

BYLAWS
of
APPLEWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH,
AN EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH

ARTICLE I
Membership

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of membership is to join with other followers of Christ in building a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, race, age, culture, and class. In so doing, the membership covenants together to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ – evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

Section 2. Responsibilities. The members of this church covenant together by God’s grace to live lives consistent with the standards of biblical teaching, including the support of this congregation in attendance, prayer, service, and giving to live lives in word and deed that are an encouragement to others to know and be like Jesus Christ to reflect in all our relationships the servant love of our Lord and to support the broader mission of Christ through the ECC and the Midwest Conference.

Section 3. Admission to membership.

- a. Membership in the church is granted to those who through faith in God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations.
- b. The applicants should complete a course in a New Member's Class or Confirmation Class after which they will appear before the Leadership Team to give a confession of their Christian faith according to Article V of the Constitution. When their application has been reviewed and their testimonies received favorably, the Leadership Team will submit their applications to the next Congregational business meeting for action.
- c. Applicants who are affirmed into the membership of the Church will be welcomed at the next service of Holy Communion and will make public confession of their Christian faith, as outlined in A Book of Worship for Covenant Churches or a statement consistent with ARTICLES III, IV, and V of the Constitution of Applewood Community Church.

Section 4. Children. Children of the church will be nurtured under its spiritual care. They will receive instruction in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, using the confirmation/discipleship material of the ECC or other confirmation material as approved by the Leadership Team. At age 16, they may apply for church membership as outlined under Section 3 of this article.

Section 5. Non-Member Friends. Non-member parish friends will be considered by the Church as part of its body. The Church and its pastor(s) will serve them in all of their spiritual needs, and they will be encouraged to consider this as their church home. They will be kept informed of the activities of the Church. Non-member friends who have confessed their Christian faith may serve on Ministry Teams, but may not serve on the Leadership Team, vote at Congregational business meetings, or chair Standing Teams.

Section 6. Discipline.

- a. Erring members. Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct will be counseled according to the procedure outlined in the AWCC Policy on Church Discipline, consistent with Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. Any member having knowledge of such error will, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If the erring member does not heed this counsel, the matter will be brought to the attention of the Leadership Team in writing, which will in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member. The Leadership Team will also be responsible for admonishing members who willfully neglect their responsibilities to the church.
- b. Dismissal of a member under paragraphs a) of this section must be acted on by the Church, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a congregational business meeting is necessary for such action.

Section 7. Withdrawal and Removal of Membership. Any member desiring to transfer or withdraw from membership should make such request in writing to the Pastor or Leadership Team. Letters of transfer will be issued by the Pastor if so requested and the member is in good standing. The Leadership Team will annually review the membership roster to determine inactivity. Those determined to have neglected their responsibilities may be approached under the process outlined in Section 6 of this article.

Section 8. Recording. The names of those joining and terminating membership will be duly recorded and reported to the congregational meeting following action.

ARTICLE II CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Qualifications. Officers of the church will consist of Chairperson (hereafter called the Chair), Secretary, Financial Secretary, and Treasurer. Officers must be members in good standing who have demonstrated maturity in the Christian faith consistent with Titus 1:7-9, and who actively support the total ministry of the Church.

Section 2. Duties. The duties of each Officer of the Church will be defined by a specific written job description approved by the Leadership Team.

- a. Chair. The Chair will be a member of the Leadership Team and will preside at all Congregational business meetings. The Chair will confer with the Senior Pastor in preparing the agenda for such meetings. The Chair will also serve as chair of the Pastoral Relations Committee.
- b. Secretary. The Secretary will keep and preserve the minutes of all Congregational business meetings. The Secretary will distribute copies of the minutes to the members of the Leadership Team promptly after such meetings and post a copy for the Congregation. The Secretary will conduct and preserve all official correspondence that is delegated to the Secretary, and be responsible for the official seal and documents of the Church. The Secretary will perform other duties as assigned by the Leadership Team.
- c. Financial Secretary. The Financial Secretary will receive, record and deposit in the church bank account all funds contributed to the Church. The Financial Secretary will also be responsible for:
 - i. Maintaining confidential records for each contributor, and issuing reports annually to all known contributors, reflecting contributions received by the Church, according to church policy.
 - ii. Maintaining current and accurate records, subject to review, of all monies received and transmitting that information monthly to the Treasurer.
 - iii. Submitting monthly written reports of all income to the Leadership Team.
 - iv. Submitting a written report of annual income to the Annual Meeting, and to congregational business meetings if appropriate.
 - v. Performing other duties as assigned by the Leadership Team.
- d. Treasurer. The Treasurer is responsible for all funds committed to the Church and will make disbursements as authorized by the Leadership Team and or the appropriate ministry representative, according to church policy. The Treasurer will work closely with the Leadership Team in all matters involving the finances of the Church. The Treasurer will also be responsible for:

