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**WESTERN PLAINS DISTRICT OF
THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I. DISTRICT CONFERENCE

A. Purpose. District Conference is a mass meeting where delegates and other interested persons from member congregations gather in business sessions and for worship, education and fellowship. It is also the legislative authority that governs the Western Plains District and implements denominational polity. District Conference projects the program of the District as it relates to the Mission and Ministry Board and other denominational agencies. It approves budgets and adopts programs. Through its delegates, it interprets and promotes the decisions of District Conference to local congregations.

B. Delegate Body. All attendees at a business session can engage issues and participate in discussion of District Conference business. However, only credentialed delegates have the right to vote. Any member or active participating youth of a District congregation may serve as a delegate. For the purpose of this section 'congregation' also means Church of the Brethren fellowships that have been recognized by the Western Plains District Conference. Congregational representatives are selected by their congregations.

1. Congregations submit a certification (credential form) for each elected delegate and alternate, to the Clerk early enough to enter the Conference Program Book but no later than one week prior to the opening of the District Conference. Delegates may not be seated by the District Conference unless properly certified by their congregation.
2. In case delegates or alternates are unable to serve the congregation can certify delegates without council action as follows: any two church officers can certify delegates and sign their credential forms. These are sent to the Clerk of the District Conference if time permits, or they are presented at the beginning of a business session.
3. The District Conference Planning Committee is responsible for the process of credentialing delegates. The Conference Clerk arranges for personnel to be available at the opening of each business session to receive and certify delegates and to report to the District Conference officers.

C. Representation. Each congregation having a membership of two hundred or less may have three delegates. Congregations may have all adults but are encouraged to have one youth delegate. Congregations having more than two hundred members may have one additional representative for each two hundred members or fraction thereof.

45 **D. Tenure.** Each congregation is encouraged to elect delegates to a two year term of
46 office. Delegates' duties begin when they are seated at District Conference and continue
47 until the seating of the next delegate body. Terms of delegates from a congregation
48 should be staggered so that a church does not elect all new representatives in any one
49 year.

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51 **E. Officers and Duties.** District Conference officers receive and process the business of
52 District Conference, establish and manage agendas and respond to concerns of
53 congregational members regarding actions and activities of Conference. The officers are
54 the Moderator, the Moderator-elect and the Clerk. The Leadership Team Chair and the
55 District Executive are normally consulted in conference planning, scheduling and agenda
56 management.

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58 1. The Moderator

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60 a. *Qualifications*

- 61 ▪ Must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the
- 62 District for at least one year prior to election
- 63 ▪ May not serve concurrently as an elected member on the Leadership Team
- 64 or a Ministry Team
- 65 ▪ Must have demonstrated leadership ability
- 66

67 b. *Election and Tenure* The Moderator moves from the position of Moderator-elect
68 and takes office immediately following the District Conference at which he or she
69 served as Moderator-elect or in the case of a vacancy in the office. He or she
70 serves for a one-year term and then becomes ineligible for re-election as
71 Moderator-elect for four years. Should the office of Moderator become vacant
72 the Moderator-elect assumes the office for the remainder of the term. At the
73 discretion of the current Moderator the immediate past moderator may serve on
74 the District Conference Planning Committee for the year following his or her
75 moderatorship.

76
77 c. *Duties*

- 78 ▪ Prepares the business agenda for District Conference in cooperation with
- 79 the officers of District Conference and the District Executive
- 80 ▪ Becomes familiar with parliamentary procedure
- 81 ▪ Presides at the business sessions of the District Conference
- 82 ▪ Appoints tellers, timekeepers and parliamentarian
- 83 ▪ Serves as a member and chair of the District Conference Planning
- 84 Committee
- 85 ▪ Collaborates with District Executive and Leadership Team chair to
- 86 develop a visioning and planning retreat in early fall
- 87 ▪ Serves on the Leadership Team as an ex-officio member

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- Studies the needs and programs of the District and reports recommendations to the Leadership Team and its Ministry Teams
 - Serves as the duly elected spiritual guide who measures and influences the spiritual tone of the District congregations
 - May deliver a Moderator’s address at District Conference
 - In consultation with the District Executive and District Leadership Team, assists with District and ecumenical matters

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When designing the agenda and business process of District Conference the Moderator is tasked with achieving maximum engagement from delegates and attendees and fostering dialog and discussion on the conference floor. This is done in close collaboration with the Conference Planning Committee. He or she also works closely with the Stewards Team and the District Office on matters of budgeting, finance and logistics for the conference.

