

Crosspointe Mennonite Church Constitution and Brotherhood Agreement

Section I – Mission Statement and Core Values

A. Our Mission

Our mission is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves, of which Jesus said, there are no greater commandments than these. (Mark 12:29-31)

B. Our Core Values

1. **Worship** – we are committed to worship God in spirit and truth, personally and as a congregation through singing, praying, preaching, teaching, Bible study, giving, and personal adoration.
2. **Holiness** – we are committed to Biblical holiness in our personal lives, which commends us to God and serves as a continual Christian witness to people around us.
3. **Evangelization** – we are committed to evangelize those who do not know Jesus Christ, and to minister to those in physical and spiritual need.
4. **Discipleship** – we are committed to Christian brotherhood in the unity of the Spirit, demonstrated by open relationships with each other, mutual discipline and accountability, so that all who are truly born again enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and become followers of Jesus Christ, to live as He taught in the Sermon on the Mount and the gospels, and the apostolic example of the epistles.

Section II – Statement of Faith and Beliefs

A. ADC Statement of Beliefs – Concise Overview

1. **God and His attributes:** We believe in one God eternally existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
2. **Divine Revelation:** We believe that God has revealed himself in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inspired Word of God, and supremely in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. **God's Creation and Providence:** We believe that in the beginning God created all things by His Son. He made man in the divine image, with free will, moral character, and a spiritual nature.
4. **Man and His Sin:** We believe that man fell into sin, bringing depravity and death upon the race; that as sinner, man is self-centered and self-willed, unwilling and unable to break with sin.
5. **Christ, the Savior from Sin:** We believe that there is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who died to redeem us from sin and arose for our justification.
6. **Salvation by Grace Through Faith:** We believe that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ, a free gift bestowed by God on those who repent and believe.

7. **The Holy Spirit and the Christian Life:** We believe that the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, effects the new birth, gives guidance in life, empowers for service, and enables perseverance in faith and holiness.
8. **The Church of Christ:** We believe that the church is the body of Christ, the brotherhood of the redeemed, a disciplined people obedient to the Word of God, and a fellowship of love, intercession, and healing.
9. **The Mission of the Church to Society:** We believe that Christ commissioned the church to go into all the world, making disciples of all the nations, and ministering to every human need.
10. **The Ministers of the Church:** We believe it is the will of God that there should be ministers to teach the Word, to serve as leaders, to administer the ordinances, to lead the church in the exercise of discipline, and to serve as pastors and teachers.
11. **Christian Baptism:** We believe that those who repent and believe should be baptized with water as a symbol of baptism with the Spirit, cleansing from sin, and commitment to Christ.
12. **The Lord's Supper:** We believe that the church should observe the communion of the Lord's Supper as a symbol of his broken body and shed blood, and of the fellowship of his church, until his return.
13. **Symbols of Christian Brotherhood:** We believe in the washing of the saints' feet as a symbol of brotherhood, cleansing, and service, and in giving the right hand of fellowship and the Christian salutation as symbols of Christian love.
14. **Symbols of Christian Order:** We believe that God has established unique roles for man and woman, symbolized by man's bared head in praying and prophesying, and by woman's veiled head.
15. **Marriage and the Home:** We believe that Christian marriage is intended by God to be the union of one man and one woman for life, and that Christians shall marry only in the Lord.
16. **Discipleship in the Kingdom of Christ:** We believe the Kingdom of Christ is composed of those who have been born again and follow Jesus Christ as His disciples, and are not to be conformed to the kingdom of this world, but seek to conform to Christ in every area of life.
17. **Holiness and Simplicity of Life:** We believe that as members of the Kingdom of Christ, we must live a lifestyle of holiness and simplicity, showing Christian stewardship in every area of life, and modesty and economy in our appearance, as becomes those professing Christian faith.
18. **Holiness and Christian Integrity:** We believe that Christians are to be open and transparent in life, ever speaking the truth, and employing no oaths.
19. **Holiness and Media:** We believe media has the potential to bring broad-based adaptation to the secular culture and values of the kingdom of this world. Since the point of conflict has

shifted from devices themselves to media content they broadcast, we refrain from the use of ungodly forms of media and content.

