

ORGANIZATIONAL PAPER

2015

**EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CHURCH
KLEEFELD, MANITOBA**

I. WHAT WE BELIEVE

A. STATEMENT OF FAITH

We affirm the statement of faith as outlined in The Constitution, Evangelical Mennonite Conference (1994 ed.), pp. 7-13.

1. **THE BIBLE:** We believe that the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired and infallible Word of God. They are the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct (Matt. 5:18, 24:35; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:16-21).
2. **GOD:** We believe in only one God, eternal, infinite, and unchanging. He alone is the Creator, the Sustainer, and Redeemer. He exists and reveals Himself in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All persons in this trinity are fully and equally God (Gen. 1:26, 17:1; Deut. 6:4; Psalm 90:2; 139:7-12; 147:5; Isa. 40:28; 44:6; 57:15; Mal. 3:6; Matt. 11:25; 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 6:27; 8:41-59; 15:26; 16:13,14; 17:1,8,23; Acts 5:3,4; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 2:10,11; 8:4; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:8,12).

2.1 God the Father – We believe in God, the Father of all believers and, in a special sense, the Father of Jesus Christ. He has revealed Himself in nature, in the Scriptures and especially in the person of Jesus Christ (Gen. 1:1- 2:3; Deut. 6:4; Psalm 47:1-9; 139:1-12; Mal. 2:10; Matt. 11:26; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42; John 1:8,9; Acts 17:28; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 4:4-6; Titus 3:4-6).

2.2 God the Son – We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He became man, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He is fully God and fully man, yet without sin.

We believe that Jesus Christ, the divinely appointed Substitute, provided the only atonement for sin by shedding His blood. Through His death, He defeated the Devil enabling people to be set free and to be reconciled to God. He arose from the dead, bringing life and hope. He ascended to the right hand of the Father. There He rules as Lord and lives to intercede for those who come to God by Him (Isa. 7:14; 53:5,6; Matt. 1:20-23; 28:5; Luke 1:35; John 1:1,14; Rom. 1:4; 5:8-10; 6:2-4; 1 Cor. 15:20; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:4,5; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:9,10,14; 7:25).

2.3 God the Spirit – We believe that the Holy Spirit exists eternally as one of the persons of the Trinity, co-equal with the Father and the Son. He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. He indwells believers and is the guarantee of their salvation. He encourages, comforts, and guides them into truth. He empowers them for service and enables believers to live holy lives (Matt. 28:19; John

16:7,8,13; Acts 1:8; 5:3,4; Rom. 8:1-4; I Cor. 1:15-17; Rom. 11:33-36; Heb. 1:1-3).

