



Job Description and Church Profile

Contents

Youth Pastor Job Description 2

Church Profile 3

Community Profile..... 5

North Oak Ministry Teams 2018-2019..... 6

Ministry Vision, Core Values, Covenant of North Oak..... 7

North Oak Community Church Constitution..... 10

North Oak Confession of Faith..... 19

Church Offices (Mailing/Shipping Address)

3002 Northridge Court
Hays, KS 67601
(785) 628-8887

Church Building

3000 Oak Street
Hays, KS 67601
Website: www.northoak.net

North Oak Community Church in Hays, Kansas is seeking an experienced servant leader to join our pastoral team as a Youth Pastor. Qualified candidates will be ordained for ministry or qualified for ordination or licensure by the United States Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches. The position reports directly to and primary responsibility for oversight and leadership of the church’s youth ministry. The position is part of a collaborative, dynamic team based approach to ministry and will provide critical leadership as the congregation advances the North Oak vision of Growing in Christ, Living Connected and Taking Jesus to Others. A job description is posted on our website: youthpastor.northoak.net. Qualified candidates need to fill out the form on the website (Youth Pastor Applicant Questionnaire) and send a cover letter and resume to nocc@northoak.net. Applications will be accepted through February 28, 2019.

Youth Pastor Job Description



North Oak Community Church Job Description

Position: Youth Pastor
Reports to: Lead Pastor
Date: December 2018

Position Summary

To win, build, equip and multiply middle school and high school youth and to promote and coordinate of youth ministries at NOCC. He will be the primary pastor and teacher for NOCC's youth and youth staff. This person is accountable to and reports to the Lead Pastor.

Job Description

Building Relationships

- Spend time with and build relationships with NOCC youth and their friends in order to take them where they are and move them forward toward Christian maturity and ministry.

Develop and Oversee Programs

- Plan and coordinate youth ministry schedules, activities and volunteer sponsors
- Oversee participation in conferences, camps and mission trips.
- Ensure that each area of youth ministries is functioning efficiently and effectively.
- Resource and empower parents and guardians to provide spiritual discipleship for their students at home.
- Work closely with parents, other staff members, youth leaders, and other ministry areas to provide a well-coordinated ministry to NOCC youth.

Qualifications

- A vibrant, mature, and growing walk with Jesus Christ, displaying the qualities of an Elder as described in 1 Timothy 3:1-6 and Titus 1:6-9.
- Demonstrated evidence of gifting in leadership, shepherding, discipleship, and teaching.
- Possess an obvious love for teenagers.
- A team player committed to the ministry of NOCC and unity with the pastoral staff.
- A people oriented rather than product/process oriented person with good relational skills – able to make, build, and keep strong relationships within the church.
- Possess a bachelor's degree. A degree related to ministry is preferred. Experience in lieu of education will be considered.
- Complete, unreserved agreement with the NOCC Constitution and Doctrinal Statement, Vision Statement, and Core Values.

Church Profile

(for more information see <http://www.northoak.net>)

A. Affiliation

Mennonite Brethren: <http://www.usmb.org/>

B. Church Statistics

Date founded - 1978

Members 273
 Attenders 296
 Total Church Family 569

Average Worship Attendance: 303

Previous Year: 308

Average Sunday School Attendance:

Ages 2–Grade 5 119
6th Grade-12th Grade 44
Adult..... 88

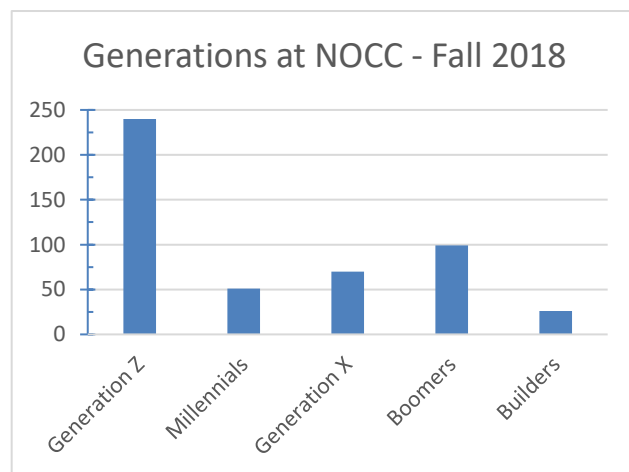
Current Youth Structure:

- On Sunday mornings youth groups meet at 9:50am for Sunday school. It is divided up into 6th-8th grades in a middle school class and 9th-12th grades in a high school class. On Wednesday evenings, youth groups are split into three groups: 6th grade, 7th-8th grades, and 9th-12th grades. At times, a youth worship band leads in combined worship.
- We are connected with a network of churches, and yearly the middle school students attend a conference called JHYC and the high school students attend SDYC. The high school students also have a yearly mission trip.

C. Demographics Study August 2018

Total 486

Generation	Ages	8/31/2018	Percentile
Generation Z	0-28	240	49%
Millennials	29-38	51	10%
Generation X	39-53	70	14%
Boomers	54-72	99	20%
Builders	73+	26	5%



D. Finance

1. Budget for the past three years:*

FY2017	FY2018	FY2019
\$613,412	\$564,722	\$592,002

*Note: In 2017 we were able to pay off our church mortgage, which represents the significant budget decrease in FY2018. In FY2019, we added a budget line to fund a future building project.

2. Budget Partitions for FY2019:

Item	Subtotal	Percent
Personnel	\$371,191	63%
Outreach	\$88,020	15%
Children & Youth	\$31,950	5%
Family & Adults	\$15,050	3%
Physical Plant	\$69,952	12%
Office Expenses	\$15,839	3%
Building Mortgage	\$0	0%
Total	\$592,002	100%

E. Current Staff (<https://www.northoak.net/about-us/>)

Full Time Staff

Lead Pastor: Ken Ediger
 Associate Pastor: Dave Buller
 Youth Pastor
 Children's Ministry Director: Karen Rigler
 Office Manager: Kim Lanning

Part Time Staff

Office Assistant: Eryn Johannes
 Custodian: Tina Maier
 Nursery Coordinator: Brandy Burkholder and Sarah Schaeffer

F. North Oak Community Church Links

Church Website

<https://www.northoak.net/>

Who are we?

<https://www.northoak.net/about-us/>

What we believe.

US Mennonite Brethren Confession of Faith

General: <https://usmb.org/what-we-believe/>

Detailed: <https://usmb.org/confession-of-faith-4/>

What is Mennonite Brethren?

<https://usmb.org/beliefs/>

Community Profile

Ellis County & Hays City, KS

U.S. Census Data (2014 &2015)

Population Demographics for Ellis County, KS

<https://suburbanstats.org/population/kansas/how-many-people-live-in-ellis-county>

Population Demographics for Hays, KS

<https://suburbanstats.org/population/kansas/how-many-people-live-in-hays>

Hays, Kansas (67601) Profile

Population, maps, real estate, averages, homes, statistics, relocation, travel, jobs, hospitals, schools, crime, moving, houses, news, etc.

