

CONSTITUTION
AND
BY-LAW,
2011

BETHEL ASSOCIATED GOSPEL CHURCH
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**CONSTITUTION
OF
BETHEL ASSOCIATED GOSPEL CHURCH
OF KINGSTON, ONTARIO**

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ARTICLE 1- DEFINITIONS, PREAMBLE AND SUPERCEDEANCE

SECTION 1. DEFINITIONS

NOTE: any word in this Constitution or the By-Law which is followed by an asterisk (*) is defined below.

- "Bethel Church"* Shall be referred to in this document and in the By-Law interchangeably as "Bethel Church", "Bethel" or "the church".
- 'Justified'* a state arrived at through justification, that process by which we are made just - or right - in our standing before a Holy God.
- Our status as sinners (which excludes us from God's presence because of His holiness) does not change, but God now sees us through "blood-coloured glasses", i.e. the shed blood of Jesus Christ forever allows us to stand before Him and be in communion with Him as if we had never sinned.
- "natural and literal meaning"* The ordinary meaning of a word or words, in keeping with the intent of the original author, the context and the literary genre
- "present"* Unless otherwise indicated in the text of this constitution, a member is considered "present" at a congregational meeting if that member physically attends the meeting, or provides a proxy vote to another member who is physically attending the meeting.
- "praxy vote"* a vote given to a member by an absent member, allowing that absent member to exercise a vote at a meeting
- "sanctified"* A state arrived at through sanctification, the *ongoing process* by which God the Holy Spirit makes the Christian more and more Christ-like every day. It is the process that transforms the new, but broken, believer into a true disciple and follower of Christ, one who recoils at sin and wants to love as He loved, care as He cared and lead as He led.
- "sinful nature"* By this we mean that the very core of our being is sinful *from conception on*. It is a doctrine that is quite contrary to the world in which we live, which thinks that children are essentially born "good" (with a "blank slate" as it were) and "learn" bad behavior, and that, overall, mankind is getting better and better.

SECTION 2. PREAMBLE

Bethel Church* exists for the following reasons:

- The advancement of religion/
- The relief of poverty both in Kingston and around the world,
- The advancement of Christian education, and
- Such other purposes as are beneficial to our community, but not falling under any of the above

Our prayer is that this document and its By-Law will help all who are associated with the church to understand the purpose and goals of Bethel Church, and their role in fulfilling that vision more clearly.

SECTION 3. SUPERCEDEANCE²

This Constitution and its By-Law supersede all previous constitutions ratified by the members of the church. This includes, but is not limited to, the Constitution and Standing Rules of Bethel Associated Gospel Church, 1964 and the Bethel Church Constitution, 1987.

ARTICLE II - OVERVIEW OF BETHEL CHURCH

SECTION 1. PREAMBLE

A. Purpose of the Church Constitution³

The purpose of this constitution is to present a clear outline of:
Bethel Church as a local assembly,
the Statement of Faith and Doctrine of our church, and
the philosophies of membership and of church discipline

B. Purpose of the By-Law⁴

The purpose of Bethel's By-law is:
to help Bethel's members better understand the membership and disciplinary procedures, and the roles and responsibilities which derive from their membership;
to explain to an adherent the procedures for becoming a member
to assist and encourage those who are members to faithfully fulfil their responsibilities

¹ Some people may take issue with the use of the word "religion". While we agree, this is a legal requirement of the government of Canada and must be included in our document in order for us to maintain our status as a charity.

² This has been included to ensure that the only useable document for regulating Bethel shall be this current constitution and by-law, and not any previous documents

³ It was decided to divide one large document into two separate ones, the Constitution being "who we are", the By-Law being "how we operate". Thus, you will note that modifying the constitution is understandably more difficult than modifying the by-law.

⁴ See footnote 3 above.

to the local body of Believers;
to assist all to understand and participate in the effective running of Bethel Church.

C. Name and History Of Bethel Church

1. Name

This church shall be known as Bethel Associated Gospel Church of Kingston, Ontario, her name being taken from the Hebrew "Beth-el" ("The House of God").

2. History

Bethel Church originated through the congregational church which arose from the religious ferment in England during the reign of Elizabeth I. Its adherents were then known as "Independents", asserting the independence of the individual church, as distinguished from the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians.

The Puritans who settled in Massachusetts in 1630 formed their own parishes after the model of these Independents. Congregationalism then sprang up in Canada from both these English and American sources. It first appeared in Nova Scotia in 1755 and started in Lower Canada about 1800, Montreal being a stronghold in Quebec. Spreading into Ontario (then Upper Canada), one of the first churches organized in Kingston in 1831 was the Union Church.

The Union Church was made up of persons not affiliated with the Anglican Church, and held to evangelical and independent views - Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and some Methodists were included in it. In 1831, it became affiliated with the Congregational Denomination.

Then, on May 21st. 1874 a meeting was held to organize a new church on what is now the present site of the church. This new church was to be known as Bethel Congregational Church of Kingston.

The United Church of Canada came into being in 1925 through the union of Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian Churches. Bethel was one of a handful of Congregational churches that remained independent, remaining so until May 18th. 1949, when the congregation voted for union with the Associated Gospel Churches of Canada.

3. Brief History and Function of our denomination, the Associated Gospel Churches of Canada

The AGC traces its beginnings to the early 1890s when a group of independent evangelical churches became known as the Christian Workers' Church of Canada, under a charter granted to Dr. P.W. Philpott, pastor of the Gospel Tabernacle in Hamilton, Ontario. These churches were concerned about the growth of theological liberalism and, in 1922, felt the need to unite with

others who practiced a simple biblical faith. In 1925, because other groups with contrasting doctrine and practice were using similar names, a new charter under the name of Associated Gospel Churches was secured from the Canadian government.

The need for a strong evangelical church association was evident from the number of independent churches and missions which joined the AGC in the years that followed. Although some early AGC churches sent out workers to begin new Sunday Schools, a more aggressive church extension program did not come about until later. In 1940, a group of western churches sought affiliation with the AGC and became the basis of what is now known as the Canada West Region. The Quebec charter was registered in 1944. With the new openness of the French population in Quebec, the AGC and UFM International mission (now CrossWorld) joined hands to begin a French work in Quebec in 1972.

A major restructuring of the AGC took place in 1989, to meet the needs of a widespread and diverse nation, of a changing society and of a growing group of churches, while still being true to the commitment to their historic distinctives. The changes grew out of an explicit Statement of Purpose and Objectives contained in their Constitution. In 2002, a further redefinition of their Purpose, Vision and Values was undertaken. There was also a re-alignment of regions requiring a restructuring.

For additional information on Bethel Church or the A.G.C., please refer to the church or denominational websites, listed in Appendix C of the By-Law.

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY:

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY

The Word of God (the Bible) shall be Bethel's final authority in matters of faith and doctrine. Furthermore, the fundamental beliefs of this church are expressed in the "Statement of Faith and Doctrine" in Part 4.