3. **THE CREATION:** We believe that God created everything as revealed in Scripture (Gen. 1-2; Ex. 20:11; Neh. 9:6; Job 38-39; Psalm 8; Mark 10:6; John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17; Rom. 11:33-36; Heb. 1:1-3).
4. **THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE:** We believe that God created the human race, both male and female, in His own image. We believe, therefore, in the sanctity of all human life, regardless of age, ability, or stage of development (Gen. 1:26,27; 2:7; Ex. 20:13; Psalm 139:13-16).
5. **THE FALL OF THE HUMAN RACE:** We believe our first parents, in unbelief and disobedience, fell into sin by their free choice. This broke their fellowship with God and brought the whole human race into the same state of sin and separation (Gen. 1:26,27; 2:7, 16, 17; 3:1-24; John 6:44; Rom. 3:23; 5:12; Eph. 2:1-10).
6. **SATAN:** We believe Satan is a personal spirit being. He heads the kingdom of all evil and opposes God and all that is holy, pure, and just (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 10:17-21; Eph. 6:10-18; I Tim. 4:1; Rev. 12).
The destiny of Satan will be the lake of fire, which God prepared for him and his angels (Matt. 25:41; Rom. 8:38,39; Gal. 4:8; 1 Cor. 2:8; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:19-23; 2:1-3; 3:10; 6:10-18; Col. 1:13; 2:14,15; Heb. 2:14; Rev. 12; 20:7-10).
7. **SALVATION:** We believe people are saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The basis of this salvation is Christ's life, His atoning death, and His resurrection. Justification, the new birth, and the transformed life come about through repentance and faith in Christ. His atonement covers children until they reach the age of accountability (2 Sam. 12:22,23; Matt. 18:1-14; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 24:47; John 1:9-13; 3:3-8; 15-18; Acts 4:12; 20:21; Eph. 2:1-10; James 2:14-24).
We believe it is the privilege of all Christians to know that they have passed from death to life and that God can keep them from falling. Faith and obedience are essential in maintaining this assurance and growth in grace (John 8:31,32; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:11; 2 Cor. 5:21; I Peter 1:5-11; 1 John 3:14; 5:13).
8. **DISCIPLESHIP AND NONCONFORMITY:** We believe that our relationship to the Savior is to be an unconditional commitment to the discipleship. Discipleship is the total life of the believer patterned after the life and death of our Lord (Matt. 4:16-22; Acts 11:26; 26:28; Rom. 5:5; 12:1,2,7-12; 13:8-14; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Eph. 1:1-10; 4:32-5:2; Col. 3:1-17; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 2:13-24; 4:16).
9. **THE LIFE OF PEACE:** We believe in the life of peace. We are called to walk in the steps of the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace. Everything about His life,

His teachings, and His redemptive death on the cross, summons us to a life of nonviolence.

As nonresistant Christians, we cannot support war, whether as officers, soldiers, combatants, or noncombatants, or direct financial contributors. Instead of taking up arms, we should do whatever we can to lessen human distress and suffering, even at the risk of our own lives.

In all circumstances, we should be peacemakers and ministers of reconciliation (Isa. 53:3-9; Matt. 5-7; 28:18-20; John 18:36; Rom. 12-13; Phil. 2:3,4; Col. 2:14,15; Heb. 1:1,2; 2:14; I Peter 2:9, 20-23).

10. **THE CHURCH:** We believe all who have experienced new life in Christ belong to His church. All who repent and make a faith commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord are united to His holy church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 16:18; 28:18-20; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; 16:31; 17:30; 30:21; Rom. 8:20; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:25; 4:19; Eph. 1:22; 4:5; Col. 1:18; 3:1-4; 1 Peter 3:21).

We believe that God calls the church to conform to the image of Christ, care for its members, and to evangelize all people. Those who are a part of the church seek to:

- 1) Live holy lives, considering their bodies as temples for the Spirit, denying themselves and their lusts (Mark 8:34,35; Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 6:19,20; 2 Thess. 3:6; Titus 2:11-14).
- 2) Avoid entering into binding relationships with unbelievers (Rom. 12:1,2; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 5:11).
- 3) Exercise proper stewardship of their abilities, time, and possessions (1 Cor. 16:1, 2; 2 Cor. 8-9).

11. **ORDINANCES:** An ordinance is a symbolic observance, instituted according to Scripture, which is to be administered in and by the church as a visible sign of spiritual truth.

We believe Christ instituted three ordinances: water baptism, the Lord's Supper, and footwashing (Matt. 28:18-20; 1 Cor. 11:20-32; John 13:1-17).

11.1 Believer's Water Baptism – We believe a Christian should be baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To qualify for baptism, one must repent of sin and by faith accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Water baptism represents the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the time of conversion and the washing of regeneration, which the believer has experienced. It is an act of obedience which identifies the believer with the Church of Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 2:36-47; 10:47,48; 18:8; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-4; Titus 3:5).

11.2 The Lord's Supper – We believe that Christians are to celebrate the Lord's Supper as instituted by Christ. The elements – the bread and the cup – symbolize the body of Christ and His shed blood.