- 20. Love and Nonresistance:** We believe that it is the will of God for Christians to refrain from force and violence in human relations and to show Christian love to all men.
- 21. The Christian and the State:** We believe that the state is ordained of God to maintain order in society, and that Christians should honor rulers, be subject to authorities, witness to the state, and pray for governments.
- 22. The Final Consummation:** We believe that at death the unsaved enter into everlasting punishment and the saved into conscious bliss with Christ, who is coming again, and will raise the dead, sit in judgment, and bring in God's everlasting kingdom.

Section III – Church Practices and Governance

A. The Christian Church

We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ is the present manifestation of the Kingdom of God, and in the Sermon on the Mount and throughout the Bible, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, presented principles by which all who enter into His kingdom shall live in this world.

1. The Christian Worship Service

We believe that God's people in a Christian congregation gather in a spirit of reverence and worship before God on the Lord's Day, and at other appointed times. All members shall participate in church services and functions whenever possible, giving financial support as they are able. (Hebrews 10:25, Acts 12:12) Children must be taught to sit quietly with minimum distraction during worship services and to be attentive and participate as they mature in understanding, showing respectful behavior while on the church grounds. (Psalm 5:7) Singing during worship services shall be a cappella, without musical instruments, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. (Eph 5:19)

B. Baptism and Church Membership

We believe the biblical pattern is to baptize new believers into the Body of Christ upon their confession of faith as soon after their conversion as practical.

1. Baptism

We recognize that new believers who qualify for baptism are of varying ages and levels of accountability:

- a.** We do not practice infant or child baptism, but understand that children growing up in Christian homes may experience conviction and confess sins, but not fully grasp the concepts of inherent sinfulness and their need for a Savior until the age of accountability, at which time they experience true conversion, often evidenced as a recommitment.
- b.** Adolescents, youth and adults may have varied levels of spiritual cognizance and maturity among individuals of similar age.

- c. Expectations and understanding may vary based on factors such as family upbringing, social environment, and/or cultural background.
- d. When new believers reach the age of accountability and experience true conversion, they are eligible for believer's baptism.

2. Church Membership

Upon baptism, all individuals are considered full members of the church:

- a. They sign the Membership Covenant.
- b. They are fully accountable to the church for their faith and practice.

3. Congregational Responsibilities

- a. Baptized members age 16 and under are not required to participate in voting, teaching, holding offices, committee membership, or other such responsibilities as are typical of church members.
- b. New members age 16 and older may vote, but for a period of 1 year are not required to participate in voting, teaching, holding offices, committee membership, or other such responsibilities as are typical of church members.
- c. All members are expected to contribute to the life and work of the congregation by exercising their God-given gifts and abilities, subject to the above noted temporary, age-related limitations.

4. Instruction for New Members and New Believers

- a. New members (baptized membership transfers) shall attend New Members Class before being received as members of the congregation.
- b. New believers (unbaptized converts) shall attend Baptismal Class to ensure true conversion before baptism, followed by additional instruction in fundamental Christian doctrines and practical Christian living.
- c. New believers shall attend the first New Members Class scheduled after their baptism.
- d. New members and/or believers shall participate in individual discipleship and mentoring as needed or requested.

C. Christian Church Discipline

We believe that church discipline is part of the ongoing process of encouraging righteousness, to correct faults, and address sinful behavior within the brotherhood. The Scriptures give guidelines for discipline of various kinds of sin, such as for unintentional error, for private sin, for deliberate public sin, and for persisting in sin after admonishment and warning. The motivation for church discipline is always the restoration of erring members through Christian love and to maintain the purity of the church. (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1, James 5:19-20)

1. Membership Suspension While Under Church Discipline

We believe the church must rebuke, correct, and instruct members who fall into sin and error, following the pattern Jesus gave in Matthew 18:15-17, first individually, then with one or two witnesses, and if he neglects to hear them, to tell it to the church. Members who respond to admonition and repent of their sin may or may not be required to make public confession and or have membership privileges of voting and holding church office suspended for a period of time, based upon the nature of their sin and its public consequences. (1Timothy 5:20, Galatians 2:11, 14)