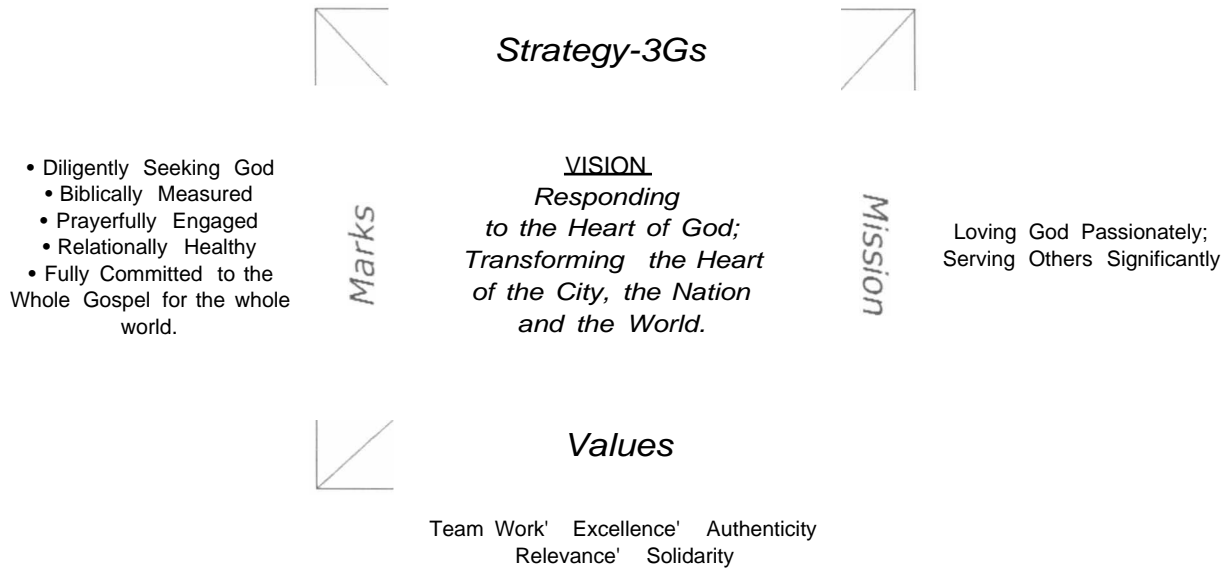
SECTION 2. PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY⁵

Bethel Church's vision is:
*"Responding to the Heart of God;
Transforming the Heart of the City, the Nation and the World."*

This vision is at the centre of our Vision Pathway, illustrated on the next page. And although this vision may grow and change with time, it revolves around four unchanging "boundary markers":

⁵ Having just recently revised our vision, it was thought that this should be a regular part of "who we are", changing with the years as our vision grows and changes.

- Growing in Intimacy with God
- Growing in Intimacy with Others
- Growing in Acts of Service



1. Mission

The Mission of the church is to love God passionately and serve others significantly.

2. Strategy

The above mission is accomplished by helping disciples:

- Grow in Intimacy with God
- Grow in Intimacy with Others
- Grow in Acts of Service

3. Values:

- Teamwork (*'we' vs. 'me'*)
- Excellence (*not 'so-so' but 'bravo'*)
- Authenticity (*permission to speak freely*)
- Relevance (*'updated' vs. 'outdated'*)
- Solidarity (*being FOR people, being WITH people*)

4. The Marks Of A Disciple:

- Diligently Seeking God
- Biblically Measured
- Prayerfully Engaged
- Relationally Healthy
- Fully Committed to the Whole Gospel for the Whole World

Everything we do must be in keeping with the Vision Pathway above. Thus, in order to accomplish the strategy mentioned above:

We evangelize the people around us and throughout the world, with the desire to bring them to repentance of sin, and to faith in Christ Jesus (Matthew 28:19, 20; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 3:19,26,30; Ephesians 2:8,9; Hebrews 11:6).

We establish every Christian in...

... an assurance of their salvation, of answered prayer, of forgiveness of sins, of victory in Christ, and of guidance in the will of God.

... a daily "quiet time" with God, including a personal intake and learning of His Word, and prayer

... a meaningful fellowship with other Christians through attending the worship services called by the church, group prayer and Bible studies and personal friendships and small groups with other Christians.

... a method of making a coherent gospel presentation and using their testimony as an evangelistic tool (Acts 16:5; Romans 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Hebrews 13:9; 2 Peter 1:12).

... We equip spiritual leaders who will give pastoral leadership to individuals or groups of people for the building up of the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:2).

... We encourage all the people that God brings into our fellowship, in the development of their spiritual gifts for the building up of the body of Christ (Hebrews 10:23-25; Philippians 2:1-4).

SECTION 3 GOALS

The goals of this church shall grow out of the above Vision Pathway and may be reset each year after an evaluation of the church's previous year of ministry, using the following guidelines:

All goals set must be specific and measurable

The leadership and staff of the church shall take the initiative in establishing both long-term and short-term goals and in leading the congregation in seeking to fulfill them.

SECTION 4 METHODS

The methods used to obtain the above goals must be flexible and adaptable. We are resolved to discontinue any activities or methods that are no longer relevant or effective in meeting the Church's Mission as stated above.

SECTION 5 EVALUATIONS

A careful evaluation of the methods, goals and objectives for all ministries will occur annually, involving as many of the relevant leaders and volunteers as possible.

ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH AND DOCTRINE⁶

NOTE: These are to be interpreted according to the natural and literal* meaning of the respective passages of the Word of God referred to under each Article.

A- The Divine Authority and Plenary Inspiration of the whole Canonical Scriptures

We believe that "All Scripture is God-breathed". By this, we understand that the whole Bible is inspired, in the sense that the Holy Spirit gave the identical words of the sacred writings (in the original manuscripts) to the holy men of old, chosen by Him to be the channel of His revelation to man. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Mark 12:26-36; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Acts 1:16; 2:4)

B - The Trinity of the Godhead

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, having precisely the same nature, attributes and perfections. They are worthy of precisely the same homage, confidence and obedience. (Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:6-8; John 1:1-4; Isaiah 63:8-10; Acts 5:3-4; Matthew 28:19,20; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Mark 12:29; Revelation 1:4-6; Hebrews 1:1-3)

C - The Deity and the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ

We believe in the essential Deity and the Virgin Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We affirm that all the Scriptures, from first to last, are centered upon Him, His Person and work, His sacrificial death upon the cross and His coming again. (Isaiah 7:14; John 5:39; Matthew 1:18-23; Acts 1:11; 17:2,3; 18:28; Luke 1:35; Acts 26:22, 23; 28:23)

D - The Personality, Deity and Present Mission of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, the Third Person of the Trinity, who is now, throughout this age of Grace, here present in the true Church. He was sent for the express purpose of revealing Christ Jesus both to the members of the Church, that they may be comforted, instructed and built up in their most holy faith, and to the world, that sinners may be convicted of sin, of God's righteousness, and of His judgment. (John 7:38,39; 14:16,17; 15:26; 16:8,13-15; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)

E - The Fall of Mankind

We believe that man and woman, originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, fell from their high and holy estate through wilful disobedience, by eating the forbidden fruit. As a result, the threatened penalty of death was then and there inflicted, so that they totally

⁶This section was revised and adopted by the congregation in 2009-2010.

lost all spiritual life, becoming dead in trespasses and sins, and subject to the power of the devil. (Genesis 1:26; 2:17; Ephesians 2:1~3; Isaiah 64:6; 1 Timothy 5:6; John 5:40; 6:53; 1 John 3:8)

F - The Total Depravity of Mankind

We believe that this spiritual death, or total corruption of human nature, has been transmitted to the entire race of men and women, with the exception of the man Christ Jesus alone. Thus, every child of Adam is born into the world with a sinful nature*.

