

## **BY-LAWS OF PETTISVILLE MISSIONARY CHURCH**

### **ARTICLE I – NAME AND AFFILIATION**

This organization shall be known as Pettisville Missionary Church, Hereafter, it shall be referred to as the local conference, which is comprised of the voting membership, the regular attenders and adherents of the organization.

This church is a member church of the Missionary Church, Inc., which has its denominational headquarters in Fort Wayne, Indiana. This church is also a member church of the East Central District of the Missionary Church, which has its headquarters in Troy, Ohio. As such, Pettisville Missionary Church shares in the privileges, benefits and responsibilities of those affiliations.

### **ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

Pettisville Missionary Church exists to worship and praise God and to make more and better disciples of Jesus Christ.

### **ARTICLE III – OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this local church is to be the visible, tangible incarnation of Jesus Christ, called and sent into the context of the culture in which it is found. It is a community of faith, with Jesus as its Savior and Lord, living in relationship with Christ and with each other. It is a people who visibly express unity in Christ by their corporate practices of worship, study, mutual concern, sharing their resources and practicing the “one another” passages of the New Testament. The local church is the verbal and visible witness to the world that the Kingdom of God has come in and through Jesus Christ and that God has sent His Son to heal, to rescue and to reconcile.

### **ARTICLE IV – ARTICLES OF FAITH AND PRACTICE**

A complete statement of faith, including other important topics relative to practice and conduct, may be found in the *Constitution of the Missionary Church*, Article IV, 2003 edition, which may be found in the church office.

### **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

#### **A. Membership basis**

We believe that local church membership is solidly based on biblical principles. Membership in the Pettisville Missionary Church is based on membership in the Body of Christ, which involves a public affirmation of personal faith in the substitution of Christ for our sins on the cross and the acceptance of His Lordship in our lives. Membership in the Pettisville Missionary Church is expressed by the willing commitment to like-minded believers through the agency of a covenant with one another. The understanding of the covenant and the principles of commitment to the congregation are outlined on the application for membership, which formalizes the desire to be in covenant with this local congregation. Understanding the positions and practices of this congregation is considered to be important. Prospective new members are strongly urged to participate in the opportunities offered which explain our common beliefs, as well as to assure themselves and the rest of the membership of their personal faith in Christ as expressed in baptism at an age of accountability.

## **B. Membership process**

After participation in the opportunities provided for understanding the church and one's relationship to it, prospective members shall submit an application and participate in a membership interview with the Elders, who may then recommend applicants for membership. The PMC Council will affirm the recommendation of new members, and the congregation will receive them in a public service by entering into the Covenant of Membership together.

1. Application can be obtained from any member, staff, Elder or Pastor, and will be available in the church office to those interested in membership.
2. Applications will be reviewed by the Elders for testimony of the grace of salvation.
3. The Council will receive the applicants on the recommendation of the Elders.
4. Reception of new members may take place during any public service throughout the year.

## **C. Membership practices**

Consistent with the Covenant, the following practices are expected of members of Pettisville Missionary Church:

1. Faithfulness in attendance and support;
2. Expression of mutual love;
3. Constancy in practice of the Biblical injunctions about serving, loving, preferring, honoring and upholding one another;
4. Exercise of spiritual gifts as bestowed by the Holy Spirit;
5. Accountability to each other for growth in Christian living;
6. Faithfulness as stewards of God's gifts, including time and money;
7. Faithfulness and constancy in prayer;
8. Faithfulness to study Scripture; and
9. Faithfulness to share Christ in word and deed at every opportunity.

## **D. Discipline of members**

All members of the Church of Jesus Christ are expected to conduct their lives according to the standards set forth in Scripture. Such conduct includes moral purity, personal honesty and Biblical fidelity. Members are to be constant examples of authentic Christianity as they seek to model the character of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. In addition, members shall promote the unity of the church rather than seek to divide it.

Any matters requiring discipline of church members will be conducted according to the guidelines established in the *Constitution of the Missionary Church*, which is available in the church office. [see ARTICLE XIII, C, 31]

## **E. Change of membership status**

A member failing to share in the fellowship and responsibilities of his/her local church for a period of one year without just cause shall, after due personal counsel, forfeit his/her membership. The Elders shall review and determine matters of just cause.