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2. The Moderator-elect

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- a. *Qualifications.* The same qualifications are required of the Moderator-elect as for the Moderator.
 - b. *Election and Tenure.* The Moderator-elect serves for one year and then assumes the office of Moderator.
 - c. *Duties.*
 - Performs all duties of the Moderator when the Moderator is unable to serve
 - May assist at the Moderator’s request in presiding over a portion of the business session
 - Contacts local leaders and congregations in the interest of the District program
 - Represents the Moderator on inter-church agencies and serves as an ex-officio member of the Leadership Team
 - Serves on the District Conference Planning Committee
 - Serves as a member of the Gifts Discernment Team
 - d. *Inability of moderator to serve.* If the Moderator-elect must stand in to serve as Moderator during the entire District Conference because of the inability of the Moderator to serve, he or she is presumed to have served as Moderator. If this arises far enough in advance that Gifts Discernment can act before Conference, a new Moderator Elect shall be named at the beginning of the Conference. If the Moderator Elect must assume the Moderator role with too little time for Gifts Discernment to act prior to Conference, then District Conference must name both a Moderator-elect and a Moderator for the next year.

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3. The Clerk

- a. *Qualifications.* The Clerk must be a member of a Church of a Brethren congregation within the District at least one year prior to election.
- b. *Election and Tenure.* The Clerk is elected for a three-year term and may serve two consecutive terms. Filling an unexpired term does not constitute a full term. The term begins immediately following the District Conference at which he or she is elected.
- c. *Duties.*
 - Records minutes of the District Conference and Planning Committee
 - In cooperation with the District Executive prepares the minutes for publication and distribution to the local congregations
 - Forwards to the Annual Conference Secretary any queries passed to Annual Conference by the District Conference
 - Assists in the interpretation of the minutes of the District Conference

F. Time and Place. District Conference is held annually in late July or early August as determined by the Conference Planning Committee. The location of the meeting is determined by the Conference Planning Committee.

All sessions of the District Conference are open to those present except when the delegate body convenes in closed session. Non-delegate participants are encouraged to actively engage in discussion and debate, but only delegates may vote on actions.

Special District Conference meetings may be called at the discretion of the District Conference officers in consultation with the Leadership Team.

G. Rules of Order. The Moderator conducts the business according to established rules of order which are published in the Conference booklet.

Nominations from the floor must have the prior written (paper, e-mail or text) consent of the nominee.

Length and number of speeches allowed are determined by the District Conference Officers.

Any business item requiring approval by the Conference shall be decided by a majority of credentialed delegates, except where Conference rule requires a higher majority.

A majority vote approves ballot nominees presented by the Gifts Discernment Team. Majority vote also determines the outcome in the event a position is contested.

176 **H. Quorum.** A quorum consists of delegates representing fifty percent of the
177 congregations of the District who have sent a delegate to any district conference
178 within the last three years.

179
180 **I. District Conference Committees**

- 181
182 1. District Conference Planning Committee. The District Conference Planning
183 Committee in consultation with the Moderator is responsible for planning the
184 conference program and theme, obtaining leadership and making all necessary
185 arrangements for the conference. The committee consists of six
186 members: Moderator, Moderator-elect, Clerk and three persons elected by the
187 District Conference. An elected member serves three years and may serve two
188 successive terms. Terms are staggered so that one member is elected each year. At
189 the invitation of the current Moderator, for purposes of continuity and counsel, the
190 immediate past Moderator may meet with the Committee.
191
- 192 2. Committees Appointed by the District Conference. The District Conference may
193 authorize to continue short-term committees to assist with the ongoing work of the
194 District. When committee achieves its specific assignment it will be dismissed.
195

196 **Standing Committee Delegate.** The Standing Committee Delegate interprets decisions
197 and recommendations of Annual Conference to the District Conference. The delegate
198 represents the District on the Annual Conference Standing Committee and is elected by the
199 District Conference. Annual Conference polity determines eligibility, the number allowed
200 and the length of term. The current Annual Conference rule specifies a term of three years,
201 with eligibility for re-election to one additional term following a full or partial term of
202 service on Standing Committee. After such service members are ineligible to serve for a
203 period of four years.

