

CONSTITUTION

**Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church Inc of Winkler
600 Southview Drive
Winkler, Manitoba R6W 2P7**

February 28, 2017

ARTICLE I - NAME

This organization shall be known as the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church, Inc.

ARTICLE II - DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

The Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church Inc. is a recognized member of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference of Canada. A liaison relationship shall also be maintained with other "missionary sending organizations" and relief agencies, when our members come under their jurisdiction in our missions and service outreach.

ARTICLE III - OWNERSHIP / TRUSTEES

A. Ownership

As a non-profit organization the Winkler EMM Church is owned by God who through the church members bears the responsibility for operating the Winkler EMM Church according to its mission statement.

B. Trustees

Trustees of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church shall be the voting members of Church Council.

C. Signing Authority of Legal Matters

Signing authority for legal matters shall be given to the Church Council chairman, Business & Administration Board chairman, and the church treasurer who will sign only with the approval of Church Council.

ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH

GOD

We believe in one God manifested as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; self-existing and eternal; the creator of all that exists. (Genesis 1 & 2; 21:33; Exodus 3:14; Isaiah 40:28; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19; 1 Timothy 1:17).

CHRIST

We believe in Jesus Christ, God incarnate; fully human and fully God; conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus died for our sins, was bodily resurrected from the grave, ascended into heaven, and will return to receive us unto Himself for eternity. (Matthew 1:18-2:12; 16:27; 25:31-46; Luke 1:30-39; 4:36-43; John 1:1-14; 14:13; Acts 2:24; Romans 8:34; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 15:3-4; Colossians 1:15-19; 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 9:24-26; 1 Peter 1:21; 3:18; 1 John 2:2; 5:20; Revelation 22:12-20).

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is God and has revealed Himself as a living spirit having personality. The Holy Spirit enables us to know and serve God. The Holy Spirit is an agent in regeneration and sanctification, and seals believers. (John 3:6,7; 14:17; 16:12-14; Acts 2:14-41; 5:3,4; 10:44,45; Romans 8:2-4; 1 Corinthians 2:11,12; 2 Corinthians 1:21-23; Ephesians 1:13;4:30; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 9:14).

MAN

We believe that man is a living soul created in the image and likeness of God. The bodies of regenerate people are the temple of the Holy Spirit, believers should glorify God with their bodies (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:1-8; 5:1; Romans 5:12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 15:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12).

SATAN

We believe that Satan is a personal being who is the arch enemy of God and seeks the eternal destruction of man. Evil originated with the fall of some angels in heaven. We believe evil, satanic and spiritual forces try to lead man astray. We believe that Satan was judged and defeated at the cross, and reserved for him is eternity in a lake of fire, which is his full and final judgment. (Job 1:6-12; Isaiah 14:12; Matthew 23:41; John 8:44; Jude 6; 2 Corinthians 2:11;11:13-15; Ephesians 6:12-16; Colossians 2:14-15; 2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 20).

SIN

We believe that original sin is conveyed from our first parents (Adam and Eve) onto their posterity by natural generation so that all who proceed from them in that way are conceived and born in sin. We believe that sin is any act or attitude by which man estranges himself from God. We believe that all have sinned and are in need of God's forgiveness. (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10,23; 6:23; 14:23; 5:12, 17-19; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 1:8-10).

SALVATION

We believe that genuine faith in Jesus Christ (which includes repentance) is the only means of salvation and that it is a gift of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ, His resurrection and His ascension constitute the only basis of salvation. Through faith in Jesus Christ, God justifies us which means He declares us righteous - innocent, perfect and pure. We believe in the Assurance of Salvation. The scriptures teach that the believer may have the assurance of possessing eternal life in Christ by faith and that the believer is kept by the power of God through abiding faith. (Acts 2:21; 11:18; Romans 4:25; 5:9,10; 6:4,5,23; 8:16; 10:9; Galatians 3:11; Ephesians 2:8; 5:13; Hebrews 9:22-28; 1 Peter 1:5,18,19; 1 John 3:14; Jude 24,25).

SANCTIFICATION

We believe Christians are sanctified both positionally and progressively. The Scriptures teach that the moment a man believes in Christ he is sanctified. The Scriptures further teach of the progressive sanctification of the believer which refers to the walk of the Christian and continues through life. (John 17:17; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 5:25-27; Hebrews 10:10; 1 John 1:1-9).

