

Nith Valley Mennonite Church Guidelines

PART A: Statement of Identity

Why are we here?

To love God with all our being and love others as ourselves.

What do we do?

As a faith community, we are inspired by our shared and dynamic faith in the living God, we are strengthened by nurturing the unique gifts we see in each other, and we are energized by God's Spirit within us to serve others.

What is important to us?

Connecting ~ In our interactions with others, in our homes, workplaces, neighbourhoods, and the world around us, we try to follow the example of Jesus, as demonstrated in the Bible, by practicing forgiveness, affirming diversity, building trust, and promoting wellbeing.

Nurturing ~ We see integrity, creativity, hope and sacredness in every being. We use our skills, our energy, and our material wealth, in ways that honour all life including the environment.

Growing ~ As Mennonites, we value our Anabaptist heritage and from these roots, we strive to grow in relevant ways of sharing love, creating peace, and demanding justice for all.

March 2014

Membership

A. The membership of this congregation shall consist of all persons who have professed their faith in Jesus Christ, who have a knowledge of and an appreciation for the doctrine and practice of the Mennonite Church, and subsequently, who have been baptized and received into the fellowship of this congregation.

Nith Valley Mennonite Church, in the spirit of Christian faith and the unity of the body of Christ, will accept the transfer of members from other Mennonite churches through a letter of recommendation from their previous pastor. Other persons wishing to transfer their membership from non Mennonite churches will also be considered for membership through a letter of recommendation from their previous pastor. They will be encouraged to participate in a period of instruction to enable them to more fully appreciate and participate in the life of our congregation.

All persons requesting membership in this congregation, whether by baptism or by transfer, will meet with the Pastors and/or the Pastoral Ministry Team. These meetings will help the Pastoral Ministry Team support the candidate's faith journey.

B. Categories of Membership

1. Active.

An active member is someone who has taken out formal membership in this fellowship and participates in the life of the congregation. This category also applies to senior members or to those in retirement/nursing homes or other institutions.

2. Inactive.

An inactive member is someone who has taken out formal membership but who is no longer involved in the life of the congregation. As a congregation, it is our intent to continue a relationship with these people so that Nith Valley Mennonite Church remains their spiritual home.

3. Adherent.

An adherent is someone who has not requested formal membership in the fellowship but participates regularly in the life of the congregation.

Item IV: Affiliation

This congregation is a member of the Regional Church, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada (MCEC) and the National Church, Mennonite Church Canada (MC Canada) and is

affiliated with Mennonite World Conference (MWC).

Part B: Organization and Positions of Leadership

To help the congregation live into the Statement of Identity declared above, the following organizational structures have evolved, with these assumptions:

1. Authority in all spiritual and business matters is vested in the congregation.
2. Pastoral leadership shall be engaged, as required, by the congregation.
3. The Church Council is accountable to the congregation.
4. The activities of the congregation shall be administered by six ministry teams, which are accountable to Church Council. These ministry teams are:
 - Pastoral Ministry
 - Worship
 - Christian Formation
 - Stewardship
 - Fellowship
 - Personnel/PCR
5. In all our activities we seek to be intergenerational, reaching both inward to ourselves and outward to our neighbour as we seek spiritual growth and integrity for ourselves, our community and our world.

Offices to be Filled, and Expectations

A. Church Council

1. Composition:
 - Pastor "ex-officio"
 - Chairperson-elected
 - Secretary-elected
 - Treasurer-elected
 - Elder Representative-appointed
 - Worship Chair
 - Christian Formation Chair
 - Stewardship Chair
 - Fellowship Chair
2. Duties:
 - A subcommittee of Church Council Chair, Stewardship Chair, PCR Chair & Church Treasurer to meet annually with the pastor(s) to interpret MCEC salary guidelines for

pastors and recommend appropriate salary remuneration (for the pastor(s)) to church council.

