

# **REVISED CONSTITUTION OF MT. PLEASANT COMMUNITY CHURCH**

## **ARTICLE I NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be the Mt. Pleasant Community Church.

## **ARTICLE II PURPOSE**

### Section A: Purpose of the Congregation

The purpose of this congregation shall be to bring glory to God and to His incarnate Son Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. The congregation can fulfill its purpose by:

1. Proclaiming publicly the Christian doctrine of redemption from sin.
2. Worshiping corporately.
3. Encouraging growth in others' lives.
4. Taking the Good News into the community and into the world.

### Section B: Responsibilities of the Congregation

The congregation should meet at assigned times and places, read and study the Scriptures, live out the principles of its calling, nurture Christians in their private and public walk with God, administer the sacraments and encourage Christians to exercise their spiritual gifts.

## **ARTICLE III BELIEFS**

All Scripture is self-attesting and being Truth, requires our unreserved submission in all areas of life. The infallible word of God, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is a complete and unified witness to God's redemptive acts culminating in the incarnation of the Living Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible, uniquely and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, is the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks.

## Section A: Essentials of our Faith

On the sure foundation of the Holy Scriptures, we affirm the following essentials of our faith:

1. We believe in one God, the sovereign Creator and Sustainer of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To Him be all honor, glory and praise forever!
2. Jesus Christ, the Living Word, became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. He who is true God became true man united in one Person forever. He died on the cross a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. On the third day He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He now is our High Priest and Mediator.
3. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to our hearts. He convicts us of sin and draws us to the Savior. Indwelling our hearts, He gives new life to us, empowers and imparts gifts to us for service. He instructs and guides us into all truth and seals us for the day of redemption.
4. Being estranged from God and condemned by our sinfulness, our salvation is wholly dependent upon the work of God's free grace. God credits His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, thereby justifying them in His sight. Only those who are born of the Holy Spirit and receive Jesus Christ become children of God and heirs of eternal life.
5. The true church is composed of all persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit are united together in the body of Christ. The Church finds her visible, yet imperfect expression in local congregations where loving fellowship is maintained. For her perfecting, the Church awaits the return of her Lord.
6. Jesus Christ will come again to the earth – personally, visibly and bodily – to judge the living and the dead and to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20 ESV)
7. The Lord Jesus Christ commands all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to make disciples of all nations. Obedience to the Great Commission requires total commitment to Him "who loved us and gave Himself up for us." (Eph. 5:2 ESV)
8. He calls us to a life of self-denying love and service. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10 ESV)

## **ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP**

The local church consists of all those professing Christians who, along with their children, are associated together to live their faith and to worship together, who seek individually and jointly to serve the Lord in willingness and service, who agree to submit themselves to the government and discipline of the Church and who promise to promote its purity and peace. It is the privilege and primary duty of this particular church to worship God regularly.

Those who have been baptized and have made a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord may be admitted to active membership of Mount Pleasant Community Church by the Church Session. All active members of the congregation age fourteen and older shall be eligible to vote.

All those whose parent(s) are members in good standing of the congregation are to be considered members of the covenant by right of birth and adoption. As such, they are entitled to pastoral oversight, to instruction, to nurture and to encouragement to embrace Jesus as Lord and Savior. Such persons are entitled to receive the sacrament of Baptism.

Persons who are separated geographically from their home church because of educational, military or other reasons may ask to be received as affiliate members of Mount Pleasant Community Church.

## **ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT**

### Section A: Government

The government of Mt. Pleasant Community Church shall be Presbyterian in form. The officers of the church are Teaching Elders (Pastors) and Ruling Elders, which make up the Church Session, and Deacons. The duties of the Church Session and of the Board of Deacons are summarized below.

The local church is governed by the Church Session which is composed of the Pastor(s) called by the congregation (see Article VII, Section A: Pastors), and Ruling Elders on active service. The Ruling Elders on active service are elected by the congregation (See Article VI, Section B: Election Meeting). The members of the Church Session are the volunteer directors and legal trustees of the ecclesiastical corporation. The congregation shall also have a Board of Deacons with whom is lodged the primary duty of sympathy and service.

The church shall have two standing committees: the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee. In addition to the standing committees, the Church Session may from time to time create various ad hoc committees. In creating an ad hoc committee the Session may give to the committee a general or specific charge, lay down requirements (if any) as to membership on the committee and may dissolve the committee whenever the Session wishes.

