

St. Paul's Church of Red Lion By-Laws

Part I: Church Organization

A. The Congregation

1. St. Paul's Church of Red Lion is a church in the Wesleyan and Evangelical United Brethren traditions of the Christian faith, led under the authority of Christ by the gathered church. The leaders of St. Paul's, as outlined in the sections to follow, exist to serve the church and advance the mission of God.
2. Worship Services: St. Paul's Church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of God, for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and on other days and times for prayer, Bible study, discipleship training, new member training, or fellowship. These meetings will be open to the entire membership and community and shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor or designated person in the absence of the pastor.
3. The role of the congregation includes membership, service to the community, and discipleship of those inside and outside our membership.

B. Church Administration

1. The Leadership Council serves as the governing body of St. Paul's Church. Leadership Council candidates are elected by the congregation at Congregational Meetings. Leadership Council will fill any vacancy as needed with a candidate who cannot vote until he or she is elected at a Congregational Meeting. Its purpose is to provide leadership for St. Paul's in carrying out the vision God has given us: to see people come alive in Jesus and pursue Jesus with us through relationships and service, leadership development, and spiritual growth. The Leadership Council consists of:
 - a. 9 to 12 voting members, one of whom is elected by Leadership Council to serve as Chairperson who
 - i. votes only in the event of a tie vote
 - ii. conducts Leadership Council meetings
 - iii. confers with the pastor on a regular basis
 - b. Pastor (*ex officio*)-non voting
2. Duties and responsibilities
 - a. The Leadership Council is bound by these By-Laws, Parts I and II, and the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith as written in Part III.
 - b. The Leadership Council meets regularly with special sessions as required.
 - c. The pastor is accountable to the Leadership Council.
 - d. A quorum for voting at St. Paul's Leadership Council meetings is set at more than 50% of council membership.
 - e. Leadership Council assumes all organizational authority and decision-making power of St. Paul's Church except these duties which require congregational vote by 2/3 majority of those members present:

- i. Change or establish a denominational affiliation
 - ii. Approve the Call of a new pastor
 - iii. Dismiss a church officer or pastor
 - iv. Change the organizational By-Laws
 - v. Make major or non-budgeted financial decisions (see 7e and 7f)
 - f. It is recommended that:
 - i. Each year's class of new Leadership Council members serves for a three-year term.
 - ii. Members serve no more than two consecutive terms before taking a one-year sabbatical from Leadership Council.
3. Administrative Committees: St. Paul's Church is managed by administrative committees. Each committee consists of a chair (Leadership Council member), members at large, and the pastor(*ex officio*) as required to serve the needs of the church.
- a. Staffing Committee: One Leadership Council member will lead the Staffing Committee, which is responsible for hiring and overseeing paid staff of St. Paul's Church as required to fulfill the position's job description and to support ministry and mission of the church. This includes:
 - i. Hiring, managing, disciplining, or terminating decisions in coordination with the Leadership Council and pastor
 - ii. Providing staff development opportunities
 - iii. Addressing all issues related to hired staff
 - iv. Monitoring employees and volunteers who work with youth as to required clearances including those clearances required by insurance policies and PA law
 - v. Reviewing employee performance yearly or as needed as determined by the Leadership Council
 - b. Trustees: One Leadership Council member will serve as lead Trustee. The Trustees are responsible for:
 - i. Property improvements, repairs, and stewardship of assets by conducting research, obtaining quotes, and bringing forth proposals to the Leadership Council for consideration.
 - ii. Adherence to safety laws, codes, and regulations as related to property
 - c. Finance Committee: One Leadership Council member will serve as Finance chairperson. The finance committee is responsible for:
 - i. The proper management of our financial assets
 - ii. Setting and managing the annual budget and salaries which will be published and made available to the congregation
 - iii. Stewardship of finances and investments
 - iv. Financial planning
4. Nominations Guidelines
- a. The Leadership Council is responsible for finding replacement candidates for vacancies and expanding Leadership Council as needed. This may require the formation of a nominating committee to find and vet candidates for positions.
 - b. Those serving in ministry do not need to be nominated.
5. Committees may be added as needed with Leadership Council approval.