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Hays-Kansas.html>

Links

- Hays Daily News Newspaper: <http://www.hdnews.net/>
- Hays Post <https://www.hayspost.com/>
- Fort Hays State University: <http://www.fhsu.edu/>
- Hays Convention and Visitors Bureau: <http://www.haysusa.net/>
- Hays Public Schools: <http://www.hays489.k12.ks.us/>
- N. Central KS Tech. College /Hays Campus <https://www.ncktc.edu/hays-campus/>
- Hays Medical Center: <http://haysmed.com>
- Ellis County Government <http://www.elliscounty.net/>
- Hays City Government <http://www.haysusa.com/>

North Oak Ministry Teams 2018-2019

MODERATOR

-Brent Goertzen

CHURCH CLERK

-Jill Goertzen

ELDERS

-Brent Goertzen, chair
 -Dave Buller
 -J.B. Burkholder
 -Ken Ediger
 -Rich Matzke
 -Jeff Neher
 -Kenny Rigler
 -Terry Weeks

DEACONS/DEACONESSES

-Justin Greenleaf, chair
 -Jeremy Burkholder
 -David Clingan
 -Sharon Graham
 -Debbie Hibbs
 -Brian Rohr
 -Karen Wasinger
 -Ross Wilson

ASSIMILATION TEAM

-Pastor Dave Buller, elder/chair
 -Sharon Graham, deaconess
 -Jan Burkholder
 -Mary Ann Coyne
 -Rachel Ediger, college students
 -Dwight Vanderlip, Usher
 Coordinator
 -Jenni Wittkorn
 -Lanee Young

BUILDINGS/GROUNDS

-Brian Rohr, deacon/chair
 -Justin Greenleaf, deacon
 -Keith Conner
 -Paul Florquist
 -Dale Kisner
 -Steven LeClerc
 -Tom Noone
 -Michael Stremel
 -Gary Timken, secretary
 -Will Weeks

CARE TEAM

-Carol Spalsbury, Compassion chr
 -Julia Kuntz, Fellowship chair
 -Debbie Hibbs, deaconess
 -Jessica Clingan, Meal Coordinator
 -Dana Cunningham, Finances
 -Paula Martin, Funeral coordinator
 -John Ross, Finances
 -Carolyn States, Finances

EQUIPPING TEAM

ADULTS

-Brent Goertzen, chair
 -Pastor Dave Buller, elder
 -Brett & Genell Albert
 -Emily Buller
 -Pat Coyne
 -Darrell & Michele Eiland
 -Kurt & Paula Martin

CHILDREN

-Karen Rigler, Chair, Director
 -Rich Matzke, Elder
 -Kumers, Children's Church
 -Aura Davis, HFL
 -Brandy Burkholder, Nursery
 -Sarah Schaeffer, Nursery
 -Stephanie Burkholder, SS Dir
 -Nikki Muench, VBS
 -Pam Schmidtberger

YOUTH

-Pastor Jeff Neher, elder
 -Ross Wilson, deacon
 -Jessica Clingan
 -Meagan Englert
 -Derek Erbert
 -Eryn Johannes
 -Zoe Martin
 -Darrick Mazour
 -Brandon Nimz
 -Bryan Noone
 -Tim Schmidtberger
 -Aaron & Joy Thomas
 -Mason Wellbrock

FINANCE TEAM

-Art Spalsbury, chair
 -Kenny Rigler, elder
 -Ross Wilson, deacon
 -Eric Austin, member
 -Bev Brungardt, member
 -Mike Burkholder, bookkeeper
 -Pat Coyne, member
 -Jenni Stringham, treasurer

GLOBAL OUTREACH TEAM

-Lanee Young, chair
 -Pastor Ken Ediger, elder
 -Travis & Shelly Keller
 -Nina McNeal, mission notebook
 -Mark Thowe

LOCAL OUTREACH TEAM (SOZO)

-Dustin & Sheila Rupke, chair
 -Jeremy Burkholder, deacon
 -Bryan Noone

SPIRITUAL LIFE TEAM

-Pastor Dave Buller, elder
 -Jenni Wittkorn, prayer chain
 -Will Fadenrecht

WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

-Normadine Noone, chair
 -Pastor Ken Ediger, elder
 -Lori Balzer
 -Pastor Dave Buller, elder
 -Joan Crull
 -Sharon Graham, deaconess
 -Kenny Rigler, elder

MEN'S MINISTRY TEAM

-Keith Brungardt, chair
 -Justin Greenleaf, deacon/chair
 -Pastor Dave Buller, elder
 -J.B. Burkholder, elder
 -Brian Rohr, deacon

WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAM

-Amy Rohr, *chair/contact*
 -Karen Wasinger, deacon
 -Emily Buller
 -JoLeen Cunningham
 -Rita Kofoid
 -Dot LeClerc
 -Paula Martin
 -Sandi May
 -Kara Olmstead

SAFETY TEAM

-Aaron Larson, chair
 -David Clingan, deacon
 -J.B. Burkholder, elder
 -Chad Maier
 -Dwight Vanderlip
 -Will Weeks

Ministry Vision, Core Values, Covenant of North Oak

Ministry Vision

The mission of North Oak Community Church as a local representative of the body of Christ is to glorify God by living as a Christ-centered and Biblically grounded community for the transformation of individuals and families in our city, region and world into authentic trust-follow relationships with Jesus Christ.

Our Purpose

Grow in Christ: At North Oak Community Church of Hays our passion is to love Jesus with all our heart.

Live Connected: As we seek to love Jesus more than he's ever been loved before, we want to cultivate an environment where no one walks alone.

Take Jesus to Others: Together, we want to see the kingdom of God advanced in our church, our community and the world.

Our Vision

We are becoming a family of generations with a whole-hearted love for God, growing in relationship with Jesus and helping each other grow and who are going to Ellis County and beyond with the good news of Jesus.

Our Strategy

- Exalt Jesus to Win People (Outreach)
- Engage with Jesus to Build Disciples (Growth)
- Follow Jesus to Equip People (Ministry Training)
- Join Jesus in Multiplying Leaders (Leadership)

Our Core Values

BIBLICAL

We believe the Bible is uniquely God-inspired, without error and the sole authority of our faith and life. We study it carefully to understand the Holy Spirit's original meaning and purpose and we work to apply it to the lives and problems of people. (2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17; Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19-21)

AUTHORITY

CHRIST-CENTERED

We believe an individual forever becomes a child of God through faith alone in Christ alone. Our goal is to become like Jesus Christ in character and lifestyle so we submit to appropriate personal and corporate accountability of our Christian walk in all areas of our lives. (Colossians 1:10, 17-18, 2:7)

DEPENDENCE

ON

GOD

We believe it is essential to seek God's guidance and direction through prayer and study of the Word. (Colossians 1:9)

LOVING/CARING

RELATIONSHIPS

We believe God designed the church to be a covenant community, so we encourage each other to demonstrate Christ's love by cultivating loving/caring relationships in every aspect of church life. (2 Peter 1:7; John 13:34-35; Galatians 5:13)

PRAISE

AND

WORSHIP

We believe in making the greatness of God known by loving and obeying him in all of life. When we meet together for congregational worship we use a blended worship style of both traditional and contemporary aspects that provides opportunities for praise and worship in a multigenerational congregation. (Acts 2:47; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 118:24, 150)

EVANGELISM

We believe Christ commands us to make disciples of every people group, so we explain the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost, seeking to win them, bring them into the church, and teach them God's word. Evangelism also includes showing the love of Christ to unbelievers by being friends to them and serving them; by church planting and supporting and sending workers to other cultures and countries. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:1-8; Philippians 1:12ff)

SERVICE

God has given every believer a spiritual gift(s), skills and talents, so we make it our goal to equip and encourage everyone to use these gifts to serve God and others. (Ephesians 4:11-16)

FAMILY

We believe the home is the primary context where God prepares all generations to know, love, and serve him, so we equip and encourage family relationships at every level - marriage, parenting, young people and singles - to nurture faith in everyday life at home. (Genesis 2:18-25; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Ephesians 5:22-33, 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21)

Our Covenant with Each Other

Believing our chief purpose is to glorify God...
 Believing the Bible is accurate, true and reliable in all it addresses...
 Believing the Bible to be our authoritative guide for faith and life...
 Believing eternal life is a gift of God's grace, received by faith...
 Believing the Holy Spirit empowers believers to live holy and sanctified lives...
 Believing Jesus Christ has instructed His church to make disciples of all nations...
 Believing all we are and all we have belongs to God...
 Believing Jesus Christ has instructed us to love one another as He loves us...
 Believing families are of vital importance to God...
 Believing our entire lives are to be lived as a testimony of God's love and grace...