## Section B: The Church Session

The entire life of the congregation is under the oversight and supervision of the Church Session which is composed of all Teaching Elders and all Ruling Elders on active service.

### Duties of the Church Session:

1. The Session shall organize itself for the advancement of the ministry of the Church and the mission of that congregation.
2. The Session shall initiate the ministry of evangelism.
3. The Session shall receive members, shall monitor the spiritual conduct of the members and shall keep membership rolls in order to dismiss, restore, grant affiliation or remove members.
4. The Session shall oversee the work of the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees and the Nominating Committee.
5. The Session shall determine the budget of the church and the benevolence objectives of the congregation.
6. The Session shall oversee the educational program of the congregation.
7. The Session shall oversee development of the children of the congregation and provide instruction.
8. The Session shall oversee the worship of the congregation.
9. The Session shall determine policies regarding the use of the property and facilities of the congregation.
10. The Session shall order special offerings, special days of prayer and fasting, special days of worship and other matters that benefit the spiritual life of the people.

### Officers and Members of the Church Session:

1. The Pastor shall be the Moderator of the Session. An Associate Pastor, at the request of the Pastor and with the consent of the Session, may serve as Moderator for the Pastor. If there is no Pastor, the Church Session may elect one of its members to serve in that capacity. The Pastor(s) elected by the congregation are full members of the Session and have the privilege of voting. If the Pastor wishes to make motions or otherwise participate in debate, some other member of the Session should serve as Temporary Moderator.
2. Each Church Session shall elect a Clerk.
3. In order to be elected as an Active Ruling Elder, candidates for the Session must receive a majority vote from the congregation.
4. The number of Active Ruling Elders shall be no fewer than nine members unless determined otherwise by the Congregation.
5. No member of the Session shall serve more than six consecutive years on the Session.

### Meetings of the Church Session:

1. The Church Session shall meet at least quarterly. The Session and its committees shall determine the time, place, and frequency of meetings, and they shall establish their own attendance policies.
2. The meetings of the Session and its committees shall be open to all members of the congregation except when the Session, by a two-thirds majority vote, elects to move into executive session. The Session shall meet at the call of the Moderator.

3. A special meeting shall be called when one-fourth of the members of the Session make a request in writing for a meeting. The Moderator shall immediately call the special meeting. The purpose of this meeting shall be clearly stated, and no business other than that stated in the call may be transacted at the special meeting.
4. In the absence of the Pastor, the Session may not meet except in the case of an emergency. In that event, two Active Ruling Elders must convene the Session and no business may be transacted other than that which precipitated the emergency.
5. One-third of the Church Session shall constitute a quorum.

### Section C: The Board of Deacons

The congregation shall have a Board of Deacons composed of all Deacons on active service.

#### Duties of the Board of Deacons:

1. The Board of Deacons shall oversee the ministry of compassion of the congregation to the sick, friendless, bereaved, and those in any way distressed.
2. The Board of Deacons shall be elected by the congregation and shall report to the Church Session on a monthly basis or at such other times as the church Session may direct.
3. The Board of Deacons may create, mandate, and dissolve such sub-committees as it deems necessary, and those committees must report to the deacons on a regular basis. Those committees dealing with social or political issues beyond the immediate focus of the church shall report directly to the church Session.
4. The Board of Deacons shall have direct responsibility for the physical and material needs of the members of this church and the community at large.
5. The Church Session may assign other duties instead of or in addition to the ordinary duties.

#### Officers and Members of the Board of Deacons:

1. The Deacons may elect a Moderator, Recording Clerk and Treasurer for a term of one year. A particular Board may elect such other officers as it may determine are needed.
2. The Number of active Deacons shall be no fewer than nine members unless otherwise determined by the congregation.
3. No member of the Board of Deacons shall serve more than six consecutive years on the Board.

#### Meetings of the Board of Deacons:

1. The Board of Deacons shall meet at least quarterly unless otherwise determined.
2. The Board of Deacons and its committees shall determine the time, place and frequency of meetings, and they shall establish their own attendance policies.
3. The meetings of the Board of Deacons and its committees shall be open to all members of the congregation except when the Board of Deacons, by a two-thirds majority vote, elects to move into executive session.
4. The Board of Deacons may establish an Executive Committee to act in extraordinary circumstances when the Board cannot meet. This committee shall be composed of the Moderator of the Board of Deacons or the Moderator's representative and three other members. All actions and significant deliberations of the committee shall be reported to the Board of Deacons at its next regular meeting.