(Genesis 6:5; Jeremiah 17:9; Psalm 14:1-3; 51:5; John 3:6; Romans 5:12-19)

G - Salvation by Grace through Faith

We believe that sinners are saved by Grace through Faith alone. It is the gift of God, not of works. We further believe that every saved man or woman is justified* from all things from which they could not be justified* by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:39; Ephesians 2:8/ 9; Romans 5:1; Titus 2:11-14)

H - The Atonement by the Blood of Christ

We believe that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made to be sin and made a curse for us/ dying in our place. He was the final Sacrifice acceptable to God and is able to save every sinner who repents. (Leviticus 17:11; Galatians 3:13; Matthew 26:28; Ephesians 1:7; John 1:12; 1 Peter 1:18/ 19 and 2:24; Romans 5:6-9; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 7:27)

I - Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

We believe that, owing to universal depravity and death in sin, no one can see or enter the kingdom of God unless born of the Spirit, at which point he or she becomes a new creation, sealed to the day of Redemption. (John 3:5-8; James 1:18; Galatians 6:15; 1 Peter 1:23; Ephesians 1:13; 1 John 5:1; Titus 3:5)

J - The Believer's Security and Assurance

We believe in the Eternal Security of all who are born again by the Spirit of God through faith in Christ. It is their privilege to be assured of their present salvation and eternal safety.

(John 10:28/29; John 5:24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Philippians 1:6; Romans 8:33-39)

K - Sanctification

We believe that the members of the body of Christ are sanctified* ones. They are perfected as to their standing forever by the one offering of the blood of Christ, and are one with Christ in

sanctification. As to their state, they may be sanctified daily by the Word, by the blood of Christ, and by the in-working presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24 and 5:25-27; John 17:17-19; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10; 13:12; Romans 15:16; 1 John 1:7-9; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Jude 1)

I- The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

We believe that, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the whole company of believers, as promised by Christ, and they were collectively baptized into one body. This was the formation of the Church, the Body of Christ. (Matthew 3:11; 1 Corinthians 12:13)

Since that time this baptism occurs individually at the moment of salvation, at which time the believer is also indwelt by the Spirit. (John 14:15-18; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Romans 8:9)

We believe that the New Testament distinguishes between being indwelt by the Spirit, which is true of all believers, and being filled with the Spirit, which is the believer's privilege and duty, producing power in Christian witness. There is one baptism of the Spirit and it is into the Body of Christ, but there are many fillings. Pentecost is an historical event and is not repeated. (Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8-31; Ephesians 1:13-14, Ephesians 5:18)

M - The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the Church to glorify Christ in the building of His Body (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18)

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of these gifts for the perfecting of the saints for the works of their ministry (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). It is not God's will that anyone gift should be given to all believers, although all believers have at least one gift (1 Corinthians 12:18-21, 29, 30). We further believe that spiritual gifts should always be exercised within the limits expressly given in the Scriptures (e.g. 1 Corinthians 14:23-40).

We believe that speaking in tongues (Acts 2:11; 1 Corinthians 14:6-15) and the working of miracles were sign gifts (1 Corinthians 14:22; Hebrews 2:3, 4) demonstrated in the early church to authenticate God's revelation through the apostles (2 Corinthians 12:12) and to authenticate the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:44-48). We believe that today such signs are not necessary to give evidence of the baptism or of the filling of the Spirit, nor are they a mark of spiritual maturity. (1 Corinthians 12:13; Hebrews 2:3, 4).

We believe that special Divine revelation for authoritative Scripture ceased with the Apostolic age (Revelation 22:18, 19; Ephesians 2:20; Galatians 1:8, 9; John 14:26).

N - The Unity of the True Church in the Mystical Body of Christ

We believe that the Church is composed of all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God by the Holy Spirit. By the same Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles. We are thus members one of another and knit together by love.
(Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:3-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Colossians 2:19)

O- The Pre-Millennial Coming of our Lord

We believe this present age will end with the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will first receive His Church unto Himself, and then establish the throne of David upon the earth. He will reign in righteousness over it for a thousand years. (2 Samuel 7:16; John 14:1-3; Psalm 72:7-8; Acts 1:10, 11; Isaiah 9:6, 7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Micah 5:2; Hebrews 9:28; Luke 1:32, 33; Titus 2:13)

P - The Resurrection of the Body

We believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead in bodily form, according to the Scriptures. Thus He became the first fruits of them that sleep. Upon His return He will raise out from among the dead those that have died in Christ, this being the first resurrection; and after the thousand years, He will raise those that have died in unbelief from their graves to receive their sentence. (Psalm 90:3, 4; John 5:28, 29; Isaiah 26:19; ~1 Corinthians 15; Daniel 12:2; Romans 1:4 and 8:23; Revelation 20:5,6)

Q - The Eternal Blessedness of the Saved, and the Eternal Punishment of the Lost

We believe that the attitude either of reconciliation or enmity toward God is fixed eternally at death. We believe that the saints of all the ages will be forever with the Lord, and will become joint heirs with Him as their Redeemer in His inheritance. Further, there is an appointed day for the judgement of the wicked, when they will be cast into the Lake of Fire, there to remain forever and ever, in varying degrees of torment, according to their works. (Daniel 12:3 and 7:22-27; 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 2:9; Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8 and 22:11)

R - The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the Father of lies, a murderer from the beginning and the great deceiver of all nations. He will be overcome by the Lord Jesus Christ (as the seed of the woman) and cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years. Finally, he will be committed to the Lake of Fire with all his angels, to be tormented forever and ever. (Job 1:6-12; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; John 8:44; Ephesians 6:12-16; Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10; Genesis 3:15)

S - Divine Healing of the Body

We believe that the Divine healing of the body is not in the Atonement in the sense that Salvation and forgiveness of sins are in the Atonement. According to the New Testament, the suffering and death of Christ was substitutionary, penal and vicarious. While Jesus died for sin,

it is nowhere taught in Scripture that Christ died for the effects of sin, and sickness is directly or indirectly the effect of sin. (Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18)

T - **Baptism**

We believe that our Lord and Saviour clearly prescribed the simple rite of Baptism by immersion for His believing disciples. It is a symbol and proclamation of the sinner's death to sin and his resurrection and newness of life in Christ Jesus. (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:38 and 8:12)

U - **The Lord's Supper**

We believe that our Lord and Saviour clearly prescribed the solemn rite of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of His death for His believing disciples. It is to be kept by His disciples until He comes again, according to His promise and the Father's revealed plan. (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-27)

ARTICLE V - PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE⁷

SECTION 1 PREAMBLE

Those receiving Jesus Christ as Saviour become members of one body, His body, the Church Universal (1 Corinthians 12:13). He is the Head of this universal assembly (Colossians 1:18).

