

THE CONSTITUTION OF
FIRST BETHANY EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH
OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN
Effective June 1, 1953

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this Church shall be THE FIRST BETHANY EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH of Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan.

ARTICLE II

PURPOSE, AFFILIATION, CONFESSION AND MEETINGS

Section 1 - PURPOSE: It shall be the purpose of this organization to establish in its community a Christian congregation for worship, to promote the christian life and to advance the Kingdom of God by all available means, both at home and abroad.

Section 2 - AFFILIATION: This congregation shall be an organic member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and shall be governed by the constitution, laws and rules of said church.

Section 3 - DOCTRINE: The Articles of Faith of the congregation shall be those of the Evangelical and Reformed Church of which it is a part.

Section 4 - MEETINGS: The congregation shall have an Annual meeting and such other meetings as are provided for in the By-Laws.

Section 5 - QUORUM: Thirty (30) members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - All baptized persons are members of the Church. Persons who have been duly received into its communion by confirmation, by letter of transfer or by profession of faith shall be communicant members of this congregation.

Section 2 - Communicant members of this congregation over sixteen (16) years of age shall have the right to a voice and vote in the congregation and also to represent the congregation on the consistory or other judicatories of the church as provided for in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE IV

THE CONSISTORY

Section 1 - The congregation shall have a Consistory and a spiritual council. The consistory shall be composed of the minister (or ministers), Elders and Deacons. It shall have jurisdiction and oversight of the congregation and all its organizations. Nine (9) members shall constitute a quorum. It shall organize as provided for in the By-Laws.

Section 2 - The Consistory shall constitute the Board of Trustees. The Board shall have the care and control of the property of the congregation as a sacred trust, whether real or personal, in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

ARTICLE V

ELDERS AND DEACONS

Section 1 - ELDERS: An Elder is a member of the church chosen by the congregation and ordained to his office. He shall assist and support the pastor in the spiritual affairs of the church. An elder shall take heed of himself that he may be an example unto others, watch faithfully over the spiritual interests of the congregation, maintain order in the House of God, aid in visiting the sick, and minister according to his ability to the edification and comfort of all the members. The manner of election, terms of office and rights and duties shall be defined in the By-Laws.

Section 2 - DEACONS: A Deacon is a member of the church chosen by the congregation and ordained to his office. He shall aid in the securing of funds necessary for the support of the church in its various activities, to foster the principles of stewardship, and to dispense the charity of the church. The manner of election, terms of office and rights and duties shall be defined in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VI

THE SPIRITUAL COUNCIL

The spiritual council shall consist of the pastor (or pastors) and the acting elders of the congregation. It shall have original jurisdiction in matters of discipline except in the case of the pastor. ~~It shall provide the elements of the Lord's Supper, and, when requested by the pastor, aid in their distribution.~~ It shall admit members into full communion and upon request issue letters of transfer to members in good and regular standing, and exclude those who may err in the faith or offend in morals.

ARTICLE VII

ADMINISTRATION

Section 1 - CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: The supreme legislative and administrative power of the congregation is vested in the congregation itself, assembled in meeting duly and legally called as provided in the By-Laws.

Section 2 - CONGREGATIONAL PREROGATIVE: It is the prerogative of the congregational meeting to decide such questions as buying and selling of property, building projects, extensive repairs (over \$500.00, the call and the rejection of a pastor, as well as changes in the constitution, and By-Laws.

Section 3 - For the transaction of all other business, the administration of the church is entrusted to the consistory, chosen and composed as provided for in the By-Laws.

ARTICLE VIII

THE PASTOR

Section 1 - The congregation shall elect as a pastor only a minister who has been approved by the Placement Committee of the Michigan-Indiana Synod.

Section 2 - The consistory shall nominate for the pastorate one pastor approved by the Placement Committee of the Synod, and to be voted on by the congregation. The congregational shall consider only one candidate at a time and vote by ballot for or against his election. If he is elected, the consistory shall tender him a call, according to the form prescribed by the General Synod. The call must be confirmed by the Synod or the Synodical Council.

ARTICLE IX

PROPERTY

Section 1 - The congregation may, in its corporate name, sue and be sued, hold, purchase, and receive title by gift, grant or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with power to mortgage, sell, or convey the same, providing the State laws permit.

Section 2 - In case of a division in the membership of the congregation, both parties shall submit the question of the right of the property to the Synod and the decision of said judiciary shall be binding on all members of the congregation. In case of a dissolution of the congregation, the title to the property shall vest in the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

ARTICLE X

SOCIETIES

All societies are subordinate to the consistory and shall report annually to the congregation.

