

CONSTITUTION OF THE COVENANT MINISTERIUM

Updated 2019

ARTICLE I

Name

Section 1.1. The name of this organization shall be The Covenant Ministerium.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Section 2.1. The purpose of this organization shall be:

- a) to consider and act upon the licensure, ordination, commissioning, consecration, and discipline of ministers and missionaries in accordance with the Rules for the Ordered Ministry and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church;
- b) to seek to raise the spiritual, ethical, and professional standards of the Covenant Ministerium;
- c) to strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship among the members of the Covenant Ministerium;
- d) to render help to members of the Covenant Ministerium in times of special physical, personal, or spiritual need;
- e) to assist in the recruiting and selection of candidates for the Christian ministry and to work with North Park Theological Seminary in the matriculation of students.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 3.1. Membership in the Covenant Ministerium is defined in the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church. All members shall maintain good standing in a regional ministerial association. Good standing within the Covenant ministerium includes annual dues, a current profile, annual completion of a vocational growth tool and regular healthy connections with ministerial colleagues. Ministers and missionaries in the inactive category, and ministers serving ECC congregations without ECC credentials shall be associate members without voting privileges or the holding of office in the Covenant ministerium.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

Section 4.1. The officers of this organization shall be a president, a vice-president, a secretary, a vice-secretary, and a treasurer. The president and vice president shall be ordained ministers in good standing of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Section 4.2. These officers, together with the president of the Evangelical Covenant Church, the executive minister of the ordered ministry, the chairperson of the Board of the Ordered Ministry, the dean of North Park Theological Seminary, the chairpersons of the regional ministerial associations, and the presidents from each of the ethnic associations of the Evangelical Covenant Church (as defined by Article XV of the bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church) and the presidents of ministerium associations, approved by the ministerium, shall constitute the Executive Committee of the Covenant Ministerium.

Section 4.3. The immediate past president of the Covenant Ministerium shall be an advisor to the executive committee for one year following the completion of that person's term of office.

ARTICLE V **Meetings**

Section 5.1. The annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium shall be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Section 5.2. Business sessions shall be conducted according to the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws.

Section 5.3. One-half of those members of the Covenant Ministerium who are registered at an annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium shall constitute a quorum for business sessions at that annual meeting.

ARTICLE VI **Relationship to the Board of the Ordered Ministry**

Section 6.1. Any matters arising in the Covenant Ministerium relating to the ordination, licensure, commissioning, consecration, and discipline of ministers and missionaries, and matters of policy or principle regarding the Rules of the Ordered Ministry or the work of the Board of the Ordered Ministry shall be referred to the Board of the Ordered Ministry for consideration and recommendation before action by the Covenant Ministerium.

Section 6.2. As provided in the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church, all decisions of the Board of the Ordered Ministry requiring action by the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church shall be submitted to the Covenant Ministerium at its annual meeting for approval before being submitted to the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church. Matters not approved by the Covenant Ministerium shall be recommitted to the Board of the Ordered Ministry for further consideration.

ARTICLE VII **Amendments**

Section 7.1. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any annual meeting, provided that the amendment has been proposed at the previous annual meeting.

BYLAWS

Updated 2021

ARTICLE I

Election

Section 1.1. The chairpersons of the regional ministerial associations shall constitute the nominating committee of the Covenant Ministerium. The president of the Covenant Ministerium shall designate the chairperson of this committee. They shall convene annually at the Midwinter Conference and shall present to the annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium a ballot in printed form, with two candidates for each office to be elected. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. When there are more than two nominees for any position and no candidate receives a majority vote on the first ballot, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall stand as candidates on the subsequent ballot.

Section 1.2. The officers shall be elected for a term of three years, and shall not succeed themselves in the same office.

Section 1.3. If an office shall become vacant by death, incapacity, or resignation, the nominating committee shall confer to determine how to deal with the situation. If, in the judgment of the nominating committee, it is necessary to fill that office prior to the expiration of the current term, the nominating committee shall follow one or both of the following procedures:

a) Recommend a candidate or candidates to the executive committee which at a regular meeting or by mail ballot shall appoint a person to serve until the conclusion of the next annual meeting of the Covenant Ministerium.

b) Nominate candidates for election by the annual meeting to serve out the unexpired portion of the current term. Notwithstanding the provision of Section 1.2, a person serving out the unexpired portion of a term to which another was originally elected shall be eligible for re-election to a full term in that office.

