

CONSTITUTION FOR THE
RAINBOW MENNONITE CHURCH

Approved April 29, 2012

Article I PREAMBLE

The following document is for the purpose of organizing ourselves as a congregation and setting forth the principles by which we are willing to be governed.

Article II NAME AND AFFILIATIONS

A. Name

The name of this congregation shall be the Rainbow Mennonite Church.

B. Affiliations

Because our mission extends beyond the local congregation, Rainbow Mennonite Church has chosen to affiliate itself with Western District Conference and Mennonite Church – USA. Rainbow Mennonite Church is a member of the Sharing Community in Rosedale, Inc., and as such, Rainbow Mennonite Church participates in the Sharing Community in Rosedale, Inc., according to the latter's Articles of Incorporation and bylaws.

Article III MISSION

It shall be the mission of Rainbow Mennonite Church to maintain a fellowship of believers that will strengthen their faith by corporate worship and study, that will express their faith in the preaching and teaching of the gospel, and that will seek to serve the spiritual and material needs of this community and other areas where the church might choose to work.

Article IV MEMBERSHIP

A. Duties and Privileges

The duties and privileges of members in this congregation shall be to:

1. endeavor to lead a Christian life,
2. strive for the strengthening of the church,
3. serve willingly in the work of the church,
4. vote in all elections,
5. hold offices wherever possible when called upon,
6. give financially for the work of this congregation,

7. share faithfully in the worship and life of the church,
8. support the church in prayer, and
9. bear the burden of others in the spirit of mutual concern for their welfare.

B. Conditions of Membership

Membership in this church is extended by invitation of the pastor and deacons and affirmed by the congregation. Individuals may indicate their preparedness in any of the following ways:

1. Confession of faith and baptism.

All persons who seek to be forgiven their sins and sincerely desire to be followers of Christ are encouraged to indicate this to the Pastor and be instructed in Christian doctrine, the history and teaching of the Mennonite Church, the meaning of baptism, and the meaning of church membership. When such candidates have given evidence of the genuineness of their faith in Christ, of their desire to assume the rights and duties expressed in the official documents of this church, and have received believer's baptism, the Pastor and deacons shall recommend the candidates to the congregation.

2. Transfer of membership.

Individuals who have already received baptism and are in good standing with another congregation of the Christian faith may be recommended for membership. They shall make a confession of faith and present a letter from their prior congregation. The Pastor will provide any instruction (as in the foregoing paragraph) that may be desired.

3. Reaffirmation of faith.

In the event that persons previously have confessed Christ, been baptized and participated as active members of a congregation of the Christian faith but do not have a letter of transfer to present, they may be recommended to the congregation in the following manner: The applicants will counsel with the Pastor and indicate that they sincerely wish to actively affiliate and meet the qualifications of all members as set forth in these articles (Article IV, B. 1.) under "Confession of faith and baptism." The Pastor shall provide instruction as necessary and then present proposed members to the deacons who, along with the Pastor, shall then consider them for recommendation to the congregation.

C. Discipline and Restoration

Discipline should always be carried out in the spirit of redemptive love. If a member indicates through actions or words that he or she does not have a right relationship with God, the church, or other persons, he or she shall be dealt with as in Matthew 18:15-20.

Although all members share responsibility and concern for the spiritual life of each member, the Pastor and deacons are delegated the responsibility to take action in the name of the church. They shall counsel with the member in order to understand and to help. If it is determined that a problem exists which is hurting the spiritual life of the member and/or that of the church, and if it appears that the member does not desire or will not make appropriate changes, the matter may be referred to the Church Council for consultation. In unresolved situations, the Pastor and deacons must then make a recommendation to the membership regarding the termination of this member's active affiliation with the congregation. The matter will be voted upon by the members present at a regular public worship service or a special meeting of the membership which has been announced in advance at a regular service. At any special meeting called for this purpose a quorum shall be present as defined in Article V.A.3 of this constitution. Membership shall be terminated by a majority vote of those present.

An appeal of termination of membership may be made to the Church Council within thirty days of the vote. By majority vote, the Church Council may refer the question again to the membership of the congregation for reconsideration. If the membership again votes to terminate a member's affiliation with the church, the decision shall be final and there shall be no further appeal.