Members in good standing who move from one locality to another shall, at their written request, be given letters of transfer to the church of their choice. In case of a pastoral change, the memberships of the pastor and those family members who accompany him (and are in good standing in the church) shall automatically follow them to the Missionary Church to which the pastor transfers. If the transfer is not made to a Missionary Church, the local church or denomination will establish their own guidelines for transfer of membership. [See *Constitution of the Missionary Church*, XIII, C, 5, which is available in the church office.

## **ARTICLE VI – LOCAL CONFERENCE**

### **A. Church year**

The regular church year shall extend from January 1 through December 31.

### **B. Business meetings**

The church shall have a minimum of two regularly scheduled business meetings per year. The first meeting will be for the purpose of reporting and reviewing ministries. The second meeting will be for the purpose of electing church officers, appointing boards and committees and adopting the annual budget. The exact dates and times of these meetings shall be set by Council and published to the congregation at least two weeks in advance. Any other business which needs to be transacted may also be done at these meetings. Additional non-emergency business meetings may be scheduled by Council at any time during the year with two weeks' advance notice, as above.

### **C. Voting**

1. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of all eligible voting members present at a business meeting. Voting members are persons age sixteen and older who have entered into the Covenant of Membership with the congregation.
2. Eligibility. No provision shall be made for proxy or absentee voting. In the event that other ministries are concurrent with the business meetings, eligible members who are in the building may vote.
3. Voting process. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a written ballot to submit to Council. Council shall approve each name on the ballot, after which the Nominating Committee shall contact nominees to determine whether they are willing to serve. The proposed final ballot shall be submitted in writing to Council for approval. The approved written ballot must be posted for two weeks prior to the election. After the initial ballot is posted, additional nominations must be submitted to the Council Chair in writing at least one week prior to the scheduled business meeting. A majority vote of the quorum shall constitute an election. If there is no election, the nominee receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped and the remaining nominees shall be voted upon until one nominee is elected.
4. If no nominee is available for the voting process, Council will fill the vacancy by appointment.

## **ARTICLE VII – CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

Persons elected by the local conference shall serve as: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Trustees, and other officers as deemed necessary by the local conference. These may be, but are not limited to: Chair of the Evangelism/Missions Committee, Nominating Committee, member(s)-at-large, District Conference delegates, and General Conference delegates.

### **Election and Ratification Schedule**

<b>Council</b>	<b>Boards or Committees</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Chair		2 Years	1 Biennially
Vice Chair		2 Years	1 Biennially Alternated with Chair
Secretary		2 Years	1 Biennially Alternated with Chair
Missions Chair		1 Year	1 Annually
Trustee		4 Years	1 Every year
Members-at-large		1 Year	3 Annually
Treasurer		2 Years	Biennial Ratification
	Deacon	1 Year	10 Annually
	Deaconess	1 Year	10 Annually
	Nominating Committee	1 Year	1 Annually
	Head Usher	1 Year	2 Annually
	Music and Worship Board	1 Year	2 Annually
	District Conference Delegate	1 Year	3 Annually
	General Conference Delegate	2 Years	3 Biennially

All elected officers must be members in good standing of the local conference, qualified and willing to serve in the position for which they are nominated. Any incomplete term vacancies will be filled by the appointment of the church Council.

### **A. Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor shall give leadership to the local conference, providing ministry vision and living a Christ-like life. The call of a Senior Pastor shall be the result of a prayerful search by the Board of Elders in conjunction with the East Central District Superintendent, concurrence of the Church Council and ratification by the local conference. Successful ratification shall be the favorable vote of at least 85% of the voting members of the local conference present at the ratification meeting. Following ratification, Council shall negotiate a compensation package. Discerning God's will and direction by prayerful consideration, the Board of Elders shall determine the term of the Senior Pastor's call.

The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the teaching and preaching ministry of the local conference and shall be responsible to see that all teaching is Biblically sound. He shall provide oversight to the pastoral and other staff. In addition, he may serve on boards and committees as advised by the Board of Elders.