In Scripture, the term "church" is also employed to denote the local body of believers (Acts 13:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Colossians 4:15; Revelation 1:4; etc.) and it is this sense which is used below in considering "Church Membership".

SECTION 2 PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

We recognize four broad principles of Bethel Church Membership. These are:

An **IDENTIFICATION** with Christ

A **COMMITMENT** to Bethel Church

A **SUBMISSION** to pastoral care and discipline (as defined in the section on the evaluation of candidates for membership found below)

A shared **RESPONSIBILITY** for the church's Vision Pathway.

In becoming a member of this church, an individual is affirming these principles. The applicant's informed endorsement of these principles constitutes the basis of their acceptance into Church Membership, through the procedures described in the By-Law.

⁷ Since a lot of this section consisted of "how to's", they were moved to the By Law and thus this section was shortened to principles only, referring the reader to the By Law for the actual procedures.

ARTICLE VI - STATEMENT OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1. PREAMBLES

Bethel Church follows an elder-led congregational model. By this we mean that:

through congregational meetings and votes, the congregation empowers the elders to lead, and the elders, which includes the Pastor, thus empowered, can lead and empower the staff, ministry leaders and congregation to fulfill the church's vision

SECTION 2. PERMANENT BOARDS, POSITIONS AND COMMITTEES

At a minimum, the following shall always be part of the fundamental structures of Bethel Church (in no particular order of precedence⁹):

An Elders' Board
A Senior Pastor
A Deacons' Board
Trustees

Qualifications are listed below. The Terms of reference for the above may be found in the By-Law.

Other boards, positions and committees

Because these may be temporary in nature, they are defined and described in the By-Law, so as to allow maximum flexibility to church members and leaders in the running of the church.

SECTION 3. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

General/Information

Duly-constituted Congregational Meetings are open to any adherent of the church. However, only church members (see Article V) may be permitted to actually vote on any church matter.

Structure and Quorum

The Structure and Quorum of Congregational Meetings shall operate according to the

⁸ It was thought important to give a preamble to allow the congregation a correct understanding of our leadership system.

⁹ This was included to help the congregation understand that the only real "head" of the church is Jesus Christ. All other leaders lead together in mutual love, respect and submission. No one person shall have pre-eminence over another, except within their clearly-defined roles.

procedures listed in the By-Law.

SECTION 4. CHURCH OFFICES

A. Pastor(s)

Biblical Office and Qualifications for Pastor(s)

Ephesians 4:11
Jeremiah 3:15; 17:16; 23:1,2
Plus the qualifications for Elders

Purpose

To respond to the call of God and the confirmation of the membership by overseeing all aspects of church life along with the Elders' Board through providing vision, direction and counsel through godly walk and Bible-centred ministry.

Terms of Reference:

The Terms of Reference shall be established in the By-Law.

Pastoral Vacancy:

The procedure for filling a pastoral vacancy shall be found in the By-Law.

B. Elders' Board

Biblical Office and Qualifications for Elders

1 Timothy 3:1-7	Men without reproach
Titus 1:5-9	Men of integrity
Acts 11:29,30; 14:23	Men of compassion
Philippians 1:11	Men filled with the Fruits of righteousness by Jesus Christ
Acts 20:28	Men with the ability to teach the Word of God and oversee the flock.

Composition

Senior Pastor
Elders, as elected by the members following a recommendation by the Nominating Committee

Purpose

To uplift the cause of Christ and protect the good name of this church by scripturally fostering a

disciple-making community through pastoral leadership.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference shall be found in the By-Law.

C. Deacons' Board

Biblical Office and Qualifications for Deacons and Deaconesses

1 Timothy 3:8-13 Men/Women who are blameless, the husband (wife) of one wife (husband), ruling their children and their own houses well; men/women who have great boldness in the faith which is in Jesus Christ.

Acts 6:1-6 Spiritual men/women with wisdom to oversee the business of the church.

Composition

Deacons, as elected by the members following a recommendation by the Nominating Committee.

The Church Administrator (*ex-officio*, as liaison between Deacons and staff and Elders)
The Treasurer (*ex-officio*).

Purpose

To provide the most advantageous physical environment, a careful administration and distribution of funds, and to encourage regular giving.

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference shall be found in the By-Law.

D. Trustees

Perpetual Succession/Current Trustees:

The trustees of Bethel Church are appointed by the members on a perpetual succession basis, with a list of current trustees being found at Appendix "A" of this Constitution.

Purpose of Trustees:

As an unincorporated entity, Bethel Church cannot, in and of herself, conduct business transactions, sign contracts, sell or lease land etc. Thus, the congregation appoints Trustees who are authorized by the congregation to conduct business on their behalf in these matters.

Composition:

Firstly, they shall be men or women who meet the qualifications of a Deacon.

Furthermore, they are to be:

- o Well-respected by the congregation
- o men or women of integrity
- o men or women who manage their households well
- o men or women who give evidence of operating under the direction of the Holy Spirit

Terms of Reference:

Terms of reference for the Trustees shall be found in the By-Law

ARTICLE VII- AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION AND THE BY-LAW

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A. Quorum

The quorum required for modifying this constitution shall be 75% of the membership of the church, present* at a duly-constituted meeting.

This quorum may be met either by:

- physically attending at the meeting, OR
- if absent, forwarding a proxy* vote, presented by another member attending the meeting

B. Votes required to modify the Constitution

75% of members voting must approve this Constitution being modified.

C. Proxy votes

The correct form and delivery of a proxy vote shall be defined in the By-Law.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAW

The By-Law shall only be amended in accordance with the procedures stated in Part 1 of the By-Law.

*END OF THE BETHEL CHURCH CONSTITUTION
APPENDIX A FOLLOWS.*

**APPENDIX A TO THE
BETHEL CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

LIST OF CHURCH TRUSTEES

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE	SIGNATURE
BATSON, Neil	4585 Lower Round Lake Road, Battersea, ON KOH 1H0	(613) 353-7312	
DICKEY, Steven	428 Carrie Crescent, Kingston, ON K7M 5X5	(613) 384-2829	
BARTIETT, Art	364 Renda Street, Kingston, ON K7M 5Y1	(613) 389-6568	

**BY-LAW
OF
BETHEL ASSOCIATED GOSPEL
CHURCH
OF KINGSTON} ONTARIO**

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ARTICLE I - PURPOSE AND AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAW¹

SECTION 1. PURPOSE

This by-law derives from the Constitution and aims:

- o to detail the duties and responsibilities behind Bethel's governing structures
- o to detail membership and disciplinary procedures
- o to further define leadership roles within the church
- o to set rules and parameters for the orderly running and administration of the church

This by-law is not intended to be a "be-all-end-all" document. It only serves to establish the overarching rules and parameters. For more details on church procedures, readers are also referred to the church's Policy documents², available on the website or through the office.

