

**THE BY-LAWS OF**  
**NASSAU STREET CHURCH**

The by-laws relating generally to the conduct of the affairs of  
**Nassau Street Church Inc.**  
(hereinafter referred to as “**NASSAU STREET CHURCH**”)

### **THE PREAMBLE**

Nassau Street Church was formally established in 1957 as a body of believers meeting together for the purpose of glorifying God through discipleship and proclaiming the truth of the gospel.

The church has its roots in the Mennonite faith and was established by members of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference (EMMC) who moved to Winnipeg from rural churches in southern Manitoba. While the new congregation, Gospel Mennonite Church, remained a member of the rurally based EMMC, its early years were marked by a keen sense of local place and awareness that its urban location in Winnipeg would require it to operate differently than its rural counterparts. The church first met in individual homes and other temporary locations until, after much discussion and planning, it moved to the corner of Nassau and McMillan, in the heart of the city. With a strong desire to extend God’s Kingdom into its community, a vision of discipleship and evangelism have marked the church since its beginning. Through our life together as a church, this gospel community seeks to demonstrate the love of Jesus through our love for each other. As we gather together as the bride of Christ, we long to see Jesus worshipped as Lord, both here in Winnipeg and to the ends of the world.

In 2012 the original name of Gospel Mennonite Church was changed to Nassau Street Church in order to better reflect the community in which we find ourselves. The church continues to be a member of the EMMC.

### **1. NAME**

The name of this congregation shall be “Gospel Mennonite Church.”

\*This name was amended June 24, 2012, replacing “Gospel Mennonite Church” with “Nassau Street Church.”

### **2. PURPOSE**

Nassau Street Church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all of its activities. We believe our lives together, as the Body of Christ, are to display the greatness of our God. Therefore, as a church we are committed to:

1. Worship: Seeking corporately and individually to glorify God in all aspects of our lives
2. Evangelism: believing that the church exists for mission, we seek to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ both locally and internationally
3. Learning: discipleship through biblical preaching, teaching and example
4. Caring: Encouraging biblical community among the believers

### 3. STATEMENT OF FAITH

*(This Statement of Faith has been adapted from the EMMC Conference Statement of Faith.)*

**God:** We believe in the one holy and loving God, filled with glory, power and wisdom, who lives in eternal Trinity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God, who sovereignly rules over all things, created and sustains the physical and spiritual universe, desires a relationship with us.

**Creation:** We believe that all persons are made in the image of God with a capacity to make moral choices, and given the responsibility to manage creation. God desires all human life to begin in families where one man and one woman covenant together as husband and wife under God for life.

**Sin:** We believe that sin is an act of rebellion against God's rule, beginning with the rebellion of Satan and followed by Adam and Eve's deliberate choice to disobey God. Therefore everyone by nature is alienated from God and we fail to rule ourselves, society or the created world as we should. The penalty for sin is physical and spiritual death.

**Revelation:** We believe that the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God, the final authority for faith and life. God's revelation in the Old Testament through creation and the covenant was a preparation for the supreme revelation in the New Testament through Jesus Christ.

**Jesus Christ:** We believe in God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, fully God and fully human, who proclaimed the rule of God, lived a sinless life, died on the cross taking the just punishment for our sins upon himself and paying the full price for all our rebellion against God. Jesus rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and reigns as Lord of all. Jesus also intercedes for his people in the presence of God the Father.

**Salvation:** We believe that salvation is entirely a free gift of God's grace, received through personal repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Believers have assurance, forgiveness of sin, salvation from sin, reconciliation with God, and eternal life as they live in faith and obedience.

**Holy Spirit:** We believe in God the Holy Spirit who has been sent from heaven to glorify Christ. The Holy Spirit convicts sinners of their lost condition and imparts new spiritual life, enabling people to repent and believe the gospel. The Spirit, who indwells believers, continues to comfort, empower, gift, guide, and unite them to fulfill the mission of the church.

**Discipleship:** We believe that following Jesus as Lord in all of life means that the Christian life is characterized by presenting your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service of worship.

**Church:** We believe that the Church is the visible body of believers, the global community of those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. Members of this body are covenanted together in local congregations that meet to encourage and serve one another, who are devoted to the Word of God and prayer, and demonstrate a concern for the global church. We believe that the church is called to proclaim the gospel to a dying world. The local church participates in the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper.

