

1 WESTERN PLAINS DISTRICT OF
2 THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

3
4 BYLAWS
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7 ARTICLE I. DISTRICT CONFERENCE
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9 **A. Purpose** District Conference is a mass meeting where delegates and other
10 interested persons from member congregations gather in business sessions and for
11 worship, education and fellowship. It is also the legislative authority that governs the
12 Western Plains District and implements denominational polity. District Conference
13 projects the program of the District as it relates to the Mission and Ministry Board and
14 other denominational agencies. It approves budgets and adopts programs. Through its
15 delegates, it interprets and promotes the decisions of District Conference to local
16 congregations.
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18 **B. Delegate Body** All attendees at a business session can engage issues and
19 participate in discussion of District Conference business. However, only credentialed
20 delegates have the right to vote. Any member or active participating youth of a District
21 congregation may serve as a delegate. For the purpose of this section 'congregation' also
22 means Church of the Brethren fellowships that have been recognized by the Western
23 Plains District Conference. Congregational representatives are selected by their
24 congregations.
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- 26 1. Congregations submit a certification (credential form) for each elected delegate and
27 alternate, to the Clerk early enough to enter the Conference Program Book but no
28 later than one week prior to the opening of the District Conference. Delegates may
29 not be seated by the District Conference unless properly certified by their
30 congregation.
- 31 2. In case delegates or alternates are unable to serve the congregation can certify
32 delegates without council action as follows: any two church officers can certify
33 delegates and sign their credential forms. These are sent to the Clerk of the District
34 Conference if time permits, or they are presented at the beginning of a business
35 session.
- 36 3. The District Conference Planning Committee is responsible for the process of
37 credentialing delegates. The Conference Clerk arranges for personnel to be available
38 at the opening of each business session to receive and certify delegates and to report
39 to the District Conference officers.
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41 **C. Representation** Each congregation having a membership of two hundred or less
42 may have three delegates. Congregations may have all adults but are encouraged to have
43 one youth delegate. Congregations having more than two hundred members may have
44 one additional representative for each two hundred members or fraction thereof.
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46 **D. Tenure** Each congregation is encouraged to elect delegates to a two year
47 term of office. Delegates' duties begin when they are seated at District Conference and
48 continue until the seating of the next delegate body. Terms of delegates from a
49 congregation should be staggered so that a church does not elect all new representatives
50 in any one year.
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52 **E. Officers and Duties** District Conference officers receive and process the business of
53 District Conference, establish and manage agendas and respond to concerns of
54 congregational members regarding actions and activities of Conference. The officers are
55 the Moderator, the Moderator-elect and the Clerk. The Leadership Team Chair and the
56 District Executive are normally consulted in conference planning, scheduling and agenda
57 management.
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59 1. The Moderator
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61 a. *Qualifications*

- 62 ▪ Must be a member of a Church of the Brethren congregation within the
63 District for at least one year prior to election
- 64 ▪ May not serve concurrently as an elected member on the Leadership Team
65 or a Ministry Team
- 66 ▪ Must have demonstrated leadership ability
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68 b. *Election and Tenure* The Moderator moves from the position of Moderator-elect
69 and takes office immediately following the District Conference at which he or she
70 served as Moderator-elect or in the case of a vacancy in the office. He or she
71 serves for a one-year term and then becomes ineligible for re-election as
72 Moderator-elect for four years. Should the office of Moderator become vacant
73 the Moderator-elect assumes the office for the remainder of the term. At the
74 discretion of the current Moderator the immediate past moderator may serve on
75 the District Conference Planning Committee for the year following his or her
76 moderatorship.
77

78 c. *Duties*

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

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- 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 Conference Program 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

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- 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.

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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.

H. Quorum A quorum consists of sixty percent of the total elected delegates representing sixty percent of the churches of the District.

I. District Conference Committees

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 members:
186 Moderator, Moderator-elect, Clerk and three persons elected by the District
187 Conference. An elected member serves three years and may serve two successive
188 terms. Terms are staggered so that one member is elected each year. At the
189 invitation of the current Moderator, for purposes of continuity and counsel, the
190 immediate past Moderator may meet with the Committee.

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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.

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

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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**

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

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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.

