

**EDINA MORNINGSIDE COMMUNITY CHURCH UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
BY-LAWS**

**(As amended on June 14, 2020)**

**ARTICLE I — CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

Prospective members will be invited to join the Church by the Senior Minister, and will be presented to the Congregation at any regular or special worship service for reception into the Church as Members, after which the Member will have full Membership privileges and duties.

Letters of transfer to other churches shall be given by the Senior Minister to all Members who desire them. Letters of transfer from other churches will be received by the Senior Minister on behalf of the Church. Those transferring into the Church will also be presented to the Congregation as outlined above.

Those who desire to participate in worship, share in the Church's organized life and work and contribute to its support, but who have not chosen Membership, will be Friends of the Church. They will share in the privileges of Membership except for the right to vote or to hold any office that is subject to election by the Congregation or otherwise designated in the Constitution or By-laws of the Church as open only to Members.

A Member who has not been in communication with this Church and has not contributed to its financial support or participated in its activities for more than a year will be contacted by the Minister(s) to determine if such Member wishes to retain their membership in the Church. If the Member is not interested in remaining an active Member (to the extent possible) or if no communication is established within a reasonable time, the Spiritual Life Team will vote to decide whether that Member should be removed from the Church's membership role. A report of the Team's decision will be sent to Vision Council.

The Vision Council is authorized to take whatever actions may be advisable, including termination of membership, to ensure the safety and well-being of the Church, its Members and others who are associated in some way with the Church.

**ARTICLE II — MINISTRY TEAMS**

**Section 1. Trustees**

The Trustees ensure the integrity of Edina Morningside Church's financial and property assets, so that the Congregation remains and flourishes as a healthy spiritual community.

Annual operating budgets submitted for adoption by the Congregation should be approved by the Trustees and, with regard to the overall mission and goals of the Church, by the Vision Council. If agreement between the two is not achieved, the budget presented to the

Congregation will include a detailed explanation of the areas of disagreement for resolution by the Congregation. At least seven (7) days before the meeting to approve the budget, a written draft of the proposed operating budget will be made available to all Members on the Church website and in any other form desired by the Trustees. Written budgets also will be available at the meeting for all attendees. Trustees will present the budget to the Congregation for consideration.

Trustees may appoint sub-committees and delegate tasks as it determines necessary and appropriate. People serving on such sub-committees or performing delegated tasks need not be members of Trustees or Members of the Church unless otherwise provided in the Constitution or these By-laws.

**1.1. Financial Oversight:** Trustees will oversee all accounting and financial processes for EMC, including but not limited to:

- (1) Develop an annual operating budget for approval by the Congregation;
- (2) Implement the approved annual operating budget;
- (3) Review the Treasurer's monthly financial report;
- (4) Report regularly to the Vision Council;
- (5) Engage auditors annually to verify the integrity of EMC's financial processes, to include books of the financial secretary, treasurer and pre-school treasurer;
- (6) Administer endowments and investments;
- (7) Recruit and coordinate weekly offering counters;
- (8) Recruit, train and supervise a Financial Secretary to track financial contributions;
- (9) Work with Vision Council on terms of employment, salary and benefits.

**1.2. Building and Facilities:** Trustees, working with the Minister(s), are authorized to:

- (1) Establish policies and set rental fees for building usage;
- (2) Make such other decisions regarding the use of the building and facilities as are appropriate and consistent with the vision and mission of the Church as articulated by the Vision Council;
- (3) Work with Church staff to assign spaces in the Church building and negotiate agreements for Church use with community groups;
- (4) Coordinate repair of facilities;
- (5) Oversee digital and technical resources, including electronic media;
- (6) Schedule Spring and Fall cleanup days;
- (7) Establish and supervise regular maintenance and inspections;
- (8) Purchase and maintain appropriate insurance;
- (9) Direct capital improvements.

In the event that Trustees and the Minister(s) are unable to determine whether a usage is consistent with the vision and mission as set by the Vision Council, they will consult with the Moderator and/or the Vision Council to make a determination.

## Section 2. Vision Council

The Vision Council guides the Congregation in welcoming and serving, so that all may experience the joy of Christ's love.