**Peace and Reconciliation:** We believe that God offers peace and reconciliation to all humanity through the work of Christ on the cross. Followers of Christ's law of love affirm the sacredness of life, and seeking, as much as it depends on us, to live at peace with all people.

**Mission:** We believe that the mission of the Church is to make disciples in all the world by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

**Christ's Final Triumph:** We believe in the return and glorious reign of Jesus Christ, the final resurrection of all people and the final judgement of all people. Unbelievers will be sent to eternal punishment and believers will be welcomed into a life of eternal joy in fellowship with God. God will make all things new and will be glorified forever.

### **3.1. Doctrinal Distinctives**

#### **3.1.1. State of Singleness and Marriage**

Whether serving Christ in singleness or in marriage, the church honours both as faithful and holy lifestyles ordained by God.

We affirm that marriage is meant to be a permanent union between one man and one woman. Our creation as man and woman with equal worth before God, who are complementary to one another, has significance in revealing aspects of the image of God and His relationship with the Church.

We affirm that a believer should not unite with a non-believer in marriage.

We affirm that Jesus in Matthew 5:32, 19:9, and Paul in I Cor. 7:15, permit divorce with the implied right to remarry in the case of adultery or desertion of a believer by an unbeliever respectively.

#### **3.1.2. Baptism**

We affirm baptism is a visible symbol of God's saving work within a person by His Spirit through which the believer is united with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection to new life.

We affirm it is the outward sign of belonging to the people of God—those who have repented and put their faith in Jesus Christ.

While it is the preferred practice of this church to baptize by immersion, we maintain that the mode of baptism is not to be an issue.

#### **3.1.3. Communion**

We affirm the Lord's Supper was instituted by Christ for the commemoration by his people of his loving, sacrificial death.

We affirm the communion table is open to all who repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ.

## **4. BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH**

### **4.1. Principal Office**

The principal office of the Church shall be determined by resolution of the Members.

### **4.2. Books and Records**

The Church shall keep proper accounting records in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles. Records of all meetings of the Elders and of the Members shall be kept in the Minute Book of the Church.

This Church recognizes the need to fellowship with and to work together with other congregations, and as such is an active member of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference of Canada.

#### **4.3. Financial Year**

The financial year end of the Church shall be the calendar year, unless otherwise determined by the Elders.

#### **4.4. Execution of Documents**

The Elders will direct the manner in which the person or persons by whom a particular document or type of document shall be executed.

#### **4.5. Borrowing Arrangements**

All decisions to borrow money on behalf of the Church will be made by a resolution of the Members.

### **5. MEMBERS**

#### **5.1. Membership Conditions**

Any person who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and personal Saviour, has received believer's baptism, agrees to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith, and commits to the Church Covenant (see Schedule "A") of this congregation may become a Member.

The Elders shall be responsible for overseeing the process of admission of Members. Those accepted by the Elders and affirmed by the Members will take vows of membership at a worship service.

#### **5.2. Duties of Members**

In accordance with the duties of each member detailed in the Church Covenant, each Member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to lead in ministries of the church who are Members of Nassau Street Church.

Members of Nassau Street Church have final authority under God's Word in matters of doctrine and discipline. By implication this authority is carried out through the affirmation (and, if necessary dismissal), of Elders and Deacons. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of Members to attend all Members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote of the membership.

#### **5.3. Notice of a Members' Meeting**

Notice of the time and place of a meeting of Members shall be announced at a weekly worship service at least 21 days before the day on which the meeting is to be held.

#### **5.4. Members Calling a Members' Meeting**

The Elders shall call a special meeting of Members on written requisition of Members carrying not less than 10% of the voting rights. If the Elders do not call a meeting within 21 days of receiving the requisition, any Member who signed the requisition may call the meeting.

#### **5.5. Termination of Membership**

Membership may be terminated by:

1. Request of the Member. Personal contact should be made by the Elders with the Member requesting release to determine the reasons for the request. After deliberation of the Elders, the release may be granted.
2. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the Elders).

Termination of Membership will be finalized by a vote of the Members.

#### **5.6. Discipline of Members**

Any Member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonoured, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the church. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline may include admonition by the Elders or the membership, removal from active ministry or leadership and release from membership (see Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be:

1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Hebrews 12: 1–11; Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3:14–15);
2. For the good of other Christians and the purity of the church as a whole (Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 6-12; I Thessalonians 5: 14; Hebrews 10: 24-25);
3. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; II Peter 2:2; I John 3:10); and
4. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (John 15:8; Romans 15:5–6; I Peter 2:12).