5. One-third of the Board of Deacons shall constitute a quorum.

#### Section D: The Board of Trustees

The congregation shall have a Board of Trustees composed of all Trustees on active service.

##### Duties of the Board of Trustees:

1. The Board of Trustees shall have responsibility for the building, land and financial undertakings of this church. The Trustees shall also be responsible for developing and recommending to the Church Session all policies relating to the annual budget, stewardship development and special gifts. The Board of Trustees shall report to the Session on a monthly basis and at such other times as the Session may direct.
2. The Board of Trustees may create, mandate and dissolve such sub-committees as it deems necessary, and those committees must report to the Trustees on a regular basis.

##### Officers and Members of the Board Trustees:

1. The Board of Trustees may elect a Chair and Recording Secretary for a period of one year. A particular Board may elect other officers as it may determine are needed.
2. The number of Trustees shall be no fewer than six members unless otherwise determined by the congregation.
3. No member of the Board of Trustees shall serve more than six consecutive years on the Board.

##### Meetings of the Board of Trustees:

1. The Board of Trustees and its committees shall determine the time, place and frequency of their meetings, and they shall establish their own attendance policies.
2. The meetings of the Board of Trustees and its committees shall be open to all members of the congregation except when the Board of Trustees, by a two-thirds majority vote, elects to move into executive session.
3. The Board of Trustees may establish an Executive Committee to act in extraordinary circumstances when the Board cannot meet. This committee shall be composed of the Chair of the Board of Trustees or the Chair's representative and two other members. All actions and significant deliberations of the committee shall be reported to the Board to Trustees at its next regular meeting.
4. One-third of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

#### Section E: The Nominating Committee

The congregation shall have a Nominating Committee composed of members as described below.

##### Duties of the Nominating Committee:

1. The Church Session, the Board of Trustees and the Board of Deacons shall inform the Nominating Committee on an annual basis of all committee vacancies on their respective boards along with the job descriptions for those vacancies. The Nominating Committee shall be notified by the boards at least two months prior to the Congregational Meeting.
2. The Nominating Committee shall nominate from the congregation on an annual basis those members who are scripturally qualified to serve this church on the Church Session, as Active

Ruling Elders, on the Board of Deacons, on the Board of Trustees and on the Nominating Committee according to 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

3. The Nominating Committee shall inform prospective candidates for the boards of the scriptural and denominational requirements of their respective offices, including committee responsibilities and attendance policies.
4. The Nominating Committee shall propose to the congregation only those candidates who have received at least a two-thirds majority approval from the Nominating Committee.
5. The Nominating Committee shall report to the congregation at the Congregational Meeting and at such other times as the Session may direct.

#### Members of the Nominating Committee:

1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of two members from the Church Session, one member from the Board of Trustees, one member from the Board of Deacons and four members from the congregation, eight members in all. The Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Committee without vote. The Nominating Committee shall be chaired by one of the Elder representatives.
2. The committee members from the congregation shall be elected by a majority vote of the congregation to a two-year term on a rotating basis. No member of the Nominating Committee shall serve more than four consecutive years.
3. Two-thirds of the members of the Nominating Committee shall constitute a quorum.

## **ARTICLE VI MEETINGS**

### Section A: Church Meetings

All meetings of the congregation shall follow the procedures set forth below:

1. Calling a meeting: The Church Session may call a congregational meeting when deemed necessary. Also, when at least one-fifth of the active membership of the congregation shall request a meeting in writing, the Church Session shall consider calling a meeting.
2. Notice of meeting: Prior notice shall be given at least two Sundays before the meeting. The purpose of the meeting must be stated in the call.
3. Agenda of meeting: Only those matters stated in the call may be presented and handled.
4. Moderator: The Session will appoint from its members a Moderator for the meeting. It is customary, but not necessary, that the Session should appoint the Pastor as Moderator.
5. Quorum for the meeting: If the active membership is less than 100 members, a quorum shall be one-fifth of the active membership. If the active membership is larger than 100, a quorum shall be one-tenth of the active membership, but not less than 20.
6. Clerk for the meeting: The Clerk of the Session shall ordinarily serve as clerk for the congregational meetings. In the absence of the clerk, the Moderator shall appoint a temporary clerk. It shall be the duty of the clerk to keep a record of the proceedings and business transacted. Such records shall be kept in a permanent form. After approval by the moderator of the meeting, the record shall be transmitted to the church Session for insertion in the minutes of that body.