**2.1. Evaluation and Oversight of Church Mission:** The Vision Council will prayerfully enhance and refine the Church's fulfillment of its mission through activities such as:

- (1) Facilitate communication amongst the Congregation and other interested parties regarding the Church Mission;
- (2) Evaluate where there is energy ("taking the wood to where the fire is burning");
- (3) Recruit Members to fill elected offices, including delegates to Minnesota Conference events;
- (4) Discern and develop emerging ministry opportunities.

**2.2. Evaluation of Opportunities through Strategic Planning:** The Vision Council will prayerfully discern the Church's future direction through activities such as:

- (1) Regularly develop and review strategic plans for the Congregation and its role in the wider community;
- (2) Engage Church membership and wider community to discern opportunities and needs.

**2.3. Evaluation and Oversight of Church Business:** The Vision Council will prayerfully govern the ability of the Church to meet its mission and vision goals through activities including:

- (1) Annually evaluate pastoral effectiveness and congregational spiritual health. A meeting for this purpose may be conducted without the Minister(s) in attendance;
- (2) Ensure the Church has the appropriate staff and structure to fulfill its mission;
- (3) Coordinate annual pledge drive;
- (4) Evaluate current programming;
- (5) Oversee Minister's administration of employees and church business;
- (6) Participate as needed in other staff evaluations;
- (7) Develop personnel policies;
- (8) Establish staff positions and define duties;
- (9) Coordinate with Trustees in setting terms of employment, salary and benefits;
- (10) Give final approval for staff hires.

**Section 3. Spiritual Life.** The Spiritual Life Team encourages faith formation and growth for all ages. Through weekly worship, Sunday School, individual care, musical groups, periodic retreats, adult education, and other ministries, they seek to assure that every person can joyfully nurture their connection to God and others in the name of Jesus Christ. Spiritual Life recognizes celebration, challenge, service, adventure and community as essential parts of the abundant life God wishes for every person. The Christian faith is taught in accessible ways so that all people can authentically claim for themselves what it means to follow Christ.

All Members, Friends and community members are welcome to serve on the Spiritual Life Team, which is led by three (3) members who are elected by the Congregation. Elected team members will serve terms of three (3) years each, staggered so that one (1) member of the team is elected annually. The Spiritual Life Team will annually select a Chair, a member to serve on the Vision Council (who may also be the Chair) and any other positions deemed necessary by the Team. The Chair and the member serving on the Vision Council must be one of the three (3) elected members of the Team. The Spiritual Life Team meets at the call of its Chair.

The Spiritual Life Team strengthens the spiritual life of the Church through activities that include:

- (1) Work with the Minister(s) to create meaningful and enlightening worship;
- (2) Assist the Minister(s) with sacraments;
- (3) Facilitate Sunday School, educational programs and faith formation programs of all kinds;
- (4) Encourage spiritual growth and exploration;
- (5) Support music and the arts in all their forms as an important part of worship;
- (6) Create support networks for those with needs, such as childcare, shut-in support, prayer support, personal visits and other needs as identified;
- (7) Coordinate support for worship services, including ushers, readers, greeters, etc.

**Section 4. Generous Hospitality.** Our Generous Hospitality Team strives to build a welcome and inviting place, filled with warmth, joy and laughter, for our members and surrounding community. They host events that provide a place for community to gather. They coordinate making our building available for local groups to meet and to connect with each other. They strive to make our church everyone's church and ensure that all feel welcome.

All Members, Friends and community members are welcome to serve on the Generous Hospitality Team, which is led by three (3) members who are elected by the Congregation. Elected Team members will serve terms of three (3) years each, staggered so that one (1) member of the team is elected annually. The Generous Hospitality Team will annually select a Chair, a member to serve on the Vision Council (who may also be the Chair) and any other positions deemed necessary by the team. The Chair and the member serving on the Vision Council must be among the three (3) elected members of the Team. It will meet at the call of its Chair.

