

# THE CONSTITUTION OF SALEM MENNONITE CHURCH

*(The Constitution of Salem Mennonite Church was first adopted in 1908.  
Revisions were made in 1934, 1942, 1954, 1969, 1977, 1988, 2003, 2010, and 2016.)*

## ARTICLE I - OVERVIEW

### A. NAME AND AFFILIATION

The name of this congregation shall be Salem Mennonite Church, 28103 - 443<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, Freeman, South Dakota, 57029. Salem Mennonite Church is a member of the Central Plains Mennonite Conference and part of the larger Mennonite Church USA. Salem Mennonite Church is a non-profit organization.

### B. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of Salem Mennonite Church is to invite individuals to life in Christ and promote the Kingdom of God through Christian witness and service. We shall provide for worship, catechism (baptismal and/or membership preparation), baptism, communion, faith formation, and other activities that benefit the congregation in the internal and external ministries of the church and conference.

### C. CONFESSION OF FAITH

Our beliefs are described by the tenets of *A Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (1995). The following is a condensed summary prepared by Helmut Harder:

1. We worship the one holy and loving God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Word of God become flesh.
3. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal Spirit of God.
4. We believe that all Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit of instruction in salvation and training in righteousness.
5. We believe that God has created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.
6. We believe that God has created human beings in the divine image.
7. We confess that, beginning with Adam and Eve, humanity has disobeyed God, given way to the tempter, and chosen to sin.
8. We believe that through Jesus Christ, God offers salvation from sin and a new way of life to all people.
9. We believe the church is the assembly of those who have accepted God's offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.
10. We believe that the church is called to proclaim and to be a sign of the kingdom of God.
11. We believe that the baptism of believers with water is a sign of their cleansing from sin and a pledge before the church to walk in the way of Jesus.
12. We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sign by which the church thankfully remembers the new covenant which Jesus established by his death.
13. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to serve one another in love as he did.
14. We believe that the practice of discipline in the church is a sign of God's offer of forgiveness and transforming grace.
15. We believe that ministry continues the work of Christ, who gives gifts through the Holy Spirit to all believers.
16. We believe that the church of Jesus Christ is one body with many members.
17. We believe that Jesus Christ calls us to take up our cross and follow him.
18. We believe that to be a disciple of Jesus is to know life in the Spirit.
19. We believe that God intends human life to begin in families and to be blessed through families.

20. We commit ourselves to tell the truth, to give a simple yes or no, and to avoid swearing of oaths.
21. We believe that everything belongs to God, who calls us to live as faithful stewards of all that God has entrusted to us.
22. We believe that peace is the will of God.
23. We believe that the church is God's "holy nation," called to give full allegiance to Christ its head and to witness to all nations about God's saving love.
24. We place our hope in the reign of God and in its fulfillment in the day when Christ our ascended Lord will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead.

#### **D. FOUNDATIONAL PRACTICES OF THE CHURCH**

Among the many spiritual practices of the church, we consider several to be the foundational religious practices which are essential in being the Church. These are directed by Christ to be observed by his followers. We do not hold that they wholly convey Christ's saving grace in themselves, but neither do we consider them to be only symbolic. We follow these as acts of obedience to our Lord, both as signs of and vehicles for the Holy Spirit's transformation.

1. **Baptism-** We believe baptism is for those who are of an age of accountability and who freely request baptism on the basis of their response to Jesus Christ in faith. Baptism is a public pledge before the church of a commitment to walk with God. It signifies for the believer that their sins have been washed away through the blood of Christ; that they now live in newness of life.

Baptism marks full adoption as children into the family of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-4; Colossians 2:11-12; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:25-29; Galatians 4:4-7; Acts 2:38).

All candidates for baptism shall receive a thorough Biblical Anabaptist Catechetical instruction. Baptism may be administered at any time to a person who, after an evaluation by the pastor(s) and the deacons, is sufficiently prepared.

2. **Communion-** We believe that the Lord's Supper is a thanksgiving, a reminder and a sign of the Church's new covenant which Jesus established by his death. This Communion represents the presence of the risen Christ in the church and is a means by which Christ unifies us.

All baptized believers who are at peace with God and with the other believers gathered and who have an earnest desire may partake of Communion (Matthew 5:23-24; 1 Corinthians 11:26-29). It should be observed at least four times a year.

3. **Singleness and Marriage Covenants-** Commitments to both celibate singleness and life-long marriage are seen as weighty covenants with God and one another. The congregation emphasizes the holiness of both committed singleness and marriage vows. The church seeks to be a support for such and warns its members against indifference in these matters. Therefore, members of the congregation who enter into matrimony should counsel with a pastor, announce their marriage to the congregation, request the congregation's prayers, and be married by a minister of the Gospel. Members who remain or become single will be supported and blessed by the congregation and its pastoral leaders.

