

**Emmanuel United Church**  
**CONSTITUTION**

**AMENDED 2024-02-25**

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**AMENDMENT REGISTER**

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| 3                      | 21 Feb 2021          | Ron Squires                                      |
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| 5                      | 25 Feb 2024          | Ron Squires                                      |
| 6                      |                      |                                                  |
| 7                      |                      |                                                  |
| 8                      |                      |                                                  |
| 9                      |                      |                                                  |
| 10                     |                      |                                                  |

## 1 PREAMBLE

The church is the body of Christ which becomes visible as it gathers to remember and celebrate the presence and ministry of Christ, and becomes vital in so far as its members share in this ministry, including proclaiming the Gospel, and participate in a life of service.

Emmanuel United Church affirms that it is as members of the people of God, as members of Christ's body, that we with all Christians share in Christ's ministry. The church as a whole and every member of the church is called to participate in this ministry.

## 2 EMMANUEL UNITED CHURCH

Emmanuel United Church is a congregation in the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council of The United Church of Canada.

Emmanuel United Church was amalgamated with Eastbrook United Church in January 1999 and with Wesley United Church in 2013. The amalgamated body is known as Emmanuel United Church and perpetuates the former bodies.

The members of the congregation entitled to all church privileges, as defined in section B.3.3 of the Manual of the United Church of Canada, are those persons who, on a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, have been received into full membership. Persons are admitted to full membership by baptism and confirmation or by certificate of membership in good standing from other United Church congregations or other communions, or by re-affirmation of Christian faith, as provided for in the Manual of the United Church of Canada [1].

Emmanuel United Church shall be carried on without purpose of financial or monetary gain for its members, and any profits or other gains to Emmanuel United Church shall be used in promoting its objectives.

Emmanuel United Church is an Affirming congregation of the United Church of Canada, and is a member of Affirm United/S'affirme Ensemble.

### 3 OUR VISION AND STATEMENT OF MISSION

#### 3.1 Our Vision

Called to be an inclusive, compassionate Christ-centered community: sharing; questioning; justice-seeking; and, welcoming all.

#### 3.2 Statement of Mission

**We are**

Emmanuel United Church – *God With Us*; – the body of Christ made visible  
a welcoming, witnessing, worshipping community, scattered and gathered,  
with a tradition of faithfulness,  
reaping the harvest from seeds of the past, yet evolving.  
We are a member congregation of the United Church of Canada,  
ecumenical and diverse in nature.

**It is our mission:**

- **to worship God as revealed in Jesus the Christ;**  
celebrating, and witnessing to, God's presence and love.
- **to seek education, growth and spiritual development;**  
as individuals and as a community.
- **to be an instrument of God's grace through God's Holy Spirit**  
Ministering to each other and the world around us;  
bringing hope and pastoral care;  
serving, nurturing and enabling, ourselves and others;  
calling for justice in our community and in the world.
- **to be stewards**  
of God's gifts to us;  
and of creation.

**We are called:**

- to journey in the loving, inspiring presence of God in faith, that we may grow, may change, may reach out, may revitalize and may dream;
- to dare to see the world as God wants it and to work for that vision.

#### **4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL MINISTRY AND CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRY**

References to ministers in this document shall refer to all persons in paid accountable ministry, including ordained, commissioned, diaconal and designated lay ministers.

By defining and accepting its purpose and structure as outlined in this constitution the congregation has committed itself to a very significant share in the leadership of and responsibility in the church. The congregation has developed a “leadership sharing” concept in its Council of the Congregation through which all of its members, including any ministers and others employed by the congregation, share in the ministry of Jesus Christ as it finds expression at Emmanuel.