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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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

G. Organization The Leadership Team and Ministry Teams are largely organized annually at District Conference. If additional organization is needed, it is done under the guidance of the Moderator following election by the District Conference, preferably at the retreat in early fall. The District Executive, Leadership Team Chair, Moderator and Moderator-elect are ex-officio members of the Leadership Team and all Ministry Teams. The Treasurer is on the Stewardship Team and is an ex-officio member of the Leadership Team, without vote. The Standing Committee member and any member of the denominational Mission and Ministry Board residing in the district are ex-officio members of the Leadership Team and its Ministry Teams.

- 274 1. Leadership Team Chair
- 275 ▪ Performs all duties ordinarily pertaining to the role of the chair and other
- 276 duties that may be assigned by the Leadership Team and these Bylaws
- 277 ▪ Serves as ex-officio member on all Ministry Teams
- 278 ▪ Does not serve as chair of a Ministry Team
- 279 ▪ Coaches the Leadership Team and Ministry Team chairs to clarify
- 280 responsibilities set forth in these bylaws and its supporting administrative
- 281 manual
- 282 ▪ Establishes and monitors accountability for tasks
- 283 ▪ Maintains communication within the Ministry Forum and with staff
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- 285 2. Leadership Team Vice Chair
- 286 ▪ Performs all duties and has all authority of the Chair when the Chair is absent
- 287 ▪ Performs other duties as may be assigned by the Leadership Team
- 288 ▪ Is an ex-officio member of the Gifts Discernment Team
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- 290 3. Secretary
- 291 ▪ In consultation with the District Executive and District Office staff records all
- 292 Leadership Team proceedings
- 293 ▪ Performs other duties as assigned by the Leadership Team, including but not
- 294 limited to archiving and distributing minutes of Leadership Team meetings
- 295 and joint gatherings of the Ministry Forum
- 296 ▪ Is independently elected for the task, not filling any other role on the
- 297 Leadership Team or Ministry Teams except as a designated officer of the
- 298 Leadership Team.
- 299
- 300 4. Treasurer
- 301 ▪ Accounts for all District funds received and disburses same as authorized by
- 302 the Leadership Team
- 303 ▪ Makes written reports available to meetings of Leadership Team
- 304 ▪ Submits accounts for an annual audit
- 305 ▪ Is an ex-officio member without vote of the Stewardship Team
- 306 ▪ Serves as Chief Financial Officer of the Corporation
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308 **H. Duties of the Leadership Team**

- 309 ▪ Fulfills the directives of the District Conference and makes an annual report to the
- 310 Conference
- 311 ▪ Projects long-range planning, sets goals and initiates new programs in harmony
- 312 with decisions of the District Conference
- 313 ▪ Receives, considers and responds to concerns brought by individuals or church
- 314 groups
- 315 ▪ Brings queries and other business items to the District Conference and processes
- 316 queries from local churches for District Conference action
- 317 ▪ Affirms Ministry Team appointments and makes any other appointments needed
- 318 ▪ Meets annually in the early fall with Ministry Teams as the “Ministry Forum” in a
- 319 visioning and planning retreat under the leadership of the Moderator

- 320 ▪ At the retreat clarifies responsibilities set forth in these bylaws, orients and trains
- 321 new members on expectations, establishes accountability for tasks and establishes
- 322 communication within the Ministry Forum and with staff
- 323 ▪ Creates and dissolves special teams or committees, except those specifically
- 324 named in the bylaws
- 325 ▪ Determines the number of members on each Ministry Team depending on size of
- 326 the work load
- 327 ▪ Promotes and administers the total church program in the District
- 328 ▪ Reviews the geographical boundaries of the District
- 329 ▪ Acts regarding employment of the District Executive and other staff
- 330 ▪ Fills vacancies in elective positions occurring between District Conferences for
- 331 any position not otherwise addressed in these bylaws
- 332 ▪ Has custody of and manages District capital funds, endowments and annuities, or
- 333 arranges for such custody and management
- 334 ▪ Holds title to District properties
- 335 ▪ Negotiates the purchase and sale of property and the borrowing and lending of
- 336 money on behalf of the District
- 337 ▪ Allocates and defines authority with respect to the establishment of bank accounts
- 338 and the signing of checks
- 339 ▪ In consultation with the Stewards Team, prepares the District budget for
- 340 presentation to the District Conference
- 341 ▪ Provides for an annual audit and submits the audit to District Conference
- 342 ▪ Arranges for bonding of persons handling large sums of money, an amount set by
- 343 the Leadership Team
- 344 ▪ Acts on recommendations from the Pastoral Ministry Team regarding nominees
- 345 for ordination and commissioned leadership status
- 346 ▪ Annually appoints a Treasurer from outside its membership

