

**HIGHLAND
MENNONITE BRETHREN
CHURCH**

4018 Centre B Street NW
Calgary, AB T2K 0W2

Constitution and Bylaws

2013

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 – Name and Objects

1.1 Official Name

- 1.1.1 The name of this religious society shall be “Highland Mennonite Brethren Church” hereinafter called the “Church.” The Church is registered as a religious society pursuant to the Alberta Religious Societies’ Land Act, R.S.A. 2000, Chapter R-15.

1.2 Objects

- 1.2.1 The objects of the Church shall be:
- 1.2.1.1 To carry out the ministry programs for the benefit of the congregation and the community;
 - 1.2.1.2 To perform pastoral and missionary work;
 - 1.2.1.3 To provide religious instruction; and
 - 1.2.1.4 To provide a weekly worship experience for the congregation and the community.
- 1.2.2 The activities of the Church shall be carried on without the purpose of financial gain for its members, and any profits or accretions to the Church shall be used in promoting its purposes.

Article 2 – Affiliation

2.1 Affiliation

- 2.1.1 The Church shall be a member of the Alberta Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches (hereafter referred to as ABMB) and the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (hereafter referred to as CCMBC). It shall give moral and material support to the above-named Conferences. All articles of this Constitution and proposed revisions shall be in accord with the constitutions of the above-named Conferences.

Article 3 – Registered Office

3.1 Registered Office

- 3.1.1 The Registered Office of the Church shall be located at 4018 Centre B Street NW, Calgary, Alberta, or at such other address in Alberta as the Church may from time to time, by resolution, direct.

Article 4 – Confession of Faith

4.1 Confession of Faith

- 4.1.1 The Confession of Faith of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches shall serve as the Confession of Faith of the Church. The Church shall not pass or accept resolutions or practices, which are in conflict or inconsistent with this Confession of Faith.

BYLAWS

Article 1 – Definitions and Enforcement

1.1 Definitions. In these Bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall apply:

“ABMB” means the Alberta Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Churches;

“Act” means the *Religious Societies’ Land Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. R-15;

“Business meeting” means any meeting of the Church membership or whole congregation where one or more motions are expected to be presented and put to a vote;

“Bylaw” or “Bylaws” means any Bylaw of the Church from time to time in force and effect;

“CCMBC” means the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches;

“Church” means the religious society registered under the *Religious Societies’ Land Act*, R.S.A. 2000, c. R-15, and named “Highland Mennonite Brethren Church”;

“Confession of Faith” means the theological centre of the Church’s core belief as stated in the Confession of Faith of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches attached hereto as Appendix A;

“Constitution” means the Constitution of the Church;

“Leadership Team” means the Board of Leaders of the Church;

“Leadership Team Executive” or “Executive” means the Chair, Assistant Chair, and secretary of the Leadership Team plus the Lead Pastor;

“Leadership Team member” means a person elected by the Membership to the Leadership Team of the Church;

“Member” means a person who has been accepted as a member of the Church.

“Members” or “Membership” means collectively all of the members of the Church;

“Member in good standing” means a participating Member of the Church who has the rights and privileges of Members;

“Member not in good standing” means a Member of the Church who has temporarily been restricted from full participation in the activities of the Membership;

“Moderator” means the Assistant Chair of the Leadership Team who normally moderates the meetings of the Church;

“Objects” means the objects of the Church as set out in the Constitution;

“Officer” means a person appointed as an officer of the Church;

“Religious Society” means the religious society known as “Highland Mennonite Brethren Church.”

1.2 Enforcement

Specific bylaws may be temporarily waived when deemed necessary by at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing present at a duly called business meeting.

Article 2 – Members

2.1 Establishing Membership in the Church

- 2.1.1 Individuals may become Members of HMBC in one of three ways:
 - 2.1.1.1 Through water baptism in the Church upon confession of their faith (in accordance with the Confession of Faith);
 - 2.1.1.2 Through transfer from another Mennonite Brethren Church which testifies that the individual holds membership in good standing;
 - 2.1.1.3 Through public testimony to the Church of (1) their faith in Jesus Christ as their Saviour and Lord and (2) their prior baptism upon a personal confession of faith.
- 2.1.2 Application for baptism and/or membership in the Church:
 - 2.1.2.1 Application shall be made by submitting a signed Covenant of Commitment to the Leadership Team. This Covenant shall indicate:
 - 2.1.2.1.1 their desire to be baptized (if not already baptized upon confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ),
 - 2.1.2.1.2 their desire to become a participating Member of the Church, and
 - 2.1.2.1.3 that they have read and affirm the Confession of Faith.
 - 2.1.2.2 All baptism and/or membership candidates will be examined by at least three members of the Leadership Team to ascertain their personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and their desire to faithfully follow Jesus as a participating Member of HMBC.
 - 2.1.2.3 The Leadership Team (or its Executive) shall decide whether or not baptism and/or membership candidates will be received into Membership.