204
205 Any member of the Church of the Brethren who has been a member of a congregation in
206 the District for one year may be elected as Standing Committee-delegate. If a Standing
207 Committee delegate moves from the District or is unable to serve, the elected alternate
208 serves.

209
210 The delegate serves as ex-officio member of the District Leadership Team.
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212 **ARTICLE II. LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY TEAMS**

213
214 **A. Purpose and Framework.** The Leadership Team manages and administers the religious
215 and business activities of the District as authorized by the District Conference. The
216 Leadership Team acts as the Trustees and legal agent of the District as referenced in the
217 Articles of Incorporation. It is empowered to act on behalf of the District except in duties
218 specifically reserved for the District Conference as set forth in the Constitution and By-
219 laws.

220
221 Ministry Teams implement District programs specific to their area of accountability.
222 They coordinate activities with other teams through the annual planning retreat and
223 through chair representation on the Leadership Team.
224

225 The Ministry Forum consists of all members of both the Leadership Team and Ministry
226 Teams meeting together. This happens at least once a year in a visioning and planning
227 retreat, referenced elsewhere in this document.
228

229 **B. Membership.** The Leadership Team consists of ten (10) members elected by the District
230 Conference with terms arranged so that three terms expire one year, three expire every
231 second year and four every third year. The ten members shall be as follows: Chair,
232 Secretary and chairs of the District's eight ministry teams. A vice Chair is selected from
233 among the ministry team chairs *other than* Stewards and Gifts Discernment. The Chair
234 and the Secretary should not serve in the same term cycle. The Moderator, Moderator-
235 elect, District Executive and Treasurer serve as ex-officio members of the Leadership
236 Team.
237

238 The Ministry Teams consist of an unspecified number of members but may be
239 determined by workload, generally 3-6. Calls to service are initiated by the Gifts
240 Discernment Team in consultation with the team chair. Ministry Team members are
241 elected by District Conference only for their first term. Subsequent terms may be fulfilled
242 by agreement with the team chair and Gifts Discernment Team.
243

244 **C. Officers.** Officers of the Leadership Team are the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Secretary,
245 the Treasurer and the District Executive.
246

247 **D. Qualifications.** A Leadership Team member and a Ministry Team member must be a
248 member of a Church of the Brethren congregation or fellowship within the District for at
249 least one year prior to election and must have demonstrated leadership ability.
250

251 **E. Terms and Tenure.** The term of service for Leadership Team members is three
252 years. Filling an unexpired term does not constitute a full term. A member may serve
253 two consecutive full terms. Eligibility is restored after one year out of office. If an elected
254 member of the Leadership Team is unable to complete his or her term, the Leadership
255 Team in consultation with the Gifts Discernment Team names an alternate to complete
256 the unexpired term.
257

258 **F. Attendance.** Leadership Team and Ministry Team members are expected to attend team
259 meetings. If a member misses three consecutive meetings the Leadership Team should
260 consider position vacant and appoint a replacement to fill the vacancy.
261

262 **G. Organization.** The Leadership Team and Ministry Teams are largely organized annually
263 at District Conference. If additional organization is needed, it is done under the guidance

264 of the Moderator following election by the District Conference, preferably at the retreat
265 in early fall. The District Executive, Leadership Team Chair, Moderator and Moderator-
266 elect are ex-officio members of the Leadership Team and all Ministry Teams. The
267 Treasurer is on the Stewardship Team and is an ex-officio member of the Leadership
268 Team, without vote. The Standing Committee member and any member of the
269 denominational Mission and Ministry Board residing in the district are ex-officio
270 members of the Leadership Team and its Ministry Teams.