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348 **I. Duties of Ministry Teams**

- 349 ▪ Work cooperatively with other Ministry Teams and staff to promote the programs
- 350 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

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- 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

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- 391 2. Pastoral 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 Pastoral 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.
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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

419 initiates and supports programs and activities that foster spiritual growth and

420 development through fellowship and service. These can include age and interest

421 groups, 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 Brethren.
- 437 Call, support and supervise a person(s) to serve as a District Peace
- 438 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

450 and fun Christian Outdoor Education program for youth. OMT works with the

451 Camp Colorado and Camp Mt. Hermon Boards and trustees to provide oversight

452 of 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.

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456 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

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479 5. Stewardship Team The Stewardship Team provides financial

480 management and reporting. It promotes programs of general stewardship

481 education, aiding and challenging churches and other District groups to be faithful

482 stewards of God-given resources. The Stewards Team also assures District

483 property, assets and equipment are properly used and safeguarded. The Treasurer

484 serves as ex officio 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

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508 6. New Church Development Team The New Church Development Team

509 advocates 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.

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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

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533 7. Communications Team The Communications Team oversees the

534 development content and the use of technology throughout the District.

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

536 Leadership Team to determine what needs to be shared with congregations,

537 members and other interested individuals and the best way to share it. This team

538 requires a proficient grasp of web-based information systems to to facilitate

539 communication.

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541 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 542 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 543 ▪ Increase visibility and communication outreach
- 544 ▪ Assess useful platforms (newsletter, email, social media, print, website,
- 545 etc.) and determine the best vehicle for content
- 546 ▪ Find innovative solutions for implementing programs and services
- 547 throughout the District
- 548 ▪ Determine who is responsible for content for each platform
- 549 ▪ Determine when and how to communicate directives to congregations

- 550 ▪ Help make forms and documents available to conduct District work
- 551 ▪ Oversee brand and look of District media across all platforms
- 552 ▪ Develop and distribute guidelines for social media usage, particularly
- 553 regarding pictures and posts
- 554 ▪ Consult with congregations on information technology and media
- 555 platforms when requested
- 556 ▪ Review websites and social media throughout the District to assure content
- 557 is up to date and appropriate
- 558

559 8. Training Team Transformation requires trained leaders and congregation

560 members. The Training Team establishes and maintains leadership coaching

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

562 transformation and training opportunities for all congregations and District

563 members.

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565 Duties include but are not limited to:

- 566 ▪ Think and act transformationally following the leading of God’s Spirit
- 567 ▪ Identify, call and train individuals to serve as coaches/mentors for
- 568 individuals or congregations
- 569 ▪ Plan, organize and hold training events for District pastors and lay leaders
- 570 ▪ Plan, organize and hold retreats, events, conferences and other gatherings
- 571 that offer opportunities for sharing, workshops, worship and education for
- 572 District congregations and individuals
- 573 ▪ Plan, organize and hold the annual Gathering or other event that creates
- 574 opportunities to emphasize transformation and training for congregations
- 575 and individuals
- 576 ▪ Other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Leadership Team and
- 577 Ministry Forum of District Conference
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579 **J. Quorum** The Leadership Team and Ministry Teams may do business when 2/3 of

580 their elected members are present.

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

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584 1. Shalom Team

585 The Shalom Team works in partnership with the Executive Minister to equip

586 congregations and their members in maintaining healthy relationships and dealing

587 creatively with brokenness in its earliest stages. This task team is appointed by and

588 accountable to the Leadership Team. It may be activated by contact made through

589 the Executive Minister or through a Shalom Team member.

590

591 2. Other Committees

592 Other committees may be appointed to assist with the work of the District. When the

593 assignment is completed, the committee is dismissed.

