

A TRANSFORMED CONSTITUTION
FOR
St Paul(Mt Pleasant) Church
Stewartstown, Pennsylvania

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*PREAMBLE

We, members of the Church of Jesus Christ, having been baptized, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission and purpose, do hereby adopt this constitution and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 1.

NAME AND INCORPORATION

- C1.01. The name of this congregation shall be St Paul (Mt Pleasant) Lutheran Church, operating as St. Paul's Church.
- C1.02. For the purpose of this constitution and the accompanying by-laws and/or continuing resolutions, the congregation of St Paul's Church shall be hereinafter designated as "this church."
- C1.11. This church shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.

Chapter 2.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Preface

This church recognizes the Holy Bible as the inerrant and infallible Word of God. It is sufficient as our rule of faith and practice, and holds that living in accordance with its teachings is the true test of fellowship. Each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the Word of God according to the dictates of his/her conscience, under the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The following Confession of Faith therefore is not a test, but an expression of the spirit in which the church understands and accepts the Word of God.

- *C2.01. This church confesses the one Triune God, known to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- *C2.02. This church confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel (as defined in I Corinthians 15:1-4) as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.
 - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
 - b. The proclamation of God's message to us is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ and His church.
 - c. Salvation is a free gift of God by His **Grace Alone** through **Faith Alone** by means of **Scripture Alone**.
 - 1. **Grace Alone:** God loves the people of the world, even though we are sinful, rebel against Him and do not deserve His love. He sent Jesus, His Son, to love the unlovable and give us what we do not deserve, forgiveness and everlasting life.
 - 2. **Faith Alone:** By His suffering, death and resurrection as the substitute for all people of all time, Jesus purchased and won forgiveness and life for us. We who hear this Good News and believe it, have this everlasting life and hope that it offers.
 - 3. **Scripture Alone:** The Bible is God's inerrant and infallible Word, in which He reveals His Law, His Truth and His Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ. It is the sole rule and source for our Christian belief and doctrine.
 - d. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in

Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

- *C2.03. This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments in their original texts as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the sole authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life.
- *C2.04. This church accepts the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as valid declarations of our Christian faith (all creeds are meant to be guidelines for declaring and teaching the Christian faith and are not to be substituted for the Word of God).
- *C2.05. This church confesses the Gospel of Jesus Christ (the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord), as the sole means of man's salvation received by grace through faith, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God's mission in the world.
- *C2.06 Statement of Social Concerns
 - a. Regarding sexual relationships:
 - 1) Sexual relationships outside of marriage are hurtful, destructive and forbidden by the Word of God (Matthew 15:19-20; Galatians 5:19-21; I Corinthians 3:16 and 6:15-18; Exodus 20:14).
 - 2) Sexual relations between people of the same sex are against the natural order and are forbidden by the Word of God (Romans 1:4-7; Galatians 5:19-21; Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13; I Corinthians 6:19-20).
 - b. Regarding the sanctity of human life:
 - 1) The unborn child is a human being, possessing the right of life (I Corinthians 3:16).
 - 2) All human life is protected from the practices of abortion, infanticide and euthanasia by the commandment of God not to murder (Exodus 20:13; Luke 18:20).
 - 3) Emotional or physical abuse of children or adults is contrary to the Word of God (I Corinthians 10:23-24; Colossians 3:19-21; Ephesians 6:4).
 - c. Regarding struggles common to humanity:
 - 1) We will seek to provide, under the guidance of God's Word and the Holy Spirit, a counseling ministry, both lay and professional, to bring healing to hurting people (Galatians 6:1-2).
 - 2) We will seek to extend the grace, mercy and love of God in our Lord Jesus Christ to all people (Ephesians 4:32; Galatians 6:10; Luke 1:77-79).

Chapter 3.

NATURE OF THE CHURCH

- *C3.01. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ. All actions of this church are to be carried out under His rule and authority.
- *C3.02. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. While recognizing the universal nature of the Church, all being one in Christ, we believe that the local congregation is God's proper method of carrying out the Great Commission.

Chapter 4.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- *C4.01. The Church is a people created by God in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, called and sent to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in the world.
- *C4.02. To participate in God's mission, this church shall:
 - a. Worship God in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, and service.

