

BETHEL CHURCH OF NEBRASKA CITY

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Amended March 19, 2023

Approved April 3, 2023

BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST NEBRASKA CITY, NEBRASKA

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

Approved January 20, 1974

BY-LAWS

Approved March 17, 1974

Amended January 30, 1977

Amended March 29, 1992

Amended May 24, 1998

Amended January 28, 2007

Amended April 19, 2009

Amended January 26, 2014

Amended December 13, 2015

Amended April 24, 2022

ARTICLES OF AMENDMENT TO THE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OF NEBRASKA CITY, OTOE, COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Pursuant to the provision of Revised Statutes of Nebraska 1943, Reissued 1970, Section 21-1932 through 21-1936 of the Nonprofit Corporation Act, the undersigned corporation adopts the following amended Articles of Incorporation which were adopted by its members on the 20th day of January, 1974, in the manner prescribed by the Nonprofit Corporation Act.

**ARTICLE I:**

The name of the Corporation is Bethel Church of Nebraska City and the place of its location shall be West Central Avenue, Nebraska City, Nebraska.

**ARTICLE II:**

The resident agent of the corporation shall be Allen E. Schreiner and the address of its registered office is West Central Avenue, Nebraska City, Nebraska.

**ARTICLE III:**

The Corporation shall have perpetual existence.

**ARTICLE IV:**

The Purpose of the Corporation shall be:

1. The worship of God and the promulgation of the Christian religion.
2. The support of missions.
3. Furnishing aid to the needy and sick.
4. Procuring, acquiring, holding, mortgaging and selling of real and personal property for the purposes of a house of public worship, parsonages, parish houses, and for such other uses and purposes as are necessary, appropriate or desirable for the purposes aforesaid.
5. Accepting, holding and administering trusts and trust funds, procuring and holding stocks, bonds, moneys, securities and other property, real or personal, all for the purposes aforesaid.

**ARTICLE V:**

In carrying out the purposes set forth in Article IV:

1. All property acquired or received and the income therefrom shall be used exclusively for religious and charitable purposes and no part thereof shall be contributed in any manner or shall enure to the benefit of any individual.
2. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall enure to the benefit of any member, director or trustee, officer of the corporation or any private individual, and no member, director or trustee, officer or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporation's assets on dissolution of the corporation.
3. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall involve carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; further the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidates for public office.
4. Upon dissolution of the corporation or winding up of its affairs, the assets of the corporation shall be distributed exclusively for religious purposes and to organizations which are exempt

under Paragraph 501 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 as it now exists or may be hereafter amended.

**ARTICLE VI:**

All regularly enrolled members of the Bethel United Church of Christ of Nebraska City, Nebraska, as their names shall, from time to time, appear on the records of such church shall be members of this corporation.

**ARTICLE VII:**

The church shall adopt By-laws consistent with these Articles for the government of its affairs. Such By-laws may be amended as provided therein. The affairs of the corporation shall be conducted by such officers, boards, and committees in the manner as may be prescribed from time to time by the By-laws.

**ARTICLE VIII:**

The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE IX:**

That the number of directors constituting the Board of Directors of the Corporation and the names and address of the persons who are serving as Directors are:

Donald Chapin, Sr. -President	Richard Kotas, Jr. -Financial Secretary
Larry Rains-Vice-President	Victor Teten-Benevolence Treasurer
Allan Barrett-Secretary	G. J. Weible-Beacon Treasurer
Kenneth Keller-Treasurer	Ralph Burkhart-Special Funds Treasurer

BY-LAWS OF BETHEL CHURCH  
NEBRASKA CITY, NEBRASKA

**BY-LAW I — FAITH AND COVENANT A.**

**FAITH:**

The Bethel Church acknowledges as its sole HEAD, JESUS CHRIST, the SON of GOD and the SAVIOR of MAN. It acknowledges as brothers and sisters in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to fulfill its creative and redemptive work in mankind, it claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds, the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed, and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in accordance with the teaching of our Lord as presented through the Holy Bible. It recognizes two sacraments:

Baptism, and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion. One expression of this faith is: "We believe In God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to His deeds we testify: He calls the worlds into being, creates man in His own image and sets before Him the ways of life and death. He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin. He judges men and nations by His righteous will declared through prophets and apostles. In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, He has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the world to Himself. He bestows upon us His Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races. He calls us into his Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be His servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at His table, to join Him in His passion and victory. He promises to all who trust Him forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, His presence in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in his Kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto Him. Amen."