CHURCH

We believe that the Church is the body of Jesus Christ composed of all those who have been born of the Spirit of God. We believe that the church has been organized into local congregations. (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 13:1; John 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18-24).

DISCIPLESHIP

We believe discipleship is essential for the growth of the Church of Jesus Christ. Christians are to be disciples of Christ in all things including, following the example of Christ in all aspects of life whether personal, professional or social. Growing in maturity and Christlikeness through personal devotions and study as well as through the edification ministry of the local church which involves teaching, worship, and fellowship. Sharing the truth of the Gospel with the unsaved (evangelism), making disciples who in turn follow, grow, and share. (Matthew 28:19; Luke 9:23; Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 4:11-16; 5:1-2; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Peter 1:2-11; 2:21; 2 Peter 3:18; 1 John 3:17-18).

NON-RESISTANCE AND THE STATE

The church is an ambassador calling people to reconciliation with God. We are peacemakers proclaiming the good news of peace with God. We gain knowledge of peace with God through the study of God's word. We desire to model peace by actively seeking reconciliation between individuals and groups within the church. We support a non-violent approach to solving conflicts. We encourage governments to promote justice and compassion for their citizens. We believe in working for peace using peaceful means to the point of personal suffering and death. We present the Gospel with the love of Christ and like Christ we trust God for the victory. (Matthew 5:3-12; 18:15-20; Romans 12:14-21; 1 Corinthians 6:1-16; Ephesians 2:11-21).

FUTURE STATE

We believe in the rapture of the saints, the resurrection of the dead, and the reality of heaven, the eternal bliss of the righteous, and hell, the eternal punishment of the unrighteous. We believe in the judgment of the nations and the establishment of a Kingdom where Christ will rule. (Isaiah 2:1-4; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 16:25; John 11:25,26; 14:3; Acts 1:6,7; 1 Corinthians 5:53; 15:20-23, 53; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 1 Peter 13,4; Revelation 20:4-6,11-15; 21:8).

THE BIBLE

We believe in the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible as the Word of God and that it is the only reliable standard for our faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 22:18-19).

ORDINANCES

We believe that the baptism of the believer, upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ, is to be administered in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe in observing the Lord's Supper (communion) as a memorial of His broken body and His shed blood given as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. (Matthew 26:26-29; 28:19; Mark 16:16; 1Corinthians 11:23-26).

MARRIAGE

We affirm the sanctity and ideals of marriage as we believe the Bible teaches. God's plan for marriage is that a man and a woman share an exclusive, lifelong, committed relationship. We also believe that we are sin-broken people and that marriages suffer breakdown that can result in separation, divorce, and remarriage. The Bible notes only one exception following divorce that permits remarriage without adultery being attached to it - marital unfaithfulness. Remarriage on this ground will be contemplated only with the counsel and discernment of the congregational elders. We believe that same sex unions are sinful and are specifically forbidden in the Scriptures. (Gen 2:24, 25; Leviticus 18:22; Matthew 19:1-9; 1 Corinthians 7:1-5; Ephesians 5:21-33).

SANCTITY OF LIFE

We believe that all human life begins at conception and has essential value because people are created in the image of God. As such the meaningfulness of a person's life is not determined by their contribution to society, or their suffering. Because God ultimately creates and sustains our life, he therefore retains the right to determine its boundaries.

We firmly oppose as sinful any practice or method, counseled or administered, expressly and/or deliberately designed to terminate life such as abortion, euthanasia, or physician assisted suicide. We believe such practices to usurp God's authority.

Our biblical response to abortion, euthanasia, and physician assisted suicide is to affirm and encourage quality supportive care such as adoption and pregnancy care counseling for expectant women, and palliative care for those suffering terminal illness.

(Genesis 1:26, 27; Psalm 8:3-6; 90:1-12; 139:16; Job 14:5; Jeremiah 1:5.)

ARTICLE V - THE MEMBERSHIP

THE PURPOSE/MISSION

The Winkler EMM Church exists to establish and maintain a place of worship, to preach and teach the Word of God, to observe the ordinances of baptism and communion so as to connect people in deep meaningful Christian relationships that encourage the transformation of lives of its congregants into the image of Jesus Christ that impact the world.