- b. Proclaim God's saving Gospel of justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in the Holy Scripture, preserving and transmitting the Gospel faithfully to present and future generations.
 - c. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by reaching out to all people to bring them to faith in Christ and by doing all ministry with a global awareness consistent with the understanding of God as Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier of all.
 - d. Serve in response to God's love to meet human needs, caring for the sick and the aged, advocating dignity and justice for all people, working for peace and reconciliation among the nations, and standing with the poor and powerless, and committing itself to their needs.
 - e. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love and to see daily life as the primary setting for the exercise of their Christian calling.
 - f. Assist its members in their path of discipleship to identify their God given gift(s) of the Spirit and to apply them to the ministry of Jesus Christ.
 - g. Manifest the unity given to the people of God by living together in the love of Christ and by joining with other Christians in prayer and action to express and preserve the unity which the Spirit gives.
- *C4.03. To fulfill these purposes, this church shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered.
 - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
 - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling to discipleship in their daily lives and in their church.
 - d. Teach the Word of God.
 - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
 - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
 - g. Motivate its members to provide financial support for this church's ministry and missions.
 - h. Foster and participate in interdependent relationships with other congregations.
- *C4.04. This church shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the bylaws. The Church Council shall prepare guidelines of responsibilities where helpful to connect mission and ministry. Areas of ministry, though ever changing in function, shall be basically identified in the by-laws.
- *C4.05. This church shall adopt a mission statement and covenant which will provide specific direction for its purpose, and from time to time review its wording to assure it is focused consistently with the mission Christ has given the Church.

Chapter 5.

POWERS OF THE CONGREGATION

- *C5.01. The powers of this church are those necessary to fulfill its purpose.
- *C5.02. The powers of this church are vested in the Congregational Meeting called and conducted as provided in this constitution and bylaws.
- *C5.03. Only such authority as is delegated to the Church Council or other organizational units in this church's governing documents is recognized. All remaining authority is retained by the church. The church is authorized to:
 - a. Call a pastor as provided in Chapter 9 of this constitution;
 - b. Terminate the call of a pastor as provided in Chapter 9 of this constitution;
 - c. Approve the annual budget;
 - d. Acquire real and personal property by gift, devise, purchase, or other lawful means;
 - e. Hold title to and use its property for any and all activities consistent with its purpose;
 - f. Sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise dispose of its property by any lawful means;

- g. Elect its Church Council, and require the members of the Council to carry out their duties in accordance with the constitution, by-laws, and continuing resolutions

Chapter 6.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- *C6.01. The ownership of the real estate on which the church structure is located, the church structure itself, and all improvements ("the Church Property") belongs to the church membership and is vested in the collective membership of the congregation.
- *C6.02. Upon dissolution of this corporation as precipitated by a two-thirds majority vote, the church property shall either be given to a Christian organization or sold and the proceeds donated to a Christian organization. The Christian organization will be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a religious organization and will propound the doctrines of the Christian faith.
- *C6.03. At no time will a church member receive a monetary value from or assume ownership of the church property in his or her personal capacity. This does not preclude an officer acting in his or her official capacity from dealing with the church property for the ultimate benefit of the entire church with approval of the congregation.

Chapter 7.

MEMBERSHIP

- *C7.01. Members of this church shall be those baptized persons on the roll of this church at the time that this constitution is adopted and those who are admitted thereafter and who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this constitution and its bylaws.
- *C7.02. Members shall be classified as follows:
 - a. **Members** are those persons who have been received by the Sacrament of Holy Baptism in this church, have been previously baptized in the name of the Triune God, or have been received by certificate of transfer from another church or by affirmation of faith.
 - b. **Affiliate members** are those who participate regularly in worship and ministry of the congregation, but who, for whatever reason, choose not to affiliate or formalize their membership as defined in other classifications. This classification of membership has privileges and assumed duties, but does not have voting rights or eligibility for elected offices or membership on the church Council of this congregation.
 - c. **Voting members** are confirmed, baptized and active members at least 18 years of age. Such confirmed and active members shall have worshiped regularly and made a contribution of record to this congregation during the preceding 12 months.
- *C7.03. All applications for membership shall be submitted to the Church Council as a matter of record.
- *C7.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of all members of this church:
 - a. To engage in meaningful **Worship** through weekly services centered on the Word and the sacraments.
 - b. To **Fellowship** one with another in the communion that is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 - c. To commit ourselves to **Discipleship**, following and devoting ourselves to the teachings of the Holy Scriptures that we might grow in Christ.
 - d. To be active participants in the life of the church through individual **Ministry**, encouraging and helping one another through the use of our Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personalities and Experiences to the advancement of His church.
 - e. To assist those beyond the boundaries of our community who faithfully carry the gospel of Jesus Christ in **Missions**. We support them through prayer, finances and personal participation obeying the scriptural mandate to go into all the world.