With this celebration, Christians call to mind Christ's suffering for the sins of the whole human race and proclaim the Lord's death until He returns to take

His followers to Himself. It involves fellowship, self-examination, testimony, confession, praise and thanksgiving. Christians should examine their own relationship to God and to other people before participating in this commemoration (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 10:16,17; 17-34; Eph. 2:11-22; Heb. 9:12, 25-28; 1 John 2:1-2).

11.3 Footwashing – We believe in the practice of footwashing. When Jesus washed the feet of His disciples he gave the church an example to follow. Footwashing is an expression of humility, love, and equality. It symbolizes cleansing from sin and the Christian's commitment to a lifestyle of servanthood. When we accept the washing of our feet by other Christians, we demonstrate that we accept Jesus' ministry to us (John 13:1-20; 1 Tim. 5:10).

12. **THE RESURRECTION:** We believe Jesus Christ rose bodily from the dead. All, believers and unbelievers, will be raised from the dead as well, the believers to the resurrection of life and the unbelievers to the resurrection of condemnation. We also believe that people already enter the eternal state at the time of death. The righteous go into the presence of their Lord and the unrighteous into conscious suffering (Dan 12:2; Luke 16:19-31; 23:43; John 5:28, 29; 20:20, 24-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15; Phil. 1:19-26; Rev. 20:11-15).

13. **THE RETURN AND FINAL TRIUMPH OF CHRIST:** We believe in the personal, visible, bodily return of Jesus Christ. This is the blessed hope of believers. Christ's return will be the occasion of the resurrection of the dead and the eternal separation of the just and the unjust. Everything will be brought into the subjection of His authority and rule as His eternal kingdom is realized (Matt. 24:44; 25:31-46; John 14:1-6; Acts 1:11; 1 Cor. 15:19-28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 10:37; 2 Peter 3:3-13; Rev. 20-22).

At His return, Christ will judge all people. After the judgment, the righteous will be with God, the unrighteous in hell. Death will be destroyed, and Satan and His angels will be thrown into the lake of fire. Christ will hand over the kingdom to God the Father, after destroying dominion, authority, and power. Then the righteous will reign with Christ forever (Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:20-28).

B. CHURCH PRACTICES

1. We affirm the section on Church Practices in *The Constitution, Evangelical Mennonite Conference* (1994 ed.), pp. 14-18.

2. Kleefeld Church Practices

a. Comments concerning ordinances:

- 1) Water baptism: Both pouring and immersion modes are acceptable.
- 2) Communion: Normally observed quarterly.

- 3) Footwashing: Normally observed annually.
- b. The *New International Version* is the recommended Bible for preaching and teaching.

II. HOW WE ORGANIZE OUR CORPORATE MINISTRIES

A. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

1. Conditions of Membership

- a) To qualify for church membership a person must:
 - i. Have a personal faith in Christ
 - ii. Live a life consistent with their confession of faith
 - iii. Be baptized on confession of faith in Christ
 - iv. Be in agreement with our statement of faith
- b) Persons are accepted into membership by a majority vote of the members present at a membership meeting.

2. Transfer of Membership

- a) Transfers-in should meet the conditions of membership and have a letter of reference if possible.
- b) Dual membership is accepted under special circumstances at the request of the individual if:
 - i. the applicant wants to retain a connection with their previous church.
 - ii. their residence may be temporary (students).
 - iii. the applicant wants to maintain connection with other churches for the purpose of support (missionaries).
- c) We encourage our members who leave our community to take up membership in a church in their new locale.

3. Lapse of Membership

- a) Where members are absent from the church for a period of a year, contact will be made by the ministerial to discuss their membership status. Exceptions will be made for the elderly, for students, for Christian workers, and for members who request that their membership be kept active.
- b) In situations where members no longer profess Christian faith, church membership will be terminated.

4. Adherents

- a) Non-members who attend regularly are welcome to attend membership meetings.
- b) Adherents are not eligible to vote or hold elected positions in the church. They may, however, be assigned to positions by appointment.
- c) We encourage adherents to take up full membership.

