

# CONSTITUTION OF WAKEMAN CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Adopted on January 29, 2023.

## Article I - Name

The name of this church is the Wakeman Congregational Church.

## Article II - Mission and Values

### Section 1. Mission

The mission of Wakeman Congregational Church is to glorify God by making disciples in Wakeman and the surrounding area, calling them into a devoted community of worshipping and maturing believers; teaching, learning, and growing together in obedience to Christ; investing in one another; and sending them out to be salt and light in the community and the world.

### Section 2. Core Values

Scripture – The Bible is the final and definitive revelation of God to man which teaches what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.

Jesus Christ - Jesus Christ is the Son of God, whose life and ministry are unique and necessary to the salvation of man and thus our goal is to know Christ and to make Him known.

Regeneration - The new birth is necessary to membership in the body of Christ and to discipleship. We emphasize this truth in our worship, our teaching, and our ministries.

Discipleship - Becoming and making mature followers of Jesus Christ is the chief duty of the church and of its members. We do this by introducing people to Christ and helping them to know Him, investing in them, and teaching them in word and deed.

Family - The family is of divine origin and foundational to making disciples so that the church supports and strengthens the family in its ministry to all ages.

Fellowship - Fellowship is a key element of Christian growth and to strengthening the church and to incorporating believers into the church.

Community - We love the community in which God has placed us and desire as a church community and as church members to seek the good of our community.

Music and Arts - Music and arts are gifts of God and signs of His blessing and we desire to use music and arts to glorify God and benefit our community.

### Section 3. Statement of Faith

We believe that God revealed Himself to humankind through the scriptures, consisting of the Old and New Testaments. We believe the Scriptures are inspired by God and therefore without error and authoritative over our lives.

We believe there is one God, revealed in three distinct persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all equally and eternally God.

God called the worlds into being, creates persons in His own image, and sets before each one the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges people and nations by His righteous will, declared through prophets and apostles.

Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, born of the virgin Mary, our crucified and risen Savior, came to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death. Jesus ascended into Heaven where He sits at the right hand of His Father. Jesus will return to earth for a final judgement for all peoples.

God bestows on us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

#### Section 4. Covenant

As we confess our faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ our Savior, willing to be guided by the Holy Spirit, we promise, as members of Wakeman Congregational Church, to walk together as Christian brothers and sisters. We promise to be obedient to God's living Word, to work, to worship, and to serve together so that the love and the faith of Jesus Christ will be expressed through our lives and our church.

#### Section 5. Doctrine

This church recognizes the Word of God as recorded in the Bible as the source of faith and practice. Each member has the privilege and responsibility to follow the Word of God according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The following statements summarize our understanding of the Bible in the following areas:

**The Bible** - We believe that the Bible is God's Word. It was written by men who were inspired by God and led by His Spirit. Therefore, it is inerrant, authoritative, infallible and applicable to our everyday lives. (2 Timothy 3:14-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

**God** - We believe that there is one eternal God who is the Creator of all things. He exists in three distinct persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11, Luke 3:21-22)

**Jesus** - We believe that Jesus is the one and only Son of God. He was with God at the beginning and was born into this world through the Virgin Mary. He is both God and man. Because of His sinlessness and sacrificial death on the cross, He is the only one who can reconcile us to God and assure us victory in this life. (John 1:1-2, 14; Philippians 2:5- 8; Luke 1:26-38; Hebrews 7:26; Acts 2:22-24; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 1:9-11)

**The Holy Spirit** - We believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within every Christian and provides the power for living a life that pleases God. We also believe that the Holy Spirit gives gifts accordingly so that the body of Christ might be built up into full maturity. (John 14:25-26; John 16:12-15; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Ephesians 5:18)

**Mankind** - We believe that all people are created in the image of God to have fellowship with Him. But because of their sin and rebellion, they are alienated from God. A person is incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through his or her own effort. However, a relationship with Him is possible through God's grace. (Genesis 1:27; Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; Ephesians 2:8-9)