The church shall treat persons with whom it has severed relationships with love and helpful compassion as befitting Christians. If subsequently reconciliation occurs, membership may be re-established upon the recommendation of the deacons and the Pastor to the membership of the congregation. Voting for membership shall be as specified in this Article.

D. Transfer

Letters of transfer shall be granted to members in good standing by action of the Pastor and deacons and will be announced to the congregation.

Article V. ORGANIZATION

A. Congregation

1. Composition

Upon being received into membership, all persons will be considered current members until such a time as they request being removed from membership, become deceased, or are removed from membership through the disciplinary action described in Article IV E.

2. Responsibilities

As it concerns Rainbow Mennonite Church, it is the responsibility of the congregation to:

- a. Decide on all changes in affiliation otherwise specified in Article II
- b. Decide on all membership requests brought by the Pastor and deacons under Article IV, B
- c. Decide on all membership terminations brought by the Pastor and deacons under Article IV, C and all termination reconsiderations recommended by the Church Council under the same article
- d. Decide on overall policy regarding use of all property owned by Rainbow Mennonite Church that would otherwise limit congregation access
- e. Approve an annual budget for Rainbow Mennonite Church
- f. Approve of the calling of a Pastor and the periodic reaffirmation of a Pastor
- g. Decide on the addition and deletion of paid staff positions
- h. Approve all changes to this constitution
- i. Elect individuals to the following positions within Rainbow Mennonite Church:
 - Moderator-elect
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Liaison for Community Building
 - Liaison for Service
 - Liaison for Worship
 - Liaison for Learning
 - Deacons
 - Trustees
- j. Fulfill its duties as they relate to the Articles of Incorporation and bylaws of the Sharing Community in Rosedale, Inc.
- k. Decide on the purchase and sale of property
- l. Approve any capital campaigns and unbudgeted capital improvements
- m. Approve the borrowing of any money
- n. Affirm the vision and mission
- o. Decide on organizational goals
- p. Approve any resolutions or position papers

3. Business Meetings

An annual meeting of the congregation shall be held on or before the last day of January of each (calendar) year. All members shall have the right and are encouraged to participate in the deliberations and vote. Upon request, an absentee ballot will be provided to members, to be returned to the church office or church moderator prior to the business meeting. Absentee voting is the only method by which a member in absentia may vote. Proxy votes will not be accepted. For purposes of voting, a quorum shall consist of thirty-three (33) percent of the membership that attends regularly as defined by holding a church mail box. A quorum cannot be established by absentee votes.

The congregation shall also meet quarterly between annual meetings to help assure communication and transparency. Rules regarding participation, voting, and the

determination of a quorum shall be the same as those at the annual meeting, as specified above.

All congregational business meetings and the purpose thereof shall be announced to the congregation by electronic mail, mailed letter or bulletin and from the pulpit at least two weeks preceding the meeting. The meeting shall be presided over by the Moderator and shall be opened with prayer. Parliamentary procedure shall be according to Robert's Rules of Order. The time and place shall be set by the Moderator in consultation with the Church Council and shall be done with consideration of the convenience of the membership.

Congregational meetings may be called by the Church Council at its discretion or upon the signed request of five percent of the membership. All persons signing such a request must be members in good standing and eligible to vote.

B. Church Council

1. Composition

The Church Council is composed of the following positions:

- Moderator-Elect
- Moderator
- Past Moderator
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Liaison for Community Building
- Liaison for Service
- Liaison for Worship
- Liaison for Learning
- A representative chosen by the Deacons
- A representative chosen by the Trustees
- Pastor (ex officio)

a. Moderator-Elect

The Moderator-Elect is elected by the congregation for a term of one year, after which he or she becomes the Moderator. The election shall occur at an annual meeting of the congregation, and the term of office will begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting at which he or she is elected.