- To hold regular meetings, as required, to administer the operations of the congregation. Six members are required to have a quorum.
- To assume responsibility for co-ordinating and evaluating the work of all ministry teams.
- To assume leadership in promoting stewardship and to evaluate the proposed budget prepared by the Stewardship Ministry Team.
- To encourage the congregation's understanding and participation in the projects and activities of the broader Mennonite Church.
- To assume responsibility for initiating pastoral and congregational reviews. These reviews will be carried out as outlined in the Memo of Understanding
- To set the date and prepare an agenda for the Annual meeting of the congregation. To encourage the Chairpersons of Ministry Teams and other related positions of ministry to prepare written reports for the Annual Meeting.
- To prepare agenda and call additional congregational meetings as required.
- The Chairperson of Council will chair all congregational meetings and the Secretary will keep minutes of all proceedings.
- To annually recommend to the membership the appointment of two persons to examine the Treasurer's books.
- To evaluate the report (positions of leadership) of the Personnel Ministry Team before it is presented to the congregation.
- To recommend to the congregation the naming of a Chairperson and one Additional Member to the Personnel/PCR, each year.

B. Pastoral Ministry Team

1. Composition:

Pastor(s) "ex-officio"

Three elders elected, one each year, for three year terms.

2. Duties of Pastoral Ministry Team Chairperson:

- To be a member of Church Council (or appoint a representative from Ministry Team)
- To call regular meetings of the Pastoral Ministry Team, to enable it to fulfil its ministry mandate.

3. Duties of the Elders:

- To assist the Pastor(s) in his/her duties.
- To counsel with the Pastor(s).
- To see that pastoral responsibilities are taken care of in the absence of the Pastor(s).
- To aid the Pastor(s) in establishing a network of pastoral care within the congregation, to include monitoring pastoral care needs, visitation and befriending.
- To assist the Pastor(s) in the administration of the Elders' Fund in accordance with the guidelines approved by the congregation. (see appendix 1)

- To endeavour to meet regularly, approximately once every six weeks, with the Pastor(s).
- To coordinate the Milestones Ministry of the congregation in partnership with the Christian Formation Ministry Team.

C. Worship Ministry Team

1. Composition:

Pastor "ex-officio"
 Worship Chairperson-elected
 Pastoral Ministry Representative-appointed
 At least 3 Additional Members-elected

2. Duties of Worship Ministry Team Chairperson:

- To be a member of Church Council (or appoint a representative from Ministry Team)
- To call regular meetings of the Worship Ministry Team, to enable it to fulfil its ministry mandate.

3. Duties of Worship Ministry Team:

- To work with the Pastor in organizing the worship schedule, seeking to plan meaningful worship which will meet the varied spiritual needs of the entire congregation, nurturing and encouraging growth in all.
- To organize visuals to enhance the worship experience in the sanctuary and bulletin board at entrance to sanctuary.
- To plan for special times such as Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas. The Worship Ministry Team is encouraged to draw upon others from the congregation to provide ideas and assistance with special services.
- To arrange for pianists, song leaders, plan special music, and encourage the development of musical talents in the congregation by initiating group and individual participation.

D. Christian Formation Ministry Team

1. Composition:

Pastor "ex officio"
 Christian Formation Chairperson-elected
 Pastoral Ministry Team Rep - appointed
 Three additional members-elected

2. Duties of Christian Formation Ministry Team Chairperson:

- To be a member of Church Council (or appoint a representative from Ministry Team)
- To call regular meetings of the Christian Formation Ministry Team, to enable it to fulfil its ministry mandate.
- To call meetings, as required, with the Associated Formation positions to facilitate the co-ordination of the broader Formational program of the congregation.

3. Duties of the Christian Formation Ministry Team:

- To be responsible for providing formation opportunities for all ages in the congregation.
- To coordinate the Milestones Ministry of the congregation in partnership with the Pastoral Ministry Team.
- To establish a program of teaching in the Christian and Mennonite faith for all ages.
- To appoint Sunday School teachers as required.
- To assist teachers in the selection and utilization of suitable resources and teaching methods.
- To be aware of Formation events offered by MCEC, and to encourage teachers and other leaders to participate.
- To evaluate and plan for additional formation events and programs such as: kids club, mentoring, youth group, service projects, etc..

4. Duties of Associated Formation positions:

a) Librarian-elected

- To care for and promote the use of the library and to purchase suitable books within the limits determined annually in the church budget.