- i. Maintaining the financial records of the Church in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, providing a full and accurate accounting of all monies received and obligations incurred by the Church.
- ii. Accurately administering the banking procedures and accounts of the Church and the internal accounting procedures of the Church.
- iii. Administering the salaries of all Pastoral Staff and church employees, ensuring that all required salary deductions are withheld and paid to appropriate agencies.
- iv. Preparing an annual budget in consultation with the Leadership Team and ministry leaders, and monitoring all budget categories on a regular basis.
- v. Monitoring all investments and debts of the Church on a regular basis and maintaining an accurate inventory of all church properties.
- vi. Providing for an independent review of all Church accounts and bookkeeping records and procedures annually and whenever a new Treasurer takes office. Audits will be conducted as required by the Leadership Team.
- vii. Submitting monthly written reports of all expenditures to the Leadership Team.
- viii. Submitting a written report of church assets and liabilities to the Annual Meeting, and to congregational business meetings if appropriate.
- ix. Performing other duties as assigned by the Leadership Team.

Section 3. Election and Tenure. At the Annual Congregational Business Meeting, the Chair, Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer will be elected for terms of three (3) years in such a manner that the terms of one-quarter to one-half of those officers will expire each year. If an officer has been elected to two (2) full consecutive terms he or she will not be eligible for re-election until a minimum of one (1) year has passed. Officers will assume their positions when elected.

ARTICLE III LEADERSHIP TEAM

Section 1. Qualifications. Members of the Leadership Team will be members in good standing who have demonstrated maturity in the Christian faith consistent with Titus 1:7-9, and who are active in the support of the total ministry of the church, financially, and otherwise. As members of the Body of Christ, the Leadership Team should be composed of people who are not identical in gifts, but who represent the diversity of attributes that will together provide an effective

team. These attributes include but are not limited to organization, communication, creativity, focus, teamwork, and finance.

Section 2. Size, Composition, Election, and Tenure.

- a. The Leadership Team will consist of four (4) to six (6) members, including both men and women. The Senior Pastor will serve as an additional ex-officio member.
- b. Those members will include the church Chair, elected in accordance with ARTICLE III, Section 3, of the Bylaws. All members who are not serving ex officio will be elected at the Annual Meeting.
- c. Candidates for positions on the Leadership Team will be nominated by the Nominating Team. The Nominating Team will perform its duties in accordance with ARTICLE IV, Section 4 of the Bylaws.
- d. Leadership Team members will serve for terms of three (3) years in such a manner that the terms of approximately one-third of the members will expire each year. If a member has been elected to two (2) full consecutive terms, the member will not be eligible for re-election to the Leadership Team until a minimum of one (1) sabbatical year has passed. Leadership Team members will assume their positions when elected.
- e. Staff members and salaried employees are not eligible to be elected to the Leadership Team.

Section 3. Organization.

- a. At the Annual Congregational Business Meeting, the Congregation will elect new members to serve on the Leadership Team to replace those whose terms have expired or become vacant. With the exception of the Chair, Leadership Team members are not elected to specific areas of responsibility, but will allocate responsibilities after each election of new members.
- b. Following the Annual Congregational Business Meeting, the Leadership Team will convene to perform the following duties:
 - i. Elect from among the Leadership Team members a Vice-Chair and a Secretary of the Leadership Team for a term of one (1) year. The Vice Chair will assist the Chair, and in his or her absence, assume that office and its duties. The Secretary of the Leadership Team will keep and distribute minutes of the Leadership Team meetings to Leadership Team members, and post a copy for the Congregation.
 - ii. Appoint members or non-member friends to lead each Ministry Team and other committees as necessary, consistent with the Leadership Team's strategic vision of the church. These Ministry Team leaders will be appointed based upon prayerful consideration of the individuals' interest, gifts, talents, and calling. Non-member friends will meet the requirements of ARTICLE I, Section 5, of the Bylaws.