(Approved by the Second General Synod of the United Church of Christ held in Oberlin, Ohio, July 5-9, 1959, .... submitted to the Churches for their approval and use.)

**B. COVENANT:**

We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and Will of God. We propose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known to us in His word the Holy Bible. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshipping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our fathers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

**BY-LAW II — AFFILIATIONS**

We believe in the freedom and responsibility of the individual soul, and the right of private judgment from God. We hold to the autonomy of the local Church and its independence of all ecclesiastical control.

## BY-LAW —

### III MEMBERSHIP

This Church shall welcome sinners but not their sins of all persuasions who have been baptized and confirmed or have made public confession of faith to be transformed by the love and grace of God, through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

#### A. RECEPTION:

1. Persons, including those wishing to join by letter of transfer, or profession of faith, having made application to and approved by the Spiritual Council, shall be received as members.
  2. Reception shall take place during a regular service of worship.
  3. In special circumstances to be determined by the Spiritual Council, a person may be received into membership "in absentia". In special instances, to be determined by the Spiritual Council, a person not desiring to terminate Church membership in their "home" Church may be received as an "associate member" holding dual membership. Associate members have all the rights and responsibilities as other members.
- #### B. INSTRUCTION:
1. At the discretion of the Spiritual Council and the Parents/Guardians, baptized children can be received into the membership after completing the rite of confirmation upon completion of a course of instruction in the Christian way of life and the standards of faith and doctrine of the Church according to the Holy Bible, and being at least in the sixth grade in school, or the equivalent, at the time they begin their instruction.
  2. Others desiring membership by profession of faith may be required to complete a course of instruction prior to their reception as members.

#### C. PRIVILEGES AND OBLIGATIONS:

1. Members shall pledge themselves to attend the regular worship of the Church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to live Christian lives, to share in the life and work of the Church, to contribute to its support and benevolences, and to seek diligently the spiritual welfare of the membership and community.
2. Members shall pledge to support the operations of the church by volunteering during at least 2 services per year in the capacity of their choosing. Otherwise, the member agrees to be assigned to serve in 2 services at the discretion of the Church office and approved by the Spiritual Council.
3. Parents shall pledge themselves to accept the obligation of the religious training of their children as promised at their baptism. Parents shall give wholehearted cooperation in confirmation and Church membership instruction.
4. All members shall consider it a privilege and sacred obligation to attend, participate in and vote at all annual and special congregational meetings. All members shall accept and support the decisions of the congregation and the governing body.
5. It is the duty of all members when called or elected to accept the responsibility and consider it a privilege to hold office, or to serve on committees.
6. Active Members are entitled to the use of the Church for traditional Christian worship in funerals, and weddings at no charge to the member. Marriage and the marriage ceremony will be a Christian covenant and vow undertaken between one man and one woman before God and society. Ceremonies that celebrate same-sex unions shall not be conducted by our minister(s) and shall not be conducted in our church.

7. The request for all events should be expressed through the Church office to avoid conflict in dates.
8. For nonmembers, use of the Church for any occasion must have approval of the Church Council , and a signed usage agreement.
9. Church property may be made available to individual members or community organizations provided the request is made known to the Church office, which, in consultation with the Church Council president, may grant approval of such use. Any use of Church property is dependent on the agreement of the borrower to return this property in the same condition in which it was loaned or to replace or repair it should it be lost or damaged.
10. Appeals process for any dispute or conflict:
  - a. The individual should attempt to resolve the issue with the opposing member, party, committee, or council.
  - b. The Issue should next be appealed to the presiding council for the issue.
  - c. If the issue is not resolved, it should be appealed to the Church Council.
  - d. If the issue is still not resolved, it can be appealed to the Congregation per the requirements of By-Law, IV.C.4, Special Meetings.
  - e. Non-members will only have appeal rights through the Church Council who's decision shall be final.