It is the responsibility of the Moderator-Elect to:

- Assist the Moderator in all duties described for the Moderator
- Chair the Church Council in the absence of the Moderator and Past Moderator
- Chair congregational meetings in the absence of the Moderator and Past Moderator

- Chair the Personnel Committee
- Submit a written report on behalf of the Personnel Committee to the congregation at its annual business meeting

In the extended absence of the Moderator, the Moderator-Elect, with the assistance and support of the Past Moderator, shall assume all the privileges, duties and responsibilities of the Moderator until such time as the moderator can resume these functions. If the Moderator is permanently incapacitated, resigns or is removed from office, the Moderator-Elect shall complete the unexpired term of office of the Moderator and then become Moderator in his or her own right.

b. Moderator

The Moderator serves a term of one year, after which he or she becomes the Past Moderator. The term of office will begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting. It is the responsibility of the Moderator to:

- Chair all business meetings of the congregation and all meetings of the Church Council where he or she is present.
- Prepare an agenda and set the date for all meetings of the congregation and the Church Council.
- With the approval of a majority of the Church Council present, appoint members to fill unexpired terms of office for any elected position described in this constitution; such appointments shall continue until the next annual meeting at which time an election shall be held to fill the remainder of any term of office.
- With the approval of a majority of the Church Council present, appoint members to committees where needed.
- With the approval of a majority of the Church Council present, appoint persons to fill other positions established by either the Church Council or congregation. The terms of these positions shall be established either by the Church Council or the congregation.
- In the absence of the treasurer, the Moderator may make disbursements as authorized by the Church Council or as designated within the budget approved by the congregation.
- Submit a written report to the congregation at its annual business meeting
- Serve as the primary representative for the congregation to external entities on matters of church business, planning, and policy.

c. Past Moderator

The Past Moderator serves a term of one year, which begins immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Past Moderator to:

- Chair the Church Council meetings in the absence of the Moderator
- Chair congregational meetings in the absence of the Moderator

- At the direction of the Moderator, manage the Church Council's responsibilities related to committee organization
- Chair the Gifts Discernment Committee
- With the assistance of the Gifts Discernment Committee, organize all volunteer committees and maintain membership lists of those committees
- Provide historical perspective on issues before the Church Council.
- At the direction of the Moderator, lead special projects that are needed
- Ensure follow-through on any outstanding issues from the past term as Moderator
- Oversee the Safe Sanctuary process
- Submit a written report to the congregation at its annual business meeting

In the absence of both the Moderator and Moderator-Elect, the Past Moderator shall assume all privileges, duties and responsibilities of the Moderator until such time as either the Moderator or Moderator-Elect can resume these functions or until a new Moderator-Elect is elected.

d. Treasurer

The Treasurer is elected by the congregation for a term of three years. The election shall occur at an annual meeting of the congregation, and the term of office will begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to:

- receive and keep account of all monies of the church and shall make disbursements as authorized by the Church Council or as designated within the budget approved by the congregation
- make an annual report of receipts and expenditures subject to audit by some person or persons appointed by the Church Council
- be a member of the Stewardship Committee
- Provide a monthly report to the Church Council
- Submit a written report to the congregation at each business meeting

The Treasurer shall be assisted by a financial secretary. The financial secretary shall be appointed by the Moderator with input from the Stewardship Committee for a three-year term that is not concurrent with that of the Treasurer. The appointment shall be subject to the approval of a majority of the Church Council present. The financial secretary shall be responsible to the Treasurer and aid the Treasurer in handling collections, deposits, recording pledges, etc. The financial secretary shall be a member of the Stewardship Committee.

e. Secretary

The Secretary is elected by the congregation for a term of three years. The election shall occur at an annual meeting of the congregation, and the term of office will begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Secretary to:

- keep a record of the proceedings of the annual and other business meetings of the congregation and the Church Council,
 - ensure that all records and documents are appropriately maintained,
 - perform any other duties which pertain to the office
- f. Liaison for Community Building
 - g. Liaison for Service
 - h. Liaison for Worship
 - i. Liaison for Learning

Each liaison is elected by the congregation for a term of three years to be staggered. The election shall occur at an annual meeting of the congregation, and the term of office will begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

It is the responsibility of each liaison to:

- Facilitate goal setting of the committees within their scope
 - Report to the Church Council on the work being done by the committees for which they are a liaison
 - Report to the committees for which they are a liaison on work being done by the Church Council, especially as it relates to those committees
- j. Pastor (ex officio)

The Pastor shall preach the Word of God, be available to individuals or groups in order to minister to spiritual needs, and help carry on programs of ministry to the community. Such efforts should reflect planning and cooperation with persons, organizations and other churches in the community as well as this congregation. The Pastor is accountable to the deacons and responsible to work with the Church Council and its various officers and committees, as needed.