ARTICLE XI

DISCIPLINE

Discipline in case of un-Christian conduct or other actions for discipline lies in the hands of the Spiritual Council except in the case of the pastor.

ARTICLE XII

AMENDMENTS

Additions and alterations to this constitution may be proposed in any regularly called meeting of the congregation. They shall be referred to the consistory, which shall consider the same and report to the next duly called meeting of the congregation. Said additions and alterations can be adopted only by a two-thirds' majority of all voting members present. The By-Laws may be amended in any duly called meeting of the congregation by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

THE BY-LAWS
FIRST BETHANY EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH
OF DETROIT, MICHIGAN.
Effective June 1, 1953

ARTICLE I

OBLIGATION TO THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH

Section 1 - A delegate and an alternate from the congregation shall be elected each year by the ~~consistory~~ ^{consistory} to the Spring meeting of the Michigan-Indiana Synod. The congregation shall also arrange that delegates from the congregation, the Bible School, the Men's, the Women's and the Young People's organizations, attend the Fall meeting of the Synod. The traveling expenses of the delegates as well as the registration fees shall be paid by the respective organizations.

Section 2 - The congregation shall regularly contribute towards the support of all branches of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Michigan-Indiana Synod according to the rules and actions of the General Synod and the Michigan-Indiana Synod.

Section 3 - The congregation, either through its pastor or a competent officer shall make such reports to the Synodical authorities as shall be required of it and in every way submit to just and lawful discipline.

Section 4 - The official year of the congregation shall be from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

ARTICLE II

PRIVILEGES AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Section 1 - PRIVILEGES:

(a) All members are entitled to a full share in the fellowship and the spiritual blessings of the church and to the service of its pastor, officials and other workers, as well as the christian sympathy and support of all members. Members in good standing are entitled to the free use of the sanctuary for public weddings and funerals; non-members are required to pay \$10.00 for use of the sanctuary (in winter, when necessary to heat building, \$15.00), \$10.00 for the organist and \$5.00 for the custodian.

(b) New members wishing to join the congregation shall make known their intentions to the pastor or to any member of the consistory. All applications for church membership are to be passed on by the spiritual council.

(c) Letters of transfer to another christian congregation will be granted when all obligations toward this congregation have been met. Such transfers are granted by the Spiritual Council.

Section 2 - DUTIES:

(a) It is the duty of all members to take an active part in all the functions of the church for the glory of God and the uplift of mankind: this includes regular attendance at divine worship, helpful assistance in the work of the organizations, participation in the Lord's Supper; baptism and confirmation of their children; attendance at the annual congregational meeting and liberal financial support towards the maintenance and benevolent undertakings of the church. Exemption from financial support may be granted by approval of the Spiritual Council.

(b) All members are obliged to call in their own pastor for all needed services and to hold themselves subject to the regulations of this constitution of the congregation.

ARTICLE III

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1 -

(a) The annual meeting shall be held in the month of January of each year.

(b) Special meetings may be called by the consistory. Upon written request of thirty (30) members in good standing, the consistory shall issue a call for such a meeting within two weeks after the request has been received. Proper notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of a special meeting. Only such business as has been mentioned in the call may be transacted at such special meetings.

(c) Notice of all meetings shall be given on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE IV

ELECTIONS

The election of the members of the consistory shall take place in the annual meeting. The congregation electing by ballot and a majority vote ~~shall~~ elect new members each year, so that the regular term of office is two years. A member who has been re-elected once and has therefore served four years in succession is not eligible for election for at least one year.

ARTICLE V

NOMINATIONS

The president shall appoint a committee on nominations consisting of three members of the congregation. Any member who has consented to have his or her name placed in nomination may be elected regardless of his or her absence from the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the meeting. Public notice of the nominations shall be given from the pulpit at least two weeks before election.

ARTICLE VI

THE CONSISTORY

Section 1 - The administration of the congregation is ^{vested in} the consistory. The consistory is composed of the pastor, ^{or Pastors} eight elders and eight deacons. At least two and not more than four women are to be members of the consistory holding the office of Deaconess.

Section 2 - The consistory shall keep a complete and accurate record of all its proceedings, be the custodian of all congregational records and report to the congregation at its regular and special meetings. The records of both the consistory and the pastor shall be the property of the congregation.

Section 3 - The consistory shall approve all bills before payment. Extraordinary expenses exceeding \$500.00 must receive approval of the congregation.

Section 4 - The employment and payment of the organist, janitor and other employees whose work may be deemed necessary, is left to the consistory.