#### **5.7. Persons Entitled to be Present at Members' Meetings**

At the discernment of the Elders, meetings exclusively for Members, may be called.

#### **5.8. Chair of Members' Meetings**

The Elders shall appoint one of their number to serve as Chair of Members' meetings.

## **5.9. Quorum at Members' Meetings**

A quorum at any meeting of the Members shall be twenty-five (25%) percent of the Members entitled to vote at the meeting.

## **5.10. Votes to Govern at Members' Meetings**

At any meeting of Members every question - with the exception of the votes pertaining to affirmation of Elders, Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, and By-law revisions - shall be determined by a majority of the votes cast on the questions. In case of an equality of votes either on a show of hands or on a ballot, the chair of the meeting in addition to an original vote shall have a second or casting vote.

With reference to votes for the affirmation of Elders, affirmation of Senior Pastor, affirmation of Associate Pastor, and for By-law revisions, a 75% majority is required to adopt the motion.

## **6. ELDERS**

For the purposes of our legal incorporation, the Elders serve as the legal Directors of the Church Corporation.

### **6.1. Number and Qualification of Elders**

The Biblical offices in the church are Elders and Deacons. We see this outlined in Scripture in Acts 6; 1st Timothy 3; Titus 1. Elders and Deacons must be Members of Nassau Street Church in order to assume these responsibilities.

The Elders shall be comprised of not less than five men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:6. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

The Elders will be voted on and affirmed by the membership to oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and I Peter 5:1-4, the Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. Under the guidance of and working alongside the Senior Pastor and pastoral team, they shall assist to guide the church in the purposes of learning, caring, worshipping and evangelism.

The Elders, under the guidance of and along with the Senior Pastor and the pastoral team, shall take particular responsibility to:

1. Devote themselves to prayer (Acts 6:4)
2. Teach the Word (Acts 6:4; 1 Tim 5:17)
3. Shepherd the flock (1 Peter 5:2-4);
4. Encourage sound doctrine and practice;
5. Equip believers for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11-12);
6. Admonish and correct error (Titus 1:9);
7. Examine and instruct prospective Members;
8. Examine and recommend all prospective candidates for elder and deacon positions;
9. Oversee worship services;
10. Administer the ordinances of baptism and communion;
11. Oversee the process of church discipline;

12. Oversee the ministries of the church;
13. Mobilize the church for world missions;
14. Ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

The Elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions.

The Elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff.

Each year the Elders shall present to the Members an itemized budget. This budget shall be circulated to Members no less than 3 weeks prior to the Members' meeting where discussion and/or a vote on its approval will be entertained. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Elders.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor, the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties.

## **6.2. Nomination Process for Elders**

Those being considered for the office of Elder will be recommended by the Elders. Members are also encouraged to make recommendations to the Elders for prospective Elder candidates.

The Elders will present to the Members the individuals that they believe should be considered for the office of Elder 21 days in advance of the meeting during which the affirmation vote is to be held. If Members believe that a suggested candidate is unqualified for the office of Elder they should express this concern to the Elders. Any concern expressed about a candidate should be done before commencing the voting process.

## **6.3. Term of Office of Elders**

The term for an Elder shall be three years. An Elder may serve consecutive terms if affirmed by the Members. After an Elder, other than the Senior or Associate Pastor(s), has served three consecutive three-year terms, he may only be elected to the office of Elder after at least one year absence.

## **6.4. Termination of Elders**

An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two Members with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation (2 Tim 5:19 – an accusation against an Elder will not be entertained except on account of two or more witnesses). Any such action shall be taken in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21.

## **6.5. Remuneration**

No Elder shall receive remuneration for serving as an Elder of the Church, except those serving as Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors.

## **6.6. Chairman at Elders' Meetings**

The Elders shall appoint a Chairman of Elders' meetings.

## **7. PASTORS**

### **7.1. Appointment of Pastors**

As needed, the Members may appoint a Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors. Any Pastor appointed to these positions will also serve as Elders of the Church.

### **7.2. Description of Pastoral Positions**

The Pastors shall have the following duties associated with their positions:

(a) **Senior Pastor** – The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder. He shall perform the duties of an Elder (described above), and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor, the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties.