F. Stewardship Ministry Team

1. Composition

Stewardship Chairperson-elected

Treasurer-elected

4 additional members-elected

2. Duties of Stewardship Ministry Team Chairperson:

- To be a member of Church Council (or appoint a representative from Ministry Team)
- To call regular meetings of the Stewardship Ministry Team, to enable it to fulfil its ministry mandate.

3. Duties of the Stewardship Ministry Team:

- To prepare and recommend to Church Council, a proposed budget for each fiscal year.
- To be aware of the needs of MCEC and other church agencies by receiving their information and by attending the appropriate meetings.
- To present an examined financial statement to Church Council as soon as possible after the close of the fiscal year.
- To monitor stewardship concerns as directed by Church Council.
- To bring major budget issues to Church Council for approval.
- To be the legal representatives of the congregation.
- To be responsible for the custody, care, and maintenance of all church property.
- To supervise the church custodian(s)

4. Duties of the Treasurer:

As a member of the Stewardship Ministry Team, the Treasurer is responsible to attend to the following specific duties:

- Maintain appropriate and up to date financial records including a monthly bank reconciliation.
- Receive and deposit in the Mennonite Credit Union, all offerings and donations made to the church, and issue receipts for those givings.
- Make regular bill payments and other budgeted allocations.
- Give regular financial reports to Church Council.
- Give monthly reports to the congregation on the status of budget givings.
- Issue payroll cheques and vacation pay as required.
- Remit to the Receiver General and M.C.E.C., all employee withholdings according to the appropriate deadlines.
- Submit church records for an annual review to be conducted by the two examiners appointed by the congregation.
- Issue T4 slips.
- Work with the Stewardship Ministry Team and Church Council Chair in the yearly review of the pastor's salary.
- Complete miscellaneous government reports as required.

4. Related Positions:

a) Cemetery Trustee and Assistant. Elected annually, the Cemetery Trustee and Assistant will:

- Keep an accurate record of cemetery plots.
- Be the contact person(s) for area morticians regarding the opening and closing of graves and the placing of memorial markers.
- Meet with the Stewardship Ministry Team as needed.

b) Decorations:

- This person will coordinate the aesthetics of the physical building.
- Meet with the Stewardship Ministry Team as needed.

c) Church Custodian(s). Engaged by the church, the custodian(s) will:

- Provide janitorial and custodial services as contracted in a Job Description and Memo of Understanding.
- Meet with the Stewardship Ministry Team as needed.

G. Fellowship Ministry Team

1. Composition:

Pastor "ex officio"
Fellowship Ministry Team Chairperson-elected
Food Coordinator – (appointed by ministry team)
At least 3 Additional Members-elected

2. Duties of the Fellowship Ministry Team Chairperson:

- To be a member of Church Council (or appoint a representative from Ministry Team)
- To call regular meetings of the Fellowship Ministry Team, to enable it to fulfil its ministry mandate.

3. Duties of the Fellowship Ministry Team:

- Plan social events and service projects for the entire church family.
- Co-ordinate community events such as: Men's Breakfast, Women's Retreat and Canada Day Brunch.
- To organize the provision of food services for events such as church potlucks, Easter breakfasts, and for "non parish" requests for food services that come from time to time from cluster, conference, or community connections.
- To care for the kitchen equipment and inventory.

4. Duties of the Food Coordinator:

- To allocate periodic cash advances from the Church Treasurer to stock the cupboards with tea, coffee, etc.
- To prepare a schedule for preparing coffee and clean up for Sunday morning coffee time.

H. Personnel/PCR Ministry Team

1. Composition:

Pastor "ex officio"
Personnel Chairperson-elected
Church Council Chairperson "ex officio"
Elder-appointed
2 Additional Members-elected

2. Duties of the Personnel Ministry Team:

- To identify the interests and availability of persons for leadership roles in the congregation.
- To clarify the duties and responsibilities of persons in leadership roles in the congregation.
- To recommend to Church Council a slate of persons to assume positions of leadership prior to the annual meeting.
- To provide support for persons in leadership roles.
- To fill any vacancies in positions of leadership which occur during the year.
- To recommend to Church Council revisions of these guidelines as required.
- To prepare an appropriate job description for each staff position created by the church (eg. Secretary, Custodian), to advertise and receive applications, conduct interviews, and negotiate and sign a suitable Memo of Understanding of employment with the person engaged.

