

APPENDIX #2:
EMCC ARTICLES OF GOVERNANCE
(A Part of EMCC Bylaw #1)

1 RELATIONSHIPS

1.1 *Relationship of EMCC to Local Churches*

1.1.1 It is the theological conviction of the EMCC that the local church is an entity called into being by God. The local church is part of Christ's Church visible in a dynamic missional network of disciples, gathered communities (local churches), and other agencies and institutions through which the presence of Christ is mediated to the watching world. Christ has given gifts to the Church that unify and mobilize believers for mission that transcends and extends the bounds of localized ministry (Eph 4:11; Acts 13:1-4; 1 Cor 12:28;). It is the Spirit of God that implants the impulse of cooperation and connection and prompts churches of like faith to make common cause for the Great Commission. It is also our conviction that the movement of churches now known as the EMCC has been called into being by God and is bound by a common heritage and a common mission.

1.1.2 A "**covenant agreement**" in this document means a firm and binding commitment, "God being our witness", which includes a prior agreement not to enforce the agreement through Court or judicial process other than, if necessary, to implement recourse to required engagement in, and application of the dispute resolution process and procedures set forth in Article 7 of these Articles of Governance. A "**covenant relationship**" in this document means the relationship based on the "covenant agreement."

1.1.3 A covenant relationship contains both privileges and responsibilities. It is this covenanting together of churches that gives rise to the existence of the EMCC. Within this family of churches the local church has the right to be self-governing in its own affairs and to participate fully, accepting the responsibilities of the covenant relationship (see Article 2.2 hereof). Notwithstanding any provision of this document, it is understood that "covenant relationship" is not intended, nor shall it be interpreted, in such a way as to render one party legally liable for the obligations or actions of the other; that is, one party cannot be held responsible if the other party fails to follow through on its commitments, for any such failure by that other party.

1.2 *Relationship of EMCC to Credentialed Ministers*

Maintaining credentials in the EMCC requires and implies compliance with the Bylaw, Articles of Faith and Practice and Articles of Governance. It also explicitly requires signing of the Minister's Covenant Agreement. Compliance includes submission to the discipline laid out in this Articles of Governance. Church leaders who wish to hold the teaching and preaching office shall be examined and credentialed according to standards that assure a unity in essentials, and evidence of Christian maturity, gifting and call.

1.3 *Relationship of EMCC to the EMCC President*

1.3.1 *Presidential Role* - The President is the Spiritual Leader of the EMCC and its Chief Executive Officer and spokesperson.

1.3.2 **Presidential Leadership**

1.3.2.1 **Spiritual**

As Spiritual Leader of the EMCC, the President shall:

- 1.3.2.1.1 foster spiritual growth and commitment to the Scriptures and the doctrine of the EMCC;
- 1.3.2.1.2 provide for the pastoral care of EMCC pastors;
- 1.3.2.1.3 give spiritual leadership to all EMCC pastors, missionaries and churches.

1.3.2.2 **General**

As Chief Executive Officer for the EMCC, the President shall also:

- 1.3.2.2.1 represent the EMCC as its official spokesperson;
- 1.3.2.2.2 attend as a non-voting advisor at meetings of the Board of Directors, and shall be an ex-officio member of all other EMCC boards, ministries and committees, attending such meetings as he considers advisable;
- 1.3.2.2.3 provide day-to-day supervision of EMCC Office staff and give direction in administrative matters;
- 1.3.2.2.4 seek to ensure provision of care for the congregational welfare of all local churches of the EMCC, including consultation with, and instruction of, each of them;
- 1.3.2.2.5 serve as a member of the board of each denominational college, either personally or by appointing a designate.

1.3.3 **Election of President**

In the event that:

- 1.3.3.1 an incumbent President:
 - 1.3.3.1.1 resigns;
 - 1.3.3.1.2 advises that he will not stand for re-election for another term;
 - 1.3.3.1.3 becomes unable to continue as President (as determined by the Board), or
 - 1.3.3.1.4 fails to achieve the 2/3 majority approval which is required to continue for a subsequent term as President; or
- 1.3.3.2 the Board of Directors determines that it will not support the incumbent President for re-election; or
- 1.3.3.3 a nominee candidate submitted for election as President by the Search Committee as described below, fails to attain the necessary majority vote to be elected;

the following steps shall be followed:

- 1.3.3.4 the Board of Directors shall establish a Presidential Search Committee of at least five (5) persons (of whom no more than two shall be members of the Board of Directors) and shall make such further arrangements as may be necessary for the selection of a candidate to

present to the Membership.

1.3.3.5 the Presidential Search Committee shall:

1.3.3.5.1 solicit recommendations and suggestions from pastors, church boards and other EMCC leaders;

1.3.3.5.2 seek applications if they deem it appropriate and desirable or the Board directs;

1.3.3.5.3 keep the Board informed as to the progress of their search;

1.3.3.5.4 present a single nominee, approved by the Board, with appropriate background information, to the membership; and

1.3.3.6 the membership shall be asked to vote for or against the candidate, at either a General or a Special Assembly, provided that the Board if it considers it appropriate may authorize such vote to be taken at a General or Special Ordinary Meeting.

1.3.4 *President's Relationship to Local Churches*

Member and affiliate churches of the EMCC shall recognize, welcome and honour the President as the leading elder of the EMCC. The counsel of the President is to be given due consideration in matters relating to the health and well-being of the local church, pastoral relations and the common life of the EMCC. In exceptional circumstances the President may intervene in the affairs of the local church in accordance with the provisions of section Article 2.6 hereof.