His or her tenure in office shall be reviewed formally every three years or more often if either party desires such. The congregation shall be asked to express a collective opinion on a Pastor's continuance every three years or more often if requested by the Pastor or the deacons. A contract for Pastoral services will be negotiated by the deacons upon the decision of the congregation and shall be for three years.

The Pastor shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Church Council.

2. Responsibilities of the Church Council

The function of the Church Council is to be the official board of the corporation and generally oversee the planning and operation of the church. As it concerns Rainbow Mennonite Church, it is the specific responsibility of the Church Council to:

- a. Develop organizational goals, with input from the committees, for decision by the congregation
- b. Provide oversight of implementation of organizational goals at the committee level
- c. Decide on policy other than that regarding use of property owned by Rainbow Mennonite Church
- d. Develop policy, as needed
- e. Recommend an annual budget to the congregation
- f. Make recommendations to the congregation regarding the addition or deletion of paid or unpaid staff positions
- g. Make recommendations to the congregation regarding changes to this constitution
- h. Approve appointments made by the Moderator
- i. Make decisions not otherwise reserved to the congregation regarding the use and lease of property, within the context of the overall policy on property use and in conjunction and cooperation with the Trustees
- j. Provide oversight of capital campaigns
- k. Provide oversight of congregational finances
- l. Find common ground and resolve conflicts between committees, as needed
- m. As needed, create or recognize committees not otherwise specified in this constitution and specify their purpose, size, function, and duration of activities
- n. Review the purpose and description (including size, function, and duration) of each committee not otherwise specified in this constitution at least every two years and make changes, as needed
- o. Determine when committees not otherwise specified in this constitution are no longer needed
- p. Align committees with liaisons
- q. Decide on unbudgeted expenditure requests other than unbudgeted capital improvements
- r. Convene quarterly congregational meetings, and other congregational meetings as needed, between annual meetings of the congregation
- s. As needed, recommend changes in affiliation otherwise specified in Article II
- t. Manage risk as it relates to property owned by Rainbow Mennonite Church
- u. Solicit/commission resolutions and position papers for consideration by the congregation, as needed
- v. Make recommendations to the congregation regarding reconsideration of a decision to terminate an individual's membership
- w. Hire or retain any regular employee of the church when the position is approved by the congregation at one of its business meetings
- x. As needed, dismiss any regular employee of the church based on a recommendation from the Personnel Committee.

The Church Council may act on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Sharing Community in Rosedale, Inc. when so requested by the Board.

3. Meetings

The Church Council shall meet as needed to conduct the business of Rainbow Mennonite Church between annual meetings of the congregation. The time and place shall be set by the Moderator in consultation with the rest of the Church Council and shall be done with consideration of the convenience of the members of the Church Council.

All members of the Church Council, with the exception of the Pastor, shall have a vote. There shall be no proxy votes. A quorum will consist of a majority of the voting members of the Church Council.

All meetings of the Church Council shall be open to any voting member of the congregation except by three-fourths vote of the Church Council members. In the event of a closed meeting, the minutes shall show the nature of the meeting and the reason for it being closed. The minutes in writing of all Church Council meetings shall be available to the membership. Meetings shall be presided over by the Moderator or, in his or her absence, the Past Moderator or Moderator-Elect, respectively. Each Church Council meeting shall be opened with prayer.

C. Standing Committees

The following standing committees have been established to enhance functions of the Church Council. All standing committees shall submit a written report to the congregation at the annual business meeting. The membership, terms of office and duties of each standing committee are described as follows.

1. Stewardship Committee.

The Treasurer and financial secretary are members of the Stewardship Committee. Five (5) additional members shall be appointed to this committee by the Moderator, with the approval of the Church Council. These appointed positions shall be for three-year rotating terms, and may be renewed at the discretion of the individual(s) and the Moderator and the Church Council. This Committee shall elect its chairperson who will be responsible for convening this Committee as often as needed but not less often than once every three months.

The Stewardship Committee shall be responsible for:

- evaluating stewardship of the resources of the congregation
- monitoring the finances of the church
- presenting the financial needs of the congregation to its members along with appropriate educational information
- preparing a budget for the Church Council's recommendation to the congregation
- as requested, assisting other committees of the congregation in financial planning

2. Gifts Discernment Committee.

The Gifts Discernment Committee shall consist of four members appointed by the Moderator, with the approval of the Church Council, for two-year, rotating terms. It shall be chaired by the Past Moderator.