We encourage everyone to respect and heed Scripture regarding family and relationship covenants, as understood in Article 19 of the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective*, which includes the following as a teaching position for our denomination:

*We recognize that God has created human beings for relationship. God intends human life to be blessed through families, especially through the family of faith. All Christians are to take their*

*place within the household of God, where members treat each other as brothers and sisters. We hold that within the church family, the goodness of being either single or married is honored. We honor the single state and encourage the church to respect and to include single persons in the life and activities of the church family. Families of faith are called to be a blessing to all families of the earth.*

*We believe that God intends marriage to be a covenant between one man and one woman for life. Christian marriage is a mutual relationship in Christ, a covenant made in the context of the church. According to Scripture, right sexual union takes place only within the marriage relationship. Marriage is meant for sexual intimacy, companionship, and the birth and nurture of children*

*[...] The church is called to help couples strengthen their marriage relationship and to encourage reconciliation in times of conflict. The church is also to minister with truth and compassion to persons in difficult family relationships. As the family of God, the church is called to be a sanctuary offering hope and healing for families.*

## **ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

### **A. ACCEPTANCE OF MEMBERS**

1. Individuals may seek membership with the congregation in one of the following ways:
  - a. Persons may be baptized and received into the congregation upon their confession of faith.
  - b. Persons from other Mennonite congregations or with Mennonite background may bring a letter from their congregation. In the absence of such a letter, they may interview with deacons and/or pastor(s). The deacons will then make a recommendation on membership.
  - c. Persons from other denominations should receive instruction in Anabaptist practices and beliefs under supervision of pastor(s) or deacons. Upon the public confession of faith, they will be admitted into full membership through the right hand of fellowship. Adult baptism shall not be required of applicants who were previously baptized and confirmed. The congregation is ready to administer adult baptism at the request of the candidate.
2. All candidates shall receive a copy of this constitution, accept its provisions, and acknowledge all responsibilities of members mentioned below.
3. Membership shall be fully established upon approval by the congregation.

### **B. RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

1. Give first allegiance to Christ and to his Church Body, including this local congregation. Membership in the Body of Christ means following Jesus first and demands precedence over all other relationships, organizations, loyalties and identities (Luke 14:26-27; Galatians 3:27-28; Colossians 3:11; 2 Corinthians 5:16-17). Members should exercise extreme caution in joining any organization, vocation or activity whose purposes, policies and effects might run contrary to the spirit of our congregation (Ephesians 5:11-13; Romans 12:2).
2. Commit to grow and mature in the likeness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13-16).
3. Live exemplary lives in conformity with the example of Jesus in scripture and the church constitution; this implies cultivation of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 22-23; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 4:8).
4. Abstain from practices and activities which give offense and cause stumbling, bring shame and disgrace, or cause other harm to the Church of Jesus Christ and our congregation (Galatians 5:16-21; 1 Peter 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 6:12; Corinthians 8:9-13; Romans 14:13-21).

5. Bear one another's burdens and work to restore one another in the spirit of love and concern (Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:13-16).
6. Be faithful in regular worship participation (Hebrews 10:22-25; Luke 4:16).
7. Assume responsibility in the ministries and life of the church locally, regionally, and worldwide.
  - a. Contribute cheerfully first-fruit offerings to the support of God's Kingdom for the mission of the local church, Central Plains Mennonite Conference, Mennonite Church USA, and other Anabaptist Ministries (2 Corinthians 9:6-15; Luke 6:38).
  - b. Participate in the Gifts Discernment process which will help one know where to share in the work of Salem's departments and committees or other Church bodies and agencies.
  - c. Promptly report all entries for the church register and directory to the church office.

### **C. PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS**

1. Members may use church facilities upon coordination with the church office administrator.
2. Members shall be eligible to serve in elected and appointed positions of the church.
3. Members may be buried in the church cemetery in accord with relevant policies.

### **D. WELCOMING NON-MEMBERS**

1. Persons who are not members of our congregation and wish to worship with us are cordially invited to do so and to take part in our ministries.
2. Non-members who worship with us are eligible to serve in appointed positions of the church.

### **E. TRANSFERS AND WITHDRAWALS OF MEMBERSHIP**

1. Members who wish to leave the church or transfer membership to another congregation shall submit a written request to the Deacon Board for approval and further follow-up.
2. Withdrawal of membership shall be acknowledged with a church letter.

### **F. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AMONG MEMBERS**

1. It is the responsibility of the pastor(s) and deacons to help in resolving conflict. Conflicts between members shall be brought before the pastor(s) and the Board of Deacons.
2. Conflicts between pastor(s) and member, or between pastors, shall be brought first before the Pastor-Congregation Relations Team (Matthew 18: 15-17, I Corinthians 6: 1-8), and if not resolved, then before the Board of Deacons.