271

272 1. Leadership Team Chair

- 273 ▪ Performs all duties ordinarily pertaining to the role of the chair and other
- 274 duties that may be assigned by the Leadership Team and these Bylaws
- 275 ▪ Serves as ex-officio member on all Ministry Teams
- 276 ▪ Does not serve as chair of a Ministry Team
- 277 ▪ Coaches the Leadership Team and Ministry Team chairs to clarify
- 278 responsibilities set forth in these bylaws and its supporting administrative
- 279 manual
- 280 ▪ Establishes and monitors accountability for tasks
- 281 ▪ Maintains communication within the Ministry Forum and with staff

282

283 2. Leadership Team Vice Chair

- 284 ▪ Performs all duties and has all authority of the Chair when the Chair is absent
- 285 ▪ Performs other duties as may be assigned by the Leadership Team
- 286 ▪ Is an ex-officio member of the Gifts Discernment Team

287

288 3. Secretary

- 289 ▪ In consultation with the District Executive and District Office staff records all
- 290 Leadership Team proceedings
- 291 ▪ Performs other duties as assigned by the Leadership Team, including but not
- 292 limited to archiving and distributing minutes of Leadership Team meetings
- 293 and joint gatherings of the Ministry Forum
- 294 ▪ Is independently elected for the task, not filling any other role on the
- 295 Leadership Team or Ministry Teams except as a designated officer of the
- 296 Leadership Team.

297

298 4. Treasurer

- 299 ▪ Accounts for all District funds received and disburses same as authorized by
- 300 the Leadership Team
- 301 ▪ Makes written reports available to meetings of Leadership Team
- 302 ▪ Submits accounts for an annual audit
- 303 ▪ Is an ex-officio member without vote of the Stewardship Team
- 304 ▪ Serves as Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation

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H. Duties of the Leadership Team

- Fulfills the directives of the District Conference and makes an annual report to the Conference
- Projects long-range planning, sets goals and initiates new programs in harmony with decisions of the District Conference
- Receives, considers and responds to concerns brought by individuals or church groups
- Brings queries and other business items to the District Conference and processes queries from local churches for District Conference action
- Affirms Ministry Team appointments and makes any other appointments needed
- Meets annually in the early fall with Ministry Teams as the “Ministry Forum” in a visioning and planning retreat under the leadership of the Moderator
- At the retreat clarifies responsibilities set forth in these bylaws, orients and trains new members on expectations, establishes accountability for tasks and establishes communication within the Ministry Forum and with staff
- Creates and dissolves special teams or committees, except those specifically named in the bylaws
- Determines the number of members on each Ministry Team depending on size of the work load
- Promotes and administers the total church program in the District
- Reviews the geographical boundaries of the District
- Acts regarding employment of the District Executive and other staff
- Fills vacancies in elective positions occurring between District Conferences for any position not otherwise addressed in these bylaws
- Has custody of and manages District capital funds, endowments and annuities, or arranges for such custody and management
- Holds title to District properties
- Negotiates the purchase and sale of property and the borrowing and lending of money on behalf of the District
- Allocates and defines authority with respect to the establishment of bank accounts and the signing of checks
- In consultation with the Stewards Team, prepares the District budget for presentation to the District Conference
- Provides for an annual audit and submits the audit to District Conference
- Arranges for bonding of persons handling large sums of money, an amount set by the Leadership Team
- Acts on recommendations from the Set Apart Ministry Team regarding nominees for ordination and commissioned leadership status
- Annually appoints a Treasurer from outside its membership

I. Duties of Ministry Teams

- Work cooperatively with other Ministry Teams and staff to promote the programs of the church

- 351 ▪ Meet annually in the early fall with the Leadership Team as the “Ministry Forum”
- 352 in a visioning and planning retreat under the leadership of the Moderator
- 353 ▪ At the retreat review responsibilities of the team chair and individual members as
- 354 outlined in the bylaws or assigned by the Leadership Team; establish
- 355 accountabilities to each other, the Leadership Team and district staff
- 356 ▪ Prepare and submit to Stewards Team an annual budget request
- 357 ▪ Select from its elected members a vice chair and recording secretary
- 358 ▪ Report activities, needs and special opportunities to the Leadership Team
- 359 ▪ Recommend for Leadership Team approval persons and committees to perform
- 360 specific responsibilities related to the Ministry Teams

361

362 1. Gifts Discernment Team. Continuous transformation of our congregations and

363 their members comes from passionate and gifted leadership. The Gifts

364 Discernment Team helps achieve this by seeking and calling individuals into

365 District leadership positions. Persons called to GDT are encouraged to prayerfully

366 and thoughtfully consider the call before responding. The District Executive

367 Minister, Leadership Team Chair and Moderator Elect serve as nonvoting

368 members of this team.