The Senior Pastor shall lead and oversee the pastoral/office team, and give guidance and oversee the team of Elders, thus assisting and guiding the Elders to carry out their calling. The details of the Senior Pastor's duties, in addition to those responsibilities of the Elders (identified above), are to be decided by the Elders.

The Senior Pastor shall undergo a regular ministry review carried out by the Elders. This review is to take place annually.

(b) **Associate Pastor** – The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the Senior Pastor is that of associate.

An Associate Pastor shall be an Elder. He shall perform the duties of an Elder (described above), and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

The Associate Pastor will become a part of the pastoral team working and serving under the leadership and guidance of the Senior Pastor and the Elders.

### **7.3. Nomination Process for Pastors**

In the calling of any man to the position of Pastor, the same qualifications of an Elder must be followed. In addition, the Elders shall appoint a committee to undertake the process of identifying a man to be put forward for the consideration of candidate pastor to the Members. Members of the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts and pastoral calling of any potential pastor. Once the Elders are assured of his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant and communicate this to the congregation, the Members will vote to affirm the pastor at a duly called Members' meeting.

## **8. DEACONS AND DEACONESSES**

### **8.1. Description of Deacons and Deaconesses Responsibility**

Deacons and Deaconesses are identified by the Elders as particularly necessary individuals who, in their service, facilitate the key ministries of the church identified by the Elders. They shall be those men and women meeting the qualifications described in I Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–7.

Deacons and Deaconesses shall care for the temporal needs of Members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others, and those with gifts of administration.

## **8.2. Nomination Process for Deacon and Deaconesses**

Calling Deacons and Deaconesses into these offices will be carried out under much prayer, both individually and corporately. Nominations will be carried out under the supervision and guidance of the Elders. All candidates will be treated with grace, kindness and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow Members, giving consideration to a process that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Those being considered for the office of Deacon will be recommended by the Elders.

Deacons and Deaconesses will be affirmed at a meeting of the Members.

## **8.3. Termination of Deacon and Deaconesses**

A Deacon's or Deaconess' term may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal by vote of the Members. Any action to remove a Deacon or Deaconess shall be taken in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17.

# **9. MINISTRY LEADERSHIP STAFF**

From time to time, the Elders may recommend an individual to be hired for a particular ministry leadership position.

Affirmation of these individuals will be voted on at a meeting of the Members.

# **10. MISCELLANEOUS**

## **10.1. Amendments to By-laws**

These by-laws may be revised by ballot vote at the Annual General Meeting of the Members.

Proposed amendments to the by-laws are required to be submitted in writing to the Elders and communicated in writing to the Members by the Elders at least four weeks before an Annual General Meeting.

*Schedule "A"*  
**CHURCH COVENANT**

We believe that we've been rescued by the blood of Jesus, living for the purpose of bringing glory to God in all we do. Through our lives together as the bride of Christ, we long to see Jesus worshipped as Lord, both here in Winnipeg and to the ends of the world. Believing the Scriptures to be true and authoritative for our lives together as the church, and in agreement with the statement of faith of Nassau Street Church we covenant with each other in the following ways:

- I covenant to seek after God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, through reading Scripture, prayer and fellowship with other believers.
- I covenant to regularly participate in the life of Nassau Street Church by attending weekly services, engaging in gospel-centered community, and stewarding the resources God has given me including my time, finances, and spiritual gifts.
- I covenant to walk together with Members of this body in love, exercising affectionate care and watchfulness over each other.
- I covenant to live a life yielded to God in all areas of my life, seeking to live a self-controlled life striving for purity and holiness,; in my marriage, dating and friend relationships.
- I covenant to avoid gossip, forgive when I've been hurt, and to strive to maintain the unity of the bride of Christ.
- I covenant to rejoice and celebrate with each other, to support and carry each other's burdens and to pray for each other.
- I covenant to walk in accountability with each other at NSC as I cannot do this by myself.
- I covenant to submit to the loving oversight, discipline and authority of the Elders as they follow and submit to Christ as overseers of the flock.
- I covenant to pray that my heart will grow in love for those who don't know Jesus as Lord and Saviour, praying for their salvation, sharing my faith in gospel conversations as I have opportunity, and supporting our local and global missionaries through prayer.
- I covenant that if and when I move on from Nassau Street Church, that I will seek another church in which I can live out my life as a believer in a gospel-centered community.