### **G. ACCOUNTABILITY, DISCIPLINE, AND RECONCILIATION OF MEMBERS**

1. The sin and evil in our world and in our lives are an affront to our Holy Creator who made creation "good" and "very good" and who calls the church to holiness. Various scriptures convey the grave seriousness and consequence of sin (e.g. Galatians 5:19-21, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). Sin and evil separate us from God and God's Kingdom, breaking the relationship threads of church fellowship, harming individuals, and damaging the integrity of our witness to God's Kingdom. The primary goal of our accountability and church discipline is to enable Christ's reconciliation in the face of sin and evil (2 Corinthians 5:18-21). This means the restoration of individual persons into right relationship with God, with one another, with themselves, and with the whole creation. It also means a restoration of the church's fellowship and witness (Matthew 5:23-24).
2. Should a member bring reproach or harm upon the name of Christ and his Church through un-Christ-like conduct, sincere effort shall be made to approach them for accountability. This should be done first by fellow members sensitively engaging the erring member directly in accountability conversations.

If additional support is needed in addressing the issues, or if conflict between members becomes evident, the pastor(s) and the Board of Deacons should be invited to help lead such

persons to repentance and to reconciled fellowship. Should such efforts fail, the erring member may be suspended and the congregation may terminate such membership (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, 9-12). The member who may be suspended shall be provided prior, individual written notice of the congregational meeting by a letter mailed to the member.

3. A terminated membership may be restored by action of the congregation following recommendation by the deacons after penitence has been shown and growth in Christ's likeness has been in evidence (2 Corinthians 2:5-8; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:12-14, 21-22).
4. We recognize that we all have sinned and that the Church's message of God's free salvation through Jesus Christ is the only hope for any of us (Romans 3:22-24). To deny membership in this congregation because of a person's ongoing un-Christlike actions does not mean denial of God's salvation or removal from the larger family of God. Neither is termination of membership an act of "giving-up" on the former member.

The members of this congregation, as a body and individually, must strive to show the love, forgiveness, and acceptance as exemplified by Jesus Christ so that within this fellowship, erring persons may find Christian reconciliation and unity. We welcome those who have erred, inviting them to worship and fellowship with us. It is our hope that they will be drawn to more faithful discipleship (2 Corinthians 2:14-15; Ephesians 4:1-6, 4:32-5:2).

### **ARTICLE III – LEADERSHIP AND BUSINESS**

#### **A. THE PASTOR(S)**

1. ELECTION, EVALUATIONS, AND VOTES OF ASSURANCE FOR THE PASTOR(S)
  - a. A 75% majority ballot vote shall be cast by members of the congregation for the purpose of calling a new pastor for a period of three years.
  - b. The Deacon Board shall facilitate the pastoral evaluation process.
    - 1) The first review of each pastor will take place one year after he or she is hired.
    - 2) After every third year of employment, the Deacon Board will conduct a congregational survey and engage the members of the congregation in a pastoral vote of assurance. Congregants will be given the opportunity and encouraged to comment on their vote.
      - i. Should the pastor receive a vote of less than 80% in his/her favor, the Deacon Board, in consultation with the pastor, shall formulate and implement a plan of action. This plan shall detail areas of concern that need to be addressed by the pastor and the congregation.
      - ii. A follow-up survey and vote of assurance will be taken one year later. If the second vote remains less than 80% favorable, the Board of Deacons will give a recommendation within 30 days on whether to continue or terminate pastoral employment. The recommendation brought forward by the Deacon Board shall require a 75% congregational approval rating for passage.
    - 3) The Deacon Board may involve the Pastor-Congregation Relations Team and the Central Plains Conference Pastor in the pastoral evaluation process.
    - 4) The church may terminate a pastor's service with a minimum of three months' notice given to the pastor. In the event of alleged pastoral misconduct, less than three months' notice may be given. The Deacon Board shall contact the Conference Pastor and follow the Mennonite Church USA guidelines for clergy misconduct.

- 5) A pastor may terminate his/her service with a minimum of three months' notice given to the congregation.
- 6) When a pastoral vacancy occurs, the congregation shall elect a Ministerial Search Team. This team shall consist of five members of the congregation and a deacon serving in an ex-officio capacity. This team shall work in cooperation with Central Plains Mennonite Conference personnel for the purpose of bringing forth a qualified pastoral candidate for congregational consideration.

## 2. THE PASTORAL SALARY

- a. A pastor's financial compensation package (salary and expenses) shall be set annually by the congregation to be effective January 1, unless otherwise specified.
- b. A proposed pastoral budget shall be brought to the annual meeting by the Salary Team. This team shall include a trustee representative, a deacon representative, and the household treasurer. The household treasurer shall be responsible for calling this meeting and shall serve as its chair.

## 3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR(S)

- a. To proclaim the Word of God faithfully, provide Biblical instruction, administer baptism, conduct Holy Communion, officiate marriages, conduct funerals and memorial services, visit and comfort the sick and other members, and offer counsel where needed.
- b. To oversee the church membership register.
- c. When attending any Leadership Team meeting, the pastor(s) shall not vote.
- d. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## **B. THE DEACON BOARD**

### 1. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEACON BOARD

- a. The Board of Deacons shall consist of five deacons. The pastor(s) shall serve as ex-officio members.
- b. Deacons shall be elected for term of three years and be eligible for two consecutive terms. No deacon shall serve as chair in the first year of their term.