SECTION 2. AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAW

A. Quorum:

In matters involving this By-Law, a quorum for modification will be 50% of the membership of the church present at the beginning of a duly-constituted meeting.

This quorum may be met either by:

- o attending the meeting, OR
- o if unable to attend, completing a proxy vote (illustrated at Appendix A), which shall be presented to the meeting chair, prior to the meeting, by another member attending that meeting

B. Votes Needed To Change The By-Law:

At least 50% of the membership must agree before any changes can be made to the by-law.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

SECTION 1. PROCEDURES FOR ACCEPTANCE INTO MEMBERSHIP

¹ As indicated in the Constitution comments, our Constitution represents "who we are", while this By-Law represents "how we operate". As such, it is an easier document to modify, as will be noted later (see the section on the Quorum for modification).

² These documents are currently being reviewed by the Board of Deacons and will be posted as completed.

A. Preamble:³

The Bethel congregation consists of two groups:

Adherents: those who have made Bethel their spiritual home

Members: those who have made Bethel their spiritual home, and who have also undergone a successful membership process and therefore are able to make motions and vote at congregational meetings

It must be noted that both groups are a valued and active part of Bethel church and its ministry. We wish to reiterate that **there are** no second-class **citizens in Christ's Church**, whether one chooses to become a member or not.

When an adherent wishes to undertake church membership, it must be done on the basis of this procedure. Only the "pastoral staff" exception at section 5 below will be permitted. Thus, letters of transfer from other churches, for example, shall be recognized only as a release of membership obligations to the previous church.

B. Membership Application:

All candidates for membership shall begin by presenting a written request to the Pastor or one of the Elders using an approved application form illustrated in Appendix B. Candidates will be provided with a copy of this church's Constitution and By-Law for their review

They shall then be privately interviewed by a Pastor or two of the Elders in order to evaluate their endorsement of the conditions and articles of membership.

They may also be asked to attend a membership class.

Following a satisfactory interview, the candidates will be recommended to the Elders' Board for membership.

After consideration and approval of this recommendation, the Elders' Board will recommend the candidate by placing their name in the bulletin for two (2) consecutive Sundays with a request to the members to submit any objections.

C. If no objection to membership is raised:

if no objection has been received after the candidate's name has appeared in the bulletin for 2 consecutive Sundays, the candidate shall be considered a member as of the Monday following the second Sunday.

as a last step, his or her membership shall be confirmed by motion and vote at the beginning of the next congregational meeting.

³ We felt it important to include a preamble to prevent any thought arising that members were somehow more "special" than non-members.

It is expected that a member shall endeavour to keep the office apprised of updated contact information, including address, phone and e-mails, so as to ensure the most accurate Membership Roll possible and to facilitate communication between the leadership and the membership.

D. If an objection to membership is raised:

Anyone, whether a member or an adherent, may privately register an objection to a candidate, either to the Pastor or to one of the Elders

In that event, the Elders' Board will investigate the issue and the candidate will not be accepted into Church Membership until the matter has been resolved.

E. Exception for staff in pastoral positions:

Provided they were interviewed by the Pastor or Elders, and since staff members in pastoral positions must agree to Bethel's Statement of Faith and Doctrine in order to work for the church, it is understood that a newly-hired pastoral staff member is deemed to have become a church member in good standing on the start date of their employment. No further process is required.

Furthermore, their membership is deemed to end on the day after they cease to be employed by the church, unless continuing membership is confirmed at a congregational meeting preceding their last day of work.

Note, however, that this does not apply to non-pastoral staff or spouses and family members⁴ all of whom may apply for membership following the process listed above.

SECTION 2. EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES FOR MEMBERSHIP

A. Identification with Christ:

This is the fundamental principle of Church Membership. In identifying with Christ, candidates are declaring their salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 2:8) recognizing that each Christian has entered the body on the same basis, one faith in one Lord (Ephesians 4:4-6).

Each Christian is called to sanctification (Romans 8:29, 30; Colossians 2:6, 7; 1 Thessalonians 4:7,8). Every church member is to exemplify the character of Jesus Christ in daily living

⁴ It used to be automatic that a staff member's spouse was also automatically granted membership. However we live in different times. For instance, a well-qualified pastoral candidate could apply to work at Bethel, having come to Christ later in life, and who could conceivably be married to someone who is still a non-believer. This, we all agree, should in no way bar that person from employment or membership. But for this reason, spouses and family members must apply on their own merits.

(Ephesians 5:1, 2). Thus love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control (Galatians 5:22, 23) are qualities which should characterize every believer.

The church, as a "called out" people is to be separate from evil (John 17:15, 17; 1 John 2:15, 16). Although Scripture does not legislate Christ-like behaviour, it does contain many principles to guide us toward Christ-likeness:

Each member is called into obedience to the Word of God (John 14:21).

All members are expected to avoid that which Scripture clearly states to be sin (Ephesians 5:11).

We are to avoid anything which has the appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We are to do all to the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31), and take care to live so as to avoid causing a brother to stumble (Romans 14:21; 1 Corinthians 8:13).

In identifying with Christ, the candidates recognize that, having received Christ, they are also called to Christ-likeness.

Evaluation:

(a) The candidates shall provide evidence (verbally or in written form) of personal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

(b) They shall express recognition of the importance of exemplifying the character of Christ in daily living and a willingness to be separated from evil.

B. Commitment to the Church

As a result of identifying with Christ, each Christian has a responsibility to His body, the Church, the local assembly of like faith (John 13:34,35), within the spiritual gifts granted to each.

This entails a willingness to nurture other members in their faith, building up one another in love (1 Thessalonians 5:11). The individual exercise of spiritual gifts for the edification of the body contributes to this end (Romans 12:6; 1 Peter 4:10).

Service to fellow Christians is service to Christ Himself (Matthew 10:40-42).

Christians should also be ready to serve in the church (see 1 Corinthians 15:58; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Galatians 5:13; Hebrews 6:10; 10:24,25).

In committing themselves to this church, the candidates recognize an obligation

- o to use their abilities, spiritual gifts and resources in caring for other members;
- o to attend regularly, as far as Providence permits, the public worship of God on the Lord's Day and such other meetings of worship or business which may be called by the church.

Evaluation:

Candidates shall express an acceptance of the "like faith" of this local body as defined in the "Statement of Faith and Doctrine" in this church's Constitution (Part 4).

They shall indicate recognition of personal obligation to use their abilities, spiritual gifts,

and resources to care for the members of this church.