2.2 Restriction and/or Termination of Membership

- 2.2.1 The rights and privileges of Membership are restricted when a Member becomes a 'Member not in good standing' for conduct or beliefs which are not consistent with the Church's Confession of Faith or are detrimental to the Objects of the Church or harm the testimony of the Church in the community.

2.2.1.1 This change in Membership status requires at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing at a duly called meeting.

2.2.1.2 A 'Member not in good standing' is restricted in these areas:

2.2.1.2.1 cannot participate in Membership meetings;

2.2.1.2.2 cannot make or vote on any motion of the Church;

2.2.1.2.3 cannot serve in any capacity in the ministry of the Church.

2.2.2 Termination and Restoration of Membership

2.2.2.1 Membership terminates upon occurrence of any of the following:

2.2.2.1.1 a Member's written statement withdrawing membership received and accepted by the Leadership Team;

2.2.2.1.2 a Member becoming a member of another church;

2.2.2.1.3 death of the Member;

2.2.2.1.4 after six months of a Member becoming a 'Member not in good standing';

2.2.2.1.4.1 the Membership may decide to extend the time-period or restore the status to 'Member in good standing' if the 'Member not in good standing' substantially resolves the issue(s) which caused the Membership to place the Member in that status;

2.2.2.1.4.2 Any change of time-period or restoration to 'Member in good standing' requires at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing at a duly called meeting.

2.2.2.2 Restoration of Membership

2.2.2.2.1 The individual whose membership is terminated may apply for restoration of membership to the Leadership Team after six months.

2.2.2.2.2 If the Leadership Team is satisfied that the individual is deserving of restoration of membership then they may present a motion for restoration to the membership at a duly called meeting.

2.2.2.2.3 Restoration of membership will be granted if passed by at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing present at a duly called business meeting.

- 2.2.3 A Member who leaves the Church but desires to retain his/her membership may request the retention of membership in writing to the Leadership Team; if the request is granted the Member shall:
 - 2.2.3.1 continue to receive congregational care within reasonable limits;
 - 2.2.3.2 be encouraged to transfer membership to another Church if the absence extends beyond twelve months;
 - 2.2.3.3 be released from membership if the absence extends beyond eighteen months and there is no reasonable expectation of the Member returning to the Church as a fully participating Member;
 - 2.2.3.3.1 those released from membership due to absence will be considered “Friends of Highland” but will have no rights or privileges extended to Members of the Church;
 - 2.2.3.3.2 this change of status shall be communicated in writing to the released Member when it happens.

2.3 Voting Privileges and Quorum

- 2.3.1 Only Members in good standing present at a meeting and at least 18 years of age shall have the right to make and vote on motions. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- 2.3.2 A quorum for any meeting of the Church shall be obtained when the Members in good standing present at the meeting represent at least 20 percent of the Members in good standing in the Church.
- 2.3.3 A majority of at least 60 percent of the votes cast by the Members in good standing present shall determine the questions and motions for the meetings. The only exception to this is where the vote or consent of a greater number of Members is required by these Bylaws.
- 2.3.4 Ballot voting shall be conducted at the discretion of the Moderator in charge of the meeting of Members or if requested by a Member at the meeting.

2.4 Meetings of Members

- 2.4.1 An Annual General Meeting of Members shall be held within two months from the end of the fiscal year at a time and place fixed by the Leadership Team.
- 2.4.2 Other business meetings of Members may be called when needed.
- 2.4.3 Non-business meetings of Members and/or congregation may be called when needed.