### 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEACON BOARD

- a. To provide guidance, care for, and maintain harmony among the members of the congregation.
- b. To review the work of the pastor(s) annually, and be responsible for the pastoral evaluation process.
- c. To evaluate the life and activities of the congregation.
- d. To administer the Deacon's Fund.
- e. To appoint an Everence Advocate for a term of two years.
- f. To make minutes of non-confidential matters from Deacon Board meetings available to the congregation after each meeting.
- g. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## **C. THE CHURCH COUNCIL**

### 1. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall be comprised of the members listed below. Voting privileges shall be extended to all Church Council members in attendance, except for the pastor(s), when votes take place.

- a. Moderator- The Moderator automatically assumes this leadership role for a term of two years following service as Assistant Moderator.
- b. Assistant Moderator-The congregation shall bi-annually elect an Assistant Moderator for a two-year term. At the conclusion of this term, the Assistant shall automatically succeed to the position of Moderator for a two-year term. Consecutive terms may not be served.
- c. Recording Secretary- The congregation shall bi-annually elect a Recording Secretary for a two-year term. The Recording Secretary shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms.
- d. Household treasurer
- e. Church Operations representative
- f. Congregational Worship representative
- g. Christian Formation representative
- h. Mission and Service representative
- i. Deacon representative
- j. Pastor-Congregation Relations Team representative
- k. Pastor(s)

## 2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL

- a. Responsibilities of the Church Council
  - 1) To serve as the coordinating and advisory body to unify the work of the church, its departments, and its support teams.
  - 2) To hold council meetings, determine the date and agenda of the annual congregational meeting, and call special meetings of the congregation.
  - 3) To follow meeting and election protocols as specified by the Constitution and Policy Handbook.
  - 4) To consider matters of concern submitted by departments, boards, and/or support teams of the church.
  - 5) To provide ballot nominees for the Gifts Discernment Team.
  - 6) To provide a slate of Central Plains Conference and Mennonite Church USA Conference delegate nominees to be voted upon by the congregation.
  - 7) To appoint temporary committees, as needed.
  - 8) To approve the proposed budget to be presented at the annual congregational meeting.
  - 9) To appoint an Auditing Team and a Policy Team.
  - 10) To authorize the use of church facilities for purposes other than congregational activities.
  - 11) To oversee and annually review church policies.
  - 12) To ensure that church practices and policies are in compliance with the Constitution of Salem Mennonite Church.
  - 13) To make minutes of council and congregational meetings available to the congregation after each meeting.
  - 14) To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.
- b. Responsibilities of the Officers of the Church Council
  - 1) The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the congregation and Church Council.
  - 2) The Moderator shall prepare the agenda for the annual congregational meeting.
  - 3) The Moderator shall appoint the Teller Committee for congregational meetings.

- 4) The Assistant Moderator shall perform duties of the position in the absence of the Moderator.
- 5) The Recording Secretary shall record all minutes of council and congregational meetings.

#### **D. PASTOR-CONGREGATION RELATIONS TEAM**

1. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE PASTOR-CONGREGATION RELATIONS TEAM
  - a. The Pastor-Congregation Relations Team shall consist of two members elected by the congregation for a term of three years and shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms, and one member chosen by the/each pastor.
  - b. Members of this team shall demonstrate strong skills in the following areas: listening, communication, counseling, and/or mediating.
  - c. Those serving in the roles of Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Deacon Board, and Salary Team shall be excluded from serving as part of this team.
2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR-CONGREGATION RELATIONS TEAM
  - a. To assess and foster healthy working relationships between the pastor(s) and congregation.
  - b. To assess and foster healthy working relationships between the pastors themselves when more than one pastor is employed by the church.
  - c. To assist deacons with pastoral evaluations.
  - d. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

#### **E. SUPPORT TEAMS**

1. GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM
  - a. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION

The Gifts Discernment Team shall consist of three members, elected by the congregation for a term of three years and shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. No team member may serve as chair during the first year of their first term.
  - b. RESPONSIBILITIES
    - 1) To distribute, collect, and tabulate gift discernment surveys or other manner of determining gifts of members of the congregation.
    - 2) To prepare a slate of nominees for annually elected positions of the church.
    - 3) To maintain and update church ministry job descriptions.
2. POLICY TEAM
  - a. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION

The Policy Team shall consist of two members, appointed by the Church Council to serve staggered terms of two years.
  - b. RESPONSIBILITIES
    - 1) To assist the deacons, council, leadership teams and others in preparing and revising church policies.
    - 2) To follow up annually with those responsible for each policy to make sure policies have been reviewed and are up to date.
3. AUDITING TEAM
  - a. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION
    - 1) The Auditing Team shall consist of three members.
    - 2) Members shall be appointed by the Church Council to serve staggered terms of three years.