594

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

601

602 **ARTICLE III. DISTRICT PERSONNEL**

603

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

610

611 The District Executive is the Executive Secretary of the Corporation and a legal officer
612 and is custodian of all official papers of the District. He or she is an ex-officio member
613 without vote of the Leadership Team and Ministry Teams and committees of the District.

614

615 The District Executive establishes a framework and process for pastoral placement in all
616 District congregations. He or she meets with search committees and gives guidance,
617 assistance and recommendations at various steps of the process.

618

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

623

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

632

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

635

636 **ARTICLE IV. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

637

638 **A. Endorsement of Documents and Contracts** Any note, contract or instrument in
639 writing entered into between the corporation and any other person, when signed by the
640 legal officers of the Corporation, shall be valid and binding on the Corporation in the

641 absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officers had
642 no authority to execute it. Unless authorized by the Leadership Team, no other officer or
643 agent or employee shall have any authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or to
644 pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or amount.
645

646 **B. Representation of Shares of Other Corporations** The District Executive or any other
647 officer or officers designated by the Leadership Team are each authorized to vote or
648 represent on behalf of the Corporation all rights incident to any and all shares of any
649 other corporation standing in the name of the Corporation. The authority may be
650 exercised by proxy or power of attorney executed by that officer.
651

652 **C. Indemnification** The District may reimburse and indemnify any officer or
653 employee for and against all amounts paid and all costs and expenses, including
654 attorney's fees, imposed in connection with any claim or proceeding or appeal thereof,
655 civil or criminal, asserted because of his or her having been an officer or employee of the
656 District; provided that the District shall not reimburse or indemnify any officer or
657 employee with respect to any such matter unless such reimbursement is expressly
658 authorized according to the process and the criteria set forth in the paragraphs
659 immediately below in this Section C.
660

661 Upon settlement of any matter of the character referred to above, the District may
662 reimburse and indemnify any officer or employee, if it is determined by a disinterested
663 majority of the Leadership Team, or by a disinterested person or group to whom the
664 question may be referred by the Leadership Team, that the person was not guilty of
665 misconduct in the performance of his or her duties in relation to the matter, or that the
666 person was acting in good relation to the matter, or that the person was acting in good
667 faith with in what he or she reasonably believed to be the scope of his or her employment
668 or authority, and for a purpose that he or she reasonably believed to be in the best interest
669 of the District, and in the case of criminal action, he or she reasonably believed was not
670 illegal.
671

672 Solely for the purpose of this Section C on indemnification, the term "officer" is defined
673 to include:
674

- 675 1. Any person elected by District Conference to serve on a Team or committee
676 authorized by that body or to carry out a specific function delegated by that body
- 677 2. Any person elected or appointed by the Leadership Team to serve on a committee or
678 subcommittee of that body or to carry out a specific function delegated by that body
- 679 3. Any person who has been elected or appointed through documented procedures of the
680 Leadership Team as a camp trustee, camp director, or camp counselor at Camp Mt.
681 Hermon or at Camp Colorado
682

683 ARTICLE V. RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS 684

685 The District relates to other organizations and agencies that further the purposes of the District.
686 Organizations such as The Cedars; McPherson College; Bethany Theological Seminary;

687 Brethren Benefit Trust; Mission and Ministry Board; On Earth Peace; statewide ecumenical
688 agencies; and Prairie View, Inc. are separate corporate entities under the control of governing
689 boards that are free of direct ownership and control by the District and that are solely responsible
690 for their actions and dealings.

691

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

693

694 **A. The Cedars** The District Conference will elect persons to the Cedars Board of
695 Directors in accordance with the policies of The Cedars.

696

697 **B. Statewide Ecumenical Agencies** The Executive Committee will name persons to the
698 boards of ecumenical bodies in the states within the geographical area making up the
699 District in accordance with their By-laws.

700

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

703

704 ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS

705

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

709

710

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

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

713

714 Version 5, Revision 10

715 03-26-92

716 8-15-92

717 9-29-92

718 03-16-93

719 08-03-96

720 08-01-97

721 7-31-04

722 7-29-06

723 Major revision drafted 2017