2.5 Notice of Meetings

- 2.5.1 Notice of the Annual General Meeting of Members or any planned business meeting of Members of the Church, shall be given at least two weeks (including two Sundays) prior to the date fixed for such a meeting.
 - 2.5.1.1 The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to or the non-receipt of a notice by a Member that is entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceedings at that meeting.
 - 2.5.1.2 For time critical issues notice may be given at a regularly scheduled gathering of the congregation (e.g., Sunday morning worship service) for a meeting to be held no sooner than one week from then.
- 2.5.2 No notice is required for non-business meetings; although notice should be given as soon as reasonably possible.
- 2.5.3 A business meeting to consider any proposed purchase or sale of real property shall be called by giving not less than two weeks' notice, including two Sundays, before the date of the meeting. The notice shall:
 - 2.5.2.1 state the time, place and particular object for which the meeting is called;
 - 2.5.2.2 be posted at the meeting place for the congregation of the Church; and
 - 2.5.2.3 be read at all intervening services held in the meeting place for the Church.

Article 3 – Leaders and Officers

3.1 Discernment Team

- 3.1.1 Comprised of Lead Pastor, representative of Leadership Team appointed by them, and 2-3 Members in good standing appointed by Membership at the Annual General Meeting or other business meeting.
- 3.1.2 Primary responsibility shall be leading the Church in discerning individuals for Leadership Team positions.

3.2 Leadership Team

- 3.2.1 The Leadership Team shall consist of an Executive and Core Ministries Coordinators.
 - 3.2.1.1 Executive shall consist of:
 - 3.2.1.1.1 Lead Pastor
 - 3.2.1.1.2 Chair

3.2.1.1.3 Assistant Chair (Moderator)

3.2.1.1.4 Secretary

3.2.1.2 Core Ministries Coordinators as are designated by the Membership.

3.2.2 Pastoral staff shall comprise less than 50 percent of Leadership Team.

3.3 Qualifications of Leadership Team Members

3.3.1 Spiritual Qualifications – Leadership Team Members shall demonstrate faithfulness in:

3.3.1.1 Following Jesus;

3.3.1.2 Marriage or singleness and family;

3.3.1.3 Serving the Church;

3.3.1.4 Testimony to the world.

3.3.2 Other Qualifications:

3.3.2.1 at least eighteen years of age;

3.3.2.2 Church Member in good standing;

3.3.2.3 affirms the Confession of Faith;

3.3.2.4 upholds the objects of the Church;

3.3.2.5 cannot be undischarged bankrupts;

3.3.2.6 cannot be persons who have been convicted of an offense in connection with the promotion, formation, or management of a corporation within five (5) years prior to being a Leadership Team Member; and

3.3.2.7 cannot be persons who have been convicted of an offense involving fraud within five (5) years prior to being a Leadership Team Member.

3.4 Selection, Appointment, and Length of Term of Leadership Team Members

3.4.1 The Discernment Team is responsible for finding suitable candidates to serve specific positions on the Leadership Team.

3.4.2 The Discernment Team shall present candidates for affirmation or vote (if more than one candidate per position) to the membership at a duly called business meeting.

3.4.3 Candidates must receive at least 75 percent affirmative vote of the Members in good standing present to join the Leadership Team.

- 3.4.4 Leadership Team members are appointed for two year terms up to a total of three consecutive times. A Leadership Team member may be considered for additional terms after being off the Team for one year.

3.5 Accountability and Removal of Leadership Team Members

- 3.5.1 All Leadership Team members shall be accountable to the whole Leadership Team for conduct and decisions.
- 3.5.2 The whole Leadership Team shall be accountable to the Membership for conduct and decisions of the whole Team and individual members of the Team.
- 3.5.3 A Leadership Team member may be removed from office if his/her behaviour or beliefs run counter to the Confession of Faith, Act, Constitution, Bylaws, policies, and practices of the Church. Removal from office requires at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing present at a duly called meeting.

3.6 Remuneration

- 3.6.1 Except for Pastoral staff, no Leadership Team member shall receive any stated salary for his or her service on the Leadership Team. However, each Leadership Team member shall be entitled to receive from the Church reimbursement of the expenses incurred by attending any regular or special meeting of the Leadership Team or of any committee. All such reimbursement and compensation shall be paid even if a meeting is adjourned because of the absence of a quorum. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Leadership Team member from serving the Church in any other capacity and receiving related compensation.