As the body of Christ we endeavor to live out these truths by:

Growing in my personal life and devotion to Christ

...By reading and studying His Word for myself
 ...By praying God will transform me into Christ's image

Working to keep the unity of my church family

...By loving the other members (as Jesus Christ loves me)
 ...By praying for my brothers and sisters in Christ
 ...By praying for the pastors and elders and deacons
 ...By not listening to or spreading any gossip

Sharing the responsibility of my church family

...By praying for its growth, both spiritual and numerical
 ...By a lifestyle of saying "yes" to God and "no" to sin
 ...By living in a spirit of submission to the church family (as unto the Lord)
 ...By inviting the unchurched to attend

Serving the ministry of my church family

...By using my God-given gifts and talents
 ...By becoming equipped to serve
 ...By developing a servant's heart

Supporting the testimony of my church family

...By participating freely, reverently and regularly in corporate worship
 ...By living a godly lifestyle at home, at work and in the community
 ...By giving regularly of my time, money, resources and abilities as God enables

Supporting the mission of my church family

...By loving my neighbor as myself
 ...By praying for God to bless my city and its people
 ...By involving myself in community life, as the Holy Spirit leads, to lift up Christ

North Oak Community Church Constitution

Affirmed: November 1985

Revised: November 1991, June 1996, September 2000,
July 2001, June 2011, October 2015, June 2018

Table of Contents

<u>Article I: Name</u>	10
<u>Article II: Purpose</u>	10
<u>Article III: Affiliation</u>	11
<u>Article IV: Statement of Faith and Conduct</u>	11
<u>Article V: Membership</u>	11
<u>Article VI: Pastor</u>	12
<u>Article VII: Associate Pastors</u>	13
<u>Article VIII: Elders</u>	13
<u>Article IX: Deacons and Deaconesses</u>	14
<u>Article X: Elder/Deacon Board</u>	15
<u>Article XI: Elected Offices</u>	16
<u>Article XII: Committees</u>	16
<u>Article XIII: Church Year</u>	17
<u>Article XIV: Business Meetings</u>	17
<u>Article XV: Incorporation of North Oak Community Church</u>	18
<u>Article XVI: Amendments</u>	18
<u>Article XVII: Dissolution</u>	18

Article I: Name

The name of this church shall be: North Oak Community Church of Mennonite Brethren of Hays, Kansas.

Article II: Purpose

Believing that Jesus Christ instituted the local church for the purpose of uniting believers, we hereby commit ourselves to establish a church in this community where people can assemble for worship, spiritual fellowship, preaching of God's Word and service to God and Man. We also commit ourselves to instruction in the Christian lifestyle in its relationship to God, family, church and the world.

We further commit to encourage, promote and participate in the preaching and teaching of the Gospel for the redemption of the unsaved both in our community and the world.

Article III: Affiliation

This church is a member of the Southern District Conference, the U.S. Conference, and the General Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches of North America. This church shall give both spiritual and material support to projects and activities of the above named conferences as the Lord prospers and makes it possible.

Article IV: Statement of Faith and Conduct

Our beliefs define not only what we think, but how we live. As a Mennonite Brethren church, we affirm the “Confession of Faith of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (2015).” [See Appendix.]

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God. It speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of North Oak Community Church's (NOCC) faith, doctrine, policy, and discipline, our Elder Board is NOCC's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Article V: Membership

We believe that we are commanded to assemble together with other Bible-believing people for Christ-centered worship. This is a vital aspect of our growth as children of God, set apart from the world for nurturing, encouragement, and discipline by His Word. To be a member of a church is to make a public promise to live according to the Word and to support the work of the congregation. In the Bible this is called a covenant. Membership, which is encouraged for all baptized believers, is an expression of a solemn and joyful commitment and involvement with one another in covenant relationship.

Section 1. Admission & Responsibility of Members

Any person who desires to unite with the Church as a member shall be interviewed by representatives as designated by the Elders. This testimony shall include the basis of their salvation, their baptism as a believer, their doctrinal beliefs, and their commitment to Christian living. All applicants for membership shall be required to complete an application declaring agreement in writing to the Constitution, including Article IV, and shall be required to attend a membership class—or in unusual personal circumstances its equivalent as determined by the Elders—before their acceptance into membership by affirmation of the congregation.

The responsibilities of church membership are summarized in the “Confession of Faith of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches” (2015). [See Appendix.]

Section 2. Rights of members

Every active member in this church is entitled to participate in all the general activities of the church and is eligible to hold any office for which he or she is qualified. Members, 18 years of age and older, may vote in any business meeting and church election.

Section 3. Release of Membership and Participation

- a) Transfer - Any member in good standing may, upon request, have their membership transferred by letter to another church. Such a transfer is issued to the church, and not to the individual. If a member moves to another locality, the church recommends a transfer by letter to an evangelical church.
- b) Removal - If a member ceases to participate in the witness and ministry of the church, the elders should contact them personally. If the inactive member wishes neither to become actively involved nor to transfer their membership to another church, the elders and deacons may vote jointly to remove them from the membership of the church. A member is able to renounce their membership voluntarily if they no longer wish to be a member of the church. A notice in writing must be submitted to the church to self-terminate a membership. A member may not self-terminate membership if they are notified in person by an elder that they are being dealt with for actions requiring the church disciplinary process.

- c) Exclusion - If a member is found not walking according to the principles taught by Scripture, they must be admonished in brotherly love and sincerity. Where private counseling fails, the church leadership shall exercise redemptive discipline. If warnings are disregarded and the attitude of rebellion and estrangement persists, the offender is formally excluded from the fellowship of the church. Believers, however, must continue to pray, practice love and compassion toward the erring one in order to win them back to the Lord's will. When they repent, the church will forgive, reinstate them in fellowship and encourage them in the Christian life. *Matt. 18:15-35*
- d) Dismissal for Disruptive Behavior - The Church, acting through its authorized agents, may forcibly eject from a service or other Church activity those who are disruptive or engage in other inappropriate behavior, whether or not they are members. Concerns regarding conduct of non-members that would provide grounds for discipline of members, that remain unresolved between the parties directly involved, may be referred to the Elders. If, upon consideration of the matter, the Elders, in their sole discretion, deem that the proper functioning, unity, or purity of the Church body requires it, the offending person(s) may be temporarily or permanently excluded from attendance or other participation in services or other activities of the Church, or such attendance or participation may be made subject to compliance with conditions imposed by the Elders.

Section 4. Non-member Attendees

- a) Non-members are welcome to attend all programs, events, and services of the church. Non-member attendees are encouraged to embrace a covenant relationship with North Oak Community Church by formally joining the church as delineated in Article V, Section 1. If a non-member continues attending worship services and activities, and calls on church leaders for counsel and support without joining the church, the elders will assume their agreement with "Confession of Faith of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches" (2015) [See Appendix], which will guide the church's relationship with the non-member.
- b) Non-members may participate in many areas of service except in positions of substantial teaching influence, governing responsibility or public visibility. Non-members shall not serve as pastors, elders, deacons/deaconesses, or ministry team leaders. Non-members may serve in remaining areas of leadership if they complete an application and it is approved. The application includes a signed statement of faith in Jesus Christ and agreement with the "Confession of Faith of the U.S. Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches" (2015). [See Appendix.]

Article VI: Pastor

Section 1. Duties and rights

- a) The pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. He shall preach the Gospel, administer the ordinances, watch over the church family, promote the spiritual growth of the church, lead the church into evangelization, organize and develop the church's strengths for the best possible service to the glory of God.
- b) The pastor shall be responsible for the administration of the church.
- c) The pastor shall be a non-voting member of the elders. He may attend the meetings of all other church organizations, boards and committees in an advisory capacity. It shall be the duty of the chairman of each organization, board and committee to notify the pastor of any meeting in advance. If the pastor cannot attend, he shall be briefed on proceedings and action taken. The pastor shall serve in an advisory capacity at all church business meetings.
- d) The pastor shall approve all special services, speakers, or singing groups before presentation to the congregation.

Section 2. Qualifications to be eligible to serve as pastor

- a) Be of unquestionable Christian character and set an example of conduct and devotion to the spiritual welfare and unity of the church, following the principles set forth in the New Testament such as I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- b) Consider the responsibility for the welfare of the church above all personal ambitions.
- c) Be in harmony with the doctrine, statement of faith, policy and practice of North Oak Community Church.
- d) Be alert to the needs of the individual members as well as to the whole church and give himself to the meeting of those needs.

