

West Zion Constitution

Adopted 9-29-2013

Amended 4-14-24 by a congregational vote

ARTICLE 1 - NAME AND AFFILIATIONS

The name of this church shall be the West Zion Mennonite Church of Moundridge, Kansas. We are affiliated with Evana Network.

The Bible, interpreted in the church community through the leading of the Spirit of Jesus, serves as our guide and authority for the life of Christian faith. The 1995 *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* provides a basic summary of our convictions.

God calls us into community to worship God and follow Jesus through the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 2:9-10; Eph.2:13-21; Ex.20:1-5; Psalm 110:2; Rev.4-5)

The core values of our calling are:

- Worshiping God in ways that are beautiful and engaging.
- Becoming disciples of Jesus and living into his care and authority.
- Welcoming and accepting others into the journey of faith in Jesus.
- Growing as a caring and sharing congregation that ministers to the needs of our community.

We live our calling as a congregation organized around worship, discipleship, and mission.

ARTICLE 2 - WORSHIP

Core value

Worship of God is the heart of our life together. We worship God as the gathered community (Heb. 10:25, Col.3:15, Eph.4:1-6). We worship God in our daily lives as the scattered community (John 4:24; Rom.12:1; 2 Cor.5:9; Col.3:23). Worship connects to discipleship, because we are formed as God's people (Psalm 100; 1 Cor.10:17-18), sharing God's heart and character (Eph.5:1; 2 Peter 1:4b) in worship.

Core leadership

Worship Team

- Purpose
 - Center the church in worship as the heart of our life together before God.
- Ministry
 - Work with the pastor and musicians to plan beautiful, vibrant worship that glorifies God and connects with the life of the congregation.
 - Learn and teach about worship and its role in congregational life.
 - Center the church in the life of Christ by following the major seasons of the Christian year (Advent/Christmas, Epiphany, Lent/Easter, Pentecost)

- Seek to make the church's worship the "work of the people" (*liturgy*) by involving people of all ages, including children
- Members
 - Pastor and three elected members serving 3-year, staggered terms, as well as others as appointed by the team.
 - Chairperson attends meetings of Church Council

ARTICLE 3 - DISCIPLESHIP

Core value

The life of Christian faith is a life of following Jesus. We become Jesus' disciples--his students--by listening to him (John 10:27), knowing him (1 Cor. 2:2; Phil.3:10), and obeying him in our lives (Matt.7:21-27).

Core leadership

Christian Discipleship Team

- Purpose
 - Seek to ground the life of the church in discipleship to Jesus Christ
 - Educate the church in the Scriptures, Christian history, the spiritual disciplines, and other aspects of Christian life so that we are formed more deeply as disciples of Jesus
 - Center the church in Scripture as God's story and situate the church as the continuation of God's story today
- Ministry
 - Work with the pastor to plan, administer, resource, and equip the Christian education programs of the church for persons of all ages and stages of life.
 - Appoint all coordinators, leaders, teachers, and helpers for Sunday School.
- Members
 - Pastor and three elected members serving 3-year, staggered terms, as well as others as appointed by the team.
 - Chairperson attends meetings of Church Council

ARTICLE 4 - MISSION

Core Value

God calls us to join him in his mission in the world.

God's mission includes preaching the Gospel and making disciples (Matt.28:19-20), showing Christ's love (John 13:35; Eph.5:1-2)--particularly through service (Matt.20:28; John 13:17-18; 1 Peter 4:10), peacemaking (2 Cor. 5:18-19; Eph.6:15), hospitality (1 Tim.5:10; Heb.13:2) and leading others into the worship of God (Psalm 22:27; Zech.8:23; Rev.15:4).

God's mission happens in our daily lives and work (Col.3:17) but also involves us being sent out into the world (John 20:21).

Core leadership

Missions Team

- Purpose
 - Seek to energize and mobilize the church for mission through local service and evangelism opportunities and engagement with international and national mission partners.
- Ministry
 - Engage local, regional, national, and international opportunities for service and evangelism.
 - Motivate individuals and congregation to look beyond themselves and their own needs
 - Watch for God's working and join in God's mission in the world.
- Members
 - Pastor and three elected members serving 3-year, staggered terms, as well as others as appointed by the team.
 - Chairperson attends meetings of Church Council

ARTICLE 5 - DEACONS

- Purpose
 - The Deacons minister to the needs of the church and community alongside the Pastor.
- Ministry
 - The New Testament does not give a concise job description for deacons. However the ministry of deacons is implied in their requisite character traits (1 Timothy 3) and witnessed in the description of their activities (Acts 6-7, et al.). Deacons are to hold themselves to a high, personal moral standard (1 Tim.3:10). The word "deacon" derives from the Greek word for "service" and points to the fundamental role of deacons as servants of the church and God.
 - Ministries
 - Administration of the ministries of the church (Acts 6-7; 1 Tim. 3:5; Titus 2:5)
 - Support for the pastor and pastor's family (Acts 6:2-4)
 - Pastoral care
 - visitation and ministry of presence (Matt. 25:31-46; Heb.13:3).
 - church discipline (1 Cor. 5:4-5)
 - hospitality (Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 5:10; Heb. 13:2)
 - prayer for sick and suffering. Anointing when requested. (James 5:14)
 - Spiritual care of congregation (Acts 20:28)
 - maintain a healthy personal rule of prayer and study (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim.3; 4:14, 16)
 - encourage church members in worship, discipleship, and mission (1 Thes. 5:12)