2. Shunning Members While Under Church Discipline

We believe if erring members neglect to hear the church, that after a period of time that the church determines, social avoidance must be practiced by not eating with disobedient members who remain unrepentant, so they might be reminded of their sinful state and restored unto God and the brother-hood. During this time of shunning, the church shall give itself to mourning, prayer, and fasting on their behalf. If any member under church discipline is in need, according to love we render them aid and assistance, otherwise shunning would tend more to destruction than to restoration. (1Corinthians 5:9-11, 2Thessalonians 3:14)

3. Excommunication

We believe the church is commanded to first admonish and warn, then, after a period of shunning, excommunicate and dismember unrepentant members who fall into gross sins of the flesh such as fornication, adultery, divorce and remarriage if their first spouse is still living, homosexuality, drunkenness, tobacco and drug use, and other sins of the flesh that are named in the Scriptures. Members who have been excommunicated shall no longer be shunned, but acknowledged as unbelievers who have forsaken Jesus Christ, loved this present world, and chosen to follow its master the devil. (Galatians 5:19-21, 1Corinthians 5:4-8, Matthew 18:17)

4. Disfellowship

We believe if someone persistently disregards their membership, the church must formally exclude them as members. Members who do not participate in our regular communion services for two consecutive years, or such time as the congregation may determine appropriate, shall forfeit their membership and be in disfellowship.

5. Restoration

Disfellowshipped members who truly repent shall be restored into fellowship and accepted as brothers and sisters in the church. (Galatians 6:1)

D. Church Leadership

Draft a summary statement about biblical basis and need for church leaders

1. Leadership offices

- a. Pastors
- b. Deacons

2. Lead Pastor

The lead pastor is the leader among equals on the pastoral team.

- a. **Appointment** – the lead pastor is appointed by the church brethren, under the leadership of the church trustees. Trustees shall present a proposal for congregational ballot vote, requiring 80% approval to pass.
- b. **Eligibility** – define eligibility of existing pastors and deacons
- c. **Term** – the lead pastor is appointed to a five year term, renewable unlimited times, subject to evaluation between each term for doctrinal soundness and capacity to fulfill the duties of the office
- d. **Installment** – draft a statement explaining that the lead pastor appointment is not a second ordination as a bishop, but an additional commission and charge of administrative leadership; develop a “lead pastors charge” to be administered at an installment ceremony during a formal church service.
- e. **Evaluation** – ADC leadership may be consulted to lead the lead pastors five year evaluation for doctrinal soundness
- d. **Retirement** – the lead pastor retires from his office at age 65. Exceptions must be approved by 75% ballot vote of the congregation.

3. Trustees

Draft a summary statement regarding trustees’ role, etc.

4. Discipleship Group Leaders

Draft a summary statement of Discipleship Group Leaders’ role and responsibilities

Section IV – Christian Conduct

A. The Christian Home

We believe the Christian home is a haven of faith and love and a shelter from the corruption of the godless society in which we live. Christian husbands love their wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. Christian wives shall be submissive, giving due respect to their husbands, showing chaste, Godly behavior in their homes. (1Timothy 5:14, 1Peter 3:1-7) Married couples shall establish Christian homes to train their children in biblical living and raise their families to support and promote the church of God. (Ephesians 5:22-6:4, Colossians 3:18-24, 2Timothy 3:14-15, Titus 1:6)

1. Leadership in the Home

We believe Christian fathers are responsible to lead in regular family worship, and in decision making for his family, taking responsibility for the things that are permitted in his home, and the development of biblical convictions in his children. Christian wives shall be keepers at home, supporting their husbands by Godly homemaking. (1Timothy 3:4, Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Titus 2:5)

2. Christian Child Training

We believe that children must be taught to obey their parents, and that Christian parents must train their children to know, respect, and obey the Bible, and submit to authority. In the godless culture in which we live, our children must be nurtured in modesty, moral purity, and separation from the world in dress and conduct. Parents must guide their children carefully in their formative years, avoiding toys, recreation, and patterns of behavior which mold them in the ways of the worldly culture of our times and lead them away from God and the Bible. (Deuteronomy 6:7, Ephesians 6:1, 4; Colossians 3:20, Proverbs 4:14-15, 22:6)