STEWARDSHIP

The Winkler EMM Church (WEMMC) may receive and hold donations, bequests, property and funds from other sources and manage, control, rent, lease, sell, or otherwise dispose of any or all real

estate and any other property that is now in possession of the WEMMC from any source, and purchase any real estate or property that the WEMMC may deem advisable. It may also mortgage property and borrow money.

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP IN THE WINKLER EMM CHURCH

In order to become a member in the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church, a person must give evidence of having received Christ as Savior and Lord, be baptized upon that confession and subscribe to the purposes and practices of the church's life of discipleship.

An associate arrangement is available to persons who are members of another church, but who, because of residing temporarily in the Winkler area, would like to participate in the life of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church yet not severing the relationship with their church.

Membership in the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church terminates when a member is dismissed, a letter of transfer to another church has been issued or when a member withdraws of his/her own accord. Termination of membership, except in the case of death, shall always be communicated in writing to the member concerned.

Termination of membership for the person also means the loss of legal and official rights belonging to the WEMMC.

ARTICLE VII - DISCIPLINE

In case a member commits an offense against God, the church or another member, the offender must be dealt with in sincerity and love, motivated by the desire to win the individual back to fellowship with God and the church. The steps outlined in Matthew 18:15-20 should always be observed and exercised. If all redemptive measures fail the suspension or cancellation of membership shall be considered and acted upon. Membership may be regained upon church members' approval, although the nature of the offense may limit some membership privileges.

ARTICLE VIII - ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

All pastoral staff and Children's Ministry Director are non-voting members of all boards and committees except as noted.

A. Board Structure

1. Each board shall consist of at least three (3) members for the positions of chair, vice-chair, and secretary.
2. Terms of office for board members shall be three (3) years so staggered that at least one member's term expires annually resulting in an election to fill the vacancy.

3. All board members shall be elected at a fall membership meeting and shall organize themselves before the February annual membership meeting. The outgoing chair will officiate at the meeting where the reorganization occurs, and then will be relieved of his/her duties at the end of February. The new board members will have voting rights during the reorganization process.
4. In the event of a position on a board becoming vacant for any reason the Church Council shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. This partial term will not count towards the number of consecutive terms that an individual is able to serve. This appointment shall be confirmed at the next general membership meeting.
5. The board members elected at the fall membership meeting shall be invited to sit in on board meetings until the end of February, after which they take office in March.
6. Members of boards shall hold office for not more than three (3) consecutive terms but are eligible for election after a year's recess.
7. Members of boards shall be members of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.
8. Boards may work with "ad hoc" committees; and/or delegate work to individuals or groups (teams) when needed.
9. Each board shall prepare a proposed annual budget which the Business and Administration Board compiles and forwards to Church Council for examination and/or improvement and approval and then it is brought to membership for approval.
10. A board member can be only on one board at a time.
11. All boards should meet a minimum of seven (7) times a year.
12. An employee or his/her spouse may not be a member of a board or the Church Council, with the exception of the Elder Board where the pastors have a vote.

B. Committee Structure

1. Each committee shall consist of at least three (3) members who shall organize themselves for the position of chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary.
2. Terms of office for committee members shall be three (3) years so staggered that at least one member's term expires annually resulting in an election to fill the vacancy.

3. Committee members shall be elected at a fall membership meeting and be organized before the annual February membership meeting. The outgoing chair will officiate at the meeting where the reorganization occurs, and then will be relieved of his/her duties at the end of February. The new committee members will have voting rights during the reorganization process.
4. The newly elected committee members shall be invited to sit in on committee meetings until the end of February after which they take office in March.
5. In the event of a position on a committee becoming vacant for any reason the Church Council shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. This partial term will not count towards the number of consecutive terms that an individual is able to serve. This appointment shall be confirmed at the next general membership meeting.
6. Members of committees shall hold office for not more than three (3) consecutive terms but are eligible for election after a year's recess.
7. Members of committees shall be members of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

C. **Honorary Membership**

1. Honorary membership to boards or committees will be conferred only upon nomination and election at the annual February membership meeting. Nominees for honorary membership should have contributed exceptional service over an extended period of time.
2. Honorary members will serve in an advisory capacity only, and therefore, will not be eligible to hold office or vote at board or committee meetings.
3. Honorary members may withdraw from serving at their discretion.