#### D. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP:

1. Any member may, on his/her own request, be granted a letter of transfer. Members moving to and settling in another community are encouraged to transfer their membership to a Church of their choice in that community. If wishing to join a body not in fellowship with this Church, he/she may be dismissed with a certificate of Church membership.
2. Any member may voluntarily have his/her name removed from the Church roll by a written request. Such request must be provided to the Spiritual Council.
3. Members may be removed from the roll by action of the Spiritual Council during the biennial membership review when the following conditions exist:
  - a. The member's whereabouts and address has been unknown for a period of more than one year.
  - b. When a member, though physically able, does not participate in the worship and activity of the Church including the receiving of Holy Communion at least once during the calendar year.
  - c. When a member, who is financially able, ceases to support the work of the Church with his/her offerings.
  - d. Concerning b and c the Spiritual Council shall seek to regain the support and presence of such members. If at the end of one year, there is no response after such efforts have been made, the Spiritual Council may remove such names from the membership roll, notifying these persons of their action by first class mail if able.
4. Discipline of any member, who after patient and loving efforts and counseling by the Spiritual Council and pastor to persuade the member to abide by the guidelines as

## **BY-LAW —**

outlined in the Church by-laws and in accordance with the Holy Bible will have his/her membership suspended by the Church Council, with appeal rights per By-Law III.C.10.

## **IV SERVICES AND MEETINGS**

### **A. WORSHIP:**

1. A service of worship shall be held each Sunday morning except when temporarily changed or suspended by consensus of the Presidents of the Church and/or Spiritual Councils or due to inclement weather. There will be Easter Services, and a Christmas Eve Service held each year. Any additional Special Services shall be determined by the Spiritual Council.
2. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion shall be celebrated at such times as the pastor and the Spiritual Council shall determine. This sacrament shall be offered not less than four times each year.
3. The Church shall conduct a Sunday Church School.
4. Other services of worship, study, inspiration, and prayer may be held when the desire or need is felt by the pastor, Councils, congregation.

### **B. AGENDAS:**

Agendas will be posted on the upstairs hall bulletin board two weeks prior to any Congregational, or Church Council meeting. The agenda for such meeting, kept continuously current, is available for member inspection. Any business not on the agenda may be discussed but no action can be taken until the next called meeting. To be added to the agenda, contact the Council president, no later than 1 week preceding the meeting, so the agenda can be updated.

### **C. MEETINGS:**

- All meetings of the congregation shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- All members of the congregation shall be eligible to vote on any business on the published agenda at congregational meetings.
- A quorum at any congregational meeting shall consist of forty (40) members. When a quorum is not present for a duly called meeting of the congregation, that meeting shall be postponed for one week at which time the voting members present will constitute a quorum.
- Congregational decisions concerning financial expenditures shall require a 60% affirmative vote by ballot.
- All meetings must be called by the Church Council and announced on two consecutive Sundays before the date the meeting is held, or by a written notice mailed or emailed to all members at least four days before said meeting, and by notice posted publicly via the church website and/or social media.

#### **1. BUDGET MEETING:**

The annual meeting to approve the budget for the upcoming year shall be held before the end of October. The proposed budget will be published in the September Church newsletter.

#### **2. ELECTION MEETING:**

- a. The nominating committee shall solicit one or more names for the positions to be elected and make its report at the annual election meeting in November when the congregation shall elect by ballot the Councils, and Boards for the coming year. The proposed slate will be published in the October Church newsletter.
  - b. Nominations may also be made from the floor.
  - c. Installation of officers and delegates should occur before the January organizational meetings of all Councils and Boards.
3. ANNUAL MEETING:  
The annual meeting shall be held in the month of January on a date to be determined by the Church Council. The agenda for this meeting shall be:
  - a. The minutes of the previous congregational meeting and annual meeting shall be read.
  - b. Written reports shall be submitted by the pastor and all persons handling funds for the Church and its organizations.
  - c. Annual activity reports shall be given by Boards, Councils, groups, etc.
  - d. The congregation may then consider any unfinished business.
  - e. The congregation may then consider any new business on the published agenda.
4. SPECIAL MEETINGS:  
Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council or by a written request to the Church Council by 25 voting members of the Church.



## BY-LAW —

### V CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council shall be the chief executive and administrative body of this Church. The Church Council has overall responsibility and authority for all decisions affecting the Church, subject only to the will of the congregation.

