

# BYLAWS OF CHAPEL HILL MENNONITE FELLOWSHIP

## ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be Chapel Hill Mennonite Fellowship.

## ARTICLE II: IDENTITY

Early participants began meeting for worship in late 2001, in Chapel Hill, Orange County, NC. These participants came, in part, from a small group affiliated with Raleigh Mennonite Church (RMC). Organizational meetings for the group began in early 2002. RMC recognized the group as a separate congregation on September 22, 2002, and weekly meetings for worship began at that time. The Fellowship subscribes to the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* (1995) as its guide for Biblical faith and Christian discipleship. The group operates on a shared leadership model, to be as inclusive as possible of all participants and their gifts.

## ARTICLE III: PURPOSES

The purposes of the organization shall be to develop and sustain the lives of its community of believers by providing opportunities for Christian worship, study, fellowship and service. The organization shall be non-profit, organized exclusively for religious and charitable purposes.

## ARTICLE IV: RELATIONSHIPS

The congregation joined Virginia Mennonite Conference (VMC) in 2003, and through that membership, became affiliated with Mennonite Church USA (MC USA). The congregation transferred its membership to Central District Conference (CDC) in 2018. The organization has agreed to abide by the bylaws of both CDC and MC USA. Through these relationships, the organization supports extended ministries of the denomination.

The congregation is also a member of the Supportive Communities Network and the North Carolina Council of Churches.

## ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the organization shall be composed of persons who wish to be in fellowship with each other for the purposes listed above. These persons shall agree that they

- 1) will follow Jesus Christ, who by his life, death, and resurrection shares with us the life of the Holy Spirit;
- 2) are baptized;
- 3) will use the *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* as their guide for Biblical faith and Christian discipleship; and
- 4) will participate in the life of the community.

Persons are proposed to the congregation for membership by the deacons and/or the pastor and are agreed to by consensus of the Fellowship. Persons remaining in the community who wish to end their membership do so by request to the Fellowship. Persons no longer residing in the community may request a letter of transfer of membership from the deacons and/or the pastor. Only those who hold membership in the organization may block consensus of the group, hold office or be deacons.

## **ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS**

Congregational Life Meetings for the purpose of discerning matters in the life of the Fellowship (CLMs) are held at regular intervals throughout the year, usually on the first or second Sunday of every other month. The schedule may be varied at the discretion of the officers. Meetings are open to everyone for participation and discussion; only members may block consensus. All regular Fellowship attendees are encouraged to attend the CLMs.

Any participant may bring a proposal or discussion item to the group. The Moderator will call for items in advance of a meeting, and compile and circulate an agenda in advance of the meeting. Matters in the meetings are decided by consensus of the group. Since issues are not voted on, all participants are encouraged to make their views known in the discussion. Those not in agreement with the general consensus on an issue may choose to block consensus or not to block consensus after making their views known. Although general consensus has been reached, the group may choose not to move forward if alternative views are voiced. Clear, open and respectful discussion may lead the entire group in a direction different from the original proposal and can be the most important outcome of a meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII: DEACONS**

The deacons work with the pastor to assure continuing spiritual care and welfare of the Fellowship participants and others who relate to the congregation. In the absence of a pastor, deacons assume the role of ministry and congregational care. Deacons serve as a pastoral oversight committee, including writing the pastor's job description; setting policies for vacation time; and reviewing, with the pastor, the time, energy, and duties of the job. In addition to caring for the well-being of the pastor, the deacons are charged with discerning the church's mission, acting as resources for Anabaptist and Mennonite practices, dispersing the benevolence fund, and leading communion. The deacons oversee the membership list.

Terms: New deacons are chosen by consensus each year no later than the May Congregational Life Meeting. In January, the moderator will solicit deacon nominations. Nominations for this office may be made by any participant to the moderator; nominations will be printed in the agenda for the March CLM and discussed at that meeting. Nominees should be present at the March CLM. Attention shall be given to balance of gender, geographical criteria, and limit of one family member at any given time. Only members may be deacons. The term of a deacon is three years, beginning June 1 following selection. Individuals may not serve consecutive three-year terms. In the case of a mid-term loss of deacon, the Fellowship may choose another person to finish the term and be eligible for a following three-year term.

## **ARTICLE VIII: OFFICERS**

- A. The Moderator of the Fellowship shall ensure the preparation of an agenda for CLMs, moderate these meetings, fulfill administrative duties to implement the Fellowship's decisions, delegate such duties as are needed and appropriate to the administrative workings of the group, and generally facilitate all organizational aspects of the Fellowship.
- B. The Secretary of the Fellowship shall keep an accurate record of group proceedings (CLMs and other special meetings of the group), to include resolutions adopted and actions taken, shall publish the minutes of these meetings in a timely fashion to the group, and shall assist the Moderator in facilitating the organizational aspects of the Fellowship.
- C. The Treasurer shall have custody of all offerings, funds and accounts of the organization. The treasurer shall receive, deposit, invest and disburse all group monies, in accordance with the direction of the Fellowship. The treasurer shall be a member of the Finance Committee. In conjunction with the committee, the treasurer

shall shape an annual budget to be presented and finalized at a CLM no later than July, before the September start of the fiscal year and shall furnish periodic accounting of group funds to the participants.

Terms: Officers are chosen no later than the May CLM meeting, and begin on June 1 following selection. In January, the moderator will solicit officer nominations. Nominations for officer positions may be made by any participant to the moderator; nominations will be printed in the agenda for the March CLM and discussed at that meeting. Nominees should be present at the March CLM. Terms are for two years. The Secretary and Moderator may be re-elected for one additional consecutive two-year term. The Treasurer may be re-elected for three additional consecutive two-year terms. Only members may be officers. In the case of a mid-term loss of officer, the Fellowship must choose another person to fill the position. The replacement will fill in until the next June and will then begin his or her own two-year term.