5. Responsibilities

- a) Members are responsible to carry out God's work as He calls and enables them.
- b) Members are responsible to live a lifestyle which is pleasing to God and which will be an example to others.
- c) All persons who have been accepted for church membership at a church membership meeting have full voting rights and are eligible to hold office.
- d) The church membership, led by the Holy Spirit, is the governing body of the church. All boards and elected officers are responsible to the church membership.
- e) All members have input into the work of the church through membership meetings.

B. NOMINATION PROCEDURES

1. All available elected positions will be announced in the bulletin, and nominations for those positions will be received by the Executive. Committee chairs will receive the nominations and forward them along with their own committee nominations to the Executive.
2. Nominations begin in March whereby the congregation will have 8 weeks to make submissions.
3. Nominations close on the day of the Executive meeting prior to the membership meeting when voting takes place. This allows the Executive to discern and prepare for the meeting and ask questions regarding a nomination if needed.
4. Nominations are brought to the congregation for vote or ratification at the membership meeting.
5. In the event that a vacancy is not filled, nominations for vacancies can be forwarded to the Executive after the elections have taken place and will then be brought to the congregation for either a vote or ratification at the next membership meeting.

C. MINISTRY TEAM STRUCTURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

a) Composition

- i. Church Chair
- ii. Ministerial Team Chair (Vice Chair of the Executive)
- iii. Pastor(s)
- iv. Trustee Chair
- v. Recording Secretary
- vi. Music Chair

- vii. Missions Chair
- viii. Christian Education Chair

b) Duties

- i. To oversee the ongoing work of the church
- ii. To provide counsel and guidance to the pastoral staff
- iii. To conduct the periodic review of salaried pastors.
 - 1) If the review indicates that there are areas of concern, the executive, ministerial, and pastor will work through a process to improve those areas.
 - 2) A summary of each review will be shared with the membership.
- iv. To arrange all membership meetings at which the Church Chair shall preside.
- v. To select and appoint scrutineers as necessary for all membership meetings.
- vi. To act as a nominating committee for the election of ministers and deacons.
- vii. To initiate a pastoral search as required.
 - 1) In the event that a pastor is required, the Church Executive shall guide the church into calling a new pastor. The Executive will nominate a committee to begin the search process. The Executive shall present the nominees for the search committee to the membership for approval.
 - 2) The Pastoral Search Committee shall seek the counsel of the membership to:
 - a. define the needs and requirements in a new pastor.
 - b. search for and present a candidate to the executive and membership.
 - 3) The Church Executive shall examine the prospective candidate regarding his philosophy of ministry, doctrine, gifts, priorities, etc.
 - 4) In the event that the candidate is not a member of the congregation and upon the advice of the Church Executive, the Pastoral Search Committee will then arrange for a candidacy visit.
 - 5) After earnest prayer, a vote shall be taken at a meeting duly called for the purpose of whether to extend the call to that candidate. If a quorum of 25% of the membership is present, a minimum vote of 80% majority of the membership is required to extend the call.
 - 6) The elected candidate should then go through the EMC examination process if not ordained previously by the EMC.

7) The elected candidate will then meet with the Trustees Team to finalize the salary, benefits, and working conditions.

viii. To review Conference Council issues with church delegates prior to the semi-annual EMC meetings (July and November or December).

ix. To meet in preparation for each membership meeting and as needed.

x. To appoint a Messenger reporter.

c) Quorum:

A quorum of the Church Executive shall consist of four or more members, not including the pastors.

d) Church Officers

i. The Church Chair is elected by the membership for a two-year term and is responsible to chair meetings of the membership and the Church Executive.

ii. The Church Vice-Chair is appointed by the Ministerial Team from within its ranks.

iii. The Recording Secretary is elected by the membership for a two-year term and is responsible for recording minutes for membership meetings and Church Executive meetings.