#### A. MEMBERSHIP:

The Church Council shall be composed of seven members elected from the Church membership. The pastor(s) shall serve as an ex officio (with voice but without vote) member(s). All Church Council members have voting privileges. B. TERM OF OFFICE:

Council members shall be elected for a two-year term. Three members shall be elected to serve beginning their terms in the odd numbered years and four members shall be elected to serve beginning their terms in the even numbered years. A member may not be elected for two consecutive terms. Should a vacancy occur on the Church Council, the Council itself shall make the necessary appointment to fill the unexpired term. C. OFFICERS:

The Church Council shall organize itself each year, as soon as possible following installation, electing from its membership the following officers:

1. President. The president shall preside at all Church Council and congregational meetings and see to the execution of all business transpired. The president, in consultation with the vice-president and/or secretary, shall make any decisions required between Church Council meetings. Such action shall be reviewed at the next Church Council meeting.
2. Vice-President. The vice-president shall assist the president and preside when the president is absent, or when business pertaining to the president and his/her administration is before the congregation. The vice-president shall be elected by Church Council members from the new members elected to the Church Council for a term of one year, stepping up to the office of president the following year.
3. Secretary. The secretary shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all congregational and Church Council meetings. The secretary shall be elected by the Church Council members to his/her office for a one-year term.
4. Building and Grounds: One member will be the lead on maintaining the maintenance and replacement schedule of required maintenance and be the point of contact for needed repairs and maintenance for the building and grounds of the church for one year. A second member will be elected by the Church Council members and assist the lead in performing these duties, stepping up the lead position the following year.
5. One member of the Church Council will serve on the Memorial Committee. D. DUTIES OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL:

Having been elected at large, the Church Council shall:

1. Meet monthly. Four members shall constitute a quorum. Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the president, or two members of the Church Council.
2. Transact all business of the congregation unless otherwise performed by other Councils, including congregational directives to the Church Council.
3. Be responsible for the care of the property of the congregation, as a sacred trust. The Church Council shall be responsible for an annual inspection of all Church properties during the first quarter of the year.
4. Supervise all current expenditures in relation to the authorized budget. The Council may authorize any unbudgeted expense if funds are available. If the amount exceeds \$2,000 it

must receive the approval of the congregation. This dollar limit does not apply to expenditures for emergency building and grounds repairs.

5. Hire or appoint a person, preferably from among the membership of the congregation, to be the Church financial secretary-treasurer. The Church Council shall also appoint no less than 2 individual Church Members who shall have signature authority to all financial accounts and safety deposit boxes, should either the Financial Treasurer or the Memorial Treasurer become incapacitated or otherwise unable or unwilling to perform their duties. This person shall receive, record, and deposit all money received for the Church. Two members of the Church, shall help count the weekly offering. The financial secretary-treasurer shall make all payments of bills in relation to the authorized budget or as directed by the Church Council. The financial secretary-treasurer shall be ineligible to become an elected member of the Church Council but shall serve the Church Council in an ex-officio (with voice but without vote) capacity, making a monthly report to the Church Council of all receipts, expenses, and balances. The financial secretary-treasurer shall make this report available to any member upon request. The financial secretary-treasurer shall be reaffirmed an annual basis in February at the Council's regular meeting.
6. Ensure a security team is established to protect the health and safety of the congregation.
7. The president in consultation with the Church Council shall appoint such committees of two or more members, as it may deem necessary to accomplish the work of the Church. These may include the budget, nominating, auditing, redecorating, memorial, Christian enlistment/stewardship, safety/security, and library committees. The Church Council shall also appoint the historian and assistants to preserve all past records of the Church and its organization and maintain the historical scrap book. The historian and assistants shall be reaffirmed on an annual basis in February at the Council's regular meeting.
8. The Church Council is responsible for hiring, disciplining, or dismissing any non-clergy personnel. The Church Council shall perform an annual evaluation and reaffirm all nonclergy personnel at the March Church Council Meeting.
9. The Church Council will annually review the work and activities of the pastor, and when necessary place the pastor on administrative leave and make recommendations at a special congregational meeting. The pastor's annual review shall take place prior to the December Church Council meeting.
10. The Church Council is responsible for establishing policies and Procedures for the church.
11. The Church Council will promote and oversee the coordination and development of all activities of any other Council, Board or committee of the Church.
12. The Church Council has the authority to vary from the current bylaws when extraordinary circumstances occur. The variances would be on an "as needed" basis and does not replace the bylaw as written.

## **VI THE SPIRITUAL COUNCIL**

The Spiritual Council shall assist the pastor in the spiritual affairs taking heed to the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully all the spiritual interests of the Church.

### **A. MEMBERSHIP:**

The Spiritual Council shall be composed of five members elected from the Church membership. The pastor(s) shall serve as an ex officio (with voice but without vote) member(s).