7. Eligibility to vote: Those who are eligible to vote consist of those persons who are active members of the congregation as determined by the Session, and who are present at the meeting. The moderator of the congregational meeting may not vote.
8. Tie votes: When a matter has been put to the congregation and the vote results in a tie, the moderator shall put the question a second time. If there is still a tie, the matter shall be declared defeated.

#### Section B: Election Meeting

Each year the Church Session shall call an election meeting of the congregation to elect officers. At this meeting elections will be held to determine new members of the Church Session, the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees, and the Nominating Committee. Each election will begin with a slate of nominees put forth by the Nominating Committee. In addition to those candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee, candidates may be nominated from the floor by an active member of the congregation. In order to be elected, candidates for the Session and any board or committee must receive a majority vote of the active members present in person and voting at the election meeting. The date for the election meeting shall be determined by the Church Session.

#### Section C: Annual Meeting

Each year the Church Session shall call an Annual Meeting. At this meeting the congregation will consider the annual budget, receive and discuss reports from all active boards, committees and organizations in the church and may consider other business as determined by the Session. The date for the annual meeting shall be determined by the Session.

## **ARTICLE VII CHURCH PERSONNEL**

The Church Session, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, is responsible for the overall direction of the church personnel of the congregation.

#### Section A: Pastors

A Pastor or Associate Pastor of the congregation may be called by the congregation. The Senior Pastor is responsible for the day-to-day direction of all church personnel.

#### Section B: Other Personnel

The Executive Committee, as defined by the Personnel Manual, in consultation with the Church Session and with the advice of the Board of Trustees, may call other persons to ministry to serve as church personnel, such as: Assistant Pastor, Youth Minister, Minister of Christian Education, Campus Minister, Church Secretary, Church Custodian and such others as the Executive Committee may designate.



## **ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS**

These By-laws may be amended at any congregational meeting of the members of the church by a two-thirds vote of the active members present in person voting in favor of the amendment, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been read at each regular Sunday morning service for two consecutive Sundays immediately preceding the date on which the vote is taken, and the written text of the amendment is made available to all members two weeks prior to such vote.

## **ARTICLE IX CHURCH PROPERTY**

Mount Pleasant Community Church has ownership of its own property. It may buy, sell, lease, rent or otherwise determine the use of its property. It may incur debt and other legal obligations. However, care should be exercised that the good name and the reputation of the Church Universal not be harmed through unwise and imprudent management.

## **ARTICLE X INDEMNITY**

### Section A: Indemnification

A person who was or is a party, or threatened to be made a party, to any pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal, other than action by or in the right of the church corporation, by reason of the fact that the person is or was a director, officer, employee, or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation, shall be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, penalties, fines and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding, if the person acted in good faith and in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the corporation, and with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, if the person had no reasonable cause to believe that conduct was unlawful. Any indemnification, unless ordered by a court, shall be made by the corporation only as authorized in the specific case, upon a determination that indemnification is proper in the circumstances because the person has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth above.

### Section B: Volunteer Directors

A volunteer director (as defined in Act No. 162 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1982, as amended) of the corporation is not personally liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for a breach of the director's fiduciary duty, except that this provision shall not eliminate or limit the liability of a director for any of the following:

1. A Breach of the director's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members.
2. Acts or omissions not in good faith or that involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law.
3. A violation of Section 551 (1) of Act. No. 162 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1982, as amended.
4. A transaction from which the director derived an improper personal benefit.
5. An act or omission occurring before January 1, 1988.

6. An act or omission that is grossly negligent.

The corporation assumes all liability to any person other than the corporation, or its members, for all acts or omissions of a volunteer director occurring on or after January 1, 1988 incurred in the good faith performance of the volunteer director's duties.

Because of the provisions of this Article:

1. A volunteer director of the corporation shall only be personally liable for monetary damages for a breach of fiduciary duty as a director, to the corporation, or its members, to the extent set forth in this Article.
2. A claim for monetary damages for a breach of a volunteer director's duty to any person other than the corporation, or its members, shall not be brought or maintained against a volunteer director. Such a claim shall be brought or maintained instead against the corporation, which corporation shall be liable for the breach of the volunteer director's duty.
3. A "volunteer director" referred to in this Article shall mean a member of the church Session.

## **ARTICLE XI SETTLEMENT OF AFFAIRS UPON DISSOLUTION**

Upon the dissolution of Mount Pleasant Community Church, its outstanding legal obligations shall be paid as soon as practicable, and its remaining assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes and to such organizations described in Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provisions of future such law.