C. Submission to Pastoral Care

Identification with Christ and commitment to His body entails obedience to Him (2 Corinthians 10:5) and mutual submission among the members of His body (Ephesians 5:21; Philippians 2:3; 1 Peter 5:5).

Within the body, some members are recognized as individuals who are called to leadership as Elders in submission to Christ (Hebrews 13:7; 1 Peter 5:1-3). This leadership is called to uphold the integrity of the body in word and deed (Titus 1:7-9). This church, through its Elders' Board, reserves the right to exclude or suspend from membership (see Section E for disciplinary procedures) any who do not fulfil the requirements of this "Statement on Church Membership".

Members are responsible for their conduct and all are to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18).

Members are urged to avail themselves of the pastoral resources and programs of this church in fostering their own Christian growth. Meaningful fellowship, personal Scripture study, prayer and regular attendance at worship are commended as vital to personal growth.

In submitting to pastoral care, candidates recognize responsibility for personal conduct and growth and recognize accountability to this body through its appointed leadership.

Evaluation:

Candidates shall express recognition of personal accountability to the church for their conduct and willingness to seek opportunities for personal Christian growth within this church's ministries and among its members.

Candidates shall indicate an acceptance of this.

D. Responsibility for the Church's Vision Pathway

In becoming a member of the local body, the candidate enlists in the work of that fellowship, affirming its purpose and sharing responsibility for the realization of its goals.

This entails participation in the decision-making processes of the church and faithful support of its ministries.

In accepting responsibility for this church's Vision Pathway, the candidate recognizes an obligation to share in the corporate discernment of God's will and the harmonious fulfilment of the objectives and goals of this church.

Evaluation:

Candidates shall express an endorsement of this church's purpose, objectives and goals as defined in the "Statement of Philosophy of Ministry" (Part 3 of the Constitution).

They shall indicate willingness to participate in realizing the objectives and goals of this church.

SECTION 3. TRANSFERS TO ANOTHER CHURCH/LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

If a member in good standing desires to join another evangelical church which holds to the fundamentals of the Faith, the Elders' Board, upon request, shall provide that member with letters of recommendation and good standing.

The Elders' Board will have authority to act in all cases, but should report the member's names at the next Congregational Meeting.

SECTION 4. DISCONTINUANCE, SUSPENSION AND REINSTATEMENT OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A. Voluntary Discontinuance:

A member may cease to be a member at any time by delivering a letter of resignation of their membership to the church office. This may be done via traditional or electronic means.

Membership also ceases once a member has received a letter of recommendation from the Elder's Board when transferring to another church.

It is not necessary to provide a reason for resigning one's membership, although it would be hoped that a member would be willing to discuss any issues at Bethel that may have led to the resignation. This is so that the leadership can take steps to resolve them, thus contributing to a healthy church community.

B. Automatic discontinuance following an absence of at least one year:⁵

Should a member permanently leave Bethel Church without submitting a letter of resignation, their membership shall be considered to have lapsed one (1) year following their departure.

Please note that the above does not apply to members who leave for temporary reasons such as overseas missionary work or military deployment, going away to school etc. It would be advisable to let the office know in these cases.

C. Suspension and Reinstatement:

See the section below on Church Discipline.

⁵ In the old Constitution there was no mechanism to remove members who had left or died. This affects the numbers needed for a quorum. It could also be used to affect church business by a disgruntled member who no longer even attends Bethel, thus detracting from a healthy church community.

SECTION 5. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

A. Scriptural Basis

- (a) Matthew 18:15-17
- (b) Hebrews 12:10, 11

B. Responsibility of the Believer

It is recognized that the fruit of the Spirit involves self-control (Galatians 5:23). The Apostle Paul also demonstrated the importance of keeping our bodies in submission to that which we know to be right (1 Corinthians 9:27). Each member of the body of Christ is therefore obligated to practice self-discipline.

Furthermore, we observe from Hebrews 12:10-11 that where we lack personal discipline God often applies outside discipline. This discipline when responded to properly will result in holiness and righteousness in living.

This discipline is motivated by God's love.

Scriptures relating to discipline:

- Self discipline - Matthew 5:23-26; 1 Corinthians 11:31
- Trespass against a brother - Matthew 18:15-17
- Disorderly person(s) - 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 5:11-14
- Fractious persons and heretics - Romans 16:17-18, Titus 3:10-11
- Those seeking divorce - Matthew 19:3-9, Mark 10:2-12
- Wicked Persons - 1 Corinthians 5:9-13
- Overtaken in a fault - Galatians 6:11,
- Offending Elders - 1 Timothy 5:19,20

C. Responsibility of the Elders' Board

The Elders' Board may, when necessary, exercise disciplinary measures on behalf of the church. In every case their motive will be that of seeing the individual fully restored to fellowship with God and others. Forgiveness and restoration will be the desired goals. Failing this, a cessation of membership may have to be considered.

D. Cessation of Membership for Disciplinary Reasons

Should members fail to respond to the efforts of the Elders' Board to correct their lifestyle or doctrinal errors, the Elders' Board may enact a suspension or termination of membership, by a unanimous vote of its members. "Suspensions" and "terminations" of membership are defined as follows:

(a) A *suspension of membership* will result in the loss of voting and ministry rights for the persons involved until they have been restored to active membership. During this time period, the Elders' Board will work with the persons involved to bring about the end of that which occasioned the suspension. A suspension may be for a specific amount of time, or not, at the discretion of the board. However, the board must inform the member in either case.

(b) A *revocation of membership* may occur if the persons involved consistently refuse to correct their known unbiblical belief or behaviour. A termination of membership will result in the loss of voting and ministry rights for the persons involved until reinstated.

Right of Appeal

Any individual who has been disciplined by the Elders' Board has the right and privilege to appeal the decision to the congregation through the Chair of the Elders' Board, who will call an Emergency Congregational Meeting within thirty days of the request for a hearing.

E. Reinstatement of Membership

(a) Persons whose membership has been suspended may be restored to active membership with full voting and ministry rights, following the confession to the Elders' Board of that which occasioned the suspension.

(b) Persons whose membership has been terminated may be restored to active membership with full voting and ministry rights following:

- (1) the confession to the Elders' Board of that which occasioned the termination
- (2) a re-application for membership following the procedure stated in the "Procedure for acceptance into membership."

ARTICLE 111- CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

Business meetings conducted at Bethel Church shall be conducted according to the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.

SECTION 2. WHO MAY CALL A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING?

Only the Pastor or the Elders' Board may call a Congregational Meeting.

Public and/or written notice of the same, including the issue/s and/or motions to be dealt with, must be provided to the congregation at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.

SECTION 3. QUORUM

A. General:

At least 15% of the membership⁶ shall be in attendance at the beginning of a meeting, before any business may be conducted at a congregational meeting.