### **B. TERM OF OFFICE:**

## BY-LAW —

Spiritual Council members shall be elected for a two-year term. A member may not be elected for two consecutive terms. Three members shall be elected to serve beginning their terms in the odd numbered years and two members shall be elected to serve, beginning their terms in the even numbered years. Should a vacancy occur within the Spiritual Council, the remaining members shall make the necessary appointment to fill the unexpired term. A member of this Council shall deliver a written or verbal report of their activities at the monthly Church Council meeting.

### C. OFFICERS:

The Spiritual Council shall organize itself each year as it deems necessary. D.

### DUTIES OF THE SPIRITUAL COUNCIL: The Spiritual Council shall:

1. Be responsible for the membership roll, including admission and transfer of members. The roll shall be reviewed biennially in fourth quarter of even numbered years, for the purpose of keeping it up to date.
2. Be responsible for the worship of the Church including, ensuring pulpit supply, and ensuring training is provided to the lay participants involving music, altar preparation, communion stewards, ushers, sound system, media ministry and bell choir.
3. Assist in the preparation and administration of the rites and sacraments. When pew communion is observed, the ushers shall be selected preferably from a list of members who have been previously or are currently members of the Spiritual Council.
4. The Spiritual Council, in consultation with the pastor shall give their consent for all religious ceremonies, except funerals, performed at the church; if the ceremony meets with their approval, and does not violate the by-laws of the church. If conflict occurs from the decision, the Individuals have appeal rights per By-Law III.C.10
5. Be responsible for the selection of and recommendation to the Church Council for employing the organist(s) and choir director(s).
6. To promote among our membership, programs and policies that cause us to seek and welcome unchurched persons, new residents in our community, and non-participating members.
7. Appoint any committees it may deem necessary to care for the spiritual needs of the congregation.
8. Review complaints of members, follow the dialogue between the parties and determine the course of action necessary to resolve the issue, up to and including recommending the issue to the Church Council to resolve.

## **BY-LAW**

### **VII — PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall help in strengthening the relationship between the pastor and the congregation. As a separate standing Committee it shall be accountable only to the congregation. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee will be formed on an as needed basis at the direction of the Church Council or at the request of the pastor.

#### **A. MEMBERSHIP:**

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be composed of five members. The pastor will select one member, the Church Council President, the Spiritual Council President, the Board of Christian Education President, and one additional member of the congregation selected by the opposing party, will be appointed to this committee.

#### **B. TERM OF OFFICE:**

Members shall serve such duration as needed to resolve the issues that have come forth, with an additional 6 months to ensure the issue is truly resolved. A member of this Committee shall deliver a written or verbal report of their activities at the monthly Church Council meeting.

#### **C. DUTIES OF THE PASTOR-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE:**

1. The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall meet as needed. It may organize itself as it determines.
2. Time for training in conflict resolution should be set aside during meetings using case studies, related printed materials, or local resources if needed.
3. The Pastor Parish Relations Committee is to help the congregation to have reasonable expectations of the pastor and help the pastor have a clear understanding of congregational priorities, thereby serving as a vehicle to promote healthy relationships between the pastor and congregation.
4. This Committee is to help the pastor and congregation deal with conflict, seeking to be the reconciling agent between contending parties.

### **VIII — THE PASTOR A.**

#### **CALLING THE PASTOR:**

1. As soon as a pastoral resignation or vacancy occurs, it shall be reported to the Spiritual Council for the purpose of securing an interim pastor for the period of vacancy.
2. It shall be the responsibility of the pastoral search committee, composed of five members appointed jointly by the Spiritual Council, the Church Council, and the Board of Christian Education to seek a candidate for the vacancy of the office of pastor. The committee is free to utilize whatever forums available to fill the position.
3. The applicants to be considered must affirm that the standard for sexual and relational behavior is fidelity in a heterosexual marriage and chastity in singleness.
4. The pastoral search committee shall present to the congregation at a special meeting the name of the candidate it recommends to fill a vacancy. A 75% affirmative vote of the members present, and voting shall constitute a call.
5. In the call, the terms of the relationship shall be those agreed upon between the candidate and the committee. The pastor, treasurer, and Church Council shall each receive a copy of the call.