- e) Possess the ability to keep the information and work of the elders, as well as personal counseling confidential where necessary.
- f) To be academically qualified to preach and teach the Word of God and principles within Scripture. *II Tim. 4:2*
- g) To be licensed or ordained through the Faith and Life Commission of the Southern District Mennonite Brethren Conference.

Section 3. Calling a pastor

When it is necessary to call a pastor, this church shall prayerfully seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit to engage a qualified person. A committee shall be appointed by the congregation and shall be responsible to guide the church in the selection of another pastor. The committee shall investigate the merits of each candidate; however, only one candidate shall be considered officially by the church at one time. The call of a pastor shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all votes cast at any regular or special business meeting. A secret ballot vote is required.

Section 4. Affirmation

The pastor's ministry shall be evaluated and reviewed annually by the elders. Every third year the members of the congregation shall evaluate and affirm the ministry of the pastor. It is understood that these evaluations should be done in a spirit of honesty and spiritual brotherhood.

Section 5. Termination

- a) A pastor may dissolve the pastoral relationship by giving two month's notice of such intention or less if it is mutually agreeable with the elders and deacons.
- b) The church may initiate termination of the pastoral relationship by calling a congregational meeting to consider the question. Such a meeting can be called by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the elders and deacons or by a petition submitted to the elders and deacons signed by twenty-five per cent (25%) of the current voting membership.
- c) A simple majority of the votes cast by secret ballot at a congregational meeting shall be sufficient to cause termination. In such case, the pastor shall be entitled to one month's salary after the date of termination set by the congregation.

Article VII: Associate Pastors

- 1) The church may call such pastoral associates as shall be considered necessary for the most effective ministry of the church, such as pastors for evangelism, music, Christian education, or youth.
- 2) The procedure for selecting and terminating such associates shall be the same as that for the pastor.
- 3) The associate pastor(s) shall be recommended to the church for selection upon the approval of the pastor.
- 4) The associate pastoral duties and privileges shall be stipulated in writing by the elders and shall be carried out under the supervision of the elders.

Article VIII: Elders

Section 1. Number

The elders shall consist of the pastor (a non-voting member) and a goal of three other members. Additional members may be added as needed.

Section 2. Procedure

Candidates for the position of elder are to be submitted to the nominating committee by the congregation. The nominating committee shall review the present list of official members of the congregation, and make recommendations to the present elder board for review. If there is a majority approval of a person who has been recommended as an elder, that person will be contacted by one of the elders, and given a job description of the elder's

responsibilities, and asked to prayerfully consider the opportunity. If the candidate agrees to be presented to the congregation for approval, he must be affirmed by two-thirds (2/3) majority of all votes cast.

Section 3. Schedule

- a) Nominations - beginning with the 2nd Sunday of March
- b) Presentation to the elders - by the 1st Sunday of April
- c) Presentation to the church - by the 1st Sunday of May
- d) Affirmation - on the 3rd and 4th Sundays of May
- e) Commencement of term - June 1

Section 4. Term

The term of office for elders shall be two (2) years. An elder may serve three (3) consecutive terms. An elder who has served three consecutive terms will be eligible to be nominated again after not serving as an elder for one or more years. Elders elected to fill an unexpired vacated position may thereafter serve three (3) complete terms. To the greatest extent possible, terms of elders shall be staggered to allow for continuity and balance of membership. The Elder/Deacon Board may make adjustments in terms to accomplish this objective.

Section 5. Qualifications to be eligible to serve as an elder

- a) Be of unquestionable Christian character and set an example of conduct and devotion to the spiritual welfare and unity of the church, following the principles set forth in the New Testament such as I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- b) Consider responsibility for the welfare of the church to be above all personal ambitions.
- c) Be in harmony with the doctrine, statement of faith, policy and practices of North Oak Community Church.
- d) Be alert to the needs of the individual member as well as to the whole church and give himself to the meeting of these needs.
- e) Possess the ability to keep the information and work of the elders confidential where necessary.
- f) Be chosen from the male membership of the church who have been active participants for at least two (2) years.

Section 6. Duties and responsibilities of elders

- a) Be responsible for the following areas of church life: 1) worship services; 2) nurture and discipleship, which includes Sunday School classes, Bible studies, youth programs; 3) evangelism, outreach, church growth.
- b) Pray for the congregation, and deal with the spiritual needs of the congregation as a whole and as individuals.
- c) Establish committees as necessary. An elder shall serve on each of these committees.

Article IX: Deacons and Deaconesses

Section 1. Number

The deacons shall consist of a goal of three members. Additional members may be added as needed.

Section 2. Procedure

Candidates for the position of deacon are to be submitted to the nominating committee by the congregation. The nominating committee shall review the present list of official members of the congregation, and make recommendations to the present deacon board for review. If there is a majority approval of a person who has been recommended as a deacon, that person will be contacted by one of the deacons, and given a job description of the deacon's responsibilities, and asked to prayerfully consider the opportunity. If the candidate agrees to be presented to the congregation for approval, he must be affirmed by two-thirds (2/3) majority of all votes cast.

Section 3. Schedule

- a) Nominations - beginning with the 2nd Sunday of March

- b) Presentation to the deacons - by the 1st Sunday of April
- c) Presentation to the church - by the 1st Sunday of May
- d) Affirmation - on the 3rd and 4th Sundays of May
- e) Commencement of term - June 1

Section 4. Term

The term of office for deacons shall be two (2) years. A deacon may serve three (3) consecutive terms. A deacon who has served three consecutive terms will be eligible to be nominated again after not serving as a deacon for one or more years. Deacons elected to fill an unexpired vacated position may thereafter serve three (3) complete terms. To the greatest extent possible, terms of deacons shall be staggered to allow for continuity and balance of membership. The Elder/Deacon Board may make adjustments in terms to accomplish this objective.

Section 5. Qualifications to be eligible to serve as a deacon

- a) Be of unquestionable Christian character and set an example of conduct and devotion to the spiritual welfare and unity of the church, following the principles set forth in the New Testament such as Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
- b) Consider responsibility for welfare of the church to be above all personal ambitions.
- c) Be in harmony with the doctrine, statement of faith, policy and practices of North Oak Community Church.
- d) Be alert to the needs of the individual members as well as to the whole church and give of himself to meeting these needs.
- e) Possess the ability to keep the information and work of the deacons confidential where necessary.
- f) Be chosen from the membership of the church who have been active participants for at least one (1) year.

Section 6. Duties and responsibilities of deacons

- a) Be responsible for the following areas of church life: 1) fellowship, which means any social activities or groups established within the church structure; 2) finances, which includes any and all monetary transactions and obligations; 3) maintenance, repair, and building of all physical structures.
- b) Pray for the congregation, and deal with the physical needs of the individual members of the congregation.
- c) Establish committees as necessary. A deacon shall serve on each of these committees.

Article X: Elder/Deacon Board

Section 1. Purposes

Elders and deacons shall meet together monthly to coordinate their responsibilities and the daily operation of the church.

Section 2. Monthly committee reports

The elders and deacons shall present reports of their committee responsibilities.

Section 3. Moderator

The elders and deacons shall elect a moderator to preside at these monthly meetings and lead the discussion of old and new business.

Section 4. Committee responsibility

An Elder or deacon shall be a member of each committee.

Article XI: Elected Offices

Section 1. Moderator

- a) The elders/deacons shall elect a moderator from their membership annually.
- b) The moderator shall preside at all church business meetings and shall carry out the agenda as prepared by the elders/deacons.
- c) The moderator shall preside at each monthly meeting of the elders/deacons.
- d) The moderator shall have a working knowledge of Roberts Rules of Order governing business sessions.

Section 2. The church clerk

- a) The clerk shall be elected from church membership, by the voting membership at the annual business meeting. Term of office shall be one (1) year.
- b) The clerk shall keep an accurate record of all church business meetings. These records shall be available to members of the church at any time.

Section 3. The church treasurer

- a) The finance committee shall be responsible for electing a treasurer from the church membership. Term of office shall be three (3) years.
- b) The treasurer shall be the custodian of all church monies and be responsible for the deposit of all such monies in a bank designated by the church.
- c) The treasurer shall, by the order of the church finance committee, be responsible for all disbursements. All disbursements will be made by check.
- d) The treasurer shall become a member of the finance committee.
- e) The treasurer shall be bonded.