The Generous Hospitality Team will enhance the hospitality of the Church through activities such as:

- (1) Promote marketing, visibility, and awareness of EMC in the wider community;
- (2) Strengthen feeling of community and friendship within the Congregation;
- (3) Connect the Church and its Congregation with the wider community;
- (4) Activate the building space in accordance with the Church's wider mission;
- (5) Review all activities on an annual basis for continued support.

**Section 5. Faithful Service.** The Faithful Service Team works to transform our community, country and world through serving our neighbors in need. It coordinates aid to local organizations, with donations of time, talent and resources. It works to help the Church learn about others and to expand our community through mission trips and donations both home and abroad. It strives to help the Church show God's love through all our work for equality and justice for all people.

All Members, Friends and community members are welcome to serve on the Faithful Service Team, which is led by three (3) members who are elected by the Congregation. Elected Team members will serve terms of three (3) years each, staggered so that one (1) member of the team is elected annually. The Faithful Service Team will annually select a Chair, a member to serve on the Vision Council (who may also be the Chair) and any other positions deemed necessary by the team. The Chair and the member serving on the Vision Council must be among the three (3) elected members of the Team. It will meet at the call of its Chair.

The Faithful Service Team will enhance the service mission of the Church through activities such as the following:

- (1) Lead us in learning to see beyond ourselves and the limits of these walls;
- (2) Support the Congregation in identifying those who need help and those in the Congregation who are moved to respond;
- (3) Evaluate where there is congregational energy and consensus for action;
- (4) Promote congregational awareness about issues of social concern;
- (5) Review all activities on an annual basis for continued support; and
- (6) Work with office staff to determine and designate benevolence offerings.

**Section 6. Edina Morningside Preschool.** The Preschool Board will act as the cohesive link between Edina Morningside Church and the Edina Morningside Preschool, which is a longstanding outreach of the Church. The Board will seek to build an integrated and positive relationship among staff, parents, students and the wider Church community.

A Preschool Board of five (5) members will be elected by the Congregation. Elected members will serve terms of three (3) years each, staggered so that either one (1) or two (2) members of the team are elected annually. The Preschool Board will annually select a Chair, a member to serve on the Vision Council (who may also be the Chair) and any other positions deemed necessary by the Board. The Chair and the member serving on the Vision Council must be among the five (5) elected members of the Board. It will meet at the call of its Chair.

The Preschool Board is authorized to:

- (1) Provide proper financial oversight, including creation of an annual operating budget that shall be submitted to Trustees for approval;
- (2) Annually, recommend to Vision Council the contracts and compensation for preschool staff for upcoming year;

- (3) Approve preschool program for year and evaluate for consistency with mission and vision;
- (4) Ensure effective organizational planning;
- (5) Maintain adherence to preschool guidelines;
- (6) Ensure adequate resources for preschool to fulfill its mission;
- (7) Promote the preschool's public standing.

**Section 7. Edina Morningside Theater Company.** The Morningside Theater Company (MTC) Board will act as the cohesive link between Edina Morningside Church and the Edina Morningside Theater Company, which is an outreach of the Church. The Board will seek to build an integrated and positive relationship among staff, parents, student actors and interns and the wider Church community.

A MTC Board of five (5) members will be elected by the Congregation. Elected members will serve terms of three (3) years each, staggered so that either one (1) or two (2) members of the team are elected annually. The MTC Board will annually select a Chair, a member to serve on the Vision Council (who may also be the Chair) and any other positions deemed necessary by the Board. The Chair and the member serving on the Vision Council must be among the five (5) elected members of the Board. It will meet at the call of its Chair.

The MTC Board is authorized to:

- (1) Provide proper financial oversight, including working with the Director to create an annual operating budget that shall be voted on by the MTC Board for approval and reported to the Trustees;
- (2) Annually, approve the contracts and compensation for MTC staff recommended by the Director for the upcoming year and report the same to Vision Council;
- (3) Consult with the Director on the programs for the year and evaluate for consistency with mission and vision;
- (4) Ensure effective organizational planning;
- (5) Maintain adherence to any MTC guidelines;
- (6) Work to increase and effectively utilize resources for MTC to fulfill its mission; and
- (7) Promote MTC's public standing.