ARTICLE II

Committees and Associations

Section 2.1. Members of the Covenant Ministerium serving in areas of specialized ministry may organize themselves into associations for purposes such as mutual support and professional enrichment. Upon approval of the executive committee such associations shall be granted recognition as specialized ministry associations of the Covenant Ministerium.

Section 2.2. The officers shall constitute the program committee. Section 2.3. Other committees may be appointed or elected as required.

ARTICLE III **Dues**

Section 3.1. Yearly dues shall be established by the Covenant Ministerium at its annual meeting. Unless excused from payment, members shall pay dues annually in order to maintain their good standing. Members who have reached the age of retirement and associate members are exempted from paying dues. The executive committee shall have the authority to develop a policy for excusing members from the payment of dues under appropriate circumstances. The executive committee shall report to the Board of the Ordered Ministry the names of those who are seriously in arrears in the payment of dues.

ARTICLE IV **Amendments**

Section 4.1. These bylaws may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

ARTICLE V **Contested Credentials Hearing**

Section 5.1 A Minister who has been notified by the Board of Ordered ministry that the Board of Ordered Ministry will recommend to the Covenant Ministerium the removal of said Minister's credentials may contest such a recommendation before the Annual Meeting of the Covenant Ministerium. Any Minister who seeks to contest the removal of their credentials must submit their intent to do so in writing to both the President of the Covenant Ministerium and the Chair of the Board of Ordered Ministry no less than 90 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant Ministerium.

Section 5.2 The Executive Officers of the Covenant Ministerium will notify the Covenant Ministerium in writing no less than 60 days prior to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant Ministerium at which a Contested Credentials Hearing is to take place. This notification will include the charges of the Board of Ordered Ministry against the Minister in question.

Section 5.3 The minister who is contesting the removal of their credentials and the Board of Ordered Ministry will be given equal time to present their cases at each stage of the Contested Credentials Hearing.

Section 5.4 Prior to the start of the Contested Credentials Hearing the President of the Covenant Ministerium will introduce a motion to establish time frames for the Contested Credentials Hearing, including deliberations and debate. The President of the Covenant Ministerium must submit this motion to both the Minister in question and the Board of Ordered Ministry at least one month prior to the Annual Meeting of the Covenant Ministerium so as to provide adequate time for preparation. This motion may be debated and amended by the Covenant Ministerium.

Section 5.5 No testimony that is directly relevant to the Contested Credentials Hearing may take place prior to the hearing itself. Anyone wishing to present first-hand information about the minister in question or the recommendation of the Board of Ordered Ministry must do so as a witness during the Contested Credentials Hearing. The President of the Ministerium will determine what constitutes directly relevant testimony.

Section 5.6 The President of the Covenant Ministerium will preside over the Contested Credentials Hearing and will be responsible to maintain proper order. The President of the Covenant Ministerium must make every reasonable effort to preside in an impartial manner ensuring an equitable and fair process. No one, save for those directly involved in the Contested Credentials Hearing or the President of the Covenant Ministerium, may obtain the floor during the hearing. Any questions, or points of order arising during the hearing must be submitted to the President of the Ministerium in writing. If the President of the Covenant Ministerium feels that he or she cannot be impartial for whatever reason they may recuse themselves and the Vice-President of the Covenant Ministerium will assume the responsibilities of the President for the purposes of the Contested Credentials Hearing.

Section 5.7 The Board of Ordered Ministry will present first at each stage of the Contested Credentials Hearing. The hearing will be ordered as follows:

- a) Opening Statements.
- b) Witness testimony.
- c) Closing Statements.

Section 5.8 Deliberation will begin following the conclusion of closing statements. Both the minister who is contesting the removal of their credentials and the representatives from the Board of Ordered Ministry who presented will exit the room until a decision has been reached. Deliberation will be ordered as follows:

- a) Debate on approving or not approving the recommendation of the Board of Ordered Ministry to remove the credentials of the minister in question.
- b) Vote on the recommendation for the removal of credentials, a two-thirds vote is required to approve the recommendation.
- c) If a two-thirds vote is reached on the recommendation for the removal of credentials, the Board of Ordered Ministry will then, with the concurrence of the Covenant Ministerium, submit the recommendation to the Annual Meeting of the ECC.
- d) If a two-thirds vote is not reached then the matter returns to the Board of the Ordered Ministry.