Article XII: Committees

Section 1. Nominating committee

- a) Purpose - 1) solicit nominees for elders and deacons; 2) verify their qualifications; 3) make recommendation to the appropriate segment of the church; 4) initiate the nominating process to fill unexpired terms of Deacons or Elders.
- b) Number - The nominating committee shall consist of four (4) members.
- c) Term - The term of office for the nominating committee members shall be for one (1) year, beginning the first Sunday in March.
- d) Qualifications - Members of the nominating committee shall be adult members of the congregation.
- e) Election - Nominees will be solicited beginning the first Sunday in February by the church clerk. By the third Sunday in February the church clerk will ascertain the nominees' willingness to serve. Election of the nominating committee will be on the fourth Sunday in February. The four nominees receiving the greatest number of votes will be elected.

Section 2. Christian education committee

- a) Purpose - To provide leadership and coordination in the ministry of teaching/discipleship for the entire congregation, to include nursery through adults.
- b) Organization - The Elders shall be responsible for selecting the committee, developing policies and procedures, overseeing and coordinating its activities.
- c) Term - The members of the Christian education committee will serve from July 1 through August 31 of the following year. In the event that different people are appointed to the various Christian education committee positions for the new year, both people shall share that position from July 1 to August 31 of the same year.

Section 3. Other committees

Elders and deacons shall, as they deem necessary, have the authority and responsibility to create, staff and dissolve other committees to fulfill the ministry of the church.

Section 4. Committee meeting quorum

At least fifty percent (50%) of the committee members must be present to conduct official committee business.

Article XIII: Church Year

Section 1. Fiscal year

The church fiscal business year shall begin on July 1.

Section 2. Christian education year

The Christian education year shall begin on the first Sunday in September.

Article XIV: Business Meetings

Section 1. Time

- a) The dates for Business Meetings will be set by the Elder/Deacon Board in accordance with Kansas Corporation requirements. Kansas Corporation requirements state that there must be an annual meeting.
- b) Business Meetings - 1) may be called by the deacon/elder board; 2) may be called by twenty-five percent (25%) of members signing a petition; 3) at least two weeks notice shall be given for all business meetings.

Section 2. Procedure

- a) Moderator
 - a. Appointed - see Article XI, Section 1.
 - b. Substitute - in the event that the moderator is unable to be at the regular or special called business meetings, a substitute shall be appointed by the elder/deacon board.
- b) Church Clerk - 1) shall take the minutes of all official business meetings; 2) shall read the minutes of the previous business meeting.
- c) Published agenda - All official business to be presented or recommended for action shall be posted on the church bulletin board and made available to members at least two weeks prior to any business meeting. The moderator shall be responsible for the selection of business items for posting and publication, and for establishing the order of business.
- d) Quorum - Quorum shall constitute the eligible voters in attendance at any business meeting in order to conduct official business.
- e) Operating Procedure - All official church business meetings shall be conducted by Roberts Rules of Order.
- f) Eligible Voters
 - a. All members high school age and older
 - b. Adult participants who, by December 3, 1985, submitted a form to the elders stating their salvation experience and affirming the North Oak Community Church Statement of Faith. In the event that these individuals become inactive, their voting privileges will be rescinded.
- g) Method of voting - Voting may be either by a show of the hands, voice vote, or written ballot. The use of written balloting may be initiated by the wishes of the moderator, the person making the motion, or an individual voting member.

Section 3. Additional business requiring church approval

- a) Financial-The finance committee, in cooperation with the elder-deacon board and standing committee chairs, shall be responsible for preparing the fiscal year budget proposal and presenting it to the church for approval at the annual business meeting. Recognizing that new opportunities and challenges may make it necessary or desirable to modify the approved budget, guidelines for approving expenditures that fall outside the budget line item authority will be made part of the budget proposal and approved concurrently by the church. Deviations from the approved annual budget not specifically granted by the guidelines shall be referred to the church for action by the elder-deacon board.
- b) Accountability-To ensure compliance with the approved guidelines, the finance committee shall track all expenditures and revenues and periodically, or on request, report same to the church, elder-deacon board, and committee chairs.
- c) Building - All minor modifications to the buildings, ground or property of the church must be approved by the building and grounds committee. Major modifications to the physical plant must be recommended and approved by the building and grounds committee and approved by the church.

Article XV: Incorporation of North Oak Community Church

Section 1. Officers:

- a) President - The church moderator shall serve as president of the corporation.
- b) Secretary - The church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation.

Section 2. Annual meeting

- a) The annual Business Meeting, which is to be set by the Elder/Deacon Board, will serve as the annual corporate meeting.
- b) The moderator and secretary shall be elected to their corporate offices at the annual business meeting.

Article XVI: Amendments

Section 1. Initiation

An amendment to the constitution may be initiated by any of the following:

- a) Joint elder/deacon board.
- b) Individual members requesting approval by the joint elder/deacon board.
- c) Petition signed by twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership.

Section 2. Adoption

- a) Presentation - Proposed amendments to the constitution must be submitted, posted and published at least 30 days prior to the business meeting during which the church vote will be taken.
- b) Approval - Amendments must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast.

Article XVII: Dissolution

In the event that North Oak Community Church ceases to function, all church buildings, grounds and property shall become the property of the Southern District Mennonite Brethren Conference.

North Oak Confession of Faith

<u>Article 1: God</u>	19
<u>Article 2: Revelation of God</u>	20
<u>Article 3: Creation and Humanity</u>	20
<u>Article 4: Sin and Evil</u>	21
<u>Article 5: Salvation</u>	21
<u>Article 6: Nature of the Church</u>	22
<u>Article 7: Mission of the Church</u>	23
<u>Article 8: Christian Baptism</u>	23
<u>Article 9: Lord's Supper</u>	23
<u>Article 10: Discipleship</u>	24
<u>Article 11: Marriage, Singleness, and Family</u>	24
<u>Article 12: Society and State</u>	25
<u>Article 13: Love, Peacemaking, and Reconciliation</u>	25
<u>Article 14: The Sanctity of Human Life</u>	26
<u>Article 15: Stewardship</u>	26
<u>Article 16: Work, Rest, and the Lord's Day</u>	26
<u>Article 17: Christianity and Other Faiths</u>	27
<u>Article 18: Christ's Final Triumph</u>	27

Article 1: God

We believe in the one, true, living God, Creator of heaven and earth. God is almighty in power, perfect in wisdom, righteous in judgment, overflowing in steadfast love. God is the Sovereign who rules over all things visible and invisible, the Shepherd who rescues the lost and helpless. God is a refuge and fortress for those in need. God is a consuming fire, perfect in holiness, yet slow to anger and abounding in tender mercy. God comforts like a loving mother, trains and disciplines like a caring father, and persists in covenant love like a faithful husband. We confess God as eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

God the Father

God the Father is the source of all life. In Him we live and move and have our being. The Father seeks those who will worship Him in spirit and in truth and hears the prayers of all who call on Him. In the fullness of time, the Father sent the Son for the salvation of the world. Through Jesus Christ the Father adopts all who respond in faith to the gospel, forgiving those who repent of their sin and entering into a new covenant with them. God gives the Counselor- the Holy Spirit- to all His children. God's creative and redemptive love sustains this world until the end of the age.

God the Son

The Son, through whom all things were created and who holds all things together, is the image of the invisible God. Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, Jesus took on human nature to redeem this fallen world. He revealed the fullness of God through His obedient and sinless life. Through word and deed Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind. Christ triumphed over sin through His death and resurrection and was exalted as Lord of creation and the church. The Savior of the world invites all to be reconciled to God, offering peace to those far and near, and calling them to follow Him in the way of the cross. Until the Lord Jesus returns in glory, He intercedes for believers, acts as their advocate, and calls them to be His witnesses.