3.7 Proceedings of the Leadership Team

- 3.7.1 The Leadership Team Chair or any three (3) Leadership Team members may request a Leadership Team meeting at any time. The Chair or Assistant Chair shall normally convene the meeting.
- 3.7.2 A quorum at any Leadership Team meeting shall be a majority of the Leadership Team members but at no time can a quorum consist of fewer than four (4) Leadership Team members.
- 3.7.3 Each Leadership Team member (except person serving as chair of the meeting) shall be entitled to one vote at any meeting; the chair may only vote in the event of a tie vote.
- 3.7.4 A Leadership Team member may not vote by proxy.
- 3.7.5 All Leadership Team members including Pastor(s) have the right to notice of and attendance at all meetings.

- 3.7.6 All Leadership Team members including Pastor(s) shall have the right to speak to and vote on any issue except when there is a personal conflict of interest.

3.8 Indemnification and Insurance

- 3.8.1 Every Leadership Team member and/or Officer, past or present, and any other person who has undertaken or is about to undertake any duty, obligation, or liability on behalf of the Church, and their respective heirs, legal representatives and estates, shall at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the Church from and against all costs, charges, and expenses, including an amount paid to settle an action or satisfy a judgement, reasonably incurred by him or her in respect of any civil or administrative action or proceeding to which he or she is made a party by reason of being or having been a Leadership Team member or Officer or other person authorized to act on behalf of the Church, except such costs, charges or expenses as are occasioned by his or her gross negligence or criminal conduct.

Article 4 – Pastoral Staff

4.1 Qualifications:

- 4.1.1 The Pastor(s) of the Church shall be, or be willing and able to be, credentialed by the ABMB Conference and licensed by the Province of Alberta.
- 4.1.2 The Pastor(s) shall affirm the Confession of Faith.
- 4.1.3 The Pastor(s) shall meet the qualifications for Leadership Team Members (see section 3.3).

4.2 Calling of a Pastor

- 4.2.1 The Leadership Team shall be responsible to guide the Church in calling a pastor;
- 4.2.1.1 the Leadership Team may serve as the Pastoral Search Team or may appoint a team with at least one representative from the Leadership Team;
- 4.2.1.2 the Leadership Team shall encourage the congregation to be in prayer throughout the search process and may arrange particular times of corporate prayer.
- 4.2.2 Selection and calling of a pastor
- 4.2.2.1 The Leadership Team shall present one candidate for consideration by the congregation.

4.2.2.2 A majority of at least 75 percent of ballots cast by Members in good standing at a duly constituted meeting is required to call a pastor.

4.2.2.3 The Leadership Team shall have the authority to hire temporary or part-time (half-time or less) ministry staff.

4.3 Terms of Employment

4.3.1 Terms of employment for pastoral staff shall be guided by the latest Employment Manual approved by the Leadership Team; these terms shall be included in the Employment Contract for each pastor.

Article 5 – Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

5.1 Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

5.1.1 The Constitution and Bylaws of the Church may be amended by at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing present at any duly called business meeting.

5.1.2 Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws may be proposed by a Member or the Leadership Team of the Church.

5.1.3 All proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws shall be submitted to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall call a business meeting of the Members for the purpose of considering and voting on any proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws and shall give notice of the meeting to Members.

5.1.4 The notice of the meeting shall contain the exact wording of any such proposed amendment and shall also contain an explanation of the purpose and intention thereof.

5.1.5 A quorum for any vote to amend the Constitution or Bylaws shall be obtained when the Members present at the meeting represent at least 20 percent of the Members in good standing.

Article 6 – Dissolution of the Church

6.1 Dissolution of the Church

6.1.1 Dissolution of the Church shall only be carried out by at least a 75 percent majority of votes cast by Members in good standing present at a business meeting duly called for that purpose or at an Annual General Meeting of the Members.

- 6.1.2 The Leadership Team shall give Members at least sixty days notice of any meeting to consider and vote on a proposal to dissolve the Church. Such notice shall contain the exact wording of any such proposed dissolution.
- 6.1.3 A quorum for any vote to dissolve the Church shall be obtained when the Members present at the meeting represent at least 25 percent of the Members in good standing.

6.2 Disposition of Property

- 6.2.1 If, upon the dissolution of the Church, there remains, after the satisfaction of all debts and obligations, any property or assets that formerly belonged to the Church, then that property shall be given or otherwise transferred to the ABMB.