- assist in conflict resolution while avoiding triangulation (Matt.18:15-20)
- Care for the needy (Acts 6:1-3)
 - administer benevolence funds
- Leadership in worship (1 Tim. 4:13)
 - preach and teach (e.g.- Stephen in Acts 6-7)
 - assist with communion and baptism
 - assist with preparing special services (funerals, weddings)
- Members
 - Pastor and three elected members with 3-year, staggered terms.
 - Head Deacon attends meetings of Church Council
 - Deacons shall be members of West Zion in good standing

ARTICLE 6 - TRUSTEES

- Purpose
 - Trustees are responsible for church property and the West Zion Cemetery.
- Ministry
 - Trustees maintain the church building inside and out. They appoint the custodian, supervise the work, and see that all property remains in good condition. They hire the office secretary and supervise his/her work. The Trustees act upon application from outsiders for the use of the church property, including the collection of fees and the notification of the Pastor, the church secretary, and the custodian.
 - Trustees are in charge of the West Zion Cemetery. They appoint a sexton(s) who keeps a record of lots and burials. Members who desire lots for burial are to consult the sexton(s). The Trustees make provisions for the up-keep and expansion for the cemetery.
- Members
 - Three elected members serving 3-year, staggered terms.
 - Head Trustee attends meetings of Church Council.

ARTICLE 7 - OTHER LEADERSHIP

Core value

Jesus continues his ministry in the church, the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27). God calls leaders to serve the church (1 Tim.3:10), equip the church (Eph. 4:12), give oversight (1 Peter 5:2), and exercise authority in building up the church (Titus 2:15, 2 Cor.13:10, Heb.13:17).

Church leaders demonstrate servant leadership, which was modeled by Jesus himself. This means leading in a spirit of humility (1 Peter 5:5), seeking to empower and equip others (Eph.4:12), leading collaboratively by seeking the counsel of other leaders in the church (Prov.11:14, Eph.5:21), and maintaining a self-reflective stance about the accumulation and exercise of power (Matt.7:3).

Our ultimate authority is Jesus himself (1 Peter 5:4), and church leadership seeks God's living

presence and guidance (Gal.5:25) in all meetings, decisions, and activities.

We share the great privilege, joy, and responsibility of ministering in Jesus' name (1 Peter 4:11,16; 2 John 7).

Core Leadership

Pastor(s)

- Purpose
 - As with deacons, there is no one job description given to pastors in the New Testament. We can glean the pastor's role based on the role of elders/bishops in both the Old and New Testaments, Paul's charge to Timothy (esp. 1 Tim.4:13), as well as descriptions of general leadership roles in the church (Eph.4).
 - Ministry
 - Equip and lead the church in worship, discipleship, and mission (Eph.4:12)
 - Preach and teach from the Scriptures (1 Tim. 4:13)
 - Work collaboratively with the Church Council and other Teams to forward the mission of God in the church
 - Practice evangelism (2 Tim.4:5)
 - Exercise spiritual and crisis care in the congregation
 - Represent the congregation in the community
 - Exercise the priestly ministry of Lord's Supper, baptism, and child dedication. Perform marriages, funerals, and other special services.
 - Along with the Deacons and Church Council, exercise oversight in the congregation
 - Live and minister according to a high moral standard (1 Tim.3) and exercise appropriate self-care.
 - Be accountable to Jesus Christ for spiritual well-being, the Deacons and Church Council in ministry, and Evana Network for ministry credentials
- The Pastor is elected by a two-thirds vote. The election shall be by ballot on a Sunday morning.
- Every three years, the Deacons shall review the Pastor's performance and make a recommendation to the Congregation. The Congregation shall then hold a vote. The Pastor must receive a 2/3 positive vote for his/her term to be extended.
- Resignation: In the event the pastor chooses to resign this position, the Church Council shall be given a minimum notice of ninety days prior to the effective date of resignation. Should the church choose to terminate the pastor in this position, they likewise will give a minimum of ninety days notice prior to the effective date of termination. If immediate dismissal occurs, for reasons other than ethical violations for which ministerial credentials have been terminated by the area conference, severance pay and benefits equal to ninety days shall be given.
- Selection of new Pastor: The Deacons, along with the Church Council, shall work with Evana Network to direct the efforts to locate and call a new Pastor.
- Salary: The Pastor's salary shall be recommended by the Deacons to the Church

Council using Evana Network guidelines. The salary shall be reviewed each year in the church budgeting process.