MTC will be managed and directed on a day-to-day basis by the Director of Theater Arts (the "Director"), who will be a non-voting member of the MTC Board. The Director of Theater Arts will be a member of EMC's staff, hired by the Vision Council and supervised by the Pastor. The Director will attend MTC Board meetings, inform the MTC Board of the Director's activities and recommend a budget and staff contracts and compensation for the Board's approval.

The Board may, but is not obligated to, authorize the Director to develop a budget and hire staff, subject to retroactive Board ratification.

### **ARTICLE III — MINISTER(S)**

The Minister(s) will be hired in accordance with UCC Guidelines. Terms of Employment will be governed by State Law, the employment contract, the Constitution and these By-laws.

If a Minister wishes to terminate their employment with EMC, they must give at least 60 days written notice to the Moderator, as representative of the Congregation. EMC must give at least 60 days written notice to a Minister before termination of their employment. Upon a determination by the Vision Council that it is in the interest of EMC that a Minister's employment be terminated immediately, however, a Minister may immediately be suspended from serving. If a Minister and the Vision Council agree that notice of less than 60 days is desirable, this time period requirement may be changed to a mutually-agreeable time period.

Ministerial duties include:

- (1) Administer sacraments of baptism and holy communion;
- (2) Conduct services, including marriage, funeral and other dedicated services when deemed appropriate;
- (3) Make him or herself available for the comfort and counsel of every Member of this Church;
- (4) Lead confirmation;
- (5) Develop programs in conjunction with Vision Council, Ministry Teams and staff;
- (6) Play a role in the life and activities of all aspects of this Church, both in and outside its walls;
- (7) Oversee church personnel, including annual reviews.

The Minister(s) shall be an advisory member of all Ministry Teams, boards and committees and shall receive notice of meetings, minutes and reports from such meetings, and regular updates on activities of all Ministry Teams, boards and committees.

### **ARTICLE IV — MODERATOR**

The Moderator will serve as the voice of the Congregation to the Vision Council and will make an effort to communicate with all members of the Congregation about issues of general or specific concerns. The Moderator will also serve as the voice of the Congregation to the Pastor and will endeavor to communicate issues of concern in a timely manner.

Signatory authority on financial accounts will be transferred to a new Moderator within forty-five (45) days of election.

### **ARTICLE V — FINANCIAL SECRETARY**

The Trustees will appoint a Financial Secretary, who will (a) keep records of all donations and pledges, (b) report at least quarterly to each Member or Friend on the receipt of all donations and pledges, and (c) provide annual statements of donations to each contributor.

## ARTICLE VI — VOTING

Section 1. Voting at all meetings may be done by voice vote or raised hands, except that the election of Church officers and Trustees will be done by confidential, written ballot. Voting on any issue may be done by confidential ballot if (a) the Moderator determines that a confidential ballot is appropriate, or (b) a Member requests that the ballot be confidential, either before or during the meeting in which the vote is held. Requests for a confidential ballot can be made to the Moderator or the Minister, verbally or in writing. The Moderator is encouraged to use confidential ballots for any vote on an issue that significantly affects the future or finances of the Church and where, in the Moderator's judgment, Members may be more likely to express their preference by confidential ballot. Procedural motions will all be held by voice vote or raised hands.

Section 2. The Annual Meeting and any Special Meetings of the Congregation may be held solely by one or more means of remote communication if the Vision Council determines that extraordinary circumstances make holding a meeting of the Congregation by remote communication desirable. If such a determination is made by the Vision Council, notice of the meeting must be given to every member entitled to vote as if the meeting were to be held in person and must include detailed instructions on how to participate, and the number of members with voting rights participating in the meeting must be sufficient to constitute a quorum at a meeting. The Clerk will use reasonable means to ensure that voting participants are members entitled to vote. Members who request a paper ballot in lieu of an electronic ballot will be sent a paper ballot to be received by them at least 3 days prior to the meeting. Such ballot may be mailed or, if requested, e-mailed for the recipient to print. Such ballots must arrive in EMC's office, addressed to the Clerk's attention, within 5 days after the date of the meeting.