This Committee shall be responsible for preparing a slate of candidates to fill all elected positions described in this constitution. At least one candidate for each position must be submitted to the membership at the annual meeting. This Committee shall provide support, as needed, to the Past Moderator in maintaining records of the membership of all committees and boards, whether elected, appointed, or volunteer and shall report this to the Church Council following the annual meeting. Included in this report shall be the date when any member's term of office ends. This Committee is responsible for assisting, as needed, the Past Moderator in coordinating the discernment process related to the membership of committees established by the Church Council or by the membership of the congregation at any business meeting.

3. Personnel Committee.

The Personnel Committee shall consist of the following individuals:

- The Moderator-Elect
- Two individuals appointed by the Moderator with the approval of the Church Council

The Moderator-Elect shall chair this Committee. The term is two years, appointments are staggered, and individuals are eligible to renew.

The Personnel Committee shall be responsible for establishing and maintaining job descriptions for all personnel hired for regular positions, excluding the Pastor(s). Job descriptions shall include salary range and benefits, duties, and the basis and means by which performance evaluations shall be conducted. The appropriate job description shall be made available in writing to any candidate for a regular position. This Committee shall participate in interviewing any person applying for a regular position. Based on the criteria in the job descriptions and with input from appropriate personnel and committees, this Committee shall evaluate the performance of all employees hired by the congregation for regular positions on an annual basis, and shall make recommendations to the Church Council about the retention or dismissal of any regular employee. If a regular position is a part-time or shared position with another agency or church, this Committee shall coordinate its functions and recommendations with the other agency. During the first year of a person's employment, the Personnel Committee shall review the employee's performance every three months.

The Personnel Committee shall make recommendations to the Stewardship Committee regarding salary and benefits to be included in the budget submitted to the congregation at its annual business meeting. This Committee shall assist any other committee of the church in developing job criteria for new, regular positions. This Committee shall assist employees and members of the congregation in handling grievances or problems related to the work performed by the employees, with the exception of the Pastor.

4. Youth Education Committee

The Youth Education Committee shall consist of six individuals. All positions shall be appointed by the Moderator, with the approval of the Church Council. The six individuals shall serve staggered three-year terms, with two individuals rotating off of the committee each year.

It shall be the responsibility of the Youth Education Committee to:

- Select a Chair from among its members
- Periodically assess and evaluate the needs of the church education program as it relates to children and youth (i.e. pre-kindergarten (excluding the nursery) through 12th grade)
- Choose a curriculum for the child and youth education program, consistent with the values of the congregation
- Annually set the church school calendar
- Ensure that each class has the necessary number of teachers
- Ensure that each class and its teacher(s) have the necessary supplies, equipment, opportunities for training, etc.
- Ensure the smooth operation of the church school program each Sunday
- Plan for Promotion Sunday and other events and activities, as appropriate
- Determine to which projects to direct offerings from the children and youth classes
- Ensure the effective administration of the Safe Sanctuary Program as it applies to education program for children and youth
- Coordinate with the Adult Education Committee and other committees, as needed
- Regularly seek feedback about the curriculum and teachers

D. Other Elected Positions

1. Deacons

The church shall have six deacons elected by the congregation serving three-year, rotating terms. Two deacons shall be elected for three year terms at each annual business meeting. In addition, at the annual meeting, elections shall be held to fill the unexpired term of office of any deacon who has failed to complete the full term of office for whatever reason. Each term of office shall begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

The deacons shall assist the Pastor in the ongoing visioning and care concerning the spiritual welfare of the congregation. They, together with the Pastor, shall decide upon applicants to be recommended for membership and upon the granting of letters of transfer, assist in the administration of sacraments, and be responsible for keeping in touch with a designated portion of the membership so as to be aware of the membership's spiritual and physical needs and to inform the membership of the services and facilities of the church. The deacons shall conduct the evaluation of the Pastor as specified in Article V.B.1.j of this constitution and will therefore be the point of contact for concerns related to the Pastor. The deacons shall be responsible for the support of the Pastor in the Pastor's ministry to the congregation. The deacons shall report on their activities to the congregation at the annual business meeting and shall choose a representative to the Church Council.

