

Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ

Proposed By-laws Revision

Bylaw Revision Regarding Quorum – Adopted at Annual Meeting held in January 2016

Previous Bylaw Revision Committee - 2013

Rev. Judith Van Kennen
Mary Jo Fairbanks
Ruthann Rowe-Matthews

Gary Van Kennen
Rev. Genevieve M. Dox
Matthew LeBire

Additional Previous by-laws revisions

Article VI revised and adopted at Annual Meeting – January 20, 2008

Written and revised by a By-law Committee [May 2004].

Linda Caza
Rosalie Hamel
Nola Martin

Gay Rawlins
Eunice Shippee
Jeff Stone
Sue Warren

Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ
By-laws
Revised January 2016

Article I

Section 1- The legal name of this church shall be Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ, Inc. in Massena, New York.

Section 2 - Mission Statement

We are an inclusive and welcoming gathering of people. Different understandings about God and Christ's Church and its mission are openly shared and respected. We believe all people are God's children and as a result of Christ's death on the cross, all people are unconditionally loved and accepted. Together we try to discern God's wishes for our lives, and we strive to provide a place in our community where all are welcomed and affirmed.

Article II
Government and Fellowship

This Church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head. The Word of God, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, discernment, and conscience provides guidance in matters of faith and discipline.

The government of this Church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs. It is subject to the Articles of Incorporation granted to it by the Secretary of State of the State of New York. It is amenable to no other ecclesiastical body; however it accepts the obligation of mutual counsel, courtesy, and cooperation involved in the free fellowship of the United Church of Christ. This Church is in direct alliance with the Black River/St. Lawrence Association, the New York Conference, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, and with all churches that seek the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Article III
Faith

We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul and the right of private judgment. We join with the fellowship of the United Church of Christ in the Statement of Faith adopted by the General Synod at Oberlin, Ohio, July 8, 1959 and revised in 1981.

Article IV
Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications

This Church will welcome to its membership any person who loves the Lord Jesus Christ and who proposes to live according to His law of love.

Section 2 - Conditions

The membership of this Church shall consist of those who present satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches or confess their Christian faith and receive baptism (if not previously baptized).

Persons who desire to actively support this Church, but retain membership in another church, may be admitted as Associate Members. They shall have all the rights and privileges of members.

A person who accepts the spirit of the United Church of Christ Statement of Faith and who has been approved by a Pastor or the Board of Deacons, in the absence of the pastor, shall be received at a worship service or such other times as determined by the Pastor or the Board of Deacons. Upon reception, all members shall be given a copy of these By-laws.

Section 3 - Responsibilities

Members are encouraged to be faithful to all duties essential to Christian life; to regularly attend the services of the Church, to give systematically to its support, to share in its organized work and to seek with diligence the spiritual growth of the Church.

Section 4 - Rights

Members in good standing sixteen years of age or older may act and vote in all transactions of the Church. All members and associate members are welcome to observe any council, trustee or committee meeting with the exception of those of the Pastoral Relations and Nominating Committees.

All records shall be accessible by members and associate members with the exception of those related to individual giving, matters that legally prevent disclosure, those related to ongoing legal action, negotiations or contractual matters in process, and pastoral related records.

Section 5 - Termination

1. By written request to the Church

a. By letter of transfer to any Christian church

b. Be released from membership if, after due conference and deliberation, the member is insistent in his or her request for such release.

2. By Inactivity.

Members who for a period of two years have not communicated with the Church or supported its ministry may, by vote of the Church at the Annual Meeting, be transferred to the inactive list. From the date of such transfer such persons shall cease to be reported on the active membership roll. If, after the expiration of a year their

addresses are unknown, or they do not wish to renew their active connection with the Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ, their names may be removed from the roll by a further vote of the Church at the Annual Meeting.

3. By exclusion.

Should a member become an offense to the Church and to its good name by reason of unchristian conduct, the Church may censure, suspend, or terminate the membership of such members by a two-thirds vote at a special meeting; but only after due notice and hearing and after faithful efforts have been made to bring such member to amendment in accordance with the law of Christ. No membership shall be terminated by exclusion at the meeting at which the motion was made.

Section 6 – Reinstatement

Any person whose membership has been terminated, for good and sufficient reasons, may be reinstated to membership at the discretion of the Pastor or the Board of Deacons, in the absence of the Pastor.

Article V Officers

Section 1 - Officers

The officers of this Church shall be a Pastor, a Clerk, a Treasurer and a Moderator. All officers and the members of the Executive Council shall be members of the Church, with the exception of the Pastor.

Section 2 - Elections

All officers and Executive Council members (with the exception of the Pastor) shall be elected at the Annual Meeting by a majority vote. Those elected for a full three-year term may not succeed themselves. Should The Executive Council deem an elected position to be vacant, they have the authority to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Section 3 - Pastor

The Pastor, to be chosen by the Church whenever a vacancy occurs, shall hold office without limitation of time and may be installed by the Association when the Pastor and the Church so desire. The Pastor's duties include: to preach the Word, to care for the stated services of public worship, provide pastoral care, administer the sacraments, promote the spiritual welfare of the Church, and those who are served by the Church. The Pastor shall manage all personnel. The Pastor shall be ex officio member of all boards and committees, and shall make a report of the year's work at the Annual Meeting. The pastoral relationship may be dissolved as outlined in the employment contract.