Salvation - We believe that the blood of Jesus Christ provides the sole basis for the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, only those who truly place their faith in Jesus' sacrifice on the cross will be saved. Salvation is a free gift and cannot be earned. Those who trust in Jesus Christ are to repent of their sins, confess their belief in Him, and follow the Lord in Christian baptism. (John 3:16; Romans 10:13-15; Galatians 3:26-27; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 22:16; Matthew 28:19-20)

The Christian Life - We believe that all Christians should live for Christ and not for themselves. By obeying God's commands as found in the Bible and by yielding daily to the Spirit of God, every believer should mature and be conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:20- 26; 2:1-7; John 14:23-24; Romans 12:1-3)

Eternity - We believe that those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ will live eternally with God (heaven), and that those who have not placed their faith in Jesus will live eternally without God (hell). (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:1- 15; 21:8)

The Church - We believe that the church is the body of Christ, of which Jesus Christ is the head. The purpose of the church is to glorify God by loving Him and by making Him known to the lost world. We gather each Lord's Day, as did the early church, for the purposes of study, fellowship, and prayer. We also live out our faith during the week that God may be glorified, and people may see Christ in us. (Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 20:7).

Marriage - We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created mankind as male and female. These complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27) We believe marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in an exclusive union, as seen in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25)

Human Life - We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139)

This doctrinal statement does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, the inspired and infallible Word of God, speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, and is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Pastor and Church Council are Wakeman Congregational Church's final interpretive authorities on the Bible's meaning and application.

#### Article III – Governance of the Church

Those policies and procedures established by the Church are contained in these statements. They are subject to change by the church in accordance with due process herein.

1. The Bible is the authority for Christ's church. Where His Word speaks, His church submits. Where His Word is silent, His church is at liberty to establish policies and procedures for maintaining all things decently and in order and providing for things honest in the sight of all.
2. Believing in the freedom and responsibility of this Church to govern itself according to New Testament principles, Wakeman Congregational Church shall remain autonomous and

independent as a congregational church. The ultimate responsibility for governance rests with its members, who exercise the right of control in its affairs.

3. Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the following matters require a vote of the members of Wakeman Congregational Church: (1) the hiring and removal of pastors; (2) the election and removal of the Moderator, members of the Diaconate, Treasurer and members of the Board of Trustees; (3) the approval of the annual budget; (4) the purchase, sale or mortgaging of real property; (5) amendments to this Constitution; and (6) the disbanding of the Church.
4. Wakeman Congregational Church understands the benefits arising from the free fellowship of likeminded churches and will endeavor to participate with such churches as opportunities arise.
5. All organizations related to the church and using its facilities will be under the general supervision of the Church Council.

#### Article IV - Worship Services

Section 1: Worship Services will be held each Sunday at set hours unless temporarily suspended by a vote of the Church Council. Additional services may be held upon the recommendation of the Pastor and the Diaconate.

Section 2: The ordinance of the Lord's Supper will be celebrated at such times as the Pastor and the Diaconate determine. Baptisms will be performed by the Pastor or interim Pastor.

#### Article V - Membership

##### Section 1: Requirements for membership

The membership of this Church is open to all people of the Christian faith who seek fellowship with God and man and growth in the Christian life. Becoming and making mature followers of Jesus Christ is the chief duty of members.

The requirements for membership in the Church are:

- Confession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
- Membership classes with the Pastor or a lay leader.
- Public declaration of adherence to the Church Covenant and this Constitution during a worship service.
- Commitment to attend worship services.
- Commitment to fellowship with other members of the congregation as often as possible.

##### Section 2: Membership Rights

Members are eligible to vote on any matter coming before the congregation and to serve as officers, deacons and trustees.

