

**CONSTITUTION
Of
NORTH PARK COVENANT CHURCH**

PREAMBLE

(An historical statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church as adopted by the Evangelical Covenant Church in 2002.)

The Evangelical Covenant Church is a communion of congregations gathered by God, united in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the great commandment and the great commission. It affirms its companionship in faith with other church bodies and all those who fear God and keep God's commandments.

The Evangelical Covenant Church adheres to the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation regarding the Bible. It confesses that the Holy Scripture, the Old and the New Testament, is the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. It affirms the historic confessions of the Christian Church, particularly the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, while emphasizing the sovereignty of the Word of God over all creedal interpretations.

In continuity with the renewal movements of historic Pietism, the Evangelical Covenant Church especially cherishes the dual emphasis on new birth and new life in Christ, believing that personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the foundation for our mission of evangelism and Christian nurture. Our common experience of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ continues to sustain the Evangelical Covenant Church as an interdependent body of believers that recognizes but transcends our theological differences.

The Evangelical Covenant Church celebrates two divinely ordained sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Recognizing the reality of freedom in Christ, and in conscious dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit, we practice both the baptism of infants and believer baptism. The Evangelical Covenant Church embraces this freedom in Christ as a gift that preserves personal conviction, yet guards against an individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.

The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity, the Protestant Reformation, the biblical instruction of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, and the great spiritual awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These influences, together with more recent North American renewal movements, continue to shape its development and distinctive spirit. The Evangelical Covenant Church is committed to reaching across boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, and status in the cultivation of communities of life and service.

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the Constitution and Bylaws of North Park Covenant Church of Chicago, Illinois.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be North Park Covenant Church of Chicago, Illinois.

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

Section 1. The church is a member of the Evangelical Covenant Church and its Central Conference and is pledged to work in harmony with the denomination and its decisions and support its program, policies, and institutions.

Section 2. The congregation shall elect delegates to represent the congregation at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Covenant Church and at the annual meeting of the Central Conference.

ARTICLE III

Confession of Faith

The church believes and teaches that the Holy Scripture, the Old and the New Testament, is the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.

ARTICLE IV

Purpose

Section 1. The purpose of the church shall be to unite Christians in worship, fellowship, and service; to call persons to faith in Jesus Christ; and to propagate the Gospel through ministries of Christian formation, missions (local, regional, and global), and the institutions of the Evangelical Covenant Church and its regional conferences.

Section 2. In order to achieve this purpose, the church, in the unity of the Spirit, shall use the gifts that God has given it and the means of grace which God has placed at its disposal: the Word of God, Holy Baptism, and Holy Communion.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Membership in the church shall be granted on application to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, and promise to support the overall ministry of the church and to share in its worship, fellowship, and service.

ARTICLE VI

Officers

The officers of the church shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a vice-secretary, and a treasurer.

ARTICLE VII

Executive Council and Church Boards

Section 1. The membership of North Park Covenant Church is the governing authority of the church, acting through duly called congregational meetings and in accordance with the By-laws.

Section 2. The Executive Council is the governing body designated by the membership to act on its behalf and is responsible for building, maintaining, and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the congregation and for overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church.

Section 3. The composition of the Executive Council shall be stipulated in the Bylaws. The chair of the church shall serve as chair of the Executive Council

Section 4. The officers and members of church boards identified in the Bylaws shall be elected by the congregation. All elected leadership shall be members of the church.

ARTICLE VIII

Congregational Business Meetings

Section 1. At least two congregational business meetings shall be held each year for the purposes of the presentation of annual reports, the election of officers and board members, and the adoption of the annual budget. One of these shall be designated as the

Annual Meeting and shall be held as soon after the beginning of the fiscal year as possible.

Section 2. Additional business meetings may be held at other times as provided in the Bylaws.

Section 3. Notice of congregational business meetings shall be given to members not less than two weeks prior to the meeting and shall include the date, time, location, and general purpose of the meeting.

ARTICLE IX

Division and Dissolution

Section 1. The congregation shall hold title to its own assets.

Section 2. In the event of schism within the church, in which there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by the church's Constitution and Bylaws, as determined by the executive board of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Section 3. Should the closure of the church be under consideration by the congregation, no action for the sale or transfer of assets may be taken without the prior approval of the Central Conference executive board. In the event the congregation votes to cease, the property and all assets of the church shall become the property of the Evangelical Covenant Church and the Central Conference, shared equally for the furtherance of the mission of both in that region.

ARTICLE X

Church Property

Purchase or sale of real estate or the securing of mortgage loans shall be authorized by the church at a congregational business meeting or a special business meeting called for that purpose, subject to the following special conditions:

- a) A written notice shall be sent to each member at the last contact known to the church not less than three weeks prior to the date of the meeting. Said notice shall state the date, time, and location of the meeting and briefly describe the proposition to be considered.
- b) A quorum of at least 20% of the membership shall be present and voting; a two-thirds majority vote shall constitute authority to act.

ARTICLE XI

Amendments

Amendments in harmony with this Constitution and the laws of the State of Illinois and not in conflict with Evangelical Covenant Church principles and policies may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in a business meeting of the congregation, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at the meeting one year earlier. Articles IX and XI may be amended only with the approval of the Central Conference executive board.

ARTICLE XII

Adoption of Bylaws

Bylaws, which must not be in conflict with this Constitution, may be adopted at any regular business meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose by a two-thirds majority vote of all members present and voting. A proposed bylaw or amendment to the Bylaws shall first be proposed in writing at a preceding regular or special business meeting.

Adopted 1/31/2010

Amended 5/1/2011