369

370 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 371 ▪ Communicate with congregations and their members to identify persons
- 372 with the gifts, passion and experience needed to serve in District
- 373 leadership roles
- 374 ▪ Communicate with ministry team chairs and other leadership to discern the
- 375 most suitable roles for the talent that is offered
- 376 ▪ Work with ministry team chairs to help determine the call of current team
- 377 members and whether they continue in their roles
- 378 ▪ When possible appeal to ministry team chairs to contact individuals or
- 379 provide referrals
- 380 ▪ Call individuals to serve in all positions elected by the District Conference
- 381 (When in conversation with candidates, communicate precise expectations
- 382 of the role, and secure commitment that he or she fills the role as defined.)
- 383 ▪ Prepare the *Slate of Nominees* for presentation to the District Conference
- 384 for review and action
- 385 ▪ Fill vacant positions when they occur between District Conferences
- 386 ▪ Create and maintain a database of individuals with the gifts, passion and
- 387 experience to facilitate District duties
- 388 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team,
- 389 Ministry Forum or District Conference

390

391 2. Set Apart Ministry Team. Annual Conference charges the District with the

392 authority and responsibility to credential ministerial leadership in the Church of

393 the Brethren. The Set Apart Ministry Team primarily fulfills this role and gives

394 counsel and guidance to all ministerial matters in the District. Policy and guidance

395 from Annual Conference further emphasizes ongoing relational support as part of
396 its commitment to providing congregations with well trained, appropriately
397 educated leadership.

398
399 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 400 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 401 ▪ Assist churches and individuals in calls to the ministry
- 402 ▪ Assist in equipping and training for ministry
- 403 ▪ License and ordain ministers
- 404 ▪ Annually review the status of licensed ministers and lay speakers in the
- 405 District and present to the Leadership Team any changes
- 406 ▪ Review status of ordained ministers in accordance with denominational
- 407 policy
- 408 ▪ Seek ways to strengthen relationships between congregations and pastors
- 409 ▪ Assist pastors in their professional and personal growth
- 410 ▪ Along with local congregations, oversee the nurture of persons in the
- 411 process of preparing for ordination
- 412 ▪ Review applications for ordination to the ministry and make
- 413 recommendations to the Leadership Team
- 414 ▪ Proceed with ordination when the candidate has completed one of the
- 415 several approved denominational study programs for ordination and the
- 416 Board and local congregation have voted approval

- 417
418 3. Congregational Resourcing Team. The Congregational Resourcing Team initiates
419 and supports programs and activities that foster spiritual growth and development
420 through fellowship and service. These can include age and interest groups,
421 disaster response, Brethren Volunteer Service promotion, peace advocacy,
422 Christian education, deacon ministry and whatever else may nurture the inner life
423 of the members of our congregations and the District. CRT may also seek paid
424 program staff positions as authorized by the Leadership Team or District
425 Conference.

426
427 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 428 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 429 ▪ Initiate and coordinate programs and work for age appropriate groups such
- 430 as children, junior high and youth. Call, support and supervise people to
- 431 lead these activities
- 432 ▪ Initiate, coordinate and support disaster response activities
- 433 ▪ Work with Leadership Team to call, support and supervise leadership to
- 434 coordinate District disaster response activities
- 435 ▪ Promote and advocate for Brethren Volunteer Service
- 436 ▪ Promote and advocate for peace issues within the Church of the
- 437 Brethren. Call, support and supervise a person(s) to serve as a District
- 438 Peace Advocate

- 439 ▪ Support and provide resources to congregations for their Christian
- 440 education programs and activities
- 441 ▪ Initiate and coordinate special interest groups and activities, including
- 442 such activities as men’s and women’s retreats. Receive and consider ideas
- 443 for new special interest groups
- 444 ▪ Support and provide resources for Congregational Deacons
- 445 ▪ Take measures to assure continuity of the Team from year to year
- 446 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team,
- 447 Ministry Forum, or District Conference
- 448

449 4. Outdoor Ministry Team. The Outdoor Ministry Team (OMT) provides a safe and
 450 fun Christian Outdoor Education program for youth. OMT works with the Camp
 451 Colorado and Camp Mt. Hermon Boards and trustees to provide oversight of
 452 long-range property plans and financial oversight of all camp programs and
 453 property. Persons called are encouraged to prayerfully and thoughtfully consider
 454 their response.