By sharing in the leadership, the ministers can help the congregation identify, understand and participate in all the ways in which Christ’s ministry finds expression. In such a shared leadership, the ministers have a significant share in the responsibility for calling the congregation together for the central acts of proclamation of the Word and celebration of the sacraments, and for pastoral care and counselling. The ministers also share in the leadership of the congregation as resource persons and enablers assisting the congregation, its council and committees in identifying goals and in planning and implementing programs to achieve these goals. The ministers shall be ex-officio members of all committees, with the privilege of attending all committee meetings, although not required to do so, and have the opportunity to be resource persons for all committees. Other members of the staff may be members of certain committees in an ex-officio capacity.

For such a shared leadership approach to work, it is essential that on-going two-way communication takes place at all levels of congregational life. This includes the responsibility and the opportunity for members of the congregation to minister to the ministers.

## **5 THE CONGREGATION**

### **5.1 Congregational Meetings**

The Congregation shall be the ultimate decision-making body within the church. It shall meet once a year (the annual meeting) as early as possible in the New Year, and at other times at the call of the Chair of Council, or any one of the ministers, or at the request of full members who represent at least 10% of full members. At least two Sundays' notice shall be given of any meeting. At the annual meeting, the following items of business shall be included as a minimum:

- Election of officers and members of the Council and Trustees
- Acceptance of the previous year's annual report
- Approval of the current year's budget
- Acceptance of the reviewed or audited financial statements for the previous year
- Appointment of a financial reviewer or auditor
- Changes to spending limits of Council or Executive of Council, if applicable

A quorum for Congregational meetings shall be 20 full members plus a minister.

### **5.2 Voting Rights**

**5.2.1** All full members whose names are on the membership roll have the right to vote at all meetings of the congregation.

**5.2.2** Adherents have the right to vote on all matters at congregational meetings unless there is a motion by full members to limit their vote to specific matters.

**5.2.3** Each Congregational meeting is to begin with the statement, "Voting Rights will be in accordance with section 5.2 of the Emmanuel United Church Constitution."

## **6 BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

There shall be a board of trustees consisting of at least three and not more than seven members of the congregation, which shall be known as “The Board of Trustees of Emmanuel United Church.”

All congregational property is held by the congregation’s trustees. This includes land, buildings, funds and investments, and any other kind of property.

The Board of Trustees shall hold, use and administer the land, buildings, funds and investments, and any other kind of property for the use and benefit of the congregation in accordance with the directives of the congregation and any relevant statutes.

Should the number of trustees become fewer than three, for whatever reason, the Council shall elect one or more member/s of the congregation to serve until the annual meeting, at which time an election shall be held.

The Board of Trustees shall meet whenever the trustees deem it necessary or when requested or instructed by the congregation to meet.

Other requirements of the Board of Trustees are given in The Manual 2019 [1], section G.3, and the Trustees Handbook [2].

## **7 EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE**

The Emergency Preparedness Committee shall consist of the Minister(s), the Chair of Council and the Chair of Trustees. They shall meet at least once per year and within one month following the Annual Meeting. They shall review all matters related to the preparations required to deal with emergencies as outlined in The United Church of Canada Emergency Plan (March 2020 or subsequent revisions).

## 8 THE PASTORAL CARE TEAM

The pastoral care team has a mandate to oversee that the pastoral care needs of the congregation are met. The Minister responsible for Pastoral Care and the Pastoral Care Provider are members of the Pastoral Care Team. The team will liaise with other committees and groups as necessary.

## 9 OFFICERS

The officers of the church are the Chair, Vice-Chair, Past Chair, Secretary of Council, Treasurer, and Chair of the Board of Trustees. The members of Council and Executive of Council shall be as shown in Table I below. The Chair shall normally succeed the Past Chair, and the Vice-Chair shall normally succeed the Chair at the next annual meeting. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair's powers.