**B. Pastoral Staff**

Additional pastoral staff shall be selected by the Senior Pastor in conjunction with the local conference leadership. Staff shall be hired based on ministry needs and according to vision for future ministry. All staff members shall report directly to the Senior Pastor and shall submit regular reports of their respective areas of ministry.

**C. Chair**

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the local conference and of the church Council. He may delegate this responsibility to the Vice-Chair with the approval of the local conference or the church Council.

He shall serve a two-year term, elected by a majority vote of the local conference at the annual business meeting. He shall be a member in good standing of the local conference and shall be a member of the Elder Board.

**D. Vice-Chair**

The Vice-Chair shall preside at all meetings of the local conference and church Council in the absence of or by the delegation of the Chair.

He shall serve a two-year term, elected by a majority vote of the local conference at the annual business meeting. His election shall be on alternate years to that of the Chair. He shall be a member in good standing of the local conference and shall be a member of the Elder Board.

**E. Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep a written record of all proceedings of the local conference and of the church Council. He/she shall present a written record of all proceedings to the local conference and church Council at their respective meetings. With the approval of the local conference or church Council, the Secretary may delegate these responsibilities to an assistant.

The Secretary shall serve a two-year term, elected by a majority vote of the local conference at the annual business meeting. He/she shall be a member in good standing of the local conference.

**F. Trustees**

The Trustees shall hold in trust the properties of the local conference. They shall be responsible for their care and maintenance. They shall also be responsible for the supervision of those who are hired or who volunteer to do the work that such care and maintenance may require.

The number of Trustees shall be determined by the Church Council. Each Trustee shall serve a four-year term, these terms to be staggered at one year intervals. At least one Trustee shall be elected by a majority vote of the local conference at each annual business meeting. A Trustee in his/her fourth consecutive year shall serve as Leader of Trustees and as a Council member.

### **G. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall receive and hold all monies of the local conference. He/she shall: maintain accurate records of all bank accounts; regularly pay all obligations as directed by the church Council; and provide a regular printed report of all accounts and monies to the local conference and to the church Council.

The Treasurer shall serve a two-year term, appointed by the church Council and ratified by the local conference at the annual business meeting. He/she shall be a member in good standing of the local conference and be qualified to serve in the position.

### **H. Stewardship Director**

The Stewardship Director shall provide oversight for the counting and recording of the weekly offerings of the local conference. In addition, he/she shall oversee the issuing of offering envelopes, maintaining the confidence of names and the amounts of those who give. He/she shall recruit individuals, with the approval of Council, who will assist with the counting and recording of monies. He/she shall prepare and mail year-end statements of giving and issue receipts upon request. He/she shall comply with IRS guidelines and regulations for charitable donations.

The Stewardship Director shall be a member in good standing of the local conference, shall be appointed annually by the Council and shall be a member of the PMC Finance Committee.

### **I. Elder Board**

Elders are entrusted with the spiritual oversight and well-being of the congregation. Biblical qualifications of elders are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Each Elder will be selected according to those Biblical qualifications and other qualifications as summarized in the Elder position description. The selection process requires nomination and unanimous recommendation by the current Board of Elders, approval by the Church Council and a ratification of 90% by the voting members present at a scheduled business meeting.

An Elder, once appointed, will remain in that position unless he: (a) leaves the church; (b) passes away; (c) requires disciplinary action necessitating his removal; or (d) submits a written resignation.

Included as Elders are the Senior Pastor and additional pastoral staff as appointed. Elders will be added to the Board of Elders as the Senior Pastor deems necessary for continuing effective ministry. The Board of Elders will provide a direct umbrella of protection for and mutual accountability with the Senior Pastor. The Board of Elders shall be led by the Elder Board Chair, a Board-selected member chosen annually at the last meeting of the calendar year for the following year. It will be the Elder Board Chair's responsibility to provide an agenda for meeting order and minutes of the previous meeting to the Board of Elders.

### **J. Deacon Board**

The Deacon Board is comprised of the Deacons and Deaconesses. According to Acts 6, Deacons were first appointed in order to release the Apostles and Elders from the burdens they were experiencing in meeting the temporal needs of their rapidly growing congregation. 1 Timothy 3:8-13 calls them to be worthy of respect, sincere, honest,

temperate and trustworthy, and to keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. In addition, we can assume that these men were assisted in part by their wives, which in turn has given rise to the office of Deaconess.