455 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 457 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 458 ▪ Research and recommend program curriculum
- 459 ▪ Prepare camp forms and promotional brochures
- 460 ▪ Call qualified camp program directors through a worshipful and prayerful
- 461 process
- 462 ▪ Contact camp webmasters regarding: camp season schedule, camp
- 463 promotion, updated forms for camper registration, etc.
- 464 ▪ Maintain a current database of campers and leaders
- 465 ▪ Appoint and assist camp directors
- 466 ▪ Annually review camp session evaluations
- 467 ▪ Procure camp photos to use for promotion
- 468 ▪ Work with Camp Task Force to review and update Camp Policy
- 469 Manual/Handbook
- 470 ▪ Plan for and hold Camp Leadership Training
- 471 ▪ Attend camp workdays and family camps if possible
- 472 ▪ Identifying growth and capital needs for the camps
- 473 ▪ Support fundraising for long range plans
- 474 ▪ Resource camp staff and provide them with growth opportunities
- 475 ▪ Act as liaison between camps and congregations
- 476 ▪ Develop vision for long term stability and growth
- 477 ▪ If possible, attend the OMA annual retreat each November

478

479 5. Stewardship Team. The Stewardship Team provides financial management and
 480 reporting. It promotes programs of general stewardship education, aiding and
 481 challenging churches and other District groups to be faithful stewards of God-
 482 given resources. The Stewards Team also assures District property, assets and

483 equipment are properly used and safeguarded. The Treasurer serves as ex officio
484 member without vote of the Stewards Team.

485
486 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 487 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 488 ▪ Prepare and present the District’s annual budget for action by the
- 489 Leadership Team and the District Conference
- 490 ▪ Appoint, supervise and collaborate with the District Treasurer and
- 491 Financial Secretary
- 492 ▪ Prepare and share interim financial reports with all interested parties
- 493 ▪ Oversee and manage the District’s financial investments
- 494 ▪ Recommend the acquiring, maintenance and disposal of District assets,
- 495 including camps
- 496 ▪ Receive, manage and dispose of congregational assets when a
- 497 congregation closes
- 498 ▪ Present annual financial and budget reports for all District activities for
- 499 District Conference
- 500 ▪ Receive and manage gifts and bequests and assure donor restrictions are
- 501 honored
- 502 ▪ Provide stewardship and financial management training and other services
- 503 to District congregations
- 504 ▪ Take measures to assure continuity of the Team from year to year
- 505 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team,
- 506 Ministry Forum or District Conference

- 507
508 6. New Church Development Team. The New Church Development Team advocates
509 for new church development. It works in relationship with new church
510 development projects and leaders. It can also seek new ways to bring people
511 together in congregation around God’s word.

512
513 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 514 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 515 ▪ Develop an overall strategy for planting new congregations
- 516 ▪ Respond to individuals, groups, or existing congregations interested in
- 517 starting or planting a new congregation
- 518 ▪ Work with existing groups who seek to become a member of or associate
- 519 with the District
- 520 ▪ Plan new congregation starts by helping seek new locations, leadership
- 521 and financial support
- 522 ▪ Provide ongoing support for new congregation starts, including call on
- 523 existing congregation or other body to walk with new congregation until
- 524 achieving self-supporting status
- 525 ▪ Facilitate training for persons involved in planting new congregations

- 526 ▪ Work with and support existing congregations who declare themselves to
- 527 be a new church plant by way of transformation and radical change in their
- 528 mission and ministry
- 529 ▪ Take measures to assure continuity of the Team from year to year
- 530 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team,
- 531 Ministry Forum, or District Conference
- 532

533 7. Communications Team. The Communications Team oversees the development

534 content and the use of technology throughout the District. Communications Team

535 works closely with the District office, Executive staff and Leadership Team to

536 determine what needs to be shared with congregations, members and other

537 interested individuals and the best way to share it. This team requires a proficient

538 grasp of web-based information systems to to facilitate communication.