- The Personnel Ministry Team will also assume the responsibilities of the Pastor-Congregation Relations Ministry Team, as outlined below.

Overview:

The primary task of the Pastor-Congregation Relations component of the Ministry Team's tasks will be to care for the relationship between the pastor(s) and the congregation. It will take a balanced third-party stance and listen to all voices. In that spirit it will assume the following responsibilities.

- Support and empower both congregation and pastor(s) to voice concerns, test perceptions and resolve conflicts through active listening and mutual feedback. Be available to the pastor(s) to hear concerns, test perceptions and deal with conflicts. Remind the congregation of availability and listen for undercurrents not clearly named.
- Meet annually with custodian and Admin Assist to assess responsibilities and concerns.
- Ensure there are appropriate Job Descriptions & Memo of Understandings for the pastor(s).
- Assist the pastor(s) to assess ministry load, responsibilities, priorities, limits and boundaries.
- Be available to meet with the pastor's spouse and children annually or upon request to listen to concerns.
- Initiate and oversee mediation between the congregation and pastor(s) in times of conflict.

I. Other Ministry Positions:

While these positions do not seem to fit neatly within the scope of any of the six Ministry Teams, they are vital in the life and activities of the congregation.

These elected positions are accountable to Church Council and the persons in these positions are free to approach Council anytime for counsel, clarification, or support.

a) The Usher Co-ordinator will:

- Arrange for and supervise ushers at all regular services.
- Arrange for ushers and car parkers at special congregational events as required.
- Be a contact person when conference or community events request ushers or car parkers from the congregation.

b) The Audio Video Co-ordinator:

- Recommend to the church the purchase and installation of a suitable sound system.
- Maintain the sound and video system.
- Operate the system, or assure that a trained person is assigned, for all church functions.

c) Canada Day Brunch Team:

- Coordinator and two additional volunteers

- Organize the food and volunteers for the brunch
- Decide in consultation with council where the funds raised will be distributed in the community.
- Work with the Community Canada Day committee.

d) The Mennonite Women Representative will:

- Keep the congregation informed of the program and activities of the Mennonite Women (Sewing circle in our congregation.)

e) The Blood Donor Clinic Coordinator:

- Coordinate the blood donor clinic.

2. Agency Representatives/Delegates

The representatives/delegates to the agencies listed below will ;

- Attend meetings of the agency and report highlights to the congregation.
- Keep the congregation informed of the activities and needs of the agency.
- Communicate information and concerns from the congregation to the agency as required.

- Mennonite Disaster Service Rep.
- M.C.C. Delegate
- M.C.C. Rep.
- M.C.E.C. Delegates. (Pastor, plus 2 Additional Delegates.)
- M.C.E.C. Youth Delegate.
- Tri-County Mennonite Homes Rep. (3 allowed)
- Fairview Mennonite Home Rep. (2 allowed)
- Hidden Acres Camp Rep

J . Related Ministry's

1. Mennonite Women.

Mennonite Women is a semi-autonomous organization within the congregation, enabling them to serve congregational, denominational, community, and world needs in a practical way.

2. Mops.

Mops is a semi-autonomous organization within the congregation. It is a ministry serving mothers of pre-schoolers and their children in our community.

3. Other.

The congregation recognizes and encourages the formation of other semi-autonomous groups, such as the Wednesday Night Craft Group, Nith Valley Leafs hockey team or the Nith Valley Jays fastball team that emerge from time to time to facilitate the service and fellowship activities of our congregation.

Part C: Conclusion

Item VII: Congregational Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

- Church Council will call the Annual Meeting within four months of the close of the fiscal year.
- At this meeting, year end financial documents will be received and the budget for the next fiscal year will be discussed and adopted.
- At this meeting reports will be received from all Ministry Teams, from people in Other Ministry positions, Agency reps and Related ministries.
- The slate will be presented and persons will be elected to positions of leadership.
- The newly elected leaders begin their terms of office on June 1.
- Other matters as determined by Church Council will be discussed.

B. Additional Meetings:

- Will be called by Church Council if Council deems it necessary to do so.