An appropriate number of Deacons and Deaconesses will be selected annually at the last business meeting of the year, and the Chair will represent the Deacon Board at church Council meetings. Among other duties, Deacons and Deaconesses are to pray for and support members of the local conference as special needs arise, assist as requested in the preparation and administration of the Lord's Supper, show hospitality to visitors, organize the "greeter ministry," staff the Welcome Center and give direction to the Benevolent Fund.

### **K. Evangelism and Missions Committee**

The Evangelism and Missions Committee shall oversee the evangelism and mission ministries of the local conference, developing specific goals and strategies to be implemented. They shall actively promote evangelism and missions, challenging and encouraging members of the local conference to be actively involved. In addition, they shall engage in specific prayer for evangelism and missions and promote regular correspondence with those involved in evangelism ministries who are supported by the local conference. They shall regularly plan and conduct events and opportunities for evangelism (such as Cherry Street Mission, jail and prison ministries, missions emphases). They shall regularly report on needs, concerns, answers to prayer and people who have committed their lives to Christ. They shall recommend to the Finance Committee the annual budget for evangelism and missions.

The Chair of the Evangelism and Missions Committee shall be selected annually by the local conference at the last business meeting of the year. He/she shall be a born-again Christian, an active and supporting member of the local conference and shall have a genuine interest in evangelism and missions. In addition, he/she shall be a member of the church Council and shall regularly report on evangelism and missions activities and opportunities.

### **L. Delegates**

#### **1. District Conference**

Each year the local conference shall select delegates to represent it at the annual District Conference. Delegates will be members in good standing of the local church, available at the scheduled time of the conference and qualified to represent the congregation. The number of delegates will be determined by district by-laws and guidelines. Delegates will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and selected by a plurality of the members in attendance at the annual business meeting. Delegates shall be aware of the conference agenda and shall give prayerful consideration to those matters prior to the conference.

#### **2. General Conference**

Every other year the local conference shall select delegates to represent it at the General Conference of the Missionary Church, Inc. Delegates will be members in good standing of the local church, available at the time of

the conference and qualified to represent the congregation. The number of delegates will be determined by denominational by-laws and guidelines. Delegates will be nominated by the Nominating Committee and selected by a plurality of the members in attendance at the annual business meeting.

**3. Alternate Delegates**

Alternate delegates shall be appointed by the Council in the event that an elected delegate is unable to attend District Conference or General Conference.

**ARTICLE VIII – CHURCH COUNCIL**

The church Council shall consist of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Council Secretary, the Senior Pastor, Treasurer, Deacon Chair, Director of Children’s Ministries, Chair of the Evangelism and Missions Committee, Director of Music and Worship, Finance Board Chair, a Trustee, members-at-large and other such members as Council shall deem appropriate.

The church Council shall meet a minimum of every other month (January, March, May, July, September, November), and may call additional meeting or emergency meetings as needed, by the request of three members of Council. (See ARTICLE VI – Business Meetings) Dates and times of meetings shall be determined by Council.

The duties of the church Council shall be the transaction of business, prayer and consultation relative to the mission of the church. The Council shall make arrangements for the support of the pastor(s) and such workers as may be engaged by Council. It shall affirm all applicants for church membership.

The church Council, exclusive of the pastor(s), shall represent the congregation in negotiating with a pastor, defining terms of service and employment.

The Reference Committee, consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Senior Pastor and Treasurer, shall deal with business which must be handled before the next regularly scheduled Council meeting. The Reference Committee shall have full authority to complete business transactions. Every action of the Reference Committee shall be documented and reported to the church Council at the next scheduled Council meeting.

**ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

These by-laws or any part of them may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of eligible voting members of the local conference at any regular or special business meeting. Any proposed amendment must be presented to the church Council for review. Council will submit proposed amendments to the Elders for their additional review and recommendation. Council will then propose amendments to the congregation in writing, posted at least two weeks in advance of scheduled meetings.

A by-laws review committee will be appointed annually by Council to examine and recommend necessary amendments to the By-Laws.