God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, the Counselor, is the creative power, presence and wisdom of God. The Spirit convicts people of sin, gives them new life, and guides them into all truth. By the Spirit believers are baptized into one body. The indwelling Spirit testifies that they are God's children, distributes gifts for ministry, empowers for witness, and produces the fruit of righteousness. As Comforter, the Holy Spirit helps God's children in their weakness, intercedes for them according to God's will and assures them of eternal life.

Genesis 1; Exodus 15:2-3; 34:6-7; Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Psalm 8; 23; 139; Isaiah 55:8-9; 66:12-13; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hosea 11:1-4; Matthew 1:18-25, 5-7; 28:18-20; Mark 8:34-38; Luke 4:18-19; John 1:1-18; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; Romans 8:1-17; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 13; 15:3-8; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:16-21; 13:14; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:15-2:22; 3:14-21; Philippians 2:6-11; Colossians 1:15-20; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:11-13; Hebrews 12:7-11; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 1 John 2:2; Revelation 5:5-6, 9-10.

Article 2: Revelation of God

God's Self-Revelation

We believe that God has made Himself known to all people. God's power and nature have always been evident in creation. The Old Testament reveals God as the one who established a covenant relationship with Israel to make known to all people the eternal plan of salvation. God revealed Himself supremely in Jesus Christ, as recorded in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit continues to make God known to individuals and the church; this revelation is always consistent with the Scriptures.

The Written Word of God

We believe that the entire Bible was inspired by God through the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit guides the community of faith in the interpretation of Scripture. The person, teaching and life of Jesus Christ bring continuity and clarity to both the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament bears witness to Christ, and Christ is the One whom the New Testament proclaims. We accept the Bible as the infallible Word of God and the authoritative guide for faith and practice.

Genesis 9:1-17; 12:1-3; Exodus 6:2-8; Psalm 19:1-11; 119; Matthew 5:17-18; Luke 24:27, 44-47; John 1:16-18; 16:13; Acts 8:34-35; Romans 1:18-21; Hebrews 1:1-2; Colossians 1:15-23; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21.

Article 3: Creation and Humanity

Creation

We believe that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and they were very good. All of creation expresses God's sovereign will and design but remains distinct from the Creator. The universe belongs to God, who takes care and delights in sustaining it. Creation declares God's wisdom and power, calling all to worship Him.

Humanity

Humans, the crowning act of creation, were designed to live in fellowship with God and in mutually helpful relationships with each other. God created them male and female in His own image. The Creator gave them the mandate to rule and care for creation as a sacred trust and the freedom to obey or disobey Him. Through the willful disobedience of Adam and Eve, sin entered the world. As a result, human nature is distorted and people are

alienated from God and creation. Creation is under the bondage of decay. Humans and all creation long to be set free.

The New Creation

Sin, guilt, or death will not prevail. God will create a new heaven and a new earth in which there will be no evil, suffering, and death. The first signs of this new creation are already present in those who accept God's forgiveness through Christ. In Christ all things are being reconciled and created anew.

Genesis 1-3; Psalm 8:6; 19:1-6; 24:1-2; 89:11; 95:5; 104; Proverbs 8:22-31; Isaiah 40:12-31; 44:24; John 1:1-4, 10; 17:5; Romans 1:19-20; 5:17, 21; 6:4; 8:18-25; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 15:20-27; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 4:6; 5:16-19; Galatians 3:28; 6:15; Ephesians 1:4, 9-10; 2:11-22; 4:24; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:8-11; 21:1-5; 22:13.

Article 4: Sin and Evil

Sin and Its Consequences

We believe that the first humans yielded to the tempter, Satan, and fell into sin. Since then, all people disobey God and choose to sin, falling short of the glory of God. As a result, sin and evil have gained a hold in the world, disrupting God's purposes for the created order and alienating humans from God and therefore from creation, each other and themselves. Human sinfulness results in physical and spiritual death. Because all have sinned, all face eternal separation from God.

Principalities and Powers

Sin is a power that enslaves humanity. Satan, the adversary, seeks to rule creation and uses sin to corrupt human nature with pride and selfishness. In sin people turn from God, exchanging the truth about God for a lie, worshipping and serving the creature rather than the Creator. Sin opens individuals and groups to the bondage of demonic principalities and powers. These powers also work through political, economic, social and even religious systems to turn people away from holiness, justice and righteousness. Whether in word, deed, thought or attitude, all humans are under the domination of sin and, on their own, are unable to overcome its power.

Genesis 3: 6:11-12; Psalm 14:1-3; 36:1-4; 52:1-7; 58:1-5; 82; Isaiah 53:6; Ezekiel 16:49-50; Amos 2:4-8; Mark 7:20-23; John 8:34, 44; Romans 1:21-32; 3:9-18, 23; 5:12-14, 18-19; 6:23; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 2:1-3; 6:12; 1 Peter 5:8-9; 1 John 1:8-10; Revelation 12:9.

Article 5: Salvation

God's Initiative

We believe that God is at work to accomplish deliverance, healing, redemption, and restoration in a world dominated by sin. From the beginning, God's purpose has been to create for Himself a people, to dwell among them and to bless them. Creation and all of humanity are without hope of salvation except through God's love and grace. God's love is fully demonstrated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

God's Plan

Throughout history, God has acted mightily to deliver people from bondage and draw them into a covenant relationship. Through the prophets God prepared the way of salvation until finally God reconciled the world to Himself by the atoning blood of Jesus. As people place their trust in Christ, they are saved by grace through faith, not of their own doing, but as a gift of God. God forgives them, delivers them from sin's bondage, makes them new creatures in Christ, empowers them by the Holy Spirit and seals them for eternal life. When sin and death are finally abolished and the redeemed are gathered in the new heaven and the new earth, God will have completed the plan of salvation.

Humanity's Response

Though Jesus entered a world ruled by sin, He chose not to submit to its allure and broke its domination. Through His obedient life, His death on the cross, and His glorious resurrection, Christ triumphed over Satan and the

powers of sin and death, opening the way for all people to follow. Convicted by the Holy Spirit, people turn from sin, entrust their lives to God, confess Jesus Christ as Lord, and join the family of God. All who receive Christ are born again, have peace with God, and are called to love one another and live at peace with their neighbor. Those whom God is saving no longer live for themselves, for they have been set free from sin and called to newness of life.

Exodus 6:1-8; 15:2; 20:2; Psalm 68:19-20; Isaiah 43:1; Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 10:45; John 1:12; 3:1-21; 13:34-35; 16:8-11; Romans 3:24-26; 5:8, 12-21; 8:18-25; 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Ephesians 1:5-10, 13-14; 2:8-9; Colossians 1:13-14; 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:12; 5:7-9; 9:15-28; 11:6; 1 John 4:7-11; Revelation 5:9-10; 21:1-4.

Article 6: Nature of the Church

Called by God

We believe the church is the people called by God through Jesus Christ. People who respond in faith are united with the local congregation by the public confession of baptism. Church members commit themselves to follow Christ in a life of discipleship and witness as empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Body of Christ

The church is one body of believers, male and female, from every nation, race and class. The head of this body is Christ. The church, united by the one Spirit, makes Christ visible in the world. The church exists as local bodies of believers and as a worldwide community of faith.

Worship

The church is nourished and renewed as God's people gather regularly to glorify God. The early church gathered on the first day of the week to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. The worshipping community celebrates God's faithfulness and grace, reaffirms its faithfulness to God, builds up the members of the body, and seeks God's will for its life and mission. As the church observes baptism and the Lord's Supper, it proclaims the good news of salvation.

Fellowship and Accountability

The church is a covenant community in which members are mutually accountable in matters of faith and life. They love, care, and pray for each other, share each other's joys and burdens, and admonish and correct one another. They share material resources as there is need. Local congregations follow the New Testament example by seeking the counsel of the wider church on matters that affect its common witness and mission. Congregations work together in a spirit of love, mutual submission, and interdependence.

The New Testament guides the practice of redemptive church discipline. The church is responsible to correct members who continue to sin. Congregations forgive and restore those who repent but formally exclude those who disregard discipline.

Gifts for Ministry

Through the Holy Spirit, God gives gifts to each member for the well-being of the whole body. These gifts are to be exercised in God's service to build up the church and to minister in the world.