Item VIII: Congregational Decisions

We shall attempt to make congregational decisions on the basis of consensus of the membership, giving due respect to all aspects of the issues under consideration, and the opinions and feelings of all members. Note: Adherents who are active in the work and fellowship of the congregation have an equal voice in this process.

Item IX: Amendments

These Guidelines may be amended at any Congregational meeting after adequate study and discussion. Church Council will maintain the updated version of this document. It is available online and printed copies are available to anyone upon request.

Note: Nith Valley Mennonite Church is a 'not for profit' organization and is a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency, Business Number 11905 8253RR0001.

Approved March 1998

Revised May 2001
Revised May 2003
Revised May 2015

Appendix 1

Guidelines for Elders Fund Nith Valley Mennonite Church

1. Purpose: The purpose of the Fund is to provide financial assistance in times of need for persons associated with Nith Valley Mennonite Church.
2. Administration: The fund is administered by the Pastoral Ministry Team on a confidential basis, in accordance with the understandings stated in these guidelines. All decisions regarding its use are made by the Pastoral Ministry Team at a regular meeting or by phone consultation.
3. Monies are received into the Fund by:
 - a) An annual allocation of \$500.00 from the church budget.
 - b) Designated giving whenever people wish or whenever the elders state to the congregation that the Fund is getting low and needs to be replenished. The Pastoral Ministry Team will attempt to keep a balance of at least \$100.00 in the Fund at all times. The maximum reserve in the Fund will not exceed \$1500.00.
4. Typical uses of the Fund include:
 - a) Subsidies for counselling (paid directly to the counselling agency, usually Shalom, New Hamburg Interfaith or Kitchener Interfaith). Such subsidies are arranged on a case-by-case basis for persons who require counselling but would find it difficult to cover the entire fee.
 - b) Emergency, short-term assistance to pay grocery bills, hydro bills, etc.
 - c) Assistance with extraordinary expenses related to illness or death.
 - d) Bridge financing at times of job loss or other income disruption.
5. Disbursement Procedure:

Cheques are written by the congregation's treasurer at the written request of the pastor or a designated elder. In certain situations, monies may be requested in such a way that the treasurer does not know who the recipient is.

6. Record Keeping:

The Pastoral Ministry Team will keep a detailed, confidential record of all decisions made regarding allocation of monies. The treasurer will keep them informed of the amount of designated monies received, so that an accurate record can be kept of the balance of the Fund.

7. Confidentiality Considerations:

In exceptional situations, a potential recipient of monies from the Fund may request that their identity not be shared with the entire Pastoral Ministry Team. In such cases, the pastor will share the general situation with the Pastoral Ministry Team but will share the recipient's identity with only one elder.

8. Yearly Limit:

Except for exceptional circumstances, the amount of monies, which will be given from the Fund for a particular situation, is capped at \$500.00 per year.

9. Regarding Publicly Known Disasters:

The Fund will not normally be used in the case of publicly known disasters. In such cases, Church Council will become involved in planning for appropriate response on behalf of the congregations.

10. Decisions Remain with the Pastoral Ministry Team:

Any person within the congregation may alert the pastor or an elder to a situation of need. However, all decisions about whether the Elders' Fund will be used in a particular situation will be made by the Pastoral Ministry Team. The Elders' Fund will not be used as a means for a particular individual or individual within the congregation to fund projects of their choosing.

Approved May 1997
Revised January 2003

Appendix 2

Nith Valley Mennonite Church
Missions/VS Fund Guidelines

The purpose of this fund is to provide financial assistance for a member of this congregation who participates as an unpaid volunteer (regardless of receipt of stipend) in a mission or service assignment of at least three months duration away from his/her own community.

Persons are to apply in writing to church council for a Missions/VS grant. A majority vote of council will approve the grant.

Usual maximum grant will be \$500CDN.

One grant per person per assignment.

Annual budget contribution (\$500) to fund when it is below \$1,500 at year-end (Jan 31).

Designated donations accepted when labeled "Missions or VS Fund" or for a specific person's assignment.

Person receiving a grant may do fund raising to get more donations into the fund and thus receive a larger grant than would be approved by council before the assignment is commenced.

Treasurer to administer accounting of fund and report separately on financial statements.