2. MINISTERIAL TEAM

a) Composition

i. Ministers and their spouses

ii. Deacons

b) Duties

i. To oversee the spiritual well-being of the congregation by planned visitation, offering counseling resources, and assisting in crisis care of members, adherents, and individuals residing in our community.

ii. To assist the congregation in forming Bible study groups.

iii. To mutually agree on the responsibilities of each member of the Ministerial Team.

iv. To interview candidates for baptism and church membership and affirm them in their Christian walk.

c) Ministers

i. Composition

1) Salaried Pastors

2) Elected Ministers

ii. Duties

- 1) To oversee the worship services, preaching, and special services of the church.
- 2) To remind the congregation of the Statement of Faith and Practices.
- 3) To assist the bereaved in making funeral arrangements.
- 4) To lead the congregation in the ministries of prayer, preaching, teaching, evangelism, visiting, and counseling.

iii. Salaried Pastors

1) Terms of Office

- a. Salaried pastors are not given a term. They serve until the church or the pastor or both decide that a change is necessary.
- b. In the event of a resignation by a pastor or termination of office by the church membership, a minimum 3-month notice is required.
- c. The Church Executive will set in motion a periodic review of the pastor(s) and a summary will be shared with the membership.
- d. The Trustees Team will review the pastor(s) salaries, sabbaticals, benefits, professional development, and working conditions annually.

2) Senior Pastor's Duties and Responsibilities

- a. The Senior Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. He shall preach and teach God's Word, administer the ordinances, provide pastoral care for the membership of the church, promote the spiritual interest of the church, and develop the church's strength for the best possible service in the Kingdom of God.
- b. The Pastor shall carry out the job description specified by the Church Executive.

3) Associate Pastor's Duties and Responsibilities

- a. The Associate Pastor's main responsibility is to oversee the youth ministry of the church.
- b. The Associate Pastor will also share in the preaching, teaching, administration of ordinances, pastoral care, and visioning for the church according to gifting and needs.

4) Vision Setting

Upon being hired, the pastor(s) and ministerial will meet to review the former goals and objectives of the church's vision and work together to formulate a new vision.

iv. Elected Ministers

- 1) As required, the church shall select from the membership additional ministers to assist the pastor(s).

2) The candidate shall be nominated by the membership. A minimum of one month shall elapse between the time of nomination and election so that the Lord's will can be sought in this matter.

3) Upon election by the membership and approval by the Conference Ministerial Examination and Placement Committee, the minister shall be ordained for life.

d) Deacons

i. Election and Term of Office

1) The number of deacons shall be determined by the membership, according to the needs of the church and the community.

2) Candidates shall be nominated by the membership. A minimum of one month shall elapse between the time of nomination and the election so that the Lord's will can be sought in this matter.

3) Upon election by the membership and approval of the Conference Ministerial Examination and Placement Committee, the deacon shall be ordained for life.

ii. Duties: The responsibility of deacons is to oversee the care-giving ministry of the church and community in cooperation and communication with the pastor(s) and Ministerial Team. Specific duties include:

1) Overseeing the organization and function of a care group. This care group will serve as a jurisdiction for the time, effort, and prayers of the deacon or deacon couple. The spiritual and social needs of the members of the group will be met directly or indirectly to the best of the deacons' abilities.

2) Promoting understanding and harmony within the church body and between the congregation and its leaders.

3) Watching for any needs and crises that may arise and responding with counsel and emotional support.

4) Supporting and assisting people who suffer loss or misfortune and administering local aid programs.

5) Assisting in the communion services of the church.

e) Terms, Retirement Age, and Sabbaticals for Elected Ministers and Deacons:

i. Definition of term: Ordination is for life, but at any time an elected minister or deacon feels that he or she no longer is able to carry on the office, he or she may, with careful reflection and prayer, initiate the resignation of his or her office. In the same way, the membership, if it no longer feels the minister or deacon is being effective may suggest to him or her that he or she resign from being an active elected minister or deacon.

ii. Retirement age for pastors, elected ministers, and deacons shall be between the ages of 65 and 70.

iii. Sabbaticals:

- 1) Sabbaticals may be taken on a seniority basis for a period of up to a year.
- 2) Applications for sabbaticals are reviewed by the Church Executive and recommendations made to the membership.
- 3) Those returning from sabbaticals re-enter their previous ministry roles.