6. Treasurer: St. Paul's Church treasurer shall serve as custodian of all funds and shall disburse these funds by checks as authorized. The treasurer must be bonded either through the church insurance policy or a separate bonding policy. The church treasurer shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annual written report. The treasurer's records shall be reviewed annually by a team selected by Leadership Council. The treasurer shall also be responsible for submitting all of the treasurer's records to a group for review that is to be completed every six years and at the conclusion of a treasurer's recommended six-year term of office prior to a new treasurer's taking office.
7. Trustees: Trustees shall be nominated and elected by the congregation to hold in trust the property of St. Paul's.
 - a. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of St. Paul's without a specific vote of the congregation authorizing each action.
 - b. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of St. Paul's property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and on behalf of St. Paul's.
 - c. No trustee shall be assigned or assume any power or authority greater than any other member unless noted in these By-Laws.
 - d. No trustee shall grant nor withhold permission or action required to fulfill the duly authorized direction approved by St. Paul's membership in business session.
 - e. Trustees may make non-budgeted emergency repairs to the properties or upgrades to dangerous building situations with Leadership Council approval.
 - f. Trustees may spend the following amounts without Leadership Council approval:
 - i. Necessary Non-Emergency: \$5,000 limit per repair
 - ii. Necessary Emergency limit: \$10,000 limit per repair
 - g. Trustees will present a user agreement to groups using the church facilities. The following statement will be included in all user agreements: "May not use the 'St. Paul's Church of Red Lion' or 'St. Paul's Preschool' names or likenesses in social media, websites, online accounts, or promotions without written permission."
8. A Congregational Meeting will be held yearly and as needed. A two-week written notice or announcement must be given for a Congregational Meeting. The quorum for a Congregational Meeting is set at 25% of the average weekly attendance from the previous month. Only church members can vote in Congregational Meetings.
9. Special Congregational Business Meeting: A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the pastor, or by a majority of the Leadership Council, or by action of the Congregation in business session to consider special matters of a significant nature. A two-week written notice or announcement must be given for the specially called Congregational Meeting.
10. Parliamentary Rules: Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings and for all

other meetings that demand voting of the members of St. Paul's, including committee meetings.

C. Reports: These reports will be prepared and made available at Congregational meetings as needed.

1. Weekly reports:
 - a. Giving: envelope and online including Weekly Giving Worksheets and forms listing all the giving members and their respective envelope numbers with contributions.
 - b. Number in attendance in Worship, Sunday School, Special Services
 - c. Missions/Outreach: number of participants or attendees
 - d. Preschool payments and totals
2. Treasurer's reports:
 - a. Monthly and Yearly reports on giving and expenditures with fund balances
 - b. Annual Trustees' report on property maintenance costs and repairs
3. Financial Reports
 - a. Financial review done yearly by a church team or individual and validated by the Finance Chair
 - b. A financial review to be done every six years and at the completion of the Treasurer's term of office
 - c. Yearly budget
4. Congregational Meeting reports and minutes
5. Property inspection including the parsonage with a report and form completed by Trustees and pastor
6. Safe Sanctuaries Report as needed and/or required by
 - a. State Law
 - b. Insurance requirements
 - c. Leadership Council recommendation

D. Record Keeping

1. All records and files pertaining to St. Paul's are to be kept on site as hard copies and/or digital copies on the church computer and cloud storage (CCIS). This includes membership records.
2. All hard copies of St. Paul's property deeds and records, Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, etc. are to be retained in an off-site secure area, such as a bank lock box. Other articles that should be kept there are, but are not limited to, papers pertaining to disaffiliation or joining another denomination and other legal paperwork that need to be kept safe and secure.
3. Historical records pertaining to St. Paul's are to be archived in a secure location in the church with items accounted for and logged into a permanent record for reference and access.
4. Recorded Minutes of meeting will be kept as hard and/or digital copies
 - a. Leadership Council Meetings
 - b. Congregational Meetings
 - c. Special Meetings