Table I – Members of Council and Executive

| Officer                           | Member of Council | Member of Executive |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Minister                          | ✓ (Non-voting)    | ✓ (Non-voting)      |
| Chair of Council                  | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Vice-Chair of Council             | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Past Chair of Council             | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Secretary of Council              | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Treasurer                         | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Chairs of Standing Committees     | ✓                 | ✓                   |
| Envelope Secretary                | ✓                 |                     |
| Roll Clerk                        | ✓                 |                     |
| Chair of the Board of Trustees    | ✓                 |                     |
| EOORC Representatives             | ✓                 |                     |
| Memorials Coordinator             | ✓                 |                     |
| Historian                         | ✓                 |                     |
| Pastoral Care Team Representative | ✓                 |                     |
| Webmaster                         | ✓                 |                     |
| Members-at-large                  | ✓                 |                     |

The number of representatives to the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council [EOORC] shall be elected in accordance with the requirements of the United Church Manual [1] section B.2.1.6. It is the responsibility of these lay representatives to regularly attend meetings of EOORC; to be familiar with all new church policies and guidelines that are established by General Council or EOORC; to report the information to Emmanuel's Council and Executive; to inform EOORC of Emmanuel's activities, needs and concerns; and to inform Emmanuel of EOORC activities and activities of other member churches that would be of interest.

## **10 EXECUTIVE OF COUNCIL**

### **10.1 Membership**

The Executive of Council shall consist of those listed as members of the Executive in Table I above.

### **10.2 Function**

The Executive shall receive reports and consider proposals from standing committees, ad hoc committees and church officers; evaluate the ongoing life and work of the congregation; prepare proposals for consideration by Council; take whatever action is deemed appropriate to implement policies and decisions made by the congregation and the Council; and, in general, carry out the business of Council between Council meetings.

### **10.3 Meetings**

The Executive shall meet at least four times each year unless meetings are replaced by Council meetings. The meetings shall normally alternate with those of the Council. The Chair of Council may change the order of meetings for exceptional reasons on giving notice to the congregation.

All members and adherents of the congregation may attend meetings as observers. Those who wish to speak during the meeting must be made Corresponding Members.

A quorum for Executive meetings shall be one third of the members, and shall include a minister serving at Emmanuel.

## **11 COUNCIL OF THE CONGREGATION**

### **11.1 Membership**

The Council shall consist of those listed as members of the Council in Table I above and members at large, as elected, in order to make the required number, given below.

The total number of members of Council, excluding members of the ministerial team, shall be no less than 25. All elected members shall be baptized Christians.

Members at large shall be elected to their positions at the annual meeting or at other meetings of the congregation as necessary.

Notwithstanding section 5 above, the Council may appoint members to the Council and to the Executive of Council on an interim basis to serve until the next annual meeting of the Congregation.

### **11.2 Function**

The Council of the Congregation is that body of persons elected by the congregation to be representative of it and to carry out the business of the congregation between annual meetings.

The chief function of the Council of the Congregation is to implement all congregational policy and decisions. It shall also recommend major policy to the congregation. It is responsible to the congregation. The functions of the council shall also include all matters contained in section B.7.4 of The Manual [1].

Council is responsible for approving the Financial Manual.

### **11.3 Duties of Council Members**

The duties of Council members are to attend Council meetings and to play an active role in the life and work of the church. Normally, it is expected that Council members other than officers will be active members of one or more of the Standing Committees of Council.

### **11.4 Meetings**

The Council of the Congregation shall meet at least four times per year. The meetings shall normally alternate with those of the Executive. The Chair of Council may change the order of meetings for exceptional reasons on giving notice to the congregation.

All members and adherents who are not members of the Council of the congregation may attend meetings as observers. Those who wish to speak during the meeting must be made Corresponding Members.

A quorum for Council meetings shall be one third of the members, and shall include a minister serving at Emmanuel.