539

540 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 541 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 542 ▪ Increase visibility and communication outreach
- 543 ▪ Assess useful platforms (newsletter, email, social media, print, website,
- 544 etc.) and determine the best vehicle for content
- 545 ▪ Find innovative solutions for implementing programs and services
- 546 throughout the District
- 547 ▪ Determine who is responsible for content for each platform
- 548 ▪ Determine when and how to communicate directives to congregations
- 549 ▪ Help make forms and documents available to conduct District work
- 550 ▪ Oversee brand and look of District media across all platforms
- 551 ▪ Develop and distribute guidelines for social media usage, particularly
- 552 regarding pictures and posts
- 553 ▪ Consult with congregations on information technology and media
- 554 platforms when requested
- 555 ▪ Review websites and social media throughout the District to assure content
- 556 is up to date and appropriate
- 557

558 8. Training Team. Transformation requires trained leaders and congregation

559 members. The Training Team establishes and maintains leadership coaching

560 networks, training for pastors and leaders, opportunities to share stories of

561 transformation and training opportunities for all congregations and District

562 members.

563

564 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 565 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 566 ▪ Identify, call and train individuals to serve as coaches/mentors for
- 567 individuals or congregations
- 568 ▪ Plan, organize and hold training events for District pastors and lay leaders

- 569 ▪ Plan, organize and hold retreats, events, conferences and other gatherings
- 570 that offer opportunities for sharing, workshops, worship and education for
- 571 District congregations and individuals
- 572 ▪ Plan, organize and hold the annual Gathering or other event that creates
- 573 opportunities to emphasize transformation and training for congregations
- 574 and individuals
- 575 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team and
- 576 Ministry Forum of District Conference
- 577

578 **J. Quorum.** The Leadership Team and Ministry Teams may do business when 2/3 of their
579 elected members are present.

580 **K. Committees reportable to Leadership Team**

581 1. Shalom Team

582 The Shalom Team works in partnership with the Executive Minister to equip
583 congregations and their members in maintaining healthy relationships and dealing
584 creatively with brokenness in its earliest stages. This task team is appointed by and
585 accountable to the Leadership Team. It may be activated by contact made through the
586 Executive Minister or through a Shalom Team member.

587 2. Other Committees

588 Other committees may be appointed to assist with the work of the District. When the
589 assignment is completed, the committee is dismissed.

590 **L. Group Fellowships.** The activities of subsidiary or fellowship groups (such as groups for
591 women, men, youth, deacons, pastors, etc.) are subject to the coordination and concern of
592 the District and accountable to the Leadership Team through the Ministry Team related to
593 its area of interest. Each fellowship group may elect the officers necessary for its
594 activities and hold meetings as necessary to care for the business of the
595 fellowship. Fellowship events should be coordinated with the District Calendar.

596 **ARTICLE III. DISTRICT PERSONNEL**

597 **A. District Executive.** District Executive manages the business of the District. He or she
598 also guides, counsels and encourages District and local church members in the
599 development of vital and well-balanced district, denominational and ecumenical
600 programs. The District Executive must be a member of the Church of the Brethren and
601 qualified by training, experience and personal dedication to Christ and the Church. The
602 District Executive is employed by the Leadership Team.

603 The District Executive is the Executive Secretary of the Corporation and a legal officer
604 and is custodian of all official papers of the District. He or she is an ex-officio member
605 without vote of the Leadership Team and Ministry Teams and committees of the District.
606
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613
614 The District Executive establishes a framework and process for pastoral placement in all
615 District congregations. He or she meets with search committees and gives guidance,
616 assistance and recommendations at various steps of the process.

617
618 The District Executive in collaboration with the Leadership Team chair clarifies
619 responsibilities set forth in these bylaws and its supporting administrative manual for
620 elected leadership and for district staff. He or she establishes accountabilities for tasks
621 and communication among members of the Ministry Forum and with staff.

622
623 **B. Area Ministry Team.** An Area Ministry Team (AMT) is a leadership model in which
624 persons from geographic areas of the District serve alongside the District Executive in
625 specific leadership functions. The Leadership Team in consultation with the District
626 Executive implements AMTs . The District Executive, in conversation with the
627 Leadership Team is responsible for calling, supervising, reviewing and terminating AMT
628 members. If an AMT is used the District Executive and the Leadership Team crafts an
629 orientation that establishes job descriptions, meeting schedules, responsibilities and
630 communication with respect to the functions delegated.