### **ARTICLE IX: PASTOR**

The pastor shall be expected to take the lead role in spiritual care and welfare of the congregation, including counseling, welcoming and ministry to participants and others who relate to the community of believers. Roles include performing the ordinances of the Fellowship, serving as a worship guide and primary preacher, and also assisting and coaching other members of the preaching rotation. The pastor meets ex officio with the deacons and serves ex officio on the worship committee. The pastor is the face of the congregation in the community and the liaison between the Fellowship and the wider denomination. As such, the pastor has designated roles as delegate to conference and district meetings, and, in consultation with the deacons, fills other conference obligations as requested. The pastor assists as needed with administrative and leadership functions in the Fellowship. The pastor takes a 10-week sabbatical every 3 years.

Oversight of the pastoral role resides with the deacons, to include encouragement, advice, and direction. While review of the pastoral role and effectiveness is ongoing, the deacons must arrange to conduct a formal review of the pastor at least every three years. The finance committee, in consultation with the deacons, will propose pastoral compensation. Denominational compensation guidelines should be consulted when determining compensation.

Terms: Following the results of the review, the pastor may be offered a new term, usually for three years. When a new person must be sought to fill the pastoral role, the congregation will appoint a Pastoral Search Committee (PSC). The PSC, working in conjunction with the District Overseer, will seek out and present a candidate(s) to the Fellowship for acceptance. The pastor is thus hired by consensus of the Fellowship; the pastor's term may only be terminated by consensus of the Fellowship. The Fellowship also decides on the fraction of time employed.

### **ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES**

The Fellowship may establish committees as needed to carry out specific functions for the organization, not to conflict with the authorization or limits stated elsewhere in these bylaws. Standing committees are listed below:

#### **A. Finance committee**

This committee is responsible for maintaining accountability in all fiscal practices of the organization and helps to fiscally interpret the decisions made by the organization. The committee is responsible for shaping an annual budget and bringing this to the congregation at a CLM. Throughout the year, the committee is responsible for monitoring the group's finances.

Terms: The organization's treasurer and at least two other members constitute this committee.

The group will choose a chair(s). Terms are indefinite; members are chosen by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time.

#### B. Worship committee

This committee is responsible for planning worship services, to include special services such as dedication and commissioning and special times of the church year, including Lent and Advent. The committee oversees recruiting, training, and maintaining a list of willing participants for all aspects of worship planning, to include hymn leading, preaching, and worship leading. As part of the training, the group maintains a guide for worship planners to follow. Responsibility for making adequate worship resources available resides with this committee. The committee provides oversight for the schedule of rotating participants for weekly worship services.

Terms: Unspecified number of participants, including the pastor. The group will choose a chair(s). Terms are indefinite; members are chosen by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time.

#### C. Hospitality Committee

This group coordinates church social events, including potlucks and hymn sings, and provides for food for CLMs. As part of this hosting, the committee monitors and maintains congregational supplies for meals and events. Additionally, the committee takes responsibility to coordinate meals and support for those in the Fellowship needing this service, such as new parents or those who are ill. This group is responsible to arrange a congregational gift for families of newborns.

Terms: Unspecified number of participants. Terms are indefinite; members are chosen by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time.

#### D. Children's Committee

This group is responsible for overseeing the nursery, Sunday School, and youth group programs. The group also coordinates congregational discernment about Christian education and the engagement of children in the life of the congregation.

Terms: Unspecified number of participants. Terms are indefinite; members are chosen by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time.

#### E. Building Committee

This group is responsible for finding suitable venue(s) for worship services, including negotiating lease arrangements and communicating with the property owner for scheduling and other issues.

Terms: Unspecified number of participants. Terms are indefinite; members are chosen by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time.

### **ARTICLE XI: APPOINTEES**

Individuals from the Fellowship may be appointed as representatives or liaisons to outside groups, as required or desired by the Fellowship. Other individuals may be appointed to positions within the Fellowship, as necessary. All individuals appointed should be currently active in the Fellowship. These positions include, but are not limited to, those mentioned below:

#### A. CDC delegate

The CDC constitution states that each congregation in CDC may designate one delegate for each 100 members or fraction thereof. (This is in addition to the pastor, who is a delegate as a result of being a credentialed congregational leader.) The duties of the delegate are to attend meetings of the Conference Assembly and to convey information from the conference to the congregation and

to represent the views of the congregation to the conference. The delegate will perform any duties as required to implement decisions made at these meetings.

Term: Selected at the January CLM. Delegates may be reappointed.

- B. Other appointees for indefinite terms, who may be appointed by general invitation to interested participants and may begin at any time, include, but are not limited to: small group facilitators, website manager, Everence advocate, NC Council of Churches representative, church archivist, representative to Inter-Faith Council meetings, Mennonite Central Committee liaison, and Mennonite Disaster Service liaison.

## **ARTICLE XII: ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS**

- A. The fiscal year of the organization shall be September 1 – August 31.
- B. The Treasurer shall maintain a permanent record of revenue and expenditures, of any insurance policies or other business documents, of the persons having access to bank records and of any other pertinent business documents.
- C. The Secretary shall maintain records of the Articles of Association of the organization, of the Internal Revenue Service Employer Identification Number, of the by-laws and any other pertinent organizational documents.
- D. The Secretary shall post the minutes of all business meetings in a timely manner. The Secretary shall maintain records of all CLM agendas and minutes.
- E. Worship committee shall keep a copy of worship service bulletins for reference.
- F. Bylaws may be adopted or changed by consensus of the Fellowship. The officers of the group shall take responsibility for drafting proposed changes to the bylaws and for submitting them to the Fellowship at least two weeks in advance of a CLM.

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