3) Members of this team shall not be associated with or responsible for any of the treasury reports they are auditing.

b. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) To conduct yearly audits of the treasuries of the church prior to the release of the church's annual report.
- 2) To ascertain that church funds are handled properly and sound accounting principles are followed.
- 3) To follow auditing process guidelines as defined by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

4. CONFERENCE DELEGATES

a. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION

- 1) Central Plains Mennonite Conference delegates shall be nominated annually by the Church Council and elected by the congregation.
- 2) Mennonite Church USA delegates shall be nominated every other year by the Church Council and elected by the congregation.

b. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) To represent Salem Mennonite Church and its departments at meetings of the church conferences.
- 2) To be informed of the work of the conference and communicate this information with the congregation.

## **F. THE DEPARTMENTS OF THE CHURCH**

### **1. THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH OPERATIONS**

a. GOALS AND PURPOSE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH OPERATIONS

- 1) To look after and maintain premises, structures, and properties belonging to the church.
- 2) To oversee the Household Treasury of the church.

b. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH OPERATIONS

1) Department of Church Operations Leadership Team

- i. The Church Operations Leadership Team shall consist of six trustees elected by the congregation. Team members shall serve staggered terms of three years and shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. No member shall serve as chair in the first year of their first term.
- ii. The pastor(s) shall be invited to attend meetings of the Leadership Team and department.

- 2) Household Treasurer- The congregation shall elect a household treasurer for a term of three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms that may be served by this individual.

c. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH OPERATIONS

1) Responsibilities of the Church Operations Leadership Team

- i. To look after church properties and operations.
- ii. To oversee the raising of sufficient funds for the maintenance of church properties.
- iii. To select a trustee to serve as a representative to the Church Council.

- iv. To present budgetary needs to the Church Council.
  - v. To be represented by the chair of the department at a yearly meeting called by the Mission treasurer for the purpose of determining the Sunday morning offering schedule. This meeting shall also include the chairs of the other church departments, pastor(s), and a deacon representative.
  - vi. To authorize and supervise the upkeep, improvement, and repair of church properties, as needed.
  - vii. To seek approval from the Church Council and then from the congregation for changes to the church structure and properties that exceed 5% of the fiscal year church budget. This includes projects funded by bequests or gifts to the church.
  - viii. To act in emergency situations by authorizing approval of necessary repairs and seeking ratification from the Church Council and the congregation as soon thereafter as possible.
  - ix. To hire and conduct performance reviews of the church's administrative assistant, custodian(s), cleaning staff, and lawn mowing staff.
  - x. To appoint the Cemetery Sexton.
  - xi. To arrange for snow removal.
  - xii. To report appointments and employment updates to the church office annually, as directed.
  - xiii. To annually review and update policies of the department and submit proposed changes to the Church Council for approval.
  - xiv. To communicate the work of the department to the Church Council.
  - xv. To record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
  - xvi. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.
- 2) Responsibilities of the Household Treasurer
- i. To receive and disburse monies of the church, other than those relating to the Department of Christian Formation, Missions, Youth Fellowship, and the Deacon's Fund.
  - ii. To keep an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements.
  - iii. To serve as chair of the Salary Team. This team shall also consist of a trustee representative and a deacon representative.
  - iv. To prepare the yearly church budget for inclusion in the report for the annual congregational meeting.
  - v. To provide the congregation with updates with regard to the financial status of the church treasury.
  - vi. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## 2. **THE DEPARTMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP**

### a. GOALS AND PURPOSE

- 1) To create a welcoming, Christ-like atmosphere for those who gather for worship and activities of the church.
- 2) To provide comfort and fellowship for those who gather at Salem Mennonite.

b. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

- 1) Department of Congregational Worship Leadership Team -The Congregational Worship Leadership Team shall consist of the members listed below. Team members shall serve staggered terms of two years and be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. No team member may serve as chair in the first year of their first term.
  - i. Worship Planning Team representative
  - ii. Music Team representative
  - iii. Hospitality Team representative
  - iv. Meal Fellowship Team representative
  - v. Deacon representative
  - vi. Pastor(s) shall be invited to Congregational Worship Leadership Team meetings.
- 2) Worship Planning Team- The Worship Planning Team shall select a chair annually and work together to plan the order and content of the Sunday morning worship services. A representative from this team shall serve as a member of the Congregational Worship Leadership Team. This team shall consist of the members listed below. The Worship Planning Team shall record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
  - i. At-Large Members- Two at-large members of the congregation shall be elected to serve two-year terms. Each at-large member shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. The at-large members shall be principally responsible for facilitating such things as visual aspects of worship (e.g., flowers and banners), dramatic scripture readings, etc., as determined by the Worship Planning Team.
  - ii. Choir Director - The choir directors of the church shall select a choir director to serve a two-year term.
  - iii. Organist/Pianist- The organists and pianists of the church shall select one organist or pianist to serve a two-year term.
  - iv. Youth Representative- The Youth Fellowship shall select a youth member to serve a two-year term.
  - v. Deacon Representative- The deacons shall select one deacon representative.
  - vi. Pastor(s) shall be invited to Worship Planning Team meetings.The Worship Planning Team shall regularly communicate with all of the following teams and collaborate with them for the purpose of arranging for worship services:
  - a) Hospitality Team members may be invited to participate in Worship Planning Team meetings when there are special needs related to hosting, ushering, or child care.
  - b) Audio Visual Team members may be invited to participate in Worship Planning Team meetings when there are special arrangements related to sound and video aspects of worship.
  - c) Meal Fellowship Team members may be invited to participate in Worship Planning Team meetings when there are meals planned as part of a worship service.
- 3) Music Team- The Music Team shall strive to enhance worship experiences by arranging for choirs and special music. They are responsible for planning the music schedule for worship services. This team shall consist of the church musicians listed below, who shall select a

chair, with the chair to serve as the representative to the Congregational Worship Leadership Team.

- i. All Choir Directors.
  - ii. A representative from each of the adult choirs, chosen by each choir.
  - iii. A representative of the organists/pianists, chosen by the organists/pianists.
- 4) Hospitality Team- The Hospitality Team shall focus on creating a welcoming church atmosphere. This team shall consist of the members listed below and select a chair to serve as the representative to the Congregational Worship Leadership Team.
- i. Hosts- The Hosts shall be appointed to serve staggered terms of two years. Hosts shall be responsible for greeting worshippers, welcoming and assisting guests before and after church services, serving as hosts for special events, coordinating lodging and meals when requested, and arranging for Sunday morning refreshments, as appropriate.
  - ii. Ushers- Ushers shall be appointed to serve staggered terms of two years.
  - iii. Child Care Facilitators- Child Care Facilitators shall arrange for the supervision and upkeep of the Church Nursery. They shall be appointed to serve staggered terms of two years.
- 5) Audio-Visual Team- The Audio Visual Team shall be appointed and shall be responsible for monitoring the sound and video aspects of services that are held in the church.
- 6) Meal Fellowship Team- The Meal Fellowship Team shall be appointed and shall arrange for the serving of fellowship meals, as requested, and maintain the church kitchen.

c. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

1) Responsibilities of the Congregational Worship Leadership Team

- i. To appoint persons to serve in various roles such as Hosts, Ushers, Child Care Facilitators, Audio-Visual Team, Meal Fellowship Team, Copyright License Manager, and/or other positions, as needed, to fulfill the goals of the department.
- ii. To select a representative to the Church Council.
- iii. To coordinate plans to fulfill the goals of the department.
- iv. The chair of this department shall meet annually with the other department chairs, pastor(s), deacon representative from the Department of Mission and Service, and the Mission treasurer to determine the church offering schedule.
- v. To report appointments to the church office annually, as directed.
- vi. To annually review and update policies of the department and submit proposed changes to the Church Council for approval.
- vii. To extend an invitation to the pastor(s) prior to each meeting.
- viii. To communicate the work of the department to the Church Council.
- ix. To record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
- x. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

2) Responsibilities of Music, Hospitality, Audio-Visual, and Meal Fellowship Teams

- i. To coordinate plans to fulfill the goals of the department.
- ii. To record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
- iii. To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

### 3. **THE DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION**

#### a. GOALS AND PURPOSE

- 1) To provide opportunities for children, youth, and adults that help them grow in their Christian faith.
- 2) To coordinate educational activities that promote the study of the Bible.

#### b. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION

##### 1) Department of Christian Formation Leadership Team

- i. Three at-large Members shall be elected by the congregation. They shall serve staggered three-year terms with the term of one member expiring each year. They shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. Two of the at-large members shall, respectively, serve as the chair and secretary of the Leadership Team. No member shall serve as chair in the first year of their first term.
- ii. Sunday School Superintendents - The Sunday School Superintendents shall organize and oversee the religious instruction of the Sunday School. The Assistant Sunday School Superintendent shall be elected annually by the congregation and shall automatically succeed to the position of Sunday School Superintendent the following year.
- iii. Bible Study Coordinator- The Bible Study Coordinator shall be elected by the congregation for a three-year term and shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. Duties shall be to plan and coordinate Bible study programs for the congregation.
- iv. Youth Representative- The Youth Fellowship shall annually select one of its members to serve as a representative to the Christian Formation Leadership Team.
- v. Christian Formation Treasurer - The Christian Formation treasurer shall be elected by the congregation for a three-year term, with no limit to the number of consecutive terms the treasurer may serve. Duties shall be to oversee and disburse funds relating to the Sunday School, Bible School, Swan Lake Christian Camp Scholarships, and as directed by the Mennonite Education Team.
- vi. Deacon Representative - The deacons shall select one deacon representative to serve as a member of the Christian Formation Leadership Team.
- vii. Bible School Superintendents- Two Bible School Superintendents shall be responsible for organizing the summer Vacation Bible School activities. One Bible School Superintendent shall be appointed annually by the Christian Formation Leadership Team to serve a term of two years. The Bible School Superintendents shall attend meetings of the department as designated by the chair of the department.
- viii. Library Team Representative- The Library Team shall consist of three members. The positions shall be for three years, with the term of one member expiring each year. One member shall serve as a representative to the Christian Formation Leadership Team. The Library Team shall promote and supervise congregational use of the church library. The Library Representative shall attend meetings as designated by the chair of the department.
- ix. Pastor(s) shall be invited to meetings of the Christian Formation Leadership team and department.