Membership in the church may be terminated in the following ways:

- By transfer. A member may transfer his/her membership to another church. Any member wishing to transfer to another church should advise the Pastor or Diaconate. A letter of transfer to another church will then be issued by the Pastor, and recorded by the clerk.

- By request. A member may request that his/her name be removed from the church membership list. Any requests for membership removal will be recorded by the clerk.
- By dismissal. A member may be disciplined or dismissed for (1) conduct inconsistent with biblical teaching; (2) disturbing the unity of the church; (3) displaying behavior detrimental to church members, or values; or (4) intentional interference with the ministry of the congregation. Before the discipline or dismissal of a member takes place, the Pastor and Diaconate should proceed through these steps, as necessary:
  - An investigation by the Pastor to determine the reason for the member's conduct, and then private counsel with the Pastor,
  - Censure of the member by the Pastor in the presence of the Moderator and one or two members of Diaconate,
  - Referral of the matter to the Diaconate board,
  - If Diaconate determines, by majority vote, that the membership should be dismissed, the specific charges against the accused member will be prepared in a signed statement.
  - A copy of the written charges will be provided to the accused member, and he/she will be given the opportunity to reply to the charges.
  - If the issue still cannot be resolved, this statement will be submitted to a panel of five people, including the Pastor, Moderator, a Diaconate board member, a Trustee board member, and a local outside minister (the accused will be given the opportunity to choose who this is).
  - After the panel meets, within at least 30 days after the matter has been submitted, one of the following actions will be taken:
    - To take action against the member, four members of the panel have to vote to terminate his/her membership. The member will be provided with a signed statement from panel members of their decision, and will be terminated from membership in the congregation.
    - If there are not four votes to terminate the membership, the member will retain his/her membership, and no action will be taken. The member will be provided with a signed statement from panel members of their decision.
- By procedure. If a member does not attend church services or support the church financially with a monetary donation for a period of one year, Diaconate will contact that member to encourage them to attend church services. If the member does not wish to attend services at Wakeman Congregational Church, Diaconate should then inquire if he/she still wants to maintain a membership with the Wakeman Congregational Church. If the member indicates to Diaconate that he/she wishes to remain a member, no action will be taken. If the member indicates in a signed statement that he/she no longer wants to be a member, Diaconate may vote to direct the clerk to remove that member from the church membership list. If three attempts to contact a non-attending member result in no response, Diaconate will present documentation of those attempts (including dates and methods of contact) to the clerk, and may vote to direct the clerk to remove that member from the church membership list.

## Article VI - Congregational Meetings

Section 1: The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held in January of each year at a time and date set by the Church Council. Notice of the Annual meeting (Article XI Section 6) will be given orally from the pulpit, printed in the bulletin, mailed, or emailed to each member at least two weeks before the meeting. The purpose of the Meeting is to hear reports from officers and committees, to approve a budget, to make plans for the new year, and to conduct any other business requiring the attention of the congregation. The fiscal year for the Church will begin February 1 of each year. Salaries will continue at the previous level until a new budget is approved.

Section 2: Special congregational meetings may be called by the Pastor, the Moderator or a majority of the Church Council. Additionally, any ten members may call for a congregational meeting. Any such request must be signed and submitted in writing to the Moderator and must describe the purpose of the meeting. If the Moderator determines that the signatures are valid, he or she shall schedule a date for the meeting.

Section 3. Notice of any congregational meeting must state the purpose, time and place of the meeting. Except as noted in Article VI Section 1 and Article XV, notice will be given orally from the pulpit, printed in the bulletin, mailed, or emailed to each member at least seven days before the meeting.

Section 4: The Moderator will preside at all congregational meetings. In the absence of the Moderator, the Chair of the Diaconate, the Vice Chair of the Diaconate or the Chair of the Board of Trustees (in that order) will preside.

Section 5: Those members present at a duly called and advertised meeting constitute a quorum.

Section 6: Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution, action may be taken by the simple majority of members present at the meeting.