## 12 TERMS OF OFFICE

- 12.1 **Members at Large of Council** are elected for a three-year term and are not eligible for immediate reelection.
- 12.2 **Chairs of Standing Committees** are elected for a one-year term and are eligible for annual reelection for a maximum of six consecutive terms.
- 12.3 **Members of the Board of Trustees** are elected for a three-year term and are eligible for reelection for two further three-year terms. Upon the completion of nine consecutive years of service they are not eligible for reelection for a period of three years.
- 12.4 **The Chair of the Board of Trustees** is elected for a one year term and is eligible for annual reelection during their term as trustee.
- 12.5 **Representatives to the Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council** are elected for a three-year term with no limit to the number of reelections.
- 12.6 **Members of the Agenda Planning Committee**, other than ministry personnel, are elected for one year terms. The Chair shall normally succeed the Past Chair, and the Vice-Chair shall normally succeed the Chair at the next Annual Meeting.
- 12.7 **The Treasurer, Envelope Secretary, Assistant Envelope Secretary, Roll Clerk, Memorials Coordinator, Mission & Service Coordinator, Pastoral Care Team Representative, Historian and Webmaster** are elected for one year terms with no limit to the number of annual reelections.

### 13 STANDING COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL

The standing committees of Council shall be the following:

- Agenda Planning
- Christian Development
- Communications
- Finance
- Global Partners
- Health
- Keeping in Touch
- Ministry and Personnel
- Property and Grounds
- Recruitment
- Social Action
- Worship

Committees shall endeavour to recruit new members, with the assistance of the Recruitment committee. Committee members other than the Chairperson may or may not be members of Council.

A quorum for any committee shall be one third of the membership of that committee.

Each committee shall perform the following tasks:

- Committees shall meet as often as necessary to accomplish their work, at least once per year. Meetings may be held electronically and/or in person.
- Except for the Agenda Planning committee, they shall keep minutes of each meeting. All committees, except for Ministry and Personnel and Recruitment, shall provide a copy of these minutes to the church office.
- Study, assess, and clarify its objectives each year including its approaches to meeting these objectives but always in the light of the total task of the church;
- Endeavour to carry out its objectives in close working relationships with other standing committees;
- Recommend policy to the Executive and/or the Council for possible implementation, as necessary;
- Implement the policy of the congregation with guidance from the Council when necessary;
- Report to the congregation through the annual report;
- Report to Council and Executive of Council at each meeting.

The detailed responsibilities of each committee shall be as given in the following sub-sections.

### **13.1 Agenda Planning Committee**

This committee shall comprise a Minister (ex-officio), the Past Chair of Council, the Chair of Council, the Vice-Chair of Council and the Secretary of Council. It shall meet at least once per month, except during the summer months and December, to plan the agenda for meetings of Council, Executive of Council and the annual congregational meeting. It may also discuss matters of a general policy and administrative nature and provide a forum for consultation on matters of concern to the Ministers. It shall also oversee the preparation and production of the Annual Report of the church, oversee orientation of new members of Council, publish an annual calendar of the church's meetings, and schedule extraordinary meetings of the Council or the congregation when deemed necessary.

### **13.2 Christian Development Committee**

The goal of Christian Development is to provide meaningful faith formation to people at each stage of their lives so that they might know God as revealed in Christ and to come to know themselves as god-gifted. Christian Development shall create opportunities to grow and serve God through worship, work, fellowship and witness in the daily life of the world. In order to achieve this goal, it shall be the responsibility of the committee to administer effective, meaningful faith formation programming for the church. This programming will embrace learning and discovering in Christianity, including the youth and adult congregation, Sunday School, church-related groups of all ages and out-reach. The Christian Development Committee will inform and be informed by the ministry team, including ministerial participation at the committee level in an ex-officio role.

This committee shall be responsible for leadership development and special training requirements that may be requested by individuals, the Council, Committees of Council and other groups in the Church. It shall keep the congregation informed of leadership development opportunities both within and outside the Church. It shall be responsible for organization and maintenance of the church library.