Section 4: The Moderator

The Moderator shall be selected from among the Executive Council by its members to serve a term one year. The duty of the Moderator is to chair all meetings, including the annual meeting. The Moderator may not serve as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Section 5 - The Clerk

The Clerk shall be elected for a term of one year and shall perform the following functions: keep a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the congregation and the Executive Council, issue notices for congregational meetings and perform other related duties incidental to the work of the position. In the event the Moderator is absent from all business meetings, the Clerk may act as a temporary chairperson. The Clerk may hold office as a Council member.

Section 6 - The Treasurer

The Treasurer shall serve a term of one year and shall perform the following duties: disperse the Church funds as directed by the Trustees, submit a monthly report to the Board of Trustees, and submit an annual report to be included in the Annual Report of the Church. The Treasurer may hold office as a Council member, but not as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Article VI Executive Council & Trustees

Section 1 - Executive Council

There shall be an Executive Council consisting of nine members so elected that one third of their terms expire each year. This Council shall meet monthly unless otherwise determined by the Council. A simple majority shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings may be held at the request of the Pastor or three members of the Council. It shall be the purpose of the Council to visualize the entire task of the Church, to coordinate activities, arrange for the Church calendar, advise the Pastor of the general direction of the Church's activities and to cooperate in developing a well-rounded program.

This Council shall designate four to six of its members as Trustees to fulfill the legal requirement for an incorporated church.

The Pastor shall be considered an ex officio member of the Council.

The Clerk, Treasurer, Chair of the Board of Deacons, Chair of the Missions Committee, and Church School Coordinator, shall be ex officio members of this Council (unless they are already Council members).

Section 2 - Trustees

Four to six Trustees shall be selected from the Executive Council by the Executive Council. The Trustees shall elect their own Chairperson and shall meet monthly.

The purpose of the Trustees is to manage the physical assets and financial affairs of the Church. The trustees shall also provide guidance to the Pastor as it relates to the management of personnel. They shall prepare and present the budget to the Executive Council for approval and then to the congregation for approval at the Annual Meeting.

Article VII Committees

Section 1 - Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall consist of at least three members selected by the Executive Council for a term of one year. The committee shall prepare a ballot nominating one member for each position and present the ballot at the Annual Meeting. In addition, the Committee shall fill any vacancies that might occur during the church year. The Nominating Committee shall also be responsible for nominating Deacons.

Section 2 - Deacon Committee

This Committee shall consist of at least four members chosen from the Church membership each for a term of three years.

This Committee shall cooperate with the Pastor in the spiritual welfare of the Church. They shall assist in the responsibilities of worship, including the preparation and serving of Communion, Baptism and welcoming new members.

Section 3 - Pastoral Relations Committee

The Pastoral Relations Committee shall consist of three members of the Church nominated by both the Pastor and the Nominating Committee. They shall be elected for terms of three years so that one term expires each year.

This Committee seeks to support and maintain an open and healthy relationship between Pastor and members of the congregation. They are accountable to the congregation. This Committee shall meet as necessary.

All Church committees shall submit a report at the Annual Meeting.

Article VIII – Meetings

Section 1 - Worship Services

Worship services shall be held at given hours each Sunday except when temporarily cancelled due to special circumstances. Special services can be held at the discretion of the Pastor and/or the Executive Council.

Section 2 – Holy Communion

Holy Communion shall be observed at the discretion of the Pastor, no less than once a month. Section 3 - The Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Church shall be held after the morning worship service on the third Sunday of January to receive the yearly reports of officers and committees, to elect officers and to transact such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

Section 4 - Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Church may be called by the Pastor or Clerk or on a written request of any ten members of the Church, specifying the purpose for the meeting. Such notice shall be read at the worship service on the two Sundays preceding the day fixed for such a meeting.

Section 5 - Official Year

The official year of the Church shall begin January 1, and all officers, boards, and committees shall assume their duties immediately upon election and continue in office until their successors have been elected.

Section 6 - Quorum

A quorum at any meeting of the entire Church shall consist of twelve (12)-voting members. A majority vote of the members present and voting shall ordinarily be decisive except that the call of the Pastor shall require two-thirds of all voting members of the Church present at a meeting specifically called for this purpose. Quorum at any other meetings such as Executive Council or committee meetings shall consist with a simple majority. If at any time a majority is no longer present the quorum is lost and no official action may be taken until a majority is once again present and a quorum is reestablished.

Article IX – Amendments

These By-laws may be altered or amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present provided that notice of the proposed changes have been presented in writing two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting. By-laws I through IV may be amended at an Annual Meeting only if the proposed amendment has been presented before the Church in writing not less than two months prior. These By-laws must be available to the congregation on three consecutive Sundays preceding such Annual Meeting. This availability shall be announced at each of the three Sundays preceding the Annual Meeting.

Article X Funds

All bequests of money, securities or property that are willed to Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ, not directed for other use, shall be placed in the Endowment Fund of said Church.

The Endowment Fund will be controlled by the Trustees of the Church. Dividends and interest derived from this fund shall be readily available to the Trustees for use in meeting normal expenses. In the event that a situation arises where additional money is required in order to keep the Church in reasonable and proper operating conditions, then a withdrawal from this fund may be made on the condition that this withdrawal has been approved at a duly warranted congregational meeting.

Gifts that are designated to be used for a specific purpose may be used in that manner by the Trustees without congregational approval.