- iii. One member of the Leadership Team will act as liaison to the Financial Team.

Section 4. Vacancies.

- a. The position of a Leadership Team member who has more than three (3) consecutive unexcused absences at regular meetings of the Leadership Team may be declared vacant by the Leadership Team.
- b. A vacancy on the Leadership Team may be filled for the remainder of that year by the Leadership Team, if the total Leadership Team membership falls below the minimum prescribed in ARTICLE III Section 2. The Leadership Team (or its designees) will serve as the Nominating Committee and act on a slate of candidate(s) presented to the Leadership Team. If the remaining membership meets the minimum membership prescribed in ARTICLE III Section 2, the vacancy may be filled at the next Annual Meeting.
- c. A vacancy in the office of Church Chair will be filled for the remainder of that term by the Vice-Chair. At the next regular meeting of the Leadership Team a new Vice-Chair will be elected from among the remaining members of the Leadership Team to serve until the next Annual Meeting.

Section 5. Duties. The Leadership Team in its administrative responsibility will fulfill the functions defined by the Constitution and Bylaws, including the following:

- a. Pray for discernment and wisdom, to provide the Church with Spirit-led vision and direction.
- b. Pray about the current health of the Church as a body, and of each Ministry
- c. Assist the Senior Pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the Church.
- d. Approve the establishment or dissolution of ministries within the Church and maintain a list of Ministry Teams, their Leaders, and Leadership Team points of contact.
- e. Communicate with Ministry Leaders regularly to provide encouragement and support.
- f. Establish administrative and program policies.
- g. Supervise Church membership, including recommendations relative to reception or removal of members.
- h. Review and distribute to the congregation for approval the recommended annual budget prepared by the Financial Ministry Team.
- i. Oversee the schedule of the Church activities and facility use, as needed.
- j. Assist the Senior Pastor in supervising and reviewing the performance of all employees of the Church. Conduct the Annual Performance Review of the Senior Pastor.
- k. Review and approve job descriptions for each employee, Church Officer and Ministry Team.

Section 6. Ministry Teams. Ministry teams are the means by which the life and ministry of the congregation are put into practice. The Leadership Team will charter each Ministry Team, supply a brief statement of scope and goals, and appoint a leader to organize the activities of each Ministry Team. One Leadership Team member will be designated as the point of contact for each Ministry Team. Ministry Teams will execute their responsibilities at their own discretion and initiative, while keeping the Leadership Team informed through the point of contact. Any changes in scope or goals will be discussed with the point of contact and approved by the Leadership Team as a whole. Ministry Teams should look to the Leadership Team for resources and guidance, but not as a source of managerial direction. The Leadership Team will have the responsibility to form, modify, or disband Ministry Teams as the Leadership Team deems prudent for the life and ministry of the congregation.

ARTICLE IV STANDING TEAMS

Section 1. Pastoral Care and Accountability Team. The Pastoral Care and Accountability Team will consist of the Church Chair, the Senior Pastor, and at least one member of the congregation appointed by the Leadership Team. The team will meet regularly. The duties of this team will include prayer and care for the Senior Pastor.

Section 2. Financial Ministry Team. The Financial Ministry Team will be responsible for all financial activities under the responsibilities of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, as described in ARTICLE II, Section 2 of the Bylaws. The Leader of the Financial Ministry Team will be appointed by the Leadership Team. The Financial Ministry Team will consist of a Financial Ministry Team Leader, the Treasurer, and the Financial Secretary (either of whom may be designated Leader by the Leadership Team), and any other members or non-member friends of the church deemed necessary or useful by the Financial Ministry Team leader.

Section 3. Pastoral Search Team. The Senior Pastor will be nominated by a Pastoral Search Team. The nominee will meet the criteria set out in ARTICLE V, Section 2 of the Bylaws. This team will be elected by a congregational business meeting. It will be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members, including the Church Chair. It will work closely with the regional conference superintendent.