Section 7: Members have the option to attend meetings virtually and/or vote by electronic means (EV), as long as they have a virtual visual presence and vocal engagement in the meeting discussion. Church council shall be responsible for establishing and defining further guidelines applicable to this procedure.

## Article VII – Pastors

Section 1. The rights of the Church's Pastor are as discussed in the Pastor's written employment contract.

Section 2. The duties of the Church's Pastor are as discussed in the Pastor's written employment contract, which will include, but not be limited to: (1) have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church and the church membership; (2) preach the gospel and seek to enlist men and women as followers of Christ; (3) administer the services of the church in cooperation with the various boards and committees; (4) visit membership during times of well-being and times of crisis, and (5) shall ordinarily attend all meetings of the church.

Section 3. The Pastor may attend and participate in meetings of the Church Council, Diaconate, the Board of Trustees and all Church committees but shall have no vote on any issue coming before the Church Council, Diaconate, the Board of Trustees or Church committees.

Section 4. When a temporary vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Diaconate will make arrangements for an interim Pastor to serve on either a long-term or short-term basis.

Section 5. To fill a vacancy in the pastorate, the Moderator and Church Council will appoint a Pastoral Search Team (PST), which will consist of at least three and up to five members of the Church. Officers of the Church may serve as members of the PST. The PST will solicit applicants for the open position, conduct interviews as they deem appropriate, and recommend at least one but not more than three candidates for the position. The recommendation(s) of the PST then go to the Moderator, Diaconate and Church Council for consideration. The Moderator and Church Council may accept or reject any or all of the PST's recommendation(s). If accepted, the Moderator and Church Council will invite one candidate recommended by the PST to give a sermon at a regular Sunday service. If a majority of the PST, Moderator and Church Council are then in agreement on that single candidate, they will propose the election of that candidate at a Special congregational meeting. If at least 2/3 of members who are present at the Special meeting vote to select the candidate, the congregation will call the applicant to serve as Pastor. If at least 2/3 of members present at the Special meeting fail to approve the recommended candidate, a majority of the PST, Moderator and Church Council will then recommend another candidate and the same process will occur.

Section 6. The call to serve will be confirmed by a written employment contract, to be signed by the Moderator and the candidate. The contract shall set forth the terms of employment of the Pastor.

Section 7. The Pastor may be removed from that position as follows.

- The employment contract of the Pastor expires by its own terms.
- If the Moderator, members of the Church Council, or a group of ten or more members believes that the Pastor has failed to comply with his/her obligations under the employment contract or that there exist other reasons why the Pastor should not continue to serve in the position:
  - They will contact the Pastor and discuss their concerns and attempt to resolve them, affording the Pastor a full and fair opportunity to be heard.
  - If applicable, the process discussed in Matthew 18:15-18 should be followed.
  - If the issues cannot be resolved by agreement, the matter will be referred to Church Council, who by a majority vote of members present may recommend to the congregation that the Pastor be terminated.
  - If that recommendation is made, the matter will come to the congregation at a special meeting to be called pursuant to Article VI, Section 2 of this constitution. At any such meeting, proponents and opponents of termination should be afforded full opportunity to be heard. Upon motion by a member, the matter of the termination of the Pastor shall be called for a vote. To terminate the Pastor, a vote of 2/3 of members present at the meeting is required.

Section 8. The Moderator and a majority of Church Council may decide and vote that additional Pastors are needed. The selection of that pastor shall be carried out according to the same procedures as provided above.

Article VIII - Officers of the Wakeman Congregational Church

Section 1: All elected officers must be members of this church.

Section 2: Officers can only be removed from their position before the expiration of his or her term only by a vote of 2/3 of members present at a congregational meeting.

Section 3: Moderator

The Moderator serves as the chief officer of the Church. He or she: (a) presides at all congregational and church council meetings; (b) shares with the Pastor the responsibility for the general welfare of the Church; (c) serves as the lay spokesperson of the Church as necessary.