B. Education

1. Elementary and High School Education

We believe the Bible is the foundation of all truth and must be incorporated into our children's education. Our children shall attend private Christian schools, using curriculum which develops a biblical worldview. We discourage attendance in public schools for young children. (Colossians 1:16-17)

2. College Education

Higher education shall only be undertaken by mature youth and adults, with the approval and supervision of church leaders, for a specific program of study. Close fellowship shall be maintained with the home congregation. (Colossians 2:8)

3. Bible Schools

We encourage and support youth and young adults to attend Bible schools and training programs that are approved and supported by the congregation. (2Timothy 2:15)

C. Christian Youth

Christian youth shall be careful to maintain a clear conscience and ready testimony for Christ and the church. We encourage Christian friendship, avoiding casual physical contact to maintain purity in social relations. (Ecclesiastes 12:1, 1Timothy 4:12)

1. Voluntary Service

Youth are encouraged to serve in VS units and missions supported by the congregation, with counsel from parents and church leaders.

2. Christian Courtship

Courtship is for the purpose of seeking a life companion, and shall to be undertaken with prayer, fasting, and in consultation with parents, not before 18 years of age. To keep themselves pure, a hands-off policy shall be maintained, refraining from sensual conduct. Dating couples are encouraged to establish a devotional time early in their relationship in order to develop a spiritual foundation for their relationship with God and one another. (Ecclesiastes 11:10; 2Timothy 2:22)

D. Christian Weddings

The main focus of Christian weddings is Jesus Christ. Therefore wedding attire shall be modest and ceremonies conducted in simplicity, avoiding frivolous patterns set by the godless culture of this world, which focuses disproportionately on the bride and groom. Further guidelines will be given as the wedding is planned with the pastoral team.

E. Christian Stewardship

We believe Christians shall seek first the Kingdom of God, and trust Him to provide for our material needs. God's provision is that we work with our own hands to provide for our own needs, so we might have to give to others, remembering that Jesus warns that the deceitfulness of riches chokes our spiritual lives. We believe that God entrusts us with the care of earthly property, and we must give an account as stewards for how we use it. Christian love leads us to give generously of the money and material resources God provides, in proportion to how God prospers us, remembering the poor and needy. Careful consideration of Christian stewardship and wisdom shall be exercised in borrowing money, making loans and investments, and purchasing insurance. Get-rich-quick schemes, lotteries and high-risk investments shall be avoided. Stewardship, moderation and service shall be guidelines in purchasing vehicles. (Genesis 3:19; 1Thessalonians 4:11-12; 2Thessalonians 3:10; Matthew 6:25-34, 10:29-31, 25:31-46; Luke 12:19-21, 32-33; Philippians 4:5-6; 2Corinthians 8:12-15, 9:6-8)

1. Houses and Furnishings

Our houses shall be serviceable and lend themselves to Christian hospitality. Good stewardship shall be exercised in size, style, and decoration, remembering we are strangers and pilgrims in this world. Seasonal decorations with pagan origins such as Christmas trees and Halloween symbols shall be avoided. (Hebrews 11:13)

2. Christian Recreation

We believe that while Christians need to come apart from time to time for rest and rejuvenation, we must be careful that our spiritual lives are not choked by extravagant living and the godless culture's obsession with sports of all kinds. Sports must never take priority over church activities, or family responsibilities. (Luke 8:14; Ephesians 5:15-16; Exodus 20:8)

F. Christian Speech

We believe Christians shall be transparent in life and practice, always speaking the truth Christians guard their speech, and do not curse, cheat, gossip, slander, or speak ill of one another, rather honoring and esteeming others better than themselves. (Exodus 20:7; Matthew 5:33-37, 12:36; Acts 6:3; Romans 12:10, 17b, 13: 6-7; 2Corinthians 8:21; Philippians 4:8, 2:1-4; 1Timothy 5:13; Titus 1:10, 2:8, 3:2; James 4:11; 1Peter 2:1, 12, 3:10; 1Corinthians 13:4-7; Colossians 3:13)