- f. To engage in the **Evangelism** of our community, sharing the gospel with all, encouraging repentance and forgiveness of sin for salvation through Jesus Christ by grace through faith.
- *C7.05. Membership in this church shall be terminated by any of the following:
- a. Death;
 - b. Resignation;
 - c. Release;
 - d. Disciplinary action by the Church Council; or
 - e. Removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined in the by-laws.
- Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the church has a continuing pastoral concern.

Chapter 8. THE PASTOR

- *C8.01. Authority to call a pastor in this church shall be by at least a two-thirds majority, written ballot vote of members present and qualified to vote at a meeting legally called for that purpose.
- *C8.02. Consistent with the faith and practice of this church,
- a. Every called pastor shall:
 - 1) Preach the Word;
 - 2) Administer the sacraments;
 - 3) Conduct public worship;
 - 4) Provide for pastoral care;
 - 5) Love the church and community with the love of Christ; and
 - 6) Be ordained
 - b. Each called pastor within the church shall:
 - 1) Offer instruction, engage in personal evangelism, confirm, marry, visit the sick and distressed, and bury the dead;
 - 2) Oversee all schools and organizations of this church;
 - 3) Install regularly elected members of the Church Council; and
 - 4) With the council, administer discipline.
 - c. Every pastor shall:
 - 1) Strive to extend the Kingdom of God in the community, in the nation, and abroad through the proclamation of the Gospel;
 - 2) Seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel, and when appropriate, call for and provide for their ordination in the local church;
 - 3) Impart knowledge of this church and its wider ministry through distribution of its periodicals and other publications.
- *C8.03. The specific duties of the pastor, compensation, and other matters pertaining to the service of the pastor shall be included in a letter of call.
- *C8.04. a. The call of a church, when accepted by a pastor, shall constitute a continuing mutual relationship and commitment, which, except in the case of the death of the pastor, shall be terminated only for the following reasons:
- 1) Mutual agreement to terminate the call or the completion of a call for a specific term;
 - 2) Resignation of the pastor, which shall become effective, unless otherwise agreed, 30 days after the date on which it was submitted;
 - 3) Inability to conduct the pastoral office effectively in the church in view of local conditions, without reflection on the competence or the moral and spiritual character of the pastor;
 - 4) The physical or mental incapacity of the pastor;
 - 5) Disqualification of the pastor through discipline on grounds of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty;