Section 4. Nominating Team. The Nominating Team will consist of the Church Chair, the Senior Pastor and not less than three (3) members who will be appointed by the Leadership Team. The Nominating Team members will elect the chair of the Nominating Team. The Nominating Team will be convened in September of each year for the purpose of prayerfully identifying and nominating candidates for the Leadership Team and vacant Church Officer positions for the coming year. The Nominating Team may be convened at other times during the year to fill vacancies, according to ARTICLE II, Section 3 and ARTICLE III, Section 2 of the Bylaws. The Nominating Team will:

- a. Confirm the willingness of each candidate to serve before presenting his or her name to the congregation.
- b. Prepare a complete slate for the Annual Congregational Business Meeting listing a candidate for each office to be filled. This list will be distributed to the congregation at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

Section 5. Other Special Teams. The Leadership Team or the congregation may establish a team to address a specific task. The team will report back to the body that formed it unless otherwise instructed by its founding body. The team will terminate upon the completion of its task.

ARTICLE V Pastoral and Ministry Staff

Section 1. Purpose. Pastoral and additional ministry staff servant-leadership positions are created to help the congregation fulfill Christ's purposes in the world and among its members.

Section 2. Pastoral Qualifications. Pastors of the church shall meet the qualifications for character, giftedness, and call set forth in the Holy Scriptures. The Senior Pastor shall be an ordained pastor in good standing with the ECC. Other pastors shall be credentialed by the ECC in accordance with their qualifications and duties. A pastor shall be a member of the church by virtue of the call to serve the church.

Section 3. Call of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be called at a regular or special congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two weeks in advance. The Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a pastoral search committee formed according to ARTICLE IV, Section 3. The Senior Pastor shall be called by written ballot with a two-thirds vote of members present and voting required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time. When the church receives aid from the conference and/or denomination through appropriations, the call shall be with the approval of the Midwest Conference.

Section 4. Call of Additional Pastors and Credentialed Ministry Staff.

Additional staff members to hold ministerial credentials shall be called at a congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The meeting shall include the budget implications of the proposed position. The Leadership Team will recommend one candidate for a call, and the vote shall be by written ballot, with two-thirds vote required for call. The Leadership Team may establish the search committee, and may serve as the search committee. When the church receives aid from the conference and/or denomination through appropriations, the call shall be with the approval of the Midwest Conference. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time unless otherwise noted at the time of call.

Section 5. Duties of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, provide missional leadership, and faithfully carry out pastoral work. The Senior Pastor shall direct the church staff, providing counsel, encouragement, and Christian discipline so as to assist in the accomplishment of objectives for each staff member. All staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be a member of the Leadership Team and an ex officio member of all ministry teams and committees and in such capacity shall strive to establish and accomplish objectives and strategies in conjunction with the mission and purpose of the church.

Section 6. Duties of Additional Pastors and Ministry Staff Members.

Additional pastors and ministry staff members shall carry out specific areas of ministry under the direction of the Senior Pastor. They may be designated by the Leadership Team to be the leader or member of one or more Ministry Teams.

Section 7. Cooperation. The pastor(s) shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the ECC, and the Midwest Conference.

Section 8. Resignation of a Pastor or Ministry Staff Member. A pastor or ministry staff member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Leadership Team. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, six weeks notice should be observed.

Section 9. Dismissal. The dismissal of a pastor or ministry staff member should be undertaken only after avenues of remediation have been pursued.

- a. Dismissal of the Senior Pastor. The dismissal of the senior pastor shall be by congregational vote at a special meeting called for that express purpose. Such an agenda item cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other meeting. The congregational meeting for such a vote may be called by the 2/3 action of the Leadership Team, or through the request of the congregation accomplished by a petition for such a meeting

signed by 20% of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The pastor shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to dismiss the senior pastor.

- b. Dismissal of Additional Pastors and Ministry Staff. Additional pastors and ministry staff called by the congregation may be dismissed by the 2/3 vote of the Leadership Team. A meeting to overturn the action of the Leadership Team may be called through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition signed by 20% of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The pastor or ministry staff member in question shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to overturn the action of the Leadership Team.

Section 10. Charges Against a Pastor. Charges against a pastor shall be submitted in writing to the Leadership Team and the Midwest Conference superintendent, charging a pastor with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the ECC. The superintendent shall confer with the ECC Executive Minister of the Ordered Ministry. These two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Ordered Ministry of the ECC regarding discipline, prior to further action by the church. A pastor or staff member credentialed by the ECC may be suspended by the ECC during this process. However, any minister who fails to become credentialed with the ECC may be suspended or recommended for dismissal at any time without prior notice by the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS

Section 1. Services. Church services will be conducted regularly on Sundays and, when deemed appropriate, on weekdays for worship, the preaching and teaching of God's word, and prayer.