God calls people to equip the church for ministry. Leaders are to model Christ in their personal, family, and church life. The church is to discern leaders prayerfully and to affirm, support, and correct them in a spirit of love.

Matthew 16:13-20; 18:15-20; John 13:1-20; 17:1-26; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 37-47; 11:1-18; 15:1-35; Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 5:1-8, 12-14; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11; Galatians 3:26-28; 6:1-5; Ephesians 1:18-23; 2:11-22; 4:4-6, 11-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22-23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Peter 2:9-12; 5:1-4.

Article 7: Mission of the Church

The Great Commission and the Great Commandment

We believe the good news of God's salvation in Jesus Christ is for all people. Christ commands the church to make disciples of all nations by calling people to repent and by baptizing and teaching them to obey Jesus. Jesus teaches that disciples are to love God and neighbor by telling the good news and by doing acts of love and compassion.

The Witness

The Holy Spirit empowers every Christian to witness to God's salvation. The church as a body witnesses to God's reign in the world. By its life as a redeemed and separated community, the church reveals God's saving purposes to the world.

Matthew 5:13-16; 22:34-40; 28:18-20; Mark 1:15; 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-37; 24:45-49; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:16-18; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20; Ephesians 3:10-11.

Article 8: Christian Baptism

Confession

We believe that when people receive God's gift of salvation, they are to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is a sign of having been cleansed from sin. It is a covenant with the church to walk in the way of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Meaning

Baptism by water is a public sign that a person has repented of sins, received forgiveness of sins, died with Christ to sin, been raised to newness of life, and received the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a sign of the believer's incorporation into the body of Christ as expressed in the local church. Baptism is also a pledge to serve Christ according to the gifts given to each person.

Eligibility

Baptism is for those who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and commit themselves to follow Christ in obedience as members of the local church. Baptism is for those who understand its meaning, are able to be accountable to Christ and the church, and voluntarily request it on the basis of their faith response to Jesus Christ.

Practice

We practice water baptism by immersion administered by the local church. Local congregations may receive into membership those who have been baptized by another mode on their confession of faith. Persons who claim baptism as infants and wish to become members of a Mennonite Brethren congregation are to receive baptism on their confession of faith.

Matthew 3:13-17; 28:18-20; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:2-6; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 2:12-13; Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 4:4-6.

Article 9: Lord's Supper

Meaning

The church observes the Lord's Supper, as instituted by Christ. The Lord's Supper points to Christ, whose body was broken for us and whose blood was shed to assure salvation for believers and to establish the new covenant. Through the supper, the church identifies with the life of Christ given for the redemption of humanity and proclaims the Lord's death until He comes. The supper expresses the fellowship and unity of all believers with Christ and embodies remembrance, celebration, and praise, strengthening believers for true discipleship and service.

Practice and Participation

In preparation for the fellowship of the Lord's Supper, all believers should examine themselves. All those who understand its meaning, confess Jesus Christ as Lord in word and life, are accountable to their congregation, and are living in right relationship with God and others are invited to participate in the Lord's Supper. The normal pattern in the New Testament was that baptism preceded participation in the Lord's Supper.

Matthew 26:26-30; Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:23-32.

Article 10: Discipleship

Following Jesus

We believe that Jesus calls people who have experienced the joy of new birth to follow Him as disciples. By calling His followers to take up the cross, Christ invites them to reject the godless values of the world and offer themselves to God in a life of service. The Holy Spirit, who lives in every Christian, empowers believers to overcome the acts and attitudes of the sinful nature. Filled with love and gratitude, disciples delight to obey God.

United in a Distinct Community

Christians enjoy fellowship with God and other believers. At baptism believers join the local church, commit to build up the body of Christ and witness to the good news of the Christian hope. In community members grow in maturity as they demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit, use their spiritual gifts, and practice mutual accountability in the disciplines of the Christian life. Christians confess sin, repent, and experience God's grace in the life of the Christian community.

Demonstrating True Faith

Jesus teaches that discipleship is the way of self-denial and promises blessing for those who suffer for righteousness. Disciples are to resist worldly values and systems, the sinful nature, and the devil. Disciples give generously and reject materialism, which makes a god out of wealth. Disciples treat others with compassion and gentleness and reject violence as a response to injustice. Disciples speak honestly to build others up and reject dishonest, vulgar, and careless talk; they seek to avoid lawsuits to resolve personal grievances, especially with other believers. Disciples maintain sexual purity and marital faithfulness and reject immoral, premarital, and extramarital relationships and all homosexual practices. To be a disciple means to be true to Jesus in everyday life.

Psalm 1; 119; Amos 5:24; Matthew 5-7; 18:15-20; Mark 8:34-38; John 8:31-32; 13:34-35; 15:14-15; Acts 2:41-47; Romans 1:24-32; 8:1-30; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 11:1; 12:1-13; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-26; 6:1-2; Ephesians 4:11-12, 15-16; 5:1, 18; Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; 5:17; 1 Timothy 1:9-11; 2:1-8; 4:6-8; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Hebrews 12:1-3; 13:4-5; James 1:22-27; 4:7; 1 Peter 2:20-25; 3:15; 5:8-9; 1 John 1:3, 6-9; 2:15-17.

Article 11: Marriage, Singleness, and Family

We believe that marriage and the family are instituted by God. The church blesses both marriage and singleness and encourages families to grow in love.

Marriage

Marriage is a covenant relationship intended to unite a man and a woman for life. At creation, God designed marriage for companionship, sexual union, and the birth and nurture of children. Sexual intimacy rightfully takes place only within marriage. Marriage is to be characterized by mutual love, faithfulness, and submission. A believer should not marry an unbeliever.

The community of faith blesses and nurtures marriage relationships and makes every effort to bring reconciliation to troubled marriages. Human sinfulness, however, may sometimes lead to divorce, a violation of God's intention for marriage. With truth and compassion, the family of God offers hope and healing while continually upholding the biblical ideal of marital faithfulness.

Singleness

Singleness is honored equally with marriage and is sometimes even preferred. The church is to bless, respect, and fully include those who are single. Those who remain single may find unique opportunities to advance the kingdom of God. God calls all people, single and married, to live sexually pure lives.

Family

God intends family relationships at all stages of life to be characterized by love. Children are a gift from God. Godly parents instruct and nurture their children in the faith. Parents are to discipline their children wisely and lovingly, not provoking them to anger. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

Genesis 1:26-31; 2:18-24; 5:1-2; 12:1-3; Exodus 22:16-17; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deuteronomy 6:4; 24:1-4; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 31; Matthew 5:32; 10:34-39; 19:3-12; 22:23-33; Mark 3:31-35; 7:9-13; 10:6-11; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2-3; 14:12; 1 Corinthians 7:8-40; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15; Ephesians 5:21-6:4; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; 5:3-16; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Article 12: Society and State

The State as Instituted by God

We believe that God instituted the state to promote the well-being of all people. Christians cooperate with others in society to defend the weak, care for the poor, and promote justice, righteousness, and truth. Believers witness against corruption, discrimination, and injustice, exercise social responsibility, pay taxes, and obey all laws that do not conflict with the Word of God.

God has given governments authority to maintain law and order and to punish wrongdoers. Followers of Christ respect and pray for those in authority so that peaceful order may prevail. We deplore the loss of life in the exercise of state-sanctioned violence.

Christian Allegiance in Society

The primary allegiance of all Christians is to Christ's kingdom, not the state or society. Because their citizenship is in heaven, Christians are called to resist the idolatrous temptation to give to the state the devotion that is owed to God. As ambassadors for Christ, Christians act as agents of reconciliation and seek the well-being of all peoples.

Because Christ forbids the swearing of oaths, we simply affirm the truth in legal transactions. Believers do not participate in secret societies that demand the swearing of oaths or otherwise conflict with a Christian's allegiance to Christ and the church. At all times, believers are called to live as faithful witnesses in the world, rejecting pressures that threaten to compromise Christian integrity.