- 6) The dissolution of the congregation.
 - b. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor or effective conduct of the pastoral office, it shall be the responsibility of the Church Council ,when such difficulties are personally known or have been brought to the Council's attention, to investigate such conditions.
 - c. In the case of alleged physical or mental incapacity of the pastor, competent medical testimony shall be obtained. When such disability is evident, the Church Council shall declare the pastorate vacant. Upon the restoration of a pastor to health, if feasible, the Church Council shall take steps to enable the pastor to resume the ministry of this church.
 - d. In the case of alleged local difficulties that imperil the effective functioning of the church, all concerned persons shall be heard, after which the Church Council shall decide on the course of action to be recommended to the pastor and the church. If they agree to carry out such recommendations, no further action shall be taken by the Church Council. If either party fails to assent, the congregation may dismiss the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members with voting privileges present at a regularly called meeting.
 - e. The foregoing procedure shall never be invoked when questions of doctrine, morality, or continued neglect of duty are involved; all such cases shall be treated as disciplinary matters.
 - f. If, in the course of the proceedings, it should become apparent that the pastoral office cannot be conducted effectively in the church being served by the ordained minister due to local conditions, the Church Council may temporarily suspend the pastor from service without prejudice and with or without pay.
- *C8.05. At a time of pastoral vacancy, an interim pastor shall be appointed by the authority of Church Council.
- *C8.06. During the period of service, an interim pastor shall have the rights and duties in the church of a regularly called pastor and may delegate the same in part to a supply pastor with the consent of the Church Council. The interim pastor and any ordained pastor providing assistance shall refrain from exerting influence in the selection of a pastor.
- *C8.07. This congregation shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to a former pastor before calling a successor. A pastor shall make satisfactory settlement of all financial obligations to this congregation.
- *C8.08. When a pastor is called to serve in company with another pastor or pastors, the privileges and responsibilities of each pastor shall be specified in documents to accompany the call and to be drafted in consultation involving the pastors, and the Church Council. As occasion requires, the documents may be revised through a similar consultation.
- *C8.09. The pastor of this congregation:
- a. Shall insure accurate parochial records of all baptisms, confirmations, members received, members dismissed, or members excluded from the congregation
 - b. Shall become a member of this congregation upon receipt and acceptance of the letter of call. In a parish of multiple congregations, the pastor shall hold membership in one of the congregations.
 - c. Shall call for the work of Deacons (men or women)
 - 1. Deacons may be chosen as needed to assist the Pastor in ministry.
 - a) Deacons may be recommended by the congregation and be appointed by the Pastor for a one year term. Deacons may serve successive terms without limit.
 - b) The nominee(s) shall be interviewed and approved by the Pastor(s) and Church Council before given a term of service.
 - c) Deacons shall be commissioned by the Pastor(s) of this church for service as needed.
 - d) The Deacons under the leadership and training of the Pastor(s) are to assist in serving the needs of the church. Areas of service may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - 1) Meeting the physical needs of this congregation
 - 2) Encouraging, supporting and praying regularly for those serving in assigned ministry areas
 - 3) Assisting in administering the ordinances as needed

Chapter 9.

CONGREGATION MEETING

- C9.01. The annual meeting of this church shall be held at a time specified in the by-laws.
- C9.02. A special congregation meeting may be called by the Church Council. The call for each special meeting shall specify the purpose for which it is to be held and no other business shall be transacted.
- C9.03. Notice of all meetings of this church shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays and by email or postal notice to all voting members at least 10 days in advance of the date of the meeting. The posting of such notice in the email or regular mail, with the regular postage affixed or paid, sent to the last known address of such members shall be sufficient.
- C9.04. One-third of those members present with voting privileges shall constitute a quorum. At Council's discretion members with voting privileges must sign an attendance sheet and, in the event of a written ballot, shall receive the ballot at the time of signing in.
- C9.05. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot shall not be permitted.
- C9.06. All actions approved by the church shall be by majority vote of those members present with voting privileges, except as otherwise provided in this constitution or by state law.
- C9.07. Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall govern parliamentary procedure of all meetings of this church.

Chapter 10.

OFFICERS

- C10.01. At its first meeting in each calendar year, the Church Council shall elect a president, a vice-president, a secretary, treasurer and a financial secretary who will serve both the Council and the church in their several capacities. Duties of the officers shall be specified in the by-laws.
- C10.02. The president and the vice-president shall be chosen from the membership of the Church Council. The other officers, if not members of the Council, shall be accorded the privilege of voice without vote in Council meetings.
- C10.03. All officers shall be members of this church with voting privileges. If any of them cease to be such, that office shall be declared vacant by the Council, who may fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.
- C10.04. No officer shall hold more than one office at a time.
- C10.05. Since the pastor is responsible for the overall direction of ministry of this church, the Council and its officers shall make every effort to apprise the pastor of all issues relating to the work of the Council and the church business where the skills, knowledge, or expertise of the pastor would be beneficial.

Chapter 11.

CHURCH COUNCIL

- C11.01. The voting membership of the Church Council shall consist of the pastor(s) and at least seven committed members of this church. Any member of this church with voting privileges in good standing for at least one year may be considered and approved by the Church Council, subject only to the limitation of the length of continuous service permitted in that office. A member's place on the Church Council shall be declared vacant if the member a) ceases to be a member of this church with voting privileges or b) is absent from two successive regular meetings of the Church Council without cause.
- C11.02. The members of the Church Council, except the pastor(s), shall be elected for three years, or until their successors are elected. Such members shall be eligible to serve no more than two full terms consecutively. Their terms shall begin at the January meeting of the Church Council. Newly elected Church Council members shall be installed at worship on a Sunday prior to the date they assume office.
- C11.03. Should a member's place on the Church Council be declared vacant, the Church Council shall elect, by majority vote, a successor until the next annual meeting. Individuals who have served the remainder of a year, or less than one-half of a full term, shall still potentially be eligible to be renominated to two full

terms. If the annual election includes both full and partial terms, at the Church Council meeting following the annual meeting, it shall be determined by lot who draws the partial terms. Those drawing partial terms likewise shall still potentially be eligible to be renominated to two full terms.