The Moderator will be elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. He or she will serve a two-year term and is eligible to serve one additional consecutive term.

If the Moderator leaves or vacates that position, the Chair of the Diaconate, the Vice Chair of the Diaconate or the Chair of the Board of Trustees (in that order) will assume that position for the remainder of the term.

If the Moderator is temporarily unable to perform the duties of the position, the Chair of the Diaconate, the Vice Chair of the Diaconate or the Chair of the Board of Trustees (in that order) will assume those duties.

Upon authorization by the congregation and/or the Board of Trustees, the Moderator may execute any contract or any document required for the management, acquisition and transfer of property.

Upon authorization by the Church Council or Board of Trustees, the Moderator may execute any other contract for the benefit of the Church.

To fill a vacancy in the pastorate, the Moderator and Church Council will appoint a Pastoral Search Team (PST) to conduct a search and to fill the position as discussed in Article VII, Section 5 of this Constitution.

If a vacancy occurs on the Board of Trustees, the Moderator has the authority to appoint a successor to fill the remainder of the that person's term.

Except as noted in Article VI, Section 6 of this Constitution, the Moderator has the authority to appoint members to open positions of all committees.

The Moderator may attend and participate in meetings of the Diaconate, the Board of Trustees and all Church committees. Except as specified in this Constitution, the Moderator shall have no vote on any issue coming before the Church Council, Diaconate, the Board of Trustees or Church committees.

Section 4: Clerk.

The Church Clerk will be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms. The clerk will keep a record of the proceedings of all congregational and Church Council meetings. The Clerk will also keep the register of the following: names and addresses of members of the Church, dates and modes of their reception or departure from the Church, baptisms, deaths, and marriages. The Clerk will report the above information at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Section 5: Financial Secretary



The Financial Secretary will be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms. The duties of the Financial Secretary include: (1) receiving all payments on current expenses, offerings and special collections; (2) keeping records of contributions and other revenue received by the Church; (3) at least weekly, depositing all funds into accounts designated by the Board of Trustees with instructions to forward a copy of the deposit slip to the Treasurer; (4) providing the Treasurer a weekly statement of funds showing the purpose for which they were given.

#### Section 6: Treasurer

The Treasurer will be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms. The duties of the Treasurer include: (1) receiving all funds from the Financial Secretary as recorded by a deposit slip to the account of the Wakeman Congregational Church from the accounts designated by the Board of Trustees; (2) keeping a record of the total amounts received from various sources according to totals shown on reports from the Financial Secretary; (3) having responsibility for disbursing salaries and amounts due for utilities and other obligations as provided for in the annual budget; (4) disbursing other funds of the church upon a pay order from the Board of Trustees issued at their meeting; (5) cooperatively assist with the audit process; and (6) manage investment accounts.

#### Section 7. Historian

The Church Historian will be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of two years and is eligible to serve consecutive terms. The Historian will keep a journal of all occurrences of interest to the Church and make a written report of these events at the Annual Meeting. Following the Annual Meeting, the journal will become part of the permanent record of the Church.

#### Article IX – Diaconate Board

Section 1. Diaconate is comprised of five to eight members, who will be elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting for staggered terms. Members of the Diaconate will be elected to serve a two-year term and are eligible to serve consecutive terms.

Section 2. Specific duties of the Diaconate are to: (1) work with the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual needs of the Church, the community and church visitors; (2) together with the Pastor, to be responsible for assisting with worship services and the preparation and serving of Communion; (3) the selection and supervision of church ushers during church services; (4) introduce new members into the life of the Church and do everything possible to maintain a spirit of good Christian fellowship and harmony within the Church; (5) update and revise the church membership list; (6) have responsibility for the Church's relationship with its Pastor; and (7) in conjunction with the Pastor, responsibility for creating a general worship plan for the church year which provides opportunities within the Church and community for fellowship and sharing.