Church Council

- Purpose
 - The Church Council shall be the governing body of the church.
- Ministry
 - The Church Council directs and encourages the church in its purpose, centered in worship, discipleship, and mission. The Council shall strive to be forward-looking, creative, and visionary. Monthly meetings serve as venues for reporting from the various Teams and Committees to keep the leadership informed.
- Members
 - The chairperson from the Worship Team, Missions Team, Christian Discipleship Team, Deacons, and Trustees
 - The Pastor(s)
 - Church Chairperson
 - Recording Secretary
 - Treasurer

Treasurer

- Purpose
 - The Treasurer receives and administers the funds of the church.
 - The Treasurer is appointed annually by the Church Council.
- Ministry
 - The Treasurer keeps an account of all funds and pays all claims of the congregation when approved by the appropriate Team/Committee.
 - The Treasurer shall render a complete report of receipts and expenditures and the overall financial status of the congregation at the annual Business Meeting.

Recording Secretary

- Purpose
 - The Recording Secretary records, files, and maintains minutes of Church Council meetings and Church Business Meetings.
 - The Recording Secretary is voted on at the Annual Meeting for a three-year term.
- Ministry
 - Besides recording, filing, and maintaining minutes, the Recording Secretary is a member of the Church Council in her/his own right with full voice and vote in the meetings.

Church Chairperson

- Purpose, Ministry, and Meetings
 - The Church Chairperson convenes and presides over all meetings of the Church Council and all Congregational Meetings.
 - The Church Chairperson is elected by the Congregation in the Annual Business

Meeting for a term of three years.

Gifts Discernment Team

- Purpose and Ministry
 - The Gifts Discernment Team prayerfully discerns and recommends candidates for the various positions needed for the life and mission of the church.
 - The Gifts Discernment Team is appointed by the Church Council.

ARTICLE 8 - COMMUNITY

Community infuses and informs everything that we do. The heart of God's work is to form a community of people (the "assembly" *qahal* in the Old Testament, Deut.4:10; the "church" *ekklesia* in the New, Matt.16:18; Eph.3:21) who worship him (Ex.20:2), love him (Mark 12:30), and serve him (Deut.6:13). God calls this community together as a people reconciled to one another (Eph.2:14) and to God through Christ (Rom.5:10; 2 Cor.5:20).

Membership

- Admission of members

New members may be received in three ways:

 1. Baptism on confession of faith (Matt.28:19; 1 Peter 3:21)--The Pastor prepares and recommends the candidate for baptism to the Church Council. In the NT, salvation implies life in and commitment to the Christian Community. Therefore, believers are baptized not only into life with Jesus Christ, but into the life of the local church, which is the body of Christ.
 2. Reaffirmation of faith--A person who has been baptized but cannot obtain a letter of transfer may be accepted into membership in the church by reaffirmation of faith. The Pastor will recommend the candidate to the Church Council, and upon recommendation of the Council, the candidate will be presented to the church for affirmation.
 3. Letter of transfer--A person may present a letter of transfer indicating membership in good standing in another congregation. The Pastor will recommend the candidate to the Church Council, and upon recommendation of the Council, the candidate will be presented to the church for affirmation.
- Joys and Responsibilities of members
 1. Love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love their neighbor as themselves (Mark 12:30-31)
 2. Live reconciled to their sisters and brothers in the church (Eph.2:14; 1 Thes.3:12)
 - a. Agree to give and receive counsel (Col.3:16), encourage one another (1 Thes.5:11), and submit to church discipline in the model of Matthew 18.
 3. Commit themselves to support and participate in the life and mission of the church by:
 - a. Tithing (Mal.3:10; Matt.23:23; 2 Cor.9:7)
 - b. Participating regularly in worship (Heb.10:25), especially in the Lord's Supper, which is where we are formed as the body of Christ (1 Cor.10:16-

- 17)
 - c. Serving in the church (1 Peter 4:10)
 - d. Supporting the Pastor and leadership of the church (Heb.13:17)
4. Members who engage in the practices listed above shall be entitled to vote in business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE 9 - CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

The church shall hold two regular business meetings a year, in addition to any special meetings. Notice of these meetings shall be given at least one week in advance.

Business meeting

- when: January
- purpose: to hold elections for electable church offices and discuss other business in the life of the church
- After Teams (Worship, Mission, Christian Discipleship, Deacons, and Trustees) are elected at the Business Meeting, each team will meet to appoint members for the positions they oversee.

Budget Meeting

- when: November
- purpose: to review and approve the annual church budget

Special Meetings

- The Church Council may call special meetings at any time. One week's notice must be given to the congregation.

Twenty-five members constitute a quorum at Business, Budget, and Special Meetings.

ARTICLE 10 - ADDITIONS AND CHANGES

The Church Council has the authority to amend or revise this Constitution as needed. All amendments or revisions shall be approved by the Council and then brought to the congregation for ratification. The amendments or revisions must be announced in the church bulletin and presented at a Congregational Meeting. Amendments or revisions must be ratified by two-thirds of the votes cast.

ARTICLE 11 - REVISIONS

This constitution was adopted on September 29, 2013.
Amended on April 14, 2024 by a congregational vote.