- C11.04. The Church Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this church, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God. The duties of the Church Council shall include the following:
- a. To lead this church in stating its mission, to do long-range planning, to set goals and priorities, and to evaluate its activities in light of its mission and goals.
 - b. To seek to involve all members of this church in worship, fellowship, discipleship, ministry, missions, evangelism and stewardship.
 - c. To attend to and provide for the administration of this church to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its ministry and mission.
 - d. To maintain supportive relationships with the pastor(s) and staff and help them annually to evaluate the fulfillment of their calling, appointment, or employment.
 - e. To be examples individually and corporately of the style of life and ministry expected of all Christians.
 - f. To promote a church climate of peace and goodwill, and, as differences and conflicts arise, to encourage and follow the Biblical mandates of scripture as outlined in Matthew 18:15-35.
 - g. To arrange for pastoral service during the sickness or absence of the pastor in the event the pastor has not already made arrangements
 - h. To seek out and encourage qualified persons to prepare for the ministry of this church.
- C11.05. The Church Council shall be responsible for the financial and property matters of this church. The Church Council:
- a. Shall be the board of trustees of this church, and as such shall be responsible for maintaining and protecting its property and the management of its business and fiscal affairs. It shall have the powers and be subject to the obligations that pertain to such boards under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania except as otherwise provided herein.
 - b. Shall not have the authority to buy, sell, or encumber real property unless specifically authorized to do so by an official vote of the church.
 - c. May enter into contracts of up to ten percent of the current operating budget for items not included in the budget.
 - d. Shall prepare an annual budget for adoption by this church, supervise the expenditure of funds in accordance therewith following its adoption, and may incur new obligations of no more than ten percent of the current operating budget.
 - e. Shall ascertain that the financial affairs of this church are being conducted efficiently, giving particular attention to the prompt payment of all obligations.
 - f. Shall be responsible for this congregation's investments and its total insurance program.
 - g. Shall require an audit of all funds at least annually.
- C11.06. The Church Council shall see that the provisions of this constitution, and either or both its by-laws and continuing resolutions, if they or whichever exists, are carried out.
- C11.07. The Church Council shall provide for an annual review of the membership roster.
- C11.08. The Church Council shall be responsible for the employment of all paid employees of this church.
- C11.09. The Church Council shall submit a comprehensive report to this church at the annual meeting.
- C11.10. The Church Council shall post minutes of meetings and make copies available to voting members upon request.
- C11.11. The Church Council shall meet at least quarterly. Special meetings may be called by the pastor or the Council president. Notice of each special meeting shall be given to all who are entitled to be present.
- C11.12. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Church Council, including the pastor or interim pastor, except when the pastor or interim pastor requests or consents to be absent and has given prior written approval to the agenda of routine matters which shall be the only business of that meeting.
- C11.13. Personal liability of Church Council members: A member of Church Council of this church shall not be

personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken, or any failure to take action unless:

- a. The Council member has breached or failed to perform the duties of his/her office in good faith, in a manner he or she reasonably believes to be in the best interest of this church, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, skill, and diligence, that a reasonable person would use under similar circumstances; and
- b. The breach to perform constitutes self-dealing, willful misconduct, or recklessness.

C11.14. Donations/Distributions:

- a. This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes; and for such purposes, this corporation can and will make distributions to organizations under 501c (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (with a corresponding section of the Federal Tax Code).
- b. No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall benefit or be distributable to its members, officers, directors, trustees, or other private persons; except this corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered, and to make payments and distributions to advance Section 501c (3) purposes.
- c. Upon dissolution of this corporation, its assets shall be either given to a Christian organization or sold and the proceeds donated to a Christian organization. The Christian organization will be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as a religious organization and will propound the doctrines of the Christian faith.