- 2) Youth Fellowship- The Youth Fellowship shall consist of high school-aged youth, including the following officers and their advisors.
  - i. President- The Youth Fellowship President shall provide leadership and collaborate with the Youth Advisors. The President shall serve a one-year term.
  - ii. Vice President/Secretary- The Vice President/Secretary shall be elected by the Youth Fellowship to serve a one-year term and automatically become President the following year.
  - iii. Treasurers- The treasurer shall work with an assistant treasurer to oversee monies handled by the Youth Fellowship. The assistant treasurer shall be elected by the Youth Fellowship to serve a one-year term and then automatically becomes treasurer for a one-year term.
  - iv. Youth Fellowship Advisors- Adult members of the congregation shall be selected as advisors by the Youth Fellowship for a two-year term. Terms shall be staggered with the term of two advisors ending annually. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms that may be served.
- 3) Child Protection Team- Two persons shall be appointed by the Christian Formation Leadership Team for the purpose of overseeing the Childhood Protection Policy.
- 4) Mennonite Education Team- The Mennonite Education Team shall consist of four individuals appointed by the Christian Formation Leadership Team. Terms shall be two years in length, with two terms expiring each year. They shall solicit and determine disbursement of funds for students attending Mennonite schools at the elementary, secondary, undergraduate, and graduate levels. Determinations shall be reported to the Christian Formation treasurer for disbursement. This team shall also maintain a relationship with Freeman Academy and collaborate with this institution in the solicitation of funds.

#### c. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHRISTIAN FORMATION

- 1) Responsibilities of the Christian Formation Leadership Team
  - i. To determine and implement education policies concerning curriculum selection, leadership training, special study courses, and overall goals that promote Christian formation and growth.
  - ii. To make provisions for recruitment and annual training of Sunday School teachers, Bible Study teachers, Bible School teachers, and other workers.
  - iii. To present a proposed annual budget to the Church Council. The Christian Formation budget shall be funded by the church's General Fund and used to carry out the organized educational work of the church.
  - iv. To select a representative to the Church Council.
  - v. To be represented by the chair of the department at a yearly meeting called by the Mission treasurer for the purpose of determining the Sunday morning offering schedule. This meeting shall also include the chairs of the other church departments, pastor(s), and a deacon representative.
  - vi. To arrange for the at-large members to meet annually with the youth for the purpose of selecting Youth Fellowship Advisors.

- vii. To use information from Gifts Discernment surveys or similar information to appoint members to the Library, Child Protection, and Mennonite Education Teams, and/or other positions as necessary to fulfill the goals of the department.
- viii. To report appointments to the church office annually, as directed.
- ix. To schedule and make determinations regarding the disbursement of all Sunday School offerings.
- x. To annually review and update policies of the department and submit proposed changes to the Church Council for approval.
- xi. To extend an invitation to the pastor(s) prior to each meeting.
- xii. To communicate the work of the department to the Church Council.
- xiii. To record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
- xiv. To fulfill other duties as described by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## 2) Responsibilities of the Youth Fellowship

- i. To create a sense of fellowship and connectedness with each other and within the church.
- ii. To create opportunities for service and growth as a group.
- iii. To select a youth representative to the Christian Formation Leadership Team.
- iv. To select a youth representative to Congregational Worship Leadership and Worship Planning Team.
- v. To meet annually with the three at-large Members of the Christian Formation Leadership Team for the purpose of selecting adult members of the congregation to serve as advisors.
- vi. To receive guidance and supervision from advisors.
- vii. To participate in a mentoring program as arranged by the advisors.
- viii. To communicate events of the Youth Fellowship with the congregation.
- ix. To fulfill other duties as described by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## 4. **THE DEPARTMENT OF MISSION AND SERVICE**

### a. GOALS AND PURPOSE

- 1) To encourage the congregation to develop a vision for mission to the local community and beyond.
- 2) To identify local mission needs and implement activities to help meet those needs.