Part II: Church Operation

- A. **Qualifications for membership:** Any questions regarding membership will be addressed by the pastor and the Leadership Council as needed. Membership of St. Paul's Church shall consist of people who have made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized, are in agreement with the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith.
- B. **Reception of new members:** Membership may be attained by any of the following manners:
1. By scriptural baptism after profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
 2. By transfer letter from another church of like faith.
 3. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and scriptural baptism in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.
 4. By restoration to membership after having been dropped.
- C. **Orientation of New Members:** Candidates for membership and new members shall attend the Membership Class to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of members to God and St. Paul's Church. Members in good standing shall have the right to a voice and vote in all St. Paul's Church transactions and shall have the rights and privileges of full participation in the life and work of our church. It shall be the duty of members to uphold the Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith, Church By-Laws, Covenant, and Mission.
- D. **Termination of membership:** Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:
1. Requests a letter of transfer to join another church of like faith.
 2. Is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins another church. A letter of transfer is not necessary.
 3. Dies
 4. Is dismissed by a vote due to reasons and circumstances provided to Leadership Council. The pastor and church leaders will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.
- E. **Church Officers:** All church officers must be members of St. Paul's in good standing. All officers (except Pastor and staff) are to be nominated and elected to serve.
- F. **The Pastor's Responsibilities, Call, Service:**
The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in Timothy 3:1-7, which describe the pastor as one who is honorable, faithful, exhibiting self-control, living wisely, and having good reputation. Training, skills, and experiences are needed in areas of leadership.

1. Responsibilities fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, planning, and guiding St. Paul's Church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
2. The pastor shall
 - a. administer the sacraments
 - b. lead St. Paul's, the organizations, and all leaders in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
3. The Pastor shall be an *ex officio* member of all standing committees, except the Pastor's Selection Committee.
4. The pastor shall assist the worship leaders in securing pulpit supply for times he or she is absent from the pulpit.
5. Pastor's Call: A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs. A Pastor Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Leadership Council to seek out a suitable pastor, and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination. The Pastor's Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time. The pastor's election shall take place at a Congregational Meeting called for that purpose, of which at least a two-week notice shall be given to the members. An affirmative vote of two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of those members present is necessary for the hiring of the nominee. The quorum for a Congregational Meeting is set at 25% of the average weekly attendance from the previous month. Only church members can vote in Congregational Meetings.
6. Terms of Service:
 - a. A written contract with the pastoral candidate will be negotiated at the time of hiring for a period of no longer than five years. Yearly performance reviews and contract renewal discussions will be ongoing or on an as-needed basis.
 - b. The chosen pastor shall serve until
 - i. the end of the contract period.
 - ii. the relationship is terminated by either the pastor's request or by $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the congregation at a Congregational Meeting. The quorum for a Congregational Meeting is set at 25% of the average weekly attendance from the previous month. Only church members can vote in Congregational Meetings.
 - iii. In any case, at least thirty (30) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

G. Church Staff:

1. St. Paul's Church shall employ or call staff as needed. Staff members other than the pastor shall be recommended for employment by the Leadership Council or a special committee.
2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

Part III: Articles of Religion and Confession of Faith from St. Paul's Wesleyan and Evangelical United Brethren Heritage

Article I — God and Trinity: We believe in the one true, holy and living God, Eternal Spirit, who is Creator, Sovereign and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. He is infinite in power, wisdom, justice, goodness and love, and rules with gracious regard for the well-being and salvation of all people, to the glory of his name. We believe the one God reveals himself as the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, distinct but inseparable, eternally one in essence and power.

Article II — Jesus Christ: We believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, in whom the divine and human natures are perfectly and inseparably united. He is the eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit. As ministering Servant he lived, suffered and died on the cross. He was buried, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven to be with the Father, from whence he shall return. He is eternal Savior and Mediator. who intercedes for us, and by him all will be judged.