## **BY-LAW**

6. Following acceptance of the call, the pastor and the Spiritual Council shall arrange for a service of installation .

### **B. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE PASTOR:**

1. The pastor shall be an ex officio member (with voice but without vote) of all Councils, Boards, and committees within the Church.
2. Any religious ceremony pertaining to the Church shall not be scheduled without discussion with the pastor of the congregation. If the pastor has reservations or concerns, it is the pastor's responsibility to bring these reservations to the Spiritual Councils attention. . The Spiritual Council will provide a recommendation for Church Council action of the use of the Church property.
3. To invite a speaker for special occasions, the consent of the Spiritual Council is necessary in consultation with the pastor.
4. The pastor shall be responsible for ensuring the Church record book is up-to-date and make an annual report of his/her work to the congregation.
5. It shall be the pastor's duty to preach the Word, to care for the regular and desired special services of worship, to administer the sacraments and rites, to visit the sick, the elderly, the bereaved, and the confined, to promote the spiritual welfare of the Church and those whom it serves, and to lead a personal life which is an effective witness to Christian faith.
6. If the pastor, the Church Council, the Spiritual Council and the Board of Christian Education deem it necessary, the congregation may decide if an assistant pastor is needed by a 75% majority vote of those present and voting. If an assistant pastor is to be hired, the same procedure as under By-Law VIII-A will be followed.

### **C. TERMINATION OF THE PASTORATE:**

1. The pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period of time. In order to terminate this relationship, three months' notice shall be given by either the pastor or the congregation, unless by mutual consent or termination for cause.
2. Termination for cause will be immediate with one months' severance pay. All duties will be suspended immediately. Access to the church property will be determined by the Church Council. One month will be provided to vacate the church parsonage.
3. When either party decides to terminate the relationship, the termination shall be by recommendation of the Church Council, the Spiritual Council, and the Board of Christian Education and voted upon by the congregation. A simple majority vote (>50%) of those present and voting is necessary for dismissal and/or for the acceptance of a pastor's resignation.

## **BY-LAW IX — BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION A.**

### **MEMBERSHIP:**

The Board of Christian Education shall consist of five members elected from the church membership. The pastor shall serve as ex officio (with voice but without vote) member. B.

### **TERM OF OFFICE:**

Members shall be elected for a two-year term. Three members shall be elected to serve beginning their terms in the odd numbered years and two members shall be elected to serve, beginning their terms in the even numbered years. A member may not be elected for two

consecutive terms. Should a vacancy occur on the Board of Christian Education, the remaining members shall make the necessary appointment to fill the unexpired term. A member of this Board shall deliver a written or verbal report of their activities at the monthly Church Council meeting.

**C. OFFICERS:**

The Board of Christian Education shall organize itself each year as it deems necessary. D.

**MEETINGS:**

The Board of Christian Education shall meet regularly to transact any business necessary and to promote the Christian Education program of the Church. E. DUTIES OF THE BOARD OF

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

The Board of Christian Education shall provide for the Christian Education of the members and children of the congregation. The following responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Recruiting and training needed teachers for Christian Education.
2. Establishing Church School classes for the children of the Church, suggesting a curriculum(s) and implementing its use. Children shall be enrolled in a Church School class which corresponds to their grade in public school.
3. Establishing and maintaining a cradle roll.
4. Providing for the instruction of the confirmation class and all classes in Church membership.
  - a. They shall be instructed in the basic beliefs of the Christian faith as affirmed by our statement of faith.
  - b. Members of the confirmation class shall have completed the sixth grade, at the time they begin their instruction.
  - c. They shall attend class regularly with prepared lessons and attend both the Church School classes and worship services.
  - d. The pastor shall present candidates for the Church membership to the Spiritual Council and perform the rite of confirmation on those who desire to be received into the church in this manner.
  - e. Any exception to the above statements shall be reviewed by the Board of Christian Education.
5. Coordinating youth groups and obtaining leaders for such groups.
6. Providing opportunities for religious education for the adult members of the Church.
7. The Board of Christian Education shall review and recommend to the Church Council any member candidates wishing to use any available scholarship funds for continuing Christian education purposes.

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**X — MEMORIALS, GIFTS, LEGACIES AND BEQUESTS A.**

**MEMORIAL TREASURER:**

The Church Council shall appoint a memorial treasurer for all memorial money, gifts, legacies, and bequests received by Bethel Church. The Memorial treasurer shall be ineligible to become an elected member of the Church Council but shall serve the Church Council in an ex-officio (with voice but without vote) capacity, making a monthly report to the Church Council of all receipts, expenses, and balances. The memorial treasurer shall be reaffirmed on an annual basis in February at the regular Church Council meeting.