B. Exceptions to the quorum rule:

a Matters dealing with Real Estate: 50% of the membership must be present or have submitted a proxy vote

a Calling a new Pastor: 50% of the membership must be present or have submitted a proxy vote. As well, for the selection of a new Pastor, 75% of the membership must vote in favour of his selection.

SECTION 4. TYPES, FUNCTION AND NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Congregational Meetings will be called at least two (2) times⁷ during the fiscal year. At minimum, the following is to be observed:

A. One meeting may be held

to familiarize the members with the activities of the Pastor(s), Elders, Deacons and various ministries,

to act appropriately on any proposed changes to the Constitution, staff replacements, or major unbudgeted expenses

B. One Annual General Meeting:

The Annual General Meeting shall be held within 60 days of the fiscal year-end to:

review ministry reports,

evaluate the past year's activities,

vote on Nominating Committee recommendations,

vote on a new budget

⁶ This is one of the reasons why we have to be able to remove old names from the membership lists.

⁷ This has been changed from 4 meetings in the past. The reason for the recommendation is two-fold: firstly, because we live in the Information Age, the leadership and staff of the church have understood and embraced the importance of constant communication with the congregation. This happens through our bulletin, the website, Facebook, Twitter, ministry features on Sundays, church-wide events etc., and we are always looking for ways to continue improving communication. Secondly, our Vision Pathway is about going out and being Jesus' hands and feet to the city, the nation and the world. But we also acknowledge that our congregation is also an active and busy one. So given the choice between asking you to attend yet another meeting, or freeing you to go serve during what little spare time you do have, we choose the latter every time. That having been said, we are counting on the congregation to keep the leadership accountable in matters of communication.

conduct and vote on such other church business as may be required

Notwithstanding the above, and irrespective of the number of meetings held, staff and ministry leaders shall endeavour to maintain good ongoing communication with the congregation with respect to ministry and activities

C. Special/Emergency Meetings:

Special or Emergency Congregational Meetings may also be requested and called:

By the Pastor

By the Elders' Board, or

Upon written request of at least 10% of the members

If an emergency matter should arise requiring a congregational meeting, such a matter must be announced to the members by phone or electronic means not less than 48 hours prior to the meeting to resolve the issue.

Special Quorum - Emergency Meetings:

This type of emergency congregational meeting must be approved by 90% of the members attending the meeting at the beginning of the meeting before proceeding with the business matter.

D. Congregational Meeting Chair Responsibilities:

Congregational meetings will be chaired by the Chair of the Elders' Board, who, with the aid of the Board, will be responsible for:

- Assuring that proper notice is given to the congregation
- planning the meeting
- preparing the agenda and assuring that minutes are taken
- maintaining proper discipline, direction and dignity during the meeting

Note: he may also delegate the chairing of the meeting to some other appropriate person (a fellow elder or other member) as needed.

E. Proxy Votes - form and procedure:

Any member of Bethel Church who is unable to attend a business meeting but who wishes to vote on a particular issue may submit a proxy vote using the form illustrated at Appendix A, unless a different form has been provided for any particular issue.

The voting slip shall be placed in a sealed envelope with the member's signature and date across the flap.

ARTICLE IV - TERMS OF REFERENCE - LEADERSHIP

NOTE:

Bethel has more leadership positions than just the ones described here, but because some can be transitory in nature, they have not been included in this by-law. Readers are referred to the Bethel Policy Manual, Section F- leadership and Job Descriptions for further information on any position not listed here.

SECTION 1. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A. Composition:

The Senior Pastor
The Chairman of Elders' Board (Committee Chair)
Three other church members elected at a Congregational Meeting

Note: Should the Senior Pastor's position be vacant, another Elder would fill that position on the Committee.

B. General Duties:

To nominate members for the various senior leadership positions of this church, after giving prayerful consideration to the character, spiritual maturity and gifts of the individuals nominated.

C. Terms of Reference:

The Chair of the Elders' Board will be Chairman of the Nominating Committee
With the input of the relevant ministries and boards, the Nominating Committee will nominate members for the following positions:

- o Elders
- o Deacons
- o Treasurer
- o Envelope Steward
- o Trustees

Nominees who respond in the affirmative will have their names posted for two Sundays preceding the Annual General Meeting, with an opportunity for additional names to be added by the consent of the person(s) so nominated and the signature of three members.

The names must be presented to the Chairman of the Nominating Committee at least one hour before the Sunday morning worship service prior to the Annual General Meeting.

Additions or deletions of positions may be made at a Congregational Meeting providing that notice of the proposed amendment(s) shall have been given from the pulpit at least two Sundays previous, with the time and place of the meeting.

SECTION 2. SENIOR PASTOR

A. Preliminary notes:

Selection of a candidate for Pastor will be made by the Elders' Board upon recommendation of a Pastoral Search Committee, and recommended to the members.

The calling of a Pastor will require a 75% affirmative vote of the members present (including proxy votes) at a congregational meeting specifically called for that purpose, and which has a quorum at the beginning of the meeting.

The Pastor must wholeheartedly endorse this church's Constitution and satisfy the requirements for membership which will be determined by the elders at the interview. He shall become a member of the church upon assumption of his duties.

B. General Duties

The Pastor is accountable (with the Elders) to the members for the spiritual direction of the church. His duties will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a preaching regularly at the church and overseeing any guest speakers
- a overseeing the ordinances of Communion and Baptism as required
- a overseeing the visiting and spiritual counselling of members and adherents; and
- a overseeing the other duties incumbent upon his office, such as funerals, weddings, etc.

Nothing in the above prevents the Elders' Board from determining more specific/other duties for the pastor at the time of his hiring or over the course of his tenure.

The Senior Pastor will be a member of all Boards ex-officio. It is understood, however, that this does not mean he will attend all board meetings, although it is his prerogative.

The Senior Pastor and all senior staff shall meet regularly for prayer and to co-ordinate their areas of service.

If more than one Pastor is employed, the Elders' Board (including the Senior Pastor) may delegate areas of responsibility.

C. Pastoral vacancy:

When a Pastoral vacancy occurs:

- o the Elders' Board will immediately appoint a Search Committee of not less than five members, of whom one will be appointed the chairperson
- o The Search Committee will consult the congregation and post a resulting job description at all relevant institutions
- o They shall review all applications, contact available candidates and as soon as possible, make a recommendation to the Elders' Board for consideration.
- o The Elders' Board, if in agreement, will present the recommendation to the Congregation for vote. Only the name of one pastoral candidate shall be submitted at a time.

SECTION 3. EIDERS

A. Quorum:

A quorum for conducting Elders' Board business meetings shall not be less than 60% of the Elders at the beginning of a meeting. A simply majority vote shall suffice to decide matters.

B. General Duties:

- o To give overall spiritual insight and direction to the church.
- o To administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as required, either by assisting the Pastor(s) or officiating in his (their) absence.
- o To exercise disciplinary measures to the members in accordance with the Scriptures when necessary.
- o To equip and build lay pastoral leadership
- o To plan and implement membership classes when needed.
- o To interview candidates for Church Membership.
- o To recommend new members to the church.