Section 3. When a temporary vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Diaconate will make arrangements for an interim Pastor to serve on either a long-term or short-term basis.

Section 4. The Diaconate will meet regularly and will elect its own chairperson on an annual basis. At least three members must be present at a Diaconate meeting to conduct business.

Section 5: The Diaconate will establish and monitor an annual performance evaluation of the Pastor. The Pastor and Diaconate will use the results of this evaluation to provide growth and improvement for the Pastor and the congregation.

Section 6. If a vacancy occurs on the Diaconate, the remaining members of the Diaconate shall appoint a replacement for the remainder of that person's term.

Section 7. Members of the Diaconate may be removed before the expiration of his or her term only by a vote of 2/3 of members present at a congregational meeting.

#### Article X – Board of Trustees

Section 1. The Board of Trustees is comprised of three to five members of the Church, who will be elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting for staggered terms, and will serve a term of two years, and are eligible to serve multiple terms. The Board will elect its own officers and determine its mode of procedure.

Section 2. The Board of Trustees will meet regularly to transact business; a quorum will consist of three members. Under the direction of the church and existing regulations and laws, unless otherwise stated, this Board shall have the custody of all property of the church and shall have general oversight of its financial affairs. The Board will have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer property without specific authority by vote of the congregation. They have the power to contract with all paid church personnel and advisors. The Board will receive and order payment of bills following the budget as voted by the congregation. The Board may annually appoint an independent auditor to examine the accounts of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

Section 3. The Trustees will develop policies relating to offerings and monetary donations made to the Church. Special donations (apart from regular offerings) which are given without a specified purpose will be allocated at the discretion of the Trustees. Monetary donations given for a specific purpose and non-monetary donations are subject to approval by the Board of Trustees and Church Council.

Section 4. The Trustees will work with the Strategic Planning Committee to develop plans for the use and the development of the Church's physical properties.

Section 5. Members of the Board of Trustees may be removed before the expiration of his or her term only by a vote of 2/3 of members present at a congregational meeting.

#### Article XI – Committees

Section 1. The slate of members of these committees will be filled by the nominating committee and will be voted on at the annual meeting. The moderator may appoint members to fill open positions of committees. Each committee should be comprised of at least three and no more than six members, and will serve for a two-year term, with no term limits. (Unless otherwise stipulated in this document.) All committees will present to the Moderator, Church Council, the Pastor and the congregation reports of their plans and programs on at least an annual basis.

#### Section 2: Christian Education Committee

The purposes of the Committee are to study and evaluate the Church's Christian education programs, to establish general policy and practices of the programs and recommend ways of improving upon it. The

committee should give consideration to Christian Education as it applies to Sunday School, Youth Fellowship and adult groups. This committee has the specific responsibility of supervising the Sunday School program, with full authority to recruit, appoint and assign teachers and approve courses of study. The Pastor will work with this committee in planning and carrying out decisions and policies. The Director of Children's Ministries shall be a member of this committee.

### Section 3: Mission Committee

The purposes of this Committee are to present mission goals to the congregation and to plan activities and experiences for the Church which will result in a deeper concern for its mission in the world.

### Section 4: Music Committee

The purposes of this Committee are to coordinate with the Diaconate and the Pastor regarding the musical needs and interests of the Church. This committee will make recommendations to Church Council for church musicians and/or choir directors.

### Section 5: Reception and Social Committee

The purposes of this Committee are to select greeters for church services and to assist with the social life of the Church, as may be planned in cooperation with Church Council, Diaconate, the Pastor and other committees.