Chapter 12

CHURCH COMMITTEES

- C12.01. When a pastoral vacancy occurs, a **Call Committee** of at least four members with voting privileges shall be elected by this church. Upon installation of the newly called pastor the Call Committee will be dismissed.
- C12.02. Other church committees may be formed, as the need arises, by decision of the Church Council.
- C12.03. Duties of the committees of this church shall be specified in the by-laws or by Church Council in situations of need per C12.02

Chapter 13.

ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION

- C13.01. All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this church and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. As outgrowths and expressions of this church's life, the organizations are subject to its oversight and direction. The Church Council shall determine their policies, guide their activities and receive reports concerning their membership, work, and finances.
- C13.02. Special interest groups may be organized only after authorization has been given by the Church Council and specified in a continuing resolution.

Chapter 14.

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

- *C14.01. Denial of the Christian faith as described in this constitution, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the Church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this church are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps: a) private admonition by the pastor, b) admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and c) citation to appear before the Church Council.

- *C14.02. A member charged with the offense shall appear before the Church Council having received a written notice, specifying the exact charges that have been made against the member, at least ten days prior to the meeting.
- *C14.03. Should the allegations be sustained by a two-thirds majority vote of the Church Council, the Council shall impose one of the following disciplinary actions:
 - a. Censure before the Council or church;
 - b. Suspension from membership for a definite period of time; or
 - c. Exclusion from membership in this church.
Disciplinary actions b. and c. shall be delivered to the member in writing.
- *C14.04. Disciplinary actions may be reconsidered and revoked by the Church Council upon receipt of a) evidence that injustice has been done or b) evidence of repentance and amendment.

Chapter 15 BY-LAWS

- *C15.01. This church may adopt by-laws. No by-law may conflict with this constitution.
- *C15.02. By-laws may be adopted or amended at any legally called meeting of this church by a majority vote of those members with voting privileges who are present.

Chapter 16 AMENDMENTS

- *C16.01. Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by a voting member or by the Church Council. Proposals must be filed in writing with the Church Council 60 days before formal consideration by the church at a regular or special church meeting called for that purpose. Upon review and approval by the Church Council, Council shall notify the church members of the proposal with the recommendations at least 30 days in advance of the meeting.
- *C16.02. A proposed amendment under provisions of C16.01. shall:
 - a. Be approved at a properly called church meeting according to this constitution by a majority vote of those present and voting;
 - b. Be ratified without a change at a church meeting (scheduled at least 30 days following the approval vote) by a two-thirds majority vote;
 - c. Have the effective date included in the resolution and noted in the constitution.

Chapter 17 CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

- *C17.01. The Church Council may enact continuing resolutions, which describe the function of the various committees or organizations of this church.
- *C17.02. Continuing resolutions shall be enacted or amended by a two-thirds vote of all voting members of the Church Council.

Chapter 18 INDEMNIFICATION

- *C18.01. Consistent with the provisions of the laws under which this church is incorporated, this church may adopt provisions providing indemnification for each person who, by reason of the fact that such person is or was a Church Council member, officer, employee, agent, or other member of

any network or team of this church, was or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed civil, criminal, administrative, arbitration, or investigative proceeding.

a. Indemnification

- 1) A church representative is defined to be a member of the Church Council, officer, employee, or agent of the church, or any organization he or she is serving as a trustee, officer, employee, or agent at the request of this church.

A church liability is defined to be any judgment, fine, liability, or reasonable expense (including but not limited to court costs, attorney fees, or any amount paid in any settlement) which were incurred or expended in connection with any claim, suit, or action or proceeding whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and which arose from any action by this church or for its benefit.

Subject to the limits set forth in the constitution and by-laws, this church shall insure or protect from loss each church representative, his or her heirs, executors or administrators from any church liability in which the church representative was involved because of anything he or she may have done or omitted to do. But such indemnification can be granted only if such determination is made, as described later, that such protection should be given. This indemnification shall not impair any other right the church representative may have.