D. **Representation**

1. Committee chairs shall report to their respective boards. If the chair is unable to attend the meeting the vice-chair may represent the committee.
2. Boards shall be represented on the Church Council by the chair, if the chair is unable to attend the meeting the vice-chair shall be appointed to represent the board at that meeting.

3. Representatives for Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church sitting on boards or committees outside of our church shall be members of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

E. **Conflict of Interest**

1. Persons finding themselves in a situation where they or their family members might be beneficiaries of a decision that is made should recuse (excuse) themselves from the meeting.

F. **Policy Book**

1. The Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church will use policies in its governance system. Policies will address various areas of church life and give guidance and expectations to follow in decision making.
2. These policies will be kept in a Policy Book that Church Council will be responsible for.
3. All policies shall be filtered through and align with this constitution.
4. All policies will be reviewed, amended as necessary, and accepted by Church Council.

G. **Church Council**

1. **Organization**

The Church Council consists of the chair of Business and Administration Board, Education Board, Elder Board, Mission Board and four (4) additional members who shall be elected from and by the membership-at-large at the fall membership meeting. The term of office of these four (4) members shall be: three (3) years, staggered so that there is an election each year.

The pastoral staff and Children's Ministry Director are ex-officio members of Church Council and along with the Church Council secretary and church treasurer,(who are appointed) do not have voting rights.

A quorum is six (6) voting members of Church Council.

2. **Duties**

Church Council, accountable and subject to the membership shall:

- a) coordinate the work of the various boards of the church and designate assignments relative to administration and operation of the church;
- b) arrange and call a minimum of two (2) membership meetings annually;
- c) call special membership meetings when needed;
- d) appoint one of the elected members of Church Council to the Personnel Committee;
- e) appoint a church treasurer annually;
- f) appoint a Church Council secretary annually;
- g) appoint auditors for all church treasuries annually;
- h) review the Church Constitution bi-annually and make changes as needed.

BOARDS

H. Elder Board

1. Organization

The board consists of the pastoral staff and five (5) elected members from church membership. They shall organize themselves annually for the position of chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The chair and vice-chair shall be one of the elected members of the board. The pastoral staff has voting rights on the Elder Board but must recuse (excuse) themselves from voting on any issue that puts them in a conflict of interest. A quorum shall be five (5) members of the board of which three (3) must be from the elected members.

2. Duties

The board shall:

- a) ensure and oversee the teaching and preaching of the Bible in respect to its purity, completeness and accuracy in all areas of church life;
- b) plan and conduct worship services;
- c) work together with the pastoral staff in coordinating and conducting visitation and counseling;
- d) be actively involved in promoting evangelism;

- e) plan and conduct the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- f) appoint one of the elected members of the Elder Board to the Personnel Committee.

I. **Mission Board**

1. **Organization**

The board shall consist of five (5) members who will organize themselves annually for the position of chair, vice-chair, and secretary. A quorum shall be three (3) members of the board.

2. **Duties**

The Mission Board shall:

- a) aggressively promote missions in the local congregation;
- b) arrange for lodging, meals and transportation for missionary speakers;
- c) plan and conduct Mission Sunday services;
- d) work in harmony with the EMM Conference mission programs;
- e) support and encourage missionaries sent from the local congregation.

J. **Education Board**

1. **Organization**

The board shall consist of five (5) members who will organize themselves annually for the position of chair, vice-chair, and secretary. A quorum shall be three (3) members of the Education Board.

2. **Duties**

The Education Board shall:

- a) oversee the Family Faith Development team;
- b) oversee the mid-week clubs;
- c) oversee the library team;
- d) oversee the curriculum, material and teaching of the Sunday School, mid-week clubs, and summer ministries;

- e) oversee the application and monetary distribution of bursaries.

K. Business and Administration Board

1. **Organization**

The board shall consist of five (5) members who will organize themselves annually for the position of chair, vice-chair, and secretary. The church treasurer will be an ex-officio member of the board. A quorum shall be three (3) voting members of the Business and Administration Board.

2. **Duties**

The Business and Administration Board shall:

- a) maintain the buildings and grounds including fixtures;
- b) handle the finances of the church;
- c) receive the proposed budgets of the various boards of the church and prepare the proposed annual budget of the church, which is forwarded to Church Council for review and acceptance;
- d) oversee the budget, and monitor income and expenses;
- e) appoint three (3) members of the Business and Administration Board who along with the Church Treasurer will have signing authority for church finances. A minimum of two (2) people will sign all cheques and electronic funds transfer;
- f) with the exception of ministerial staff, hire and arrange duties and salary of all other staff;
- g) appoint one of the elected members of the Business and Administration Board to the Personnel Committee;
- h) supervise the purchase of assets for the church.