**B. DUTIES OF THE MEMORIAL TREASURER:**

## **BY-LAW**

1. Keep an accurate record of all money received, accounting for the memorials, gifts, legacies and bequests separately.
2. Acknowledge all memorials given directly to the Church, notifying the family of their receipt.
3. Make a written monthly report to the Church Council of receipts and disbursements of all memorials, gifts, legacies, and bequests. Make an annual report to the congregation of receipts and disbursements of all memorials, gifts, legacies, and bequests.
4. Make the entries in the "Book of Living Memories".

### **C. THE MEMORIAL COMMITTEE:**

1. The Memorial Committee shall consist of the Memorial Treasurer and one member of the Church Council.
2. One member shall be appointed each year from those elected to serve on the Church Council.
3. The Memorial Committee shall meet at least quarterly and review the record of all money received, accounting for all memorials, gifts, legacies, and bequests.

### **D. HANDLING OF FUNDS:**

The memorial treasurer shall handle all gifts, memorials, legacies, and bequests in the following manner:

1. Funds or bequests shall remain in the Memorial Fund until such time when they can be used.
2. All proposed memorial purchases or improvements must have the approval of the Church Council after input of available family members.

**E. DEDICATION:**  
Any items purchased or improvements made to the Church property with these funds shall be dedicated at such times agreed upon by the pastor and Spiritual Council. Members of the families of those in whose memory these memorials are made shall be notified of the intended dedication.

### **F. REDEDICATION:**

If a memorial needs to be replaced or becomes obsolete it will be left to the discretion of the Church Council how it will be handled.

**G. IDENTIFICATION:**  
In place of nameplates, all memorials, gifts, legacies, and bequests shall be entered into the "Book of Living Memories" upon dedication.

## **BY-LAW XI — RULES OF ORDER**

The latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these By-laws. The term "ex officio" when used in these Bylaws shall mean to serve on a Council Board or committee without vote.

## **BY-LAW XII — INDEMNIFICATION**

- A. Any officer of the Bethel Church, or any member, including officers and directors (collectively the Entity), may, to the full extent allowed by law, be indemnified by the Entity against all judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement of, and against all reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees, actually and necessarily incurred in defense of any lawsuit, proceeding or prosecution (including appeal thereof) wherein such person is made a party by reason of being such officer or member. This provision shall also extend to any lawsuit, proceeding, or prosecution in which such officer or member is made a party in such person's

capacity as an officer or member of another organization in which the person serves at the request of the Entity.

- B. Indemnity shall not be made in connection with any derivative lawsuit or proceeding for any matter with regard to which the member or officer is adjudged to have breached the duty owed by the member or officer to the Entity or organization by the right of which the action is brought. In all other lawsuits, proceedings or prosecutions, indemnity shall not be made unless the officer or member acted in good faith and for a purpose which the person reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Entity and in criminal actions or proceedings only upon the additional requirement that the person had no reasonable cause to believe that the operative conduct or inaction was unlawful.
- C. These indemnity provisions shall also operate for the benefit of anyone duly serving in a representative capacity for such member or officer.
- D. The officers of the Bethel Church are authorized to purchase insurance providing indemnification pursuant to the provisions of the preceding paragraphs, subject to the approval of the Church Council as to the amount of coverage and premium for such insurance. Any such contract of insurance may afford coverage for matters as to which the Entity may not give indemnity if in such case the insurance shall provide in such manner as may be required under applicable law for a retention amount and for coinsurance.



### **By-Law XIII – SECURITY**

- A. Bethel allows concealed/carry on all premises and activities pursuant with state and federal laws.

### **BY-LAW XIV — AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to the By-laws may be made at any duly called Church meeting by a two-thirds (≥67%) affirmative vote of the members present. Public announcement of the text of the proposed amendment(s) having been made two weeks prior to the meeting.

These By-laws were originally approved and adopted by the congregation of Bethel United Church of Christ of Nebraska City, Nebraska, on March 17, 1974 to become effective on May 1, 1974, and these By-laws were later amended:

1. January 30, 1977
2. March 29, 1992
3. May 24, 1998
4. January 28, 2007
5. April 19, 2009
6. January 26, 2014

7. December 13, 2015
8. April 24, 2022

**Addendum 1 – Miscellaneous:**

By congregational vote dated November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 the Church voted to leave the United Church of Christ Denomination.