2. Trustees

The church shall have six trustees elected by the congregation serving three-year, rotating terms. At any annual meeting two trustees shall be elected for a three-year term. In addition, at the annual meeting elections shall be held to fill the unexpired term of office of any trustee who has failed to complete the full term of the office for whatever reason. Each term of office shall begin immediately following the annual congregational meeting.

The trustees shall act on behalf of the church to manage all church real estate and property and are to be responsible for its upkeep in a responsible and orderly manner in coordination with the church sexton. They shall keep complete records of all transactions, including income and expenditures directly related thereto. They are empowered to sign legal documents (e.g. contracts for work to be done on the church) related to their responsibility for managing and maintaining church property. However, they shall not sell or encumber real estate or property of the congregation, buy, or make any obligations on behalf of the membership for such, unless authorized to do so as an agent of the church by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a business meeting of the church at which notice of such has been given at least two weeks in advance. All transactions must be carried out within the laws of the state of Kansas which govern the acquiring and selling or encumbering of church property. They shall also not obligate the congregation through any rent or lease arrangement which has not been previously approved by the Church Council or the congregation within the context of the policy on use of church property. The trustees shall receive gifts of tangible property to the church on its behalf with the approval of the Church Council.

E. Other Committees

As noted, the Church Council is responsible for creating and recognizing committees not otherwise specified in this constitution and for specifying their purpose, size, function, and duration of activities.

In general, such committees shall be responsible to:

- Decide on all matters within the scope of its purpose, function, and designated activities
- Expend funds within its budget authority
- Set goals within the scope of its purpose, function, and designated activities
- Manage and implement activities within the scope of its purpose and function
- Develop an annual budget request for the committee
- Decide its meeting frequency
- Elect its chair
- Implement actions of the Church Council as requested by the Church Council
- Recommend policies to the Church Council
- Communicate regularly with other committees that have overlapping missions

ARTICLE VI REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

1. Elected positions.

Any elected individual may be removed from office for cause by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the congregation in attendance at a meeting called for that purpose. A quorum as specified in Article V.A.3 shall exist for any action to be official. The cause(s) for removal shall be presented in writing three weeks in advance to the individual in question. During any meeting called to consider the removal of an elected individual, the cause(s) for removal shall be presented publicly. The individual to be removed from office shall have the right to be present at the meeting, to speak, to present information, to rebut the charges, and to ask individuals to speak on his or her behalf. Members of the congregation may be called by the Church Council or by the individual, or may volunteer, to present additional information relevant to the determination.

The Moderator shall chair the meeting unless he or she is the individual in question. In that event, the Past Moderator shall chair the meeting. The chairperson shall maintain order, shall ensure that adequate time has been given to present information by all parties concerned, and in general conduct the meeting with fairness and due process.

The Church Council may present to the membership of the congregation a motion to remove a member from an elected position by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council present. There shall be three weeks notice given to the congregation of any meeting called to consider such a motion. A petition containing signatures of twenty percent of the members of the congregation shall be sufficient to authorize a meeting called to consider the removal of an elected individual of the church. The Moderator must call a meeting of the congregation within thirty days of receiving a valid petition. All procedures specified for notification, quorum, presentation of cause(s), rights or response, and conduct of the meeting shall be maintained.

The results of the vote shall be considered final unless appealed on the basis that substantial information has been withheld from the proceedings. An appeal shall be made within thirty days from date of the vote. Such an appeal must be signed by ten percent of the members of the congregation. Upon receiving a valid appeal, the Moderator, or Past Moderator should the officer in question be the Moderator, shall then call for a meeting of the membership of the congregation to reconsider the motion to remove the elected individual. Such a meeting shall be held within thirty days. The reasons for the appeal should be specified during the meeting. All procedures specified for notification, quorum, presentation of cause(s), rights of response, and conduct of the meeting shall be maintained.

Should the vote be in favor of removal as specified in the first paragraph of this section, the individual removed shall cease all activities related to the office immediately after the result of the vote has been announced. The individual shall yield in an orderly manner to the Church Council any papers, documents, checks, monies or other material which pertain to church or to the individual's official functions as described in this constitution.