Approved May 2007

Appendix 3

NITH VALLEY SAFE SPACES POLICY

At Nith Valley we value relationships across generations, with this in mind we are committed to a Safe Spaces Policy. Our aim is that the following policy will outline the boundaries for the treasured and essential relationships between adults and children in all aspects of our church community's life. We affirm and encourage all the ways that our members work to create an environment of grace, joy and peace in which children can grow physically, emotionally and spiritually. Further, we want to clarify positive relational boundaries in an effort to absolutely minimize the risk of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse to our children, as well as protecting our adults from false and wrongful allegations.

The NITH VALLEY SAFE SPACES POLICY is available online or by contacting the church office.

Appendix 4

Nith Valley Bequest Guidelines

All bequests should be reviewed before they are accepted by Nith Valley. The source of the gift should be determined to ensure that it aligns with our guidelines and mission statement. This should not involve lengthy, in-depth detective work, but rather a quick review of the person donating the funds and how these funds came about. Inquiries of the members of council should suffice. Lottery and gambling proceeds would be a cause for concern.

Bequests may be in different forms such as cash, physical assets, life insurance policies or stocks. More obscure forms of bequests should be reviewed by council for their acceptability. A valuation of non-cash items will need to be undertaken to determine the market value of the bequest and hence the value of the tax receipt given. Any costs related to valuation will be paid from the proceeds of that asset. Non-cash items will be converted to cash as soon as possible as Nith Valley is not in the business of investing or speculating.

Conditions, if any, attached to the bequest should be reviewed by council to ensure that Nith Valley can meet those conditions and that meeting those conditions would not put the church in conflict with its mission statement and guidelines. If conditions dictated that the church would have to spend additional funds, council must approve spending those funds before the bequest could be officially accepted.

If a bequest less than \$5,000 is received without directions as to its use, Nith Valley will deposit these funds into the Capital Fund. If directions are received the funds will go into the Bequest Fund. The Treasurer will send the family a thank you letter acknowledging the bequest.

Bequests greater than \$5,000 will go into the Bequest Fund regardless of the existence of accompanying directions. If no directions accompany the bequest, the Treasurer or Pastor will communicate by phone with the estate's representative and explain our bequest policy and ask if there are any projects, capital or otherwise, that they would be interested in supporting. The Treasurer or Pastor should suggest projects that are currently being proposed or undertaken as well as provide examples of past projects that were undertaken by Nith Valley. In doing so, the representative may come up with a completely new project or idea that would meet with the approval of council.

If the estate's representative does not provide any direction for the bequest, the funds will remain in the Bequest Fund without a restriction on their use. The estate's representative should also be asked about public recognition of the bequest. We honour the wish to remain anonymous but also accept simple plaques that may be attached to an asset that the bequest has assisted in obtaining. All recognition requests must be approved by council.

In each case the Treasurer will provide the estate with a tax receipt accompanied by a thank you letter. The Pastor will also sign the thank you letter for bequests over \$5,000. The letter should

also summarize Nith Valley's understanding of the conditions attached to the bequest. In the absence of any directions for the use of the funds, the letter should briefly outline our bequest policy and ask the estate representative to reconsider a project or designated use for the funds. It should also be stated that a direction may be accepted by Nith Valley at a later date.

The Treasurer will keep council informed of any bequests and their accompanying conditions and request council's assistance in determining the acceptability of a bequest. Church council has the final say on the acceptance of any bequest and the conditions attached to it.

The Bequest Fund will be included with all other funds on the financial statements presented to council and/or the congregation. The actual Bequest Fund cash will be held in the same high interest savings account that holds the Capital Fund's cash.

If a bequest is deemed unacceptable by council, the Treasurer will return the money along with a letter outlining Nith Valley's position and why it cannot accept the bequest.

The rules regarding the time line of spending a bequest are very lenient. The CRA requires that a charity annually spend 3.5% of surplus cash or investments on charitable activities. Nith Valley's annual budget easily accedes this total. Therefore, we should not put time parameters on the spending of bequest funds. Requests for disbursements from this fund should be brought to council for approval and may originate with any member of the congregation. Church council has total authority and the final approval over activities of the Bequest Fund.

Approved by Church Council March 30, 2016