This revised Constitution and Bylaws was ratified by the Membership of HMBC on October 16, 2013. It is signed by the following officers:

Peter von Kampen
Chair of Leadership Team

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Weldon Dueck
Assistant Chair of Leadership Team

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Brent Penner
Secretary of Leadership Team

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX A – CCMBC Confession of Faith

1. God

We believe in the one true God, the source of all life, who reigns over all things as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and lovingly cares for all creation. God the Father planned the redemption of humanity and sent Jesus Christ the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God, bringing good news to the poor and triumphing over sin through his obedient life, death, and resurrection. God the Holy Spirit empowers believers with new life, indwells them, and unites them in one body.

2. Revelation of God

We believe God has made himself known to all people. Beginning with creation and culminating in Jesus Christ, God has revealed himself in the Old and New Testaments. All Scripture is inspired by God and is the authoritative guide for faith and practice. We interpret Scripture in the church community as guided by the Holy Spirit.

3. Creation and Humanity

We believe God created the heavens and the earth, and they were good. Humans, God's crowning act, were created in the image of God. Sin has alienated humanity from the Creator and creation, but God offers redemption and reconciliation through Jesus Christ.

4. Sin and Evil

We believe sin is individual and corporate opposition to God's good purposes and leads to physical and spiritual death.

5. Salvation

We believe God saves all people who put their faith in Jesus Christ. Through his obedient life, sacrificial death, and victorious resurrection, Christ delivers people from the tyranny of sin and death and redeems them for eternal life in the age to come. All creation eagerly awaits its liberation from bondage into the freedom of the glory of God's children.

6. Nature of the Church

We believe the church is the covenant community called by God through Jesus Christ to live a life of discipleship and witness as empowered by the Holy Spirit. The local church gathers regularly for worship, fellowship, and accountability and to discern, develop, and exercise gifts for ministry.

7. Mission of the Church

We believe the mission of the church is to make disciples of all nations by calling people to repent, be baptized, and love God and neighbour by sharing the good news and performing acts of love and compassion.

8. Christian Baptism

We believe baptism by water is a public sign that a person has repented of sin, received forgiveness, died with Christ, and been raised to new life through the power of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is also a public declaration of a believer's incorporation into the body of Christ as expressed in the local church.

9. Lord's Supper

We believe that in obedience to Christ, the church observes the Lord's Supper as a remembrance of his atoning death and to celebrate forgiveness, new life, and the fellowship and unity of all believers.

10. Discipleship

We believe Jesus calls people who have experienced the new birth to follow him in a costly life of service to God. The power of the Holy Spirit transforms believers from the unrighteous pattern of the present age into a life of joyful obedience with God's people.

11. Marriage, Singleness, and Family

We believe that singleness and marriage are honoured by God and should be blessed by the church. God instituted marriage as a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman for the purpose of companionship, encouragement, sexual intimacy, and procreation. Children are gifts from God and should be nurtured by parents in the ways of God.

12. Society and State

We believe that God instituted the state to promote justice and to maintain law and order. Christians' primary allegiance is to Christ's kingdom. Believers are called to witness against injustice, exercise social responsibility, and obey all laws that do not conflict with the Word of God.

13. Love and Nonresistance

We believe that God in Christ reconciles people to himself and to one another, making peace through the cross. We seek to be agents of reconciliation, practice love of enemies, and express Christ's love by alleviating suffering, reducing strife, and promoting justice. Because violence and warfare are contrary to the gospel of Christ, we believe we are called to give alternative service in times of war.

14. The Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that God is Creator and giver of life and highly values each person. Procedures designed to take human life are wrong. We oppose all attitudes that devalue human life, especially the defenceless lives of the unborn, disabled, poor, aging, and dying.

15. Stewardship

We believe the universe and everything in it belong to God the Creator and that we have been entrusted by God to manage its resources. All God's gifts, including money, time, abilities, and influence, are to be received with thanksgiving, used responsibly, and shared generously.

16. The Lord's Day, Work, and Rest

We believe God's act of creation provides the model for work and rest. In work, we use our abilities to glorify God and serve others. In rest, we express thanks for God's provision and trust in God's sustaining grace. In worship, we gather to commemorate the resurrection through worship, instruction, fellowship, and service.

17. Christianity and Other Faiths

We believe God's atoning work in Jesus is the only means of reconciling people with God. God has not left any without a witness to the Creator's goodness and power. Christians treat people of other faiths with respect but urgently proclaim Christ as the only way of salvation.

18. Christ's Final Triumph

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will return triumphantly at the end of this age to destroy all evil powers, condemn all who have rejected Christ to eternal punishment, and unite believers with Christ to reign forever with God in glory.