In the event the Moderator has been removed from office, the Moderator-Elect shall become moderator and shall assume all privileges, duties and responsibilities as described in this constitution. Serving the unexpired term of Moderator shall not preclude the Moderator-Elect from serving a normal, consecutive term as Moderator.

At the next regularly scheduled Church Council meeting, the moderator shall appoint a replacement for any vacancy created by the removal of an elected individual. Such appointment shall be subject to approval by a majority of the Church Council present. At the next annual meeting of the congregation, an election shall be held to fill any remaining unexpired term of office.

2. Pastor.

Any member of the congregation may submit to the deacons a recommendation that the Pastor be removed from his or her position for cause. The deacons shall take any subsequent recommendation for action to the Church Council. By a two-thirds vote of the Church Council present, the Moderator shall be empowered to contact the Conference Minister of the Western District Conference to inform him or her of any such recommendation. Procedures for removal shall be conducted consistent with the covenant of understanding between the congregation and the Pastor as well as the publication entitled *A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership* (copyright 1996 by Ministerial Leadership Services of the General Board of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries of the Mennonite Church) and the *Ministerial Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure* (as adopted by the Western District Conference, MC USA Ministerial Committee on August 26, 2003). A congregational meeting shall be held within three weeks of any vote by the Church Council to inform the members of the congregation of the action recommended and the procedures to be followed. By a majority vote of the congregation, the members may instruct the Church Council to withdraw the recommendation.

3. Appointee.

Any member appointed to a committee or position may be removed from that appointment for cause by a two-thirds vote of the Church Council present. The cause(s) for removal shall be presented in writing to the appointee three weeks prior to the Church Council meeting at which a vote will be taken. The person shall have the right to be present at the Church Council meeting, to speak, to present information, to rebut any charges, and to ask individuals to speak on his or her behalf. The Moderator shall ensure the fairness of the proceedings. A vote shall be held at the conclusion of the proceedings. The meeting shall be open to all members of the congregation unless a motion to close the Church Council meeting is passed by a three-fourths vote of the Church Council present. The request to close the meeting may be made by any member of the Church Council or by the appointee.

The results of the vote shall be considered final unless appealed on the basis that substantial information has been withheld from the proceedings. An appeal shall be made within thirty days from the date of the vote of the Church Council. Such an appeal must be signed by ten percent of the members of the congregation. Upon receiving a valid appeal, the Moderator shall call for

a meeting of the membership of the congregation to hear the appeal. The meeting shall be held within thirty days. The Moderator shall chair the meeting. The chairperson shall maintain order, shall ensure that adequate time has been given to present information by all parties concerned, and in general conduct the meeting with fairness and due process. During any meeting called to consider the appeal, the cause(s) for removal shall be presented publicly. The individual to be removed from the position shall have the right to be present at the meeting, to speak, to present information, to rebut the charges, and to ask individuals to speak on his or her behalf. Members of the congregation may be called by the Church Council or by the appointee, or may volunteer, to present additional information relevant to the determination. All procedures specified for notification, quorum, presentation of cause(s), rights of response, and conduct of the meeting shall be maintained. The membership may affirm the decision of the Church Council by a two-thirds vote of the congregation present.

Should the vote be in favor of removal, the appointee removed shall cease all activities related to the appointment immediately after the result of the vote has been announced. The appointee shall yield in an orderly manner to the Church Council any papers, documents, checks, monies or other material which pertain to church or to the individual's official functions as described in this constitution.

ARTICLE VII FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the congregation shall be January 1 to December 31. All accounts shall be closed for the fiscal year and reported upon at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VIII RESOLUTIONS AND POSITIONS PAPERS

Documents shall be drawn from time to time to state the position of the congregation on theological, practical or contemporary issues. Papers may be solicited or commissioned by the Church Council or advanced by members. In either case, such shall be reviewed for relevancy by the Church Council, which shall determine whether they are submitted to the congregation. In order that such a document be said to represent the views of the congregation, it must receive a two-thirds majority vote of those present at a duly called business meeting.

Article IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds majority of those present and eligible to vote. Changes must be submitted by action of the Church Council. A signed petition by twenty percent of the resident members shall require the Church Council to submit a proposed amendment in writing. Any amendment shall be given to all members at least two weeks prior to voting.