- 2) As described in the above paragraph, this indemnification can only be given if a determination is made by members of the Church Council who are not involved in the church liability, with advice of Counsel for this church; or by a disinterested person or persons named by the members of the Church Council not involved in the liability, or by independent legal counsel in a written opinion that:
- a) The church representative acted in good faith, and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in the best interests of this church and had no reasonable cause to believe his/her conduct was unlawful (if this is a criminal action or proceeding);
 - b) The amount of the proposed indemnification is reasonable;
 - c) The proposed indemnification is just and proper, and can be legally made by this church under the law existing at the time when the liability was created.
- The indemnification shall be made by this church in the amount stated in the determination, but shall not be available if the act or failure to act giving rise to the claim for indemnification has been determined by a court to have constituted willful misconduct or recklessness.

b. Advance Payment of Expenses:

Expenses incurred by a church representative in defending a civil or criminal action, suit, or proceeding may be paid by this church in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding upon receipt of notification to repay such amount by or on behalf of the church representative is not entitled to be indemnified by this church.

c. Insurance or Indemnification Fund:

This church shall have the power to buy and maintain insurance, and to establish and fund a self-insurance indemnification reserve on behalf of the church representative against any church liability.

d. Validity:

The validity of any portion of this article shall not affect the validity of the remainder.

- *C19.01. This church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head and finds in the Word of God, interpreted by the Holy Spirit through divine reason, faith and conscience, its guidance in matters of faith and discipline. The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters, however to the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.
 - *C19.02. Believing that the local church is God's instrument in reaching the world for Christ, this church is amenable to no ecclesiastical judicatory.
 - *C19.03. This church further believes in the fellowship and interdependence of the body of Christ and may affiliate with any likeminded Christian churches or organizations it deems necessary for the furtherance of ministry support and missions.
 - a. With unanimous approval of the Church Council.
 - b. Any affiliation requiring financial support (ie. missions, local ministry groups, etc.) not already included in the annual budget of this church should be presented to the church body for justification and approval of additional finances.
 - *C19.04. This church further pledges itself to participate in common aims and works with other community churches and organizations for the benefit of the body and furtherance of the Gospel.
 - *C19.05. This church retains the right to terminate any or all affiliations by the same requirements as stated in *C19.03.
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BY-LAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF ST. PAUL (Mt. Pleasant) CHURCH

BY-LAW 1

To perform the functions of this church as specified in the constitution, the Church Council shall appoint, encourage, assist and provide oversight to the following ministries:

- I. WORSHIP: to tend to matters of worship in our church so that "the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Holy Sacraments are as ministered according to the Gospel". This includes but is not limited to...
 - a) Praise Team
 - b) Choir
 - c) Accompanists
 - d) Tone Chimes
 - e) Special Music
 - f) Drama
 - g) Spirit!
 - h) Audio Visual
- II. FELLOWSHIP: to promote fellowship within the church as well as the community at large. This includes but is not limited to...
 - a) Prayer Ministry
 - b) Host Homes for Bible Studies
 - c) Visitation
- III. DISCIPLESHIP: This includes but is not limited to....
 - a) Children's Ministry
 - b) Youth Ministry
 - c) Adult Ministry
- IV. GENERAL CHURCH MINISTRY: This includes but is not limited to...
 - a) Nursery
 - b) Altar Care
 - 1) Acolyte
 - 2) Eucharist
 - c) Special and Seasonal Events
- V. OUTREACH: to teach, encourage and lead all members of the church in being "evangelists", so as to bring persons to Christ and His Church, to integrate new members into active participation in the church and to call inactive members back to full participation in a ministry of Word and Sacrament. This includes but is not limited to...
 - a) Evangelism
 - b) Missions
 - c) Ushers/Greeters
- VI. STEWARDSHIP: To manage the business and financial affairs of this church with policies and practices that are consistent with the meaning of Christian stewardship.
 - a) Audit Committee
 - b) Tellers
 - c) Stewardship development
 - d) Capital fundraising
 - e) Building and Grounds

BY-LAW 2

THE ANNUAL MEETING of this church shall be held during the third or fourth week in January as chosen by the Church Council.

BY-LAW 3

Members who have failed to regularly attend or make a regular contribution of record during the previous twelve (12) months shall be considered inactive.

BY-LAWS 4

The building may be made available for public use by non-members or groups provided no conflict of schedule, purpose, mission or values of the church exists and approval by the Church Council has been given. Use may be denied any group who misuses the facility. Fees may be set by Church Council.