### **13.3 Communications Committee**

This committee shall be responsible for improving the effectiveness of communication relating to the congregation's purposes and activities, both within the congregation and in the community. To carry out its mandate, the committee shall be specifically responsible for planning, organizing and delivering a variety of communication media such as social media, media advertising, a web site, video (of church services), slides for projection of church services and narthex TV, sound system, outdoor sign content and management, and the newsletter and other publications.

The Editor of the Emmanuel Newsletter shall be a member of this committee.

### **13.4 Finance Committee**

This committee shall be responsible for collecting, disbursing, investing and recording church funds; recording contributions and issuing receipts; coordinating the preparation of the annual budget in consultation with committee chairpersons, and presenting it to the annual meeting. Additional responsibilities include filing the necessary government Tax/Charitable Status forms; preparing the annual financial statements and presenting them to the annual meeting; facilitating the financial reviewer's or auditor's annual review of the annual financial statements; coordinating the Stewardship Program; and administering financially-related aspects of the church office.

The Finance Committee shall appoint one of its members to serve as Stewardship Coordinator, and another to serve as Fundraising Coordinator.

The Treasurer and Envelope Secretary shall be members of Finance Committee. The Financial Reviewer or Auditor shall not be a member of the Finance committee. The Finance Committee shall carry out all its functions in accordance with the Financial Manual [3]. The Financial Manual shall be reviewed from time to time by the Finance Committee in order that changes, if warranted, can be recommended to Council for approval.

### **13.5 Global Partners Committee**

This committee is responsible for the oversight and management of relations with Emmanuel's global partners, including Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel of El Salvador and the Chipembi Congregation of the United Church of Zambia. It is responsible for obtaining approval of and maintaining the Covenants between Emmanuel and its Partners. It is also responsible for the management and transfer of donated funds from the Salvadoran Mission Fund to Iglesia Bautista Emmanuel and from the Zambia Mission Fund to the Chipembi Congregation, in accordance with the joint ministry priorities in the respective Covenant Agreements. The committee will endeavor to foster relations between the Partners and the Emmanuel congregation.

### **13.6 Health Committee**

The Health Committee shall focus on the health and social well-being of older adults within the Emmanuel Congregation. Specifically, it shall be the body responsible to the Congregation through Council for the administration and implementation of various social Ministry programs within Emmanuel such as the seniors Take Time to be Wholly exercise. The committee shall also:

- Provide support for the Bridge Club, the Active Artists group and the Meditation group.
- Promote older adult issues within the Congregation and community and liaise with other Committees in this regard.
- Provide feedback to Council regarding older adult issues, programs and needs which can be addressed by the Committee.

### **13.7 Keeping in Touch Committee**

The objectives of this committee shall be to foster and enhance Emmanuel's reputation as a welcoming and caring faith community, to encourage church groups to promote a wide representation and participation of the congregation in their activities, and to encourage individuals in the church to keep in touch with one another.

Specifically, the committee shall take responsibility for ensuring the congregational address list is up to date and arrange for contact with people for whom a need to keep in touch has been identified (e.g. absence from church activities), and in so doing, liaise with the Pastoral Care Team. The Committee shall provide a personal welcome to newcomers with follow up contact; recruit greeters for Sunday services, with some emphasis on including many different people and families in this function, and provide name tags for members and adherents. The Keeping in Touch Committee will assist in the organization of every family contact and cottage group meetings. The Roll Clerk shall be a member of the Keeping in Touch Committee.