631
632 **C. Other Staff.** The District Executive in consultation with the Leadership Team is
633 responsible for the employment, review and termination of other District staff.

634
635 **ARTICLE IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

636
637 **A. Endorsement of Documents and Contracts.** Any note, contract or instrument in writing
638 entered into between the corporation and any other person, when signed by the legal
639 officers of the Corporation, shall be valid and binding on the Corporation in the absence
640 of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officers had no
641 authority to execute it. Unless authorized by the Leadership Team, no other officer or
642 agent or employee shall have any authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or to
643 pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or amount.

644
645 **B. Representation of Shares of Other Corporations.** The District Executive or any other
646 officer or officers designated by the Leadership Team are each authorized to vote or
647 represent on behalf of the Corporation all rights incident to any and all shares of any
648 other corporation standing in the name of the Corporation. The authority may be
649 exercised by proxy or power of attorney executed by that officer.

650
651 **C. Indemnification.** The District may reimburse and indemnify any officer or employee for
652 and against all amounts paid and all costs and expenses, including attorney's fees,
653 imposed in connection with any claim or proceeding or appeal thereof, civil or criminal,
654 asserted because of his or her having been an officer or employee of the District;
655 provided that the District shall not reimburse or indemnify any officer or employee with
656 respect to any such matter unless such reimbursement is expressly authorized according

657 to the process and the criteria set forth in the paragraphs immediately below in this
658 Section C.

659
660 Upon settlement of any matter of the character referred to above, the District may
661 reimburse and indemnify any officer or employee, if it is determined by a disinterested
662 majority of the Leadership Team, or by a disinterested person or group to whom the
663 question may be referred by the Leadership Team, that the person was not guilty of
664 misconduct in the performance of his or her duties in relation to the matter, or that the
665 person was acting in good relation to the matter, or that the person was acting in good
666 faith with in what he or she reasonably believed to be the scope of his or her employment
667 or authority, and for a purpose that he or she reasonably believed to be in the best interest
668 of the District, and in the case of criminal action, he or she reasonably believed was not
669 illegal.

670
671 Solely for the purpose of this Section C on indemnification, the term “officer” is defined
672 to include:

- 673
- 674 1. Any person elected by District Conference to serve on a Team or committee
675 authorized by that body or to carry out a specific function delegated by that body
 - 676 2. Any person elected or appointed by the Leadership Team to serve on a committee or
677 subcommittee of that body or to carry out a specific function delegated by that body
 - 678 3. Any person who has been elected or appointed through documented procedures of the
679 Leadership Team as a camp trustee, camp director, or camp counselor at Camp Mt.
680 Hermon or at Camp Colorado

681
682 **ARTICLE V. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS**

683
684 The District relates to other organizations and agencies that further the purposes of the District.
685 Organizations such as The Cedars; McPherson College; Bethany Theological Seminary;
686 Brethren Benefit Trust; Mission and Ministry Board; On Earth Peace; statewide ecumenical
687 agencies; and Prairie View, Inc. are separate corporate entities under the control of governing
688 boards that are free of direct ownership and control by the District and that are solely responsible
689 for their actions and dealings.

690
691 The District elects or nominates persons to serve on the boards as follows:

- 692
- 693 **A. The Cedars.** The District Conference will elect persons to the Cedars Board of Directors
694 in accordance with the policies of The Cedars.
 - 695
696 **B. Statewide Ecumenical Agencies.** The Executive Committee will name persons to the
697 boards of ecumenical bodies in the states within the geographical area making up the
698 District in accordance with their By-laws.
- 699

700 **C. Prairie View Inc.** The Leadership Team will name a person to the Prairie View Board in
701 accordance with the policies of Prairie View, Inc.

702

703 **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

704

705 These bylaws may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the delegates present at a District
706 Conference. Proposed Amendments must be distributed at least thirty days before the
707 Conference convenes for business.

708

709

710 Adopted by the Western Plains District Conference July 31, 2004

711 Revised by the Western Plains District Conference July 29, 2006

712

713 Version 5, Revision 10

714 03-26-92

715 8-15-92

716 9-29-92

717 03-16-93

718 08-03-96

719 08-01-97

720 7-31-04

721 7-29-06

722 Major revision adopted by District Conference July 29, 2017

723 Amendment on Quorum, 07/30/2022