3. MISSIONS TEAM

a) Composition: Five elected members

b) Duties:

- i. To promote interest in world missions
- ii. To organize missions programs and events
- iii. To promote local missions
- iv. To assist the Mennonite Central Committee representative as needed.

4. EDUCATION TEAM

a) Composition:

- i. Education Director
- ii. Coordinators of the following education committees:
 - 1) Sunday School
 - 2) Girls' Club
 - 3) Christian Service Brigade
 - 4) Library
 - 5) Kidzone

b) Duties:

- i. To establish criteria for curriculum selection
- ii. To survey and provide resources for the educational programs of the church.
- iii. To encourage unity, coordination, and teamwork among the education committees.
- iv. To facilitate professional development for Christian Education workers.
- v. To appoint a Vacation Bible School Coordinator.

c) Elections and Terms of Office:

- i. The Education Director is elected by the membership for a two-year term.
- ii. Coordinators of education committees are elected by the membership for a two-year term.
- iii. The Education Team will appoint two members to each education committee annually.

5. WORSHIP TEAM

a) Composition

- i. Five elected members representing music, sound, and technology
- ii. Pastor or Associate Pastor

b) Duties

- i. To coordinate all aspects of Sunday morning worship services
- ii. To recruit, train, assist, and appoint personnel to fill the areas of music ministry, sound ministry, and technology as it pertains to all church services, including weddings, funerals, and other functions.
- iii. To form a budget that pertains to the acquisition and maintenance of instruments, sound, and technology equipment.
- iv. To form and recruit subcommittees as needed in order to provide specific tasks in the areas of music, sound, and/or technology.

6. TRUSTEES TEAM

a) Composition

- i. Five elected members
- ii. Treasurer

b) Duties

- i. To oversee the maintenance of church property
- ii. To present a proposed budget at the annual business meeting.
- iii. To handle all church funds, keeping an accurate record of all receipts and disbursements.
- iv. To be responsible for the use of church property for special occasions (e.g. weddings, funerals, etc.). Arrangements are to be made with the pastor and chair of this board.
- v. To be responsible for human resources.

7. LADIES MINISTRIES TEAM

a) Composition

- i. Four elected members

b) Duties

- i. To plan for ministries related to the spiritual welfare of the women in the church and community.

b) Each of the following committees shall appoint one delegate to the Evangelical Mennonite Conference Council for a one year term. These meetings are held twice a year (July and November/December).

- i. Church Executive Chair
- ii. Missions
- iii. Trustee
- iv. Ministerial
- v. Christian Education

c) Membership and duties of delegates are governed by the constitution and by-laws of the respective organizations. (Note: EMC delegates and MCC delegates are elected on the basis of one delegate for every 50 members).

11. MINISTRY TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

All teams are responsible:

- a) To organize internally, appoint a chair, add non-voting members as needed, form subcommittees as deemed necessary, and to present to the membership their recommendations for filling such team vacancies as may occur.
- b) To review and update purpose, goal, and expectations in order to meet the needs of the church and community.
- c) To compose a list of job descriptions for its members.
- d) To consult the membership regarding major changes.
- e) To maintain proper financial records under the supervision of the Church Treasure and to submit a budget to the Trustees Team.
- f) To submit its annual yearbook report to the Church Office.

III. AMENDING THE ORGANIZATIONAL PAPER

A. Any proposed amendments require a 75% majority vote of members present at a membership meeting in order to be adopted.

B. A minimum time of one week should elapse between the proposal of an amendment and the vote.

C. Proposed amendments to the Organizational Paper should be noted in the church bulletin prior to the vote.