Exodus 20:13, 16; Leviticus 19:11; Psalm 82:3-4; Jeremiah 29:7; Daniel 2:21; 3:17-18; 4:17; Matthew 5:13-16, 33-37; 6:33; 17:24-27; 22:17-21; John 15:19; 17:14-18; Acts 5:29; Romans 13:1-7; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 5:6-13; Philippians 1:27; 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Titus 3:1-2; James 5:12; 1 Peter 2:13-17.

Article 13: Love, Peacemaking, and Reconciliation

God's Community of Peace

We believe that God in Christ reconciles people to Himself and to one another, making peace through the cross. The church is a fellowship of redeemed people living by love. The bond between followers of Jesus transcends all racial, social, and national barriers.

Christian Peacemaking

We actively pursue peace and reconciliation in all relationships by following Christ's example and His command to love God, neighbors and even enemies. We strive to be peacemakers and agents of reconciliation in families, churches, communities in our nation, and throughout the world.

As peacemakers we alleviate suffering, reduce strife, promote justice, and work to end violence and war, that others may see a demonstration of Christ's love. As in other Peace Churches many of us choose not to participate in the military, but rather in alternative forms of service.

Because Jesus is Lord, His example and teaching take priority over nationalism and the demands of human authorities.

Exodus 20:1-17; Jeremiah 29:7; Matthew 5:9, 17-26, 38-48; Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:15-20; Ephesians 2:14-18; 1 Peter 2:19-23.

Article 14: The Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life belongs to God. Each person is created in the image of God and ought to be celebrated and nurtured. Because God is Creator and the Author and Giver of life, we oppose all actions and attitudes that devalue human life. The unborn, disabled, poor, aging, and dying are particularly vulnerable to such injustices. Christ calls the people of all nations to care for the defenseless.

God highly values human life. Ultimate decisions regarding life and death belong to God. Hence, we hold that procedures designed to take life, including abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide, are an affront to God's sovereignty. We esteem the life-sustaining findings of medical science, but recognize that there are limits to the value of seeking to prolong life indefinitely. In all complex ethical decisions regarding life and death, we seek to offer hope, healing, support, and counsel in the context of the Christian community.

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; Exodus 20:13; Job 31:15; Psalm 139:13-16; Amos 1-2; Matthew 6:25-27; 25:31-46; John 10:11.

Article 15: Stewardship

God's Creation Mandate

We believe the universe and everything in it belong to God the Creator. God has entrusted the care of the earth to all people, who are responsible for managing its resources. Good stewardship uses the earth's abundance to meet human need, but resists the unjust exploitation of the earth and its peoples. All God's gifts are to be received with thanksgiving and used responsibly.

Responsible Living

To confess Jesus as Lord transforms values. Jesus warns that we cannot serve both God and wealth. Preoccupation with money and possessions, self-indulgent living, and eagerness to accumulate wealth for personal advantage are not in keeping with the teachings of Scripture.

Generous Giving

The Bible teaches cheerful, sacrificial, and proportional giving through the church in grateful response to God's goodness. Christians do not claim any of their possessions as their own, but manage all their resources, including money, time, abilities, and influence, in generous ways that give glory to God. They do not despise the poor but practice mutual aid within the church and share what they have with others in need. God's people seek to embrace a lifestyle of simplicity and contentment.

Genesis 1:28; Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Psalm 24:1; 115:16; Proverbs 14:31; Amos 6:4-7; Malachi 3:6-10; Matthew 6:19-34; 25:14-30; Luke 6:38; 12:13-21; Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-37; 1 Corinthians 4:7; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 6:7; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19; James 2:1-7, 15-16; 5:1-6; 1 John 3:16-18; Jude 11.

Article 16: Work, Rest, and the Lord's Day

We believe that God's act of creation is the model for human activity. While sin has corrupted work and rest, redeemed people are called to restore labor and rest to their proper place.

Work

As creatures made in the image of God, Christians imitate the Creator by working faithfully as they are able. They are to use their abilities and resources to glorify God and to serve others. Because they bear the name of Christ, all believers are called to work honestly and diligently and to treat others with respect and dignity.

Rest

As God rested on the seventh day, people are called to observe regular times of rest. Rest is an act of thankfulness for what God has provided. Rest is also an act of trust, reminding humans that it is not their work but God who sustains them. Finally, rest is an act of hope, anticipating the future rest assured by the resurrection of Jesus.

The Lord's Day

Following the New Testament example, believers gather to commemorate the resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week. On the Lord's Day, believers joyfully devote themselves to worship, instruction in the Word, prayer, breaking of bread, fellowship, and service. They limit their labor to work of necessity and deeds of mercy.

Genesis 1:26-2:3, 15:3:14-19; Exodus 20:8-11; Leviticus 25:1-7; Deuteronomy 5:12-15; Psalm 46:10; 95:6-11; Ecclesiastes 3:13; Mark 2:23 - 3:6; Luke 24:1-36; Acts 2:42-47; 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 2:16-17; 3:22-4:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10; Hebrews 4:1-10; 10:23-25; Revelation 1:10.

Article 17: Christianity and Other Faiths

Jesus Is the Only Way

We believe that the saving grace of God in Jesus is the only means of reconciling humanity with God. Although salvation is available to all, only those who put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have the assurance of eternal life.

God's Universal Witness

God has not left anyone without a witness to the Creator's goodness and power. Due to human rebellion, people have chosen to suppress the truth. While elements of truth may be found in other religions, Scripture warns against false teachings. Christians treat people of other faiths and philosophies with respect, but lovingly and urgently proclaim Christ as the only way of salvation for all peoples.

Sovereignty of God

God loves the world and does not want anyone to perish. In sovereign grace, God may communicate with people in ways that are beyond human comprehension. The Bible teaches that those who reject the gospel are under divine judgment; the eternal destiny of those who have never heard the gospel is in God's hands. Our task is to proclaim Christ as the only way of salvation to all people in all cultures. The Judge of all the earth will do what is just.

Genesis 18:25; Psalm 19:2-4; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Isaiah 46:1-10; 55:8-9; Ezekiel 33:1-20; Jonah 1-4; Matthew 8:5-13; 25:31-46; 28:18-20; Mark 7:24-30; Luke 9:51-56; 12:47-48; John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 4:8-42; 12:12-26; 14:6; Acts 1:8; 4:12; 10:1-8, 34-36; 14:16-17; 17:22-31; Romans 1:18-24; 2:1-16; 10:9-21; 11:33-35; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 12:3; 1 Timothy 2:4-5; 2 Peter 3:9; Revelation 20:15.

Article 18: Christ's Final Triumph

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ will return visibly and triumphantly at the end of the present age. The church must always be prepared to meet the Lord, living in expectation of His imminent return.

The Last Days

In these last days, between the first and second coming of Christ, the church carries out its mission in the world. Believers often endure suffering and persecution because of their witness to Christ. In spite of opposition by evil powers, the church is assured of the final victory of Christ's kingdom. These last days come to an end with Christ's return.

Death

Since Christ destroyed the power of death through His resurrection, believers need not be afraid of death, the last enemy. Christ's followers go to be with the Lord when they die. When Christ returns, they will be raised and receive new bodies. Believers who are alive at Christ's coming will be transformed and will also receive new and glorious bodies, fit for life in God's eternal kingdom.

Judgment

When Christ returns, He will destroy all evil powers, including the Antichrist. Satan and all those who have rejected Christ will be condemned to eternal punishment in hell, forever separated from the presence of God. Believers must appear before the judgment seat of Christ to have their lives examined and their labors rewarded. By God's grace, they will enter into the joy of God's eternal reign.

The New Creation

All God's children will be united with Christ when He appears and will reign with Him in glory. Pain, sorrow, and death will be abolished and the redeemed will be gathered into the new heaven and new earth, where together with the angels they will worship God forever. God will make all things new and God will be all in all. This is the blessed hope of all believers.

*Matthew 24:29-31; 25:13; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 16:9; 23:43; John 14:1-3;
Acts 2:17; Romans 8:18-22; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 15:26; 2 Corinthians 5:10;
Philippians 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-12;
2:1-12; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 1:2; 9:26-28; 1 Peter 1:20; 4:7; 1 John 2:18;
3:2-3; Revelation 19:17-21; 20:7-15, 21-22.*