### b. ELECTION AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF MISSION AND SERVICE

#### 1) Department of Mission and Service Leadership Team

- i. Three At-Large Members- The at-large members shall be elected by the congregation. They shall serve three year terms with the term of one member expiring each year. They shall be eligible to serve two consecutive terms. Two of the at-large members shall fill the roles of Chair and Secretary of the Leadership Team. No member shall serve as chair in the first year of his/her first term. The chair of this department shall meet annually with the other department chairs, pastor(s), deacon representative, and the Mission treasurer to determine the church offering schedule.
- ii. Project Team Representative- The Project Team shall select one representative to serve on the Mission and Service Leadership Team.

- iii. Deacon Representative- The deacons shall select one deacon representative to serve as a member of the Mission and Service Leadership Team. The deacon representative shall meet annually with department chairs, pastor(s), and Mission treasurer to determine the church offering schedule.
  - iv. The pastor(s) shall be invited to meetings of the Mission and Service Leadership Team and department.
- 2) Project Team- The Project Team shall consist of four members appointed by the Mission and Service Leadership Team for the purpose of organizing and overseeing relevant mission and service projects of the church throughout the year. The position shall be for two years, with the terms of two members expiring each year.
  - 3) Mission Treasurer - The Mission treasurer shall be elected by the congregation for a term of three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms that may be served by this individual. Duties shall be to deposit and disburse all monies received from church mission offerings and gifts for missions and benevolent causes. The Mission treasurer shall keep an accurate record of all such transactions and report to the congregation as directed. The Mission treasurer shall call and chair the meeting to determine the annual worship offering schedule. This meeting shall include the chairs of each of the four departments, deacon representative, and the pastor(s).
  - 4) Media Contributor- The Media Contributor shall be appointed to a term of two years by the Mission and Service Leadership team for the purpose of providing news items to the local newspaper and Mennonite publications.
- c. Responsibilities of the Department of Mission and Service Leadership Team
- 1) To promote an awareness of and reach out to those who do not currently have a church home.
  - 2) To encourage church members to become involved in Christian service and ministry locally, regionally, nationally, and globally.
  - 3) To appoint persons to serve in various roles for the purpose of fulfilling the goals of the department. These roles may be related to the following areas of mission and service: MCC Sale, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Women MC-USA, MCC Meat Canning, and MCC Meat Canning Food Committee.
  - 4) To select a member of the Leadership Team to serve as a representative to the Church Council.
  - 5) To appoint four members to the Project Team.
  - 6) To appoint a Media Contributor.
  - 7) To report appointments to the church office annually, as directed.
  - 8) To annually review and update policies of the department and submit proposed changes to the Church Council for approval.
  - 9) To extend an invitation to the pastor(s) prior to each meeting.
  - 10) To communicate the work of the department to the Church Council.
  - 11) To record notes to be made available to the congregation after each meeting.
  - 12) To fulfill other duties as specified by the Salem Mennonite Church Policy Handbook.

## **G. CHURCH BUSINESS**

### **1. Meetings**

- a. **Annual Meeting.** A report of the work of the pastor(s), all elected congregational positions, and any others as requested by the Church Council, shall be given in written or oral form at the annual meeting. All treasurers' reports and the household proposed budget shall be given in written form at the annual meeting. The auditing committee report shall be given in written or oral form at the annual meeting.
- b. **Special Meetings.** Special congregational meetings shall be called whenever necessary to address a matter upon which the congregation is to vote.
- c. **Procedure.**
  - 1) The congregation shall be given at least two weeks written notice as to the date and description of business to be transacted at all meetings at which votes will be taken.
  - 2) Except when otherwise expressly provided in the Constitution, or as determined by the Church Council and announced to the congregation prior to a vote, a simple majority of members present at a meeting of the congregation shall have the authority to determine any matter voted upon. Such decisions shall be binding upon the whole congregation until the same is recalled or changed by congregational action.
  - 3) The Constitution may be amended at any annual or special meeting of the congregation. A two-thirds majority (67%) of all members voting at the meeting shall be necessary to adopt such amendments.

### **2. Elections**

- a. The regular election of all positions shall be held at the annual meeting. All elections shall be by written ballot unless there is a successful motion for unanimous ballot of the entire slate.
- b. The slate presented shall include one or more nominees for each elected position. With the consent of the nominee, additional nominations may be made from the floor.
- c. Candidates receiving a plurality of votes cast shall be deemed elected.
- d. Vacancies in any elected position shall be filled by the Church Council, with those persons holding that position until the next annual meeting of the congregation.
- e. No absentee voting is permitted for any congregational meeting.

### **3. Church Register**

The congregation shall have a church register wherein shall be entered the names of the members of the congregation, the names of each member's immediate family members, birthdates, baptisms, marriages, and deaths.

### **4. Church Property**

The Church Council shall determine how to dispose of or distribute church property which is no longer used. This does not include property disposed of as part of regular maintenance. The Church Council may request input on the decision to dispose of church property from any Leadership Team and/or from the congregation.