G. Christian Morality

Addictive habits which enslave, such as use of tobacco in any form, alcoholic beverages, drug abuse (Proverbs 20:1; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:19-21), immorality such as fornication, adultery, abortions, homosexuality, self-abuse, sexual perversions, pornography in any form, and foul, suggestive language, let it not once be named among you, as becometh saints. (Ephesians 5:3-6; Romans 1:18-32, 13:13-14)

H. Occult Practices

We believe Christians completely avoid involvement in any occult practices such as witchcraft, the divining rod, dowsing, powwowing, pendulum inquiry, astrology, horoscopes, hypnosis, and holistic healing through questionable treatments such as acupuncture, acupressure, homeopathy, psychic healing, applied kinesiology, iridology, and any and all other mystical, metaphysical New Age and occult practices. Voluntary or involuntary participation in occult practices shall be renounced and brought under the protection of the blood of Jesus Christ. (Deuteronomy 18:19-14; Galatians 5:20)

I. Christian Media

The Christian home shall be a shelter from the corruption of the godless society in which we live. Television is not permitted in our homes. Entertainment video media such as movies, DVDs and video games may be viewed only if their content is suitable for Christians and contribute to spiritual enrichment, remembering that the godless culture of this world glorifies violence, immorality, and all kinds of wickedness, using unguarded media to infiltrate our homes, minds and hearts. While regulating devices is helpful, ultimately we must by our conscience regulate the content which we permit ourselves to be exposed to. Therefore fathers must exercise care and vigilance regarding internet access and media used in our homes, utilizing internet filters as necessary. Brethren shall participate in men's accountability groups. (Psalm 101:3; Romans 1:28-32; Colossians 2:8)

Article V – Christian Appearance

A. Introduction

The Scriptures recognize that God looks on the heart, and also affirms that man sees the outward appearance. As witnesses for Christ and the church in our communities, we want our appearance to give the right message. We believe the local congregation shall establish practical applications to encourage biblical lifestyle and practice. Therefore we enact these brotherhood agreements:

B. Christian Appearance

Attire and conduct reveal much about one's character, therefore we need to appear neat, clean, modest, simple, and appropriate, refraining from wearing jewelry, sheer or sleeveless garments, and tight or form-fitting clothes. Dresses shall be modestly tailored, defined as one-piece dresses or two piece outfits with a second top layer, avoiding low necklines, with mid-calf length skirts without slits. Neck lines, sleeve length and hem length shall be designed to avoid emphasizing or exhibiting the body's form. Makeup such as lipstick, colored nail polish, eye shadow and similar forms of adornment shall not be used. Men's clothes shall be modest, defined as full-length pants, shirts with sleeves, and straight cut suit coats. Hair and beards shall be kept neat, avoiding extreme fashions and frequent changes. 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 teaches that a Christian man's head should be uncovered and a Christian woman should have long hair and cover her head while praying or prophesying because of headship (v 3), order of creation (v 7-9), and the presence of angels (v 10). Sisters' hair shall be veiled from the top of the head to the bottom of the hairline, to show Biblical conformity and a distinct witness to the world and the angels that they are under the

authority and protection of God. These definitions of the Christian's appearance must never be understood as an end in themselves, nor that by keeping them we are assured of salvation. They are applications of Biblical principles to which we agree as brethren and sisters, as we represent Jesus Christ in this present world (Titus 2:12).

Article VI - Conclusion

A. Conclusion

May God give us grace and wisdom to walk in the light and in obedience to His Word, wisely applying His principles in all things, including things not addressed in this Brotherhood Agreement.

1. Revisions

Periodic reviews shall be conducted and updates made as needed to maintain a Christian witness in our godless culture.

2. Voting

a. Men's Meeting voting

Decisions approved by vote at men's meetings shall be binding, if a quorum of 60% of total brethren members are present, unless it is agreed that a matter of this nature should be brought before the congregation for a congregational vote.

b. Congregational voting

Revisions shall be presented by pastoral proposal for approval by congregational vote, either by 51% of those voting, 80% of those voting, or unanimous approval. Proposals shall include the percent of consenting votes required for approval when they are presented. Proposals requiring 80% or unanimous approval shall be by ballot vote. Absentee ballots may be cast prior to the meeting at which the vote is taken.

Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: (Ephesians 4:3, 13)

Adopted by congregational vote: 01/20/16