and Facilities Ministry Team**

The terms of office of the individuals elected to the Finance Ministry Team and the Facilities Ministry Team shall be three years. The terms of the three elected positions on each of these bodies shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year.

Individuals elected to the Finance Ministry Team shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Finance Ministry Team for more than seven consecutive years.

Individuals elected to the Facilities Ministry Team shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Facilities Ministry Team for more than seven consecutive years.

### **Section 3 Bethlehem Cemetery Board**

The terms of office of the individuals elected to the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be three years. The terms of the six members of the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be staggered such that two of each expire each year. Individuals elected to the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Bethlehem Cemetery Board for more than seven consecutive years.

### **Section 4 Other Elected Offices**

The terms of all other elected offices shall be three years. Individuals elected to other elected offices shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms.

No individual shall serve in any elected office of the Church for more than seven consecutive years, exclusive of any time spent serving as President.

### **Article VIII Meetings of the Governing Body**

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Governing Body, held no earlier than May 1 and no later than June 15 of each year. The Leadership Council shall select the date, time and place for this meeting. At the Annual Meeting, the Governing Body shall (1) elect, by majority vote of those members present and voting, eligible members to fill all open elected positions of the Church for the following fiscal year beginning June 1; (2) receive and act on an annual budget for the June 1 to May 31 fiscal year as recommended by the Finance Ministry Team and Leadership Council; (3) receive annual reports from each ministry team and committee; and (4) conduct any other business that may come before it.

Special meetings of the Governing Body may be called by the Leadership Council at its discretion.

The Leadership Council shall, upon written request of at least 25 members, call a special meeting of the Governing Body to be held no more than 30 days after the written request is received. The written request shall specify the purpose of the requested meeting of the Governing Body.

At special meetings of the Governing Body, only such business as has been specified in the notice of the special meeting may be voted upon.

At least 14 days' advance notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of all meetings of the Governing Body. Such notice shall include, at a minimum, (1) verbal and/or written notice at, or immediately before or after, worship service(s) and (2) notification through other reliable

means, utilizing such technology as may exist at the time, designed to reach members of the congregation.

Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all decisions of the Governing Body shall be made by majority vote of those members present and voting.

## **Article IX    Administration**

### **Section 1   Pastor**

#### **A.   Qualifications and Selection**

The Pastor shall be an ordained minister who has been recommended or approved by the Covenant Association or the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ. If there is a vacancy in the position of Pastor, the Leadership Council shall, in consultation with the search committee, nominate a candidate to be voted on by the Governing Body. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.

#### **B.   Responsibilities**

The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the Church and oversee its day-to-day administrative activities. The Pastor:

1. Shall care for the general welfare of the congregation.
2. Shall preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and oversee all worship services.
3. Shall minister to the sick and those otherwise in need.
4. Shall administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Leadership Council, the Ministry Teams, and the ordained and other staff.
5. Shall support the Leadership Council in its role of strategic planning for the future of the Church and setting the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall serve as a member ex officio of the Leadership Council and attend Leadership Council meetings except to the extent the Leadership Council is discussing the performance and evaluation of the Pastor. The Pastor shall have a voice on matters coming before the Leadership Council, but shall not be entitled to vote. If the Pastor is unable to attend a Leadership Council meeting, he or she is entitled to delegate such responsibility to an Associate Pastor or other ordained staff.
7. Shall recommend to the Leadership Council the call or termination of ordained staff within the parameters established in the budget and the strategic direction established by the Leadership Council. The Pastor shall be responsible for directing, developing, and evaluating ordained staff.
8. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, shall, within the parameters of the budget, be responsible for hiring, directing, developing, evaluating and, as the Pastor determines appropriate, terminating the employment of non-ordained staff.

9. Shall receive advice and counsel from the Vice President with respect to personnel matters.
10. Shall, in consultation with the Vice President, annually recommend to the Finance Ministry Team and the Leadership Council a budget for the compensation and benefits of all staff.
11. May, in consultation with the Leadership Council, establish committees or task forces to assist in fulfilling the Pastor's role or otherwise support the Church.
12. Shall have the right to grant or deny requests for other clergy to perform any religious ceremony in the Church, none of which shall be performed without the Pastor's consent. The Pastor shall have the right to delegate the responsibility of leading a worship service to an ordained guest minister during the temporary absence of the Pastor or for a particular special occasion.
13. Shall annually provide a summary written report of his or her activities to the congregation.

If there is a vacancy in the position of Pastor, any interim Pastor selected under these Bylaws shall carry out these responsibilities.

## **Section 2 Associate Pastor(s) and Other Ordained Staff**

The Church may employ one or more Associate Pastors and/or other ordained staff within the budgetary limits established by the Governing Body. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the responsibility of the Leadership Council, acting on a recommendation of the Pastor, if any, to hire Associate Pastor(s) and/or other ordained staff. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the right of the Leadership Council, acting on the recommendation of the Pastor, if any, to terminate any relationship with any Associate Pastor or other ordained staff. Any individual employed as an Associate Pastor shall be recommended or approved by the Covenant Association or the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Associate Pastor(s) and other ordained staff shall have such duties and responsibilities as set forth in their terms of employment or as otherwise directed by the Pastor. Such individuals shall perform their responsibilities under the direction of and with the counsel of the Pastor.

Associate Pastor(s) and/or other ordained staff may, from time to time, be delegated or otherwise requested to attend meetings of the Leadership Council, which responsibility they shall fulfill.

## **Section 3 Non-Ordained Staff**

Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor to employ support staff personnel to perform administrative and operational duties as needed and within budgetary limits. Such individuals shall perform their responsibilities under the direction of and with the counsel of the Pastor. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the right of the Pastor to terminate any relationship with any non-ordained staff.

## **Article X Property**

The Church may in its corporate name acquire real and personal property by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or other lawful means. The Church may utilize its real and personal property for any lawful purpose, and may transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, or convey such property. The Church may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property. The real property, personal property, and all monies of the Church shall be under the care of the Board of Directors, which is the Leadership Council.

Church properties shall be held as a sacred trust by the Leadership Council, which shall have the ultimate responsibility for keeping the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the Church in proper repair.

The burial grounds known as Bethlehem Cemetery shall be managed by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.

#### **Article XI     Conflicts of Interest**

Whenever a member of the Leadership Council or other individual serving in an elected position has a financial or family interest in any matter coming before them, the affected person shall (1) fully disclose the nature of the interest and (2) withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter. Any vote involving a potential conflict of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested individuals present and voting determine that it is in the best interest of the Church to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record the disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

#### **Article XII     Rules of Order**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

#### **Article XIII     Amendment**

Proposed changes to these Bylaws shall first be referred to the Leadership Council, which shall report its recommendation to the Governing Body at the next duly called congregational meeting. Any change to these Bylaws requires a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of all members present and voting.

#### **Article XIV     Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the Church, after providing for the debts and obligations of the Church, the remaining assets shall be transferred to the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Adopted by vote of the Governing Body on October 19, 2014.

Effective Date: January 25, 2015

Amended by vote of the Governing Body on June 14, 2020

Amended by vote of the Governing Body on June 9, 2024 (Article VI, Section 1.A.)