### **13.8 Ministry and Personnel Committee**

This committee shall maintain an open and supportive employer/employee relationship between the congregation and its staff. Specific areas of responsibility are the employment relationships with ministerial and non-ministerial staff and with the congregation. The responsibilities of this committee, from Section B.7.8.5 of The Manual 2019 [1], include:

- being available for consultation and support for matters involving the pastoral charge staff;
- available to any group or member of the congregation to consider positive and negative feedback concerning the personnel of the church;
- overseeing the relationship of the pastoral charge staff to each other and to people in the congregation;
- regularly reviewing the working conditions, responsibilities, and compensation of all pastoral charge staff, and relevant provincial/federal workplace policies;
- revising position descriptions of pastoral charge staff as needed;
- conducting annual performance reviews of the pastoral charge staff;
- making recommendations as appropriate as a result of all of the above reviews to the governing body;
- ensuring pastoral charge staff make use of opportunities for continuing education; and
- maintaining close contact with the Regional Council's Pastoral Relations Committee or equivalent.

The committee shall name a member or members to serve on the Community of Faith Profile Preparation Team where necessary. Where the Region declares a vacancy for a minister, the committee shall name a member or members to serve on the Search Committee.

### **13.9 Property and Grounds Committee**

This committee shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, improvement, security and administration of church building property, equipment and furnishings. The committee shall maintain an inventory of church property, and shall have an appraisal done as necessary to ensure adequate insurance coverage at all times. The committee shall prepare and submit to the Finance Committee a capital budget for inclusion in the Annual Report and shall oversee custodial services of the property.

### **13.10 Recruitment Committee**

It shall be the responsibility of this committee to co-ordinate the recruitment of volunteer workers for the congregation. The Committee is responsible for the recruitment of Council members and the Executive and for the co-ordination of all other recruitment in the church. It shall present a full slate of nominations for those to be elected at the annual meeting as defined in sections 10.1 and 11.

### **13.11 Social Action Committee**

The primary purpose and function of this committee shall be to coordinate, develop and maintain as part of the life of the congregation programs that actively express its Christian faith in outreach, service and action for social justice in response to the needs of persons in our community, nation and world. The committee shall participate fully with other groups in the city, with the object of maintaining a Christian presence in the community of Emmanuel United Church.

### **13.12 Worship Committee**

The Worship Committee is responsible for the planning and coordination of all worship events that take place in Emmanuel United Church (EUC) and those led by representatives of the congregation at other locations (e.g., seniors' homes, joint services with other communities of faith). It is charged with the oversight of church music, pulpit supply, the order of worship, and the church (i.e., liturgical) calendar, including the administration of the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism. The committee is responsible for ensuring worship leadership and providing support to the worship leaders.

Specifically, the Worship Committee will ensure that a worship leader is designated for each regular (i.e., Sunday morning, 10:00 am) and special worship service. When the Paid Accountable Ministers at EUC are unavailable, the Worship Committee will acquire the services of Visiting Ministry Personnel (ordered or lay) and arrange for their financial compensation according to the salary schedule set out by The United Church of Canada.

The Worship Committee will provide support to worship leaders by:

- recruiting ushers and scheduling their duties,
- providing a lay assistant for each Sunday morning service and other special services held at EUC (as required),
- scheduling teams to administer the sacrament of Holy Communion and preparing the communion elements,
- providing flowers, candles, and visual worship aids such as banners, and
- recruiting hosts for Coffee and Conversation.

Furthermore, the Worship Committee will appoint one of its members to be Mission and Service (M&S) coordinator. It is the responsibility of this coordinator to keep the congregation informed concerning M&S matters, including M&S goals and projects, through planning mission messages as part of the service of worship, and through other activities as requested/approved by the Worship Committee and/or the Council. The coordinator will cooperate with the Finance Committee in the preparation of the congregation's annual M&S commitment.

#### **14 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of a Congregational meeting on the recommendation of a two-thirds vote of Council, provided that the congregation has been given at least three Sundays' notice of the proposed amendments.

## 15 REFERENCES

1. The Manual 2024 The United Church of Canada\*
2. Congregational Board of Trustees Handbook 2004, The United Church of Canada\*
3. Financial Manual, Amendment 0, June 2016, Emmanuel United Church\*
4. Employment Guidelines for Lay Employees, The United Church of Canada, March 2010\*

\* Or most recent version.