Section 5 - The consistory shall through its president appoint such committees as it may find necessary to accomplish its work.

Section 6 - The consistory shall establish a Board of Religious Education. *Members of Consistory - Ch. School Supt., Interested Parent, member of Senior Dept., Teacher in School, and minister or ministers.*

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

The consistory shall meet at least once a month, ~~except in July~~

~~and August~~, for the purpose of transacting such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the call of the president or the pastor. Eight (8) members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII

ORGANIZATION

Shortly following the annual congregational meeting, the consistory shall organize itself by electing, by ballot, a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, a Financial-Secretary, a Treasurer, for a term of one year. The consistory shall fill vacancies on the consistory. *Consist. for annual Sec. & asst. treasurer for one year term appointed officers.*

ARTICLE IX

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 -

(a) THE PRESIDENT: presides at all meetings of the consistory and the congregation, appoints all committees and is to concern himself with the welfare of the congregation.

(b) THE VICE-PRESIDENT: shall preside at all meetings where the president is not present and also when business pertaining to the president and his administration is before the congregation. He shall also do all in his power to help the president and make his administration easier.

(c) THE RECORDING-SECRETARY: shall keep record of all transactions of the congregation and the consistory; attend to all correspondence, and with the president, sign all contracts, loans and deeds.

(d) THE FINANCIAL-SECRETARY: shall receive all monies, bank same and report to the treasurer. He shall send a quarterly statement to all members. He shall also be bonded and insured by the congregation and receive a salary of one dollar annually.

(e) THE TREASURER: shall have charge of all funds received from the Financial-Secretary. He shall render a monthly report except when the last Sunday immediately preceeds the meeting of the consistory, and likewise make an annual report to the congregational meeting. He shall be bonded and insured by the congregation and receive an annual salary of one dollar.

Section 2 - THE FINANCE COMMITTEE: shall be appointed by the President, and is to be composed of five members. It shall concern itself with the financial contributions of the members and through the Financial-Secretary send quarterly statements to all members. It shall make a monthly report to the consistory. Meetings of this committee are subject to the call of the chairman.

Section 3 - THE ELDERS - THE SPIRITUAL COUNCIL. The eight Elders together with the pastor shall constitute the Spiritual Council of which the president of the consistory is chairman. It shall concern itself with the spiritual welfare of the congregation and shall exercise discipline in the congregation.

Section 4 - DEACONS: The eight Deacons shall provide for the proper order of all public services, provide ushers who are to receive the offerings in the services and render such services as they may be called upon to render for the general welfare of the congregation.

Section 5 - THE PRESIDENT and THE PASTOR are ex-officio members of all committees of the congregation and consistory.

Section 6 - THE CHURCH-CABINET. The Church-Cabinet consisting of the presidents and secretaries of each organization in the congregation shall co-ordinate and promote the entire program of the church.

It shall meet at the call of ~~the call~~ of the president of the congregation who shall be chairman.

Section 7 - THE HOUSE-COMMITTEE: shall consist of four members appointed by the president, two of whom shall be members of the consistory. They shall care for the physical property, make recommendations to the consistory as to repairs and supervise their execution. They shall report monthly to the consistory.

Section 8 - Membership & Evangelism Committee.
ARTICLE X

Section 1 - THE PASTOR: TERM OF OFFICE: The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relation, three months notice shall be given by either pastor or congregation, unless by mutual consent.

Section 2 - DUTIES: It shall be the duty of the pastor to set a good example to his congregation, to conduct all church services, to direct the work of religious education, administer the sacraments, visit the sick and to perform all such duties as belong to the pastor's office in the Evangelical and Reformed Church. He shall keep a record of all services performed and to make an annual report to the congregation. *written*

Section 3 - RIGHTS: The pastor is a member of the consistory and ex-officio member of all organization within the church. As long as he is pastor, no other minister shall perform any religious ceremony in the church without his consent. He may rightly expect the sincere and willing cooperation of all the members in the congregation in attending the worship services and the church organizations. The pastor's salary shall be paid in monthly installments. His moving expenses when he assumes charge shall be born in full by the congregation.

Rev. [unclear]

Please Return

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Section 2 - Communicant members of this congregation over sixteen (16) years of age shall have the right to a voice and vote in the congregation and also to represent the congregation on the consistory or other judicatories of the church as provided for in the By-Laws. *21 or over anyone years may represent the congregation*

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Section 1 - The congregation shall have a Consistory and a spiritual council. The consistory shall be composed of the minister (or ministers), Elders and Deacons. It shall have jurisdiction and oversight of the congregation and all its organizations. Nine (9) members shall constitute a quorum. It shall organize as provided for in the By-Laws.