Article III — The Holy Spirit: We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from and is one in being with the Father and the Son. He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He leads us through faithful response to the gospel into the fellowship of the Church. He comforts, sustains, and empowers the faithful and guides them into all truth.

Article IV — The Holy Bible: We believe the Holy Bible, Old and New Testaments, reveals the Word of God so far as it is necessary for our salvation. It is to be received through the Holy Spirit as the true rule and guide for faith and practice. Whatever is not revealed in or established by the Holy Scriptures is not to be made an article of faith nor is it to be taught as essential to salvation.

Article V — Of Original or Birth Sin: Original sin stands not in the following of Adam, but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil continually.

Article VI — Of Free Will: The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

Article VII — Reconciliation and Salvation Through Christ: We believe God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. The offering Christ freely made on the cross is the perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, redeeming man from all sin, so that no other satisfaction is required. The offering of Christ, once made is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone.

We believe good works are the necessary fruits of faith and follow regeneration but they do not have the virtue to remove our sins or to avert divine judgment. We believe good works, pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, spring from a true and living faith, for through and by them faith is made evident.

Article VIII — Regeneration: We believe regeneration is the renewal of man in righteousness through Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, whereby we are made partakers of the divine nature and experience newness of life. By this new birth the believer becomes reconciled to God and is enabled to serve Him with the will and the affections. We believe, although we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to depart from grace and fall into sin; and we may even then, by the grace of God, be renewed in righteousness.

Article IX — Sanctification and Christian Perfection: We believe sanctification is the work of God's grace through the Word and the Spirit, by which those who have been born again are cleansed from sin in their thoughts, words, and acts, and are enabled to live in accordance with God's will, and to strive for holiness without which no one will see the Lord. Entire sanctification is a state of perfect love, righteousness, and true holiness which every regenerate believer may obtain by being delivered from the power of sin, by loving God with all the heart, soul, mind and strength, and by loving one's neighbor as one's self. Through faith in Jesus Christ this gracious gift may be received in this life both gradually and instantaneously, and should be sought earnestly by every child of God.

We believe this experience does not deliver us from the infirmities, ignorance, and mistakes common to man, nor from the possibilities of further sin. The Christian must continue on guard against spiritual pride and seek to gain victory over every temptation to sin. He must respond wholly to the will of God so that sin will lose its power over him; and the world, the flesh, and the devil are put under his feet. Thus he rules over these enemies with watchfulness through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Article X — Of the Church: The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of the faithful in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

Article XI — The Sacraments: We believe the Sacraments, ordained by Christ, are symbols and pledges of the Christian's profession and of God's love toward us. They are means of grace by which God works invisibly in us, quickening, strengthening, and confirming our faith in him. Two Sacraments are ordained by Christ our Lord, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Article XII—Baptism: We believe Baptism signifies entrance into the household of faith, and is a symbol of repentance and inner cleansing from sin, a representation of the new birth in Christ Jesus and a mark of Christian discipleship.

We believe children are under the atonement of Christ and as heirs of the Kingdom of God are acceptable subjects for Christian Baptism. Children of believing parent(s) through Baptism become the special responsibility of the Church. They should be nurtured and led to personal acceptance of Christ, and by profession of faith confirm their Baptism.

Article XIII—Communion: The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another, but rather is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death; insomuch that, to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ; and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ. The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the Supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner. And the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper is faith. The Lord's Supper is not to be denied to the lay people and ought to be administered to all Christians.

Article XIV — Civil Government: We believe that civil government derives its just powers from the sovereign God. As Christians we recognize the governments under whose protection we reside and believe such governments should be based on, and be responsible for, the recognition of human rights under God. We believe it is the duty of Christian citizens to give moral strength and purpose to their respective governments through sober, righteous, and godly living.

Article XV— The Judgment and the Future State: We believe all stand under the righteous judgment of Jesus Christ, both now and in the last day. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the righteous to life eternal, and the nonbelievers to endless condemnation.

Sourced from the 2016 United Methodist Book of Discipline