L. Standing Committees

1. **Discernment Committee**

a) **Organization**

The Discernment Committee shall consist of four (4) members appointed by the Church Council. The Discernment Committee reports to Church Council.

b) **Duties**

The Discernment Committee shall:

- 1) find people for the elections at the fall meeting for all the various openings available;
- 2) find people for positions vacated during the year for whatever reason and forward the names to Church Council for approval;
- 3) help find volunteers for church run programs;
- 4) keep an up to date list of when terms expire for the various positions.

2. **Personnel Committee**

a) **Organization**

The committee shall consist of one (1) elected member from Church Council, one (1) elected member from the Elder Board and one (1) elected member from the Business and Administration Board. The appointments shall be made at the time that the boards restructure at their February meetings. Authorization of the appointments shall come from Church Council. The Personnel Committee reports to the Church Council.

b) **Duties**

The Personnel Committee shall:

- 1) review and negotiate the annually salary review of all staff;
- 2) be a liaison between staff and the congregation;
- 3) conduct evaluations of all staff.

3. **Deacon Committee**

a) **Organization**

The Deacon Committee shall consist of six (6) positions. The Deacon Committee reports to the Elder Board. Male or female, single or married couples are welcome to be deacons/deaconesses. A couple will be considered as one position.

b) **Duties**

The Deacon Committee shall:

- 1) assist in meeting the practical needs of church members;
- 2) organize the visitation program.

4. **Music Committee**

a) **Organization**

The Music Committee shall consist of five (5) elected members who report to the Elder Board.

b) **Duties**

The Music Committee shall ensure that:

- 1) all musical equipment is cared for;
- 2) musicians are scheduled for Sunday morning services and other events as needed.

M. **Team Structure**

1. A team will consist of a group of people that will fulfill duties that are assigned to it.
2. The team structure will vary depending on the duties it is required to fulfill.

N. **Hiring of New Ministerial Staff**

The candidate must be approved firstly by the Elder Board, secondly by the Church Council and thirdly by the church membership. At the church membership meeting 75% or more of ballots cast shall constitute approval.

O. **Membership Meetings**

1. Notice of all membership meetings must be given at least two (2) consecutive Sunday worship services prior to the date of the meeting.
2. All motions regarding money matters must have approval of at least 75% of the votes cast.
3. A quorum for a membership meeting will be a minimum of at least sixty (60) members of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

P. **Vision Based Ministry & Ministry Teams**

1. Ministry teams for special needs and projects are encouraged and may be developed when two (2) or more church members bring a proposal to the Church Council. This proposal must:
 - a) respond to an identified need;
 - b) be in harmony with the mission and purpose of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church;
 - c) be approved by Church Council;
 - d) be accountable by way of providing information and reporting to the church membership.

Q. **Staff and Volunteer Expectations**

All staff and volunteers will hold to the statement of faith of the Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

R. **Rescinding and Replacement Procedure**

Changes to major money decisions passed at membership meetings shall be made providing that:

1. a rescinding motion has been piloted through the Church Council;
2. a replacement motion has been accepted by Church Council for presentation to the membership;
3. the proposed rescinding action and the replacement motion have been publicized in the church bulletin and announced at least one (1) Sunday morning worship service(s) prior to a membership meeting;
4. both the rescinding and replacement motions are accepted by at least 75% of the votes cast.

S. **Amendments**

Any changes to Winkler Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church's statement of faith whether in this constitution, policies or other adopted procedures shall be brought to church membership for a vote of acceptance. The vote should follow the same procedure as outlined below in making a change to the constitution.

This constitution may be altered by any regular or special membership meeting provided that:

1. the proposed alteration has been announced at least four (4) Sundays before the meeting;
2. the proposed alteration receives the approval of at least 75% of the votes cast.

T. **Enacting Clause**

This constitution and by-laws become effective immediately upon acceptance by the membership, unless a specific date has been set by the membership. It shall supercede all previous practices that are in conflict with it. All elected officers shall continue to serve under the constitution until their elected term is completed.

FLOW CHART

**Jesus Christ
(our Head)**