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AMENDMENTS

Additions and alterations to this constitution may be proposed in any regularly called meeting of the congregation. They shall be referred to the consistory, which shall consider the same and report to the next duly called meeting of the congregation. Said additions and alterations can be adopted only by a two-thirds' majority of all voting members present. The By-Laws may be amended in any duly called meeting of the congregation by a majority vote of the members present and voting.

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ARTICLE I

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ARTICLE III

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1 -

(a) The annual meeting shall be held in the month of January of each year.

(b) Special meetings may be called by the consistory. Upon written request of thirty (30) members in good standing, the consistory shall issue a call for such a meeting within two weeks after the request has been received. Proper notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of a special meeting. Only such business as has been mentioned in the call may be transacted at such special meetings.

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ARTICLE IV

ELECTIONS

The election of the members of the consistory shall take place in the annual meeting. The congregation electing by ballot and a majority vote ^{Eight} ~~six~~ new members each year, so that the regular term of office is two years. A member who has been re-elected once and has therefore served four years in succession is not eligible for election for at least one year.

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NOMINATIONS

The president shall appoint a committee on nominations consisting of three members of the congregation. Any member who has consented to have his or her name placed in nomination may be elected regardless of his or her absence from the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor of the meeting. Public notice of the nominations shall be given from the pulpit at least two weeks before election.

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Section 4 - The employment and payment of the organist, janitor and other employees whose work may be deemed necessary, is left to the consistory.

Section 5 - The consistory shall through its president appoint such committees as it may find necessary to accomplish its work.

Section 6 - The consistory shall establish a Board of Religious Education. ^{Education. Composed of a member of the consistory, the School Superintendent, a Parent a Pupil of a Senior department - a Sunday School teacher and a minister.}

ARTICLE VII

MEETINGS

The consistory shall meet at least once a month, except in July

and August, for the purpose of transacting such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings are subject to the call of the president or the pastor. ~~Eight (8)~~ ^{nine (9)} members shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII

ORGANIZATION

Shortly following the annual congregational meeting, the consistory shall organize itself by electing, by ballot, a president, a vice-president, a recording secretary, a Financial-Secretary, a Treasurer, for a term of one year. The consistory shall fill vacancies on the consistory. ~~Assistant financial Sec. - Assistant Treasurer~~ ^{should be appointed by the President}

ARTICLE IX

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1 -

(a) THE PRESIDENT: presides at all meetings of the consistory and the congregation, appoints all committees and is to concern himself with the welfare of the congregation.

(b) THE VICE-PRESIDENT: shall preside at all meetings where the president is not present and also when business pertaining to the president and his administration is before the congregation. He shall also do all in his power to help the president and make his administration easier.

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Section 4 - DEACONS: The eight Deacons shall provide for the proper order of all public services, provide ushers who are to receive the offerings in the services and render such services as they may be called upon to render for the general welfare of the congregation.

Section 5 - THE PRESIDENT and THE PASTOR are ex-officio members of all committees of the congregation and consistory.

Section 6 - THE CHURCH-CABINET. The Church-Cabinet consisting of the presidents and secretaries of each organization in the congregation shall co-ordinate and promote the entire program of the church.

It shall meet at the call of the call of the president of the congregation who shall be chairman.

Section 7 - THE HOUSE-COMMITTEE: shall consist of four members appointed by the president, two of whom shall be members of the consistory. They shall care for the physical property, make recommendations to the consistory as to repairs and supervise their execution. They shall report monthly to the consistory.

Section 8. Evangelism Committee. (As suggested by front membership)

ARTICLE X

Section 1 - THE PASTOR: TERM OF OFFICE: The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relation, three months notice shall be given by either pastor or congregation, unless by mutual consent.

Section 2 - DUTIES: It shall be the duty of the pastor to set a good example to his congregation, to conduct all church services, *assist in* the direct ~~the~~ work of religious education, administer the sacraments, visit the sick and to perform all such duties as belong to the pastor's office in the Evangelical and Reformed Church. He shall keep a record of all services performed and to make an annual report *written* to the congregation.

Section 3 - RIGHTS: The pastor is a member of the consistory and ex-officio member of all organization within the church. As long as he is pastor, no other minister shall perform any religious ceremony in the church without his consent. He may rightly expect the sincere and willing cooperation of all the members in the congregation in attending the worship services and the church organizations. The pastor's salary shall be paid in monthly installments. His moving expenses when he assumes charge shall be born in full by the congregation.