C. Term of Office:

- o following the acceptance of the Nominating Committee report at the Annual General Meeting, new Elders will be considered elected for one three-year term, renewable for a further and consecutive three years.
- o Elders who have served for two consecutive three-year terms should not be re-elected for one year.
- o Wherever possible⁸, no more than one third of the elected members will relinquish their office in any year.
- o The Elders' Board will appoint their own chairman and secretary.
- o The Elders' Board will have not less than five⁹ members

⁸ This was added to allow some flexibility

D. Elders' Board Votes:

- o to allow the Elders' Board maximum flexibility in its decision-making, especially in (but not limited to) emergency circumstances, board votes may be held electronically⁹, by fax, mail or phone call to the Board's chair whenever necessary. However, any vote held outside of a board meeting shall be ratified by the Elders at the next Elders' Board meeting.
- o EXCEPT for security, safety and legal matters, any "no" vote using electronic or other means will cause the matter under consideration to be tabled until the next Board meeting. At that point, the discussion may be taken up again.

SECTION 4. DEACONS**A. Quorum:**

A quorum for conducting Deacons' Board business meetings shall not be less than 60% of the Deacons at the beginning of a meeting. A simply majority vote shall suffice to decide matters.

B. General Duties:

The Board of Deacons is accountable to the members for:

- o assuring regular giving so the budget will be met and special projects financed
- o controlling and overseeing spending through the budget and through the treasurer/bookkeeper who shall keep accurate records and report the same to all business meetings
- o overseeing the insuring, heating, lighting, repairing, cleaning and renting of church property and buildings
- o purchasing and repairing all church equipment, including any vehicles, if applicable
- o overseeing the work of the Building Superintendent
- o preparing an annual budget to be presented to the membership, with the assistance of staff and ministry leaders

C. Term of Office

⁹ We changed board "minimum numbers" for one of two reasons: firstly, because the old document spoke of a "maximum" number. This can be a real hindrance in a growing church such as ours as a board may find itself unable to cope with growing demands because it cannot bring on more members. Thus, a "minimum" was chosen instead. Secondly, where a number has been provided, it may have been replaced by an uneven number, instead of an even one, to simplify votes on that board.

¹⁰ As you can see, we have added methods that come out of the information age in which we find ourselves.

- o Following the acceptance of the Nominating Committee report at the Annual General Meeting, new Deacons will be considered elected for a two-year term, renewable for a further two years
- o Wherever possible, no more than one half of the deacons will relinquish their office in any year.
- o Deacons who have served for four consecutive years should not be re-elected for one year.
- o The Deacons' Board will appoint their own chairman and secretary.
- o The board shall have not less than 5 members, not including the Treasurer and Church Administrator.

D. Spending Authority

The Board is permitted to spend up to a maximum of \$5000.00 (five thousand dollars) within any fiscal year on items not specified in the annual budget, to be reported at the next Congregational Meeting.

Any amount greater than this must be cleared by the membership first, with the exception of items involving the church's immediate safety and/or security. In that circumstance, the matter shall be dealt with and immediately reported to the membership at the earliest possible convenience.

E. Deacon Board Votes

- o to allow the Deacons' Board maximum flexibility in its decision-making, especially in (but not limited to) emergency circumstances, board votes may be held electronically, by fax, mail or phone call to the Board's chair whenever necessary. However, any vote held outside of a board meeting shall be ratified by the deacons at the next Deacons' Board meeting.
- o EXCEPT for security, safety and legal matters, any "no" vote using electronic or other means will cause the matter under consideration to be tabled until the next Deacons' Board meeting. At that point, the discussion may be taken up again.

SECTION 5. TRUSTEES

A. Number of trustees and term:

- o The trustees shall be three in number (see the exception below, however) and elected at the Annual General Meeting upon acceptance of the Nominating Committee report.
- o Their term of office is for a period of five years, renewable for a further and consecutive five years.

B. Exception to the rule of three trustees:

Should a Trustee be required to step down, Ontario law permits the remaining trustees to conduct business on the Church's behalf until a new Trustee is appointed.

C. General Duties:

All three trustees shall

- o hold all church property in trust for the church
- o sign legal documents on behalf of the church as directed by the membership
- o hold all legal and valuable items for safekeeping, in coordination with the office staff, either on site at the church or in some other appropriate mutually agreed-upon location.

ARTICLE V - MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

SECTION 1. "LEADERSHIP YEAR"

The "leadership year" for ministry leaders shall begin on July 1st of one year and run through June 30th of the following year.¹¹

SECTION 2. FISCAL YEAR

Bethel's fiscal year shall be from May 1st to April 30th.

A. Budget:

- o In preparation for each new fiscal year, a budget shall be voted upon and approved at the Annual General Meeting
- o Ministry leaders shall submit budget requests for their ministry to the Deacons' Board for the upcoming ministry year no later than March 15th of that year
- o With the assistance of the Treasurer, the Deacons shall process all requests and meet with ministry leaders as necessary to collate the budget prior to the congregational vote.

*END OF THE BETHEL CHURCH BY-LAW
APPENDICES A, BAND C FOLLOW*

¹¹ The reason this does not follow the fiscal year is because the Nominating Committee report must be approved before the new leadership takes over. This happens at the Annual General Meeting in June of every year.

APPENDIX "A"
GENERAL PROXY VOTE FORM FOR USE IN BETHEL BUSINESS MEETINGS

NOTE: ILLUSTRATION ONLY. THIS FORM CAN BE OBTAINED
FROM THE OFFICE OR DOWNLOADED FROM THE BETHEL WEBSITE.

BETHEL CHURCH
PROXY FORM

**NOTE: TO BE HANDED IN AT THE MEETING, BY ANOTHER BETHEL MEMBER, IN
A SEALED ENVELOPE INITIALED AND DATED BY THE MEMBER SUBMITTING THE
FORM.**

ABSENT MEMBER'S NAME:

DATE OF MEETING:

TO THE MEETING CHAIR:

I AM A MEMBER OF BETHEL CHURCH AND WILL BE UNABLE TO ATTEND THE
BUSINESS MEETING ON THE ABOVE DATE. I WISH TO REGISTER MY VOTE WITH
RESPECT TO THE MATTER BELOW.

ISSUE BEING VOTED UPON:

I VOTE:

YES

NO

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

PHONE NUMBER/E-MAIL ADDRESS (FOR VERIFICATION PURPOSES):

APPENDIX "B" MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

NOTE: ILLUSTRATION ONLY. THIS FORM CAN BE OBTAINED FROM THE OFFICE OR DOWNLOADED FROM THE BETHEL WEBSITE.

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WITNESS (ELDER)

APPLICANT

Bethel Will notify In wrntml any memJer whose name ls to be
 removed from the membership list

APPENDIX *lie*"
WEBSITES

Bethel Church

<http://www.bethelkingston.com>

Associated Gospel Churches of Canada

<http://www.agcofcanada.com>