Section 2. Celebrating the Sacraments. The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated at least monthly, or as determined by vote of the Leadership Team. The sacrament of baptism will be celebrated in keeping with Covenant policies and according to the needs of the constituency.

Section 3. Congregational Business Meetings. Congregational business meetings will be open to all church members and non-member friends.

- a. Congregational business meetings will be held not less than semiannually. Items as required by the Constitution and By-laws will be submitted for congregational action.
- b. An Annual Meeting will be held as near the first of the calendar year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting, written progress reports will be submitted by the pastor(s), ministry staff, financial officer, leadership and ministry teams. Election for members of the Leadership Team will be held. The church budget will be submitted for action, if it has not already been approved at a congregational meeting at the end of the previous calendar year.
- c. Notice of all congregational business meetings will be made available to the congregation not less than two weeks prior to the date of the meeting and will include the date, time and place of the meeting.
- d. Each church member present at a congregational business meeting will be entitled to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of the membership. All votes must be cast in person; vote by proxy will not be allowed.
- e. Special congregational business meetings may be called by the Leadership Team as specified in the Bylaws.
- f. Ten percent (10%) of the church membership, but not less than twenty-five (25) members, present and voting at a congregational business meeting properly called will constitute a quorum.
- g. All congregational business meetings will be conducted according to the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws.
- h. The congregation reserves for itself final authority in any matter of its choice. A member may advance an item to the agenda of a congregational business meeting by the majority vote of the membership at that meeting, providing that the item is not in conflict with the Constitution and Bylaws. An item brought to the agenda in this way will be decided by a majority vote of the membership, unless the item requires a different percentage as outlined elsewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws, in which case that percentage will be used.

Section 4. Leadership and Ministry Team Meetings. Regular meetings of the Leadership Team and Ministry Teams will be open to Church members and held not less than monthly, or at a frequency specified by the Leadership Team. Ad Hoc meetings of the Leadership Team, Ministry Teams, Standing Teams and other Special Teams may be called by their respective chairmen.

Section 5. Organizational Meetings. Meetings and activities of the organizations of the Church will be planned and conducted regularly under the direction and supervision of the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VII GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. The quorum for the Leadership Team, Ministry Teams, Standing Team and Special Team meetings will be a majority of their respective memberships, unless otherwise specified.

Section 2. All Church expenditures will be documented or vouchered in a manner specified by the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will have authority to make expenditures under the annual budget with the following limitations:

- a. Ministry Teams will maintain responsibility for expenditures budgeted under their respective areas in the approved annual budget.
- b. The Leadership Team may authorize expenditures that are not accounted for in the annual budget, provided that those expenditures do not exceed a total of two percent (2%) of the general fund budget each fiscal year.
- c. Any expenditure not covered by this Section must be approved by the Congregation at a congregational business meeting.
- d. The church fiscal year will be from January 1 through December 31.

ARTICLE VIII AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws not in conflict with the Constitution may be adopted at any regular Congregational Business Meeting or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Such amendment(s) must be presented in writing to the Leadership Team, which will bring the proposed amendment(s) before the Congregation at the next regular Congregational business meeting. The Congregation will vote on the proposed amendment(s) no less than sixty (60) days later, with a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting required for passage. When the Church receives aid from the regional conference and/or the Covenant through subsidy or loans, proposed amendments must also be

approved by the Regional Conference Board and the Executive Minister of the Department of Church Growth and Evangelism.

ARTICLE IX CLOSURE

Section 1. Action Needed. The congregation may terminate its existence by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

Section 2. Meeting Provisions. The decision whether or not to close the church cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other meeting. The congregational meeting for such a vote may be called by the Leadership Team or through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition for such a meeting signed by 20% of the membership.

Section 3. Notification. All members of the church must be notified of the meeting by first class mail, and electronically if possible, at least two weeks in advance.

Section 4. Quorum. The quorum for such a meeting shall be all members of the church who are present at the meeting.

Section 5. Asset Distribution. Upon the vote to close, the assets of the congregation shall be transferred according to Article VIII, section 3 of the Constitution of Applewood Community Church.

Section 6. Collaboration. Should congregational attendance stand below 25, the conference executive board may appoint an ex officio member to the Leadership Team.