### Section 6: Nominating Committee

The Moderator will appoint three members of the church to serve as the Nominating Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to recommend a slate of candidates for the following elected positions: Moderator, Diaconate Board, the Board of Trustees, Financial Secretary, Treasurer, Clerk, Historian, and all committees. The Nominating Committee shall endeavor to seek the consent of potential candidates before any nominations are announced. The Committee will nominate at least one candidate for each position up for election. All members will be notified of the names of nominees at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. Nomination of candidates will also be accepted from the floor at the annual meeting. When more than one candidate is nominated for a position, the winning candidate must receive at least 50% of the vote. If none of the candidates receive 50% of the vote, there will be a run-off vote held between the two candidates receiving the greatest percentage of votes.

### Section 7: The Planned Giving and Stewardship Committee. (PGSC)

The Committee will consist of five to seven members, including the Moderator, Treasurer, and at least one Trustee, will meet regularly and will elect its own Chairperson. The PGSC will establish, promote and maintain the church's planned giving programs based on the following stewardship principles: giving is private (Matthew 6:1-4); giving should be cheerful and with purpose (2 Corinthians 9: 7); giving is sacrificial, and a result of receiving God's grace. Our first gift to God is ourselves (2 Corinthians 8:1-5). The PGSC will set policies and procedures to manage the assets in the program, will keep confidential records, and will be responsible for reporting of the assets value, disbursements and accounting of costs for the program's maintenance. The PGSC will consider proposals of areas where assets could be applied, and will, in cooperation with the Trustees, decide how the income will be disbursed to continue God's work in our church, our community, and beyond.

The committee will help organize prayerful giving of our time, talent, and treasure at least annually, and will promote these stewardship principles prior to the pledging and budgeting process every year.

#### Section 8: Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee will consist of five to seven members, two of whom are trustees. The committee will be appointed as needed by Church Council, and will elect their own chairperson. Due to the long-range nature of the committee's duties, they may be reappointed with no time limit. The primary duty of the committee is to develop plans for the use and the development of the church's physical properties. They will work closely with the Board of Trustees. The Strategic Planning Committee will facilitate the spiritual growth of the church and the community.

#### Article XII – Church Council

The Church Council will be chaired by the Moderator, and will be composed of all elected officers of the church along with two representatives from each board, and one representative from each committee. Representatives to church council will be determined by a majority vote at a meeting of each board or committee. The Pastor is a member ex-officio, with no voting rights. The Church Council will meet at least quarterly, at an appointed time or on a special call of the Pastor or Moderator. Five members present will constitute a quorum.

The function of the Church Council is to visualize the entire workings of the church to achieve a unity of purpose and action. Officers, boards and committees, and the Pastor will present a report to the Council members for their information and approval.

The Council may also initiate plans, programs and goals for the general welfare of the church and assign the responsibility for carrying them out.

#### Article XIII – Communication Between Boards, Committees and Church Council

Each board and committee is given autonomy to accomplish the duties specified in this constitution. However, there is often a close parallel in functions or tasks of different boards and committees. To reduce potential conflict and ensure continuity, boards and committees are expected to coordinate their activities with other boards/committees when these activities might affect another group. The communication can be limited, but should always afford the contacted group an opportunity to voice objection, offer alternatives and strive for consensus.

#### Article XIV - Attendance at Board and Committee Meetings

In order to complete the work of the Church and to encourage fellowship and the work of Christ, all members serving as Church officers, trustees, Diaconate and committee members should strive to attend and participate in meetings. Members of boards and committees have the option to attend meetings virtually and/or vote by electronic means (EV), as long as they have a virtual visual presence and vocal engagement in the meeting discussion. Council, along with each board and committee, will be responsible for establishing and defining guidelines applicable to its respective members.

#### Article XV - Amendments

This Constitution may be altered or amended by a 60% vote of members present at any regular or special congregational meeting. Notice of the time and location of the meeting will be given orally from the pulpit, printed in the bulletin, mailed, or emailed to each member at least two weeks before the meeting. Such notice must include the substance of any proposed changes and a summary of those changes. At least every four years, the Church Council will appoint a committee to study this Constitution and to recommend any necessary changes to the congregation.