1.3.5 *President's Relationship to Credentialed Ministers*

The President, elected as "first among equals", shall be recognized, welcomed and honoured as the leader of the EMCC. The counsel of the President shall be given due consideration in matters relating to the exercise of the pastoral office. Credentialed ministers exercise their ministry under the general oversight and supervision of the office of the President.

1.4 *Relationship of EMCC to Regional Ministers*

The EMCC believes that the covenant relationships amongst its pastors, churches and people are important to enhance and develop. For growing Gospel impact of the EMCC, the ministry personnel of the EMCC Office are tasked with intentional networking, facilitating and resourcing. Regional Ministers under the supervision of the President provide direct support to churches, pastors and other leaders.

1.5 *Relationship of EMCC to RMC and EBC*

As the founding denomination of Emmanuel Bible College and Rocky Mountain College, the EMCC maintains an affiliation with both colleges.

1.6 *Relationship of EMCC to EMCC World Partners*

EMCC World Partners (EMCC WP) is a ministry of the EMCC, administered through the office of the President, under the auspices of the Board of Directors. EMCC WP facilitates the EMCC in its missional task by encouraging and facilitating ministry in cross-cultural and global contexts.

1.7 *Incorporated Ministries*

The EMCC Board of Directors may enter into bilateral agreements with other incorporated entities consistent with its charitable purposes and objects.

1.8 *Relationship of EMCC with Auxiliary Organizations*

Furtherance of the work of the EMCC is also achieved through Auxiliary organizations which are approved as such by the Board of Directors and who report regularly to General Assembly and to the Board of Directors. Each such organization shall have voting representation at General Assembly by appointment of a delegate as an Individual Member.

2 MEMBER CHURCHES

2.1 *Definition*

A Corporate Member, or “**member church**” or “**member congregation**”, is a local congregation which has met the conditions of membership which are described in Article 2 of these Articles of Governance, and which has been formally accepted by EMCC in writing as a Corporate Member. Such a member congregation is in a covenant relationship with the other churches and organizations that constitute the EMCC.

2.2 *Acceptance to Membership - Covenant Agreement*

2.2.1 A church that is requesting membership shall understand that an application by them for membership is an application to enter into a covenant agreement. Subject to Article 2.2.3 hereof, that covenant relationship between a local church and the EMCC comes into force upon the signatures of the authorized representatives of both parties to the membership affirmation presented by EMCC on acceptance of that local church as a Corporate Member. In addition to the covenant agreement as understood in this document, the use of EMCC and related trademarks is legally limited strictly to churches and agencies in good standing and recognized by the EMCC.

2.2.2 In the membership affirmation, the local church shall subscribe in writing to the following statement:

“We, the duly authorized representatives of (name of local church), apply to become a recognized member of the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada. It is our intent to participate in the life of this family of churches and to promote its values, advance its purpose and support its projects to the best of our ability. We declare our commitment to maintain fellowship and aid other EMCC churches by making common cause in fulfilling the Great Commission, the Lord being Our Helper. We affirm the Articles of Faith and Practice of the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada and pledge to conduct the affairs of our local church in accord with the Bylaw and the Articles of Governance. We affirm our commitment to being a healthy, growing, Great Commission church that multiplies disciples, groups and churches. We understand that this statement constitutes a good faith entry into a covenant agreement.”

2.2.3 Local congregations which were already a part of the EMCC as at May 4, 2005 are recognized as already being in the covenant relationship described herein.

2.3 *Privileges*

A member church has the privileges of membership in the family of the EMCC. These privileges include:

- 2.3.1 use of denominational names and trademarks;
- 2.3.2 the cooperation, guidance, stability, accountability and support of the EMCC organization;
- 2.3.3 access to trained, screened, supported and supervised ministers;
- 2.3.4 guidance in matters of pastoral relations;
- 2.3.5 the counsel, visits, encouragement and vision of the national staff;
- 2.3.6 participation in camping, youth or other ministries organized regionally or nationally;
- 2.3.7 financial resources such as loan funds and grants;
- 2.3.8 resources for church health, growth and multiplication;
- 2.3.9 multiple networking for mutual support and work; and
- 2.3.10 participation in a national and global Great Commission vision and program.

2.4 **Responsibility**

Member Churches are expected to participate in the common life of the churches of the EMCC, making common cause and uniting in a desire to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and to fulfill the Great Commission. It is our understanding that the following expectations will be fulfilled in our family of churches:

- 2.4.1 each local church shall strive to conduct its affairs in a way that it brings no harm or disrepute to the EMCC family of churches;
- 2.4.2 each local church shall administer its affairs in accordance with the Bylaw of the EMCC;
- 2.4.3 each local church is to recognize and cooperate with the duly appointed officers of the EMCC;
- 2.4.4 each local church shall do its best to reflect concern for global ministries through missions support;
- 2.4.5 each local church shall carefully consider how best to invest in the ministry of denominational colleges;
- 2.4.6 each local church shall do its best to carry its part of the shared ministry of the EMCC denominationally;
- 2.4.7 each local church shall send delegates to the meetings of members; and
- 2.4.8 each local church shall report annually to EMCC.

2.5 **Local Organization**

- 2.5.1 It is the understanding of the EMCC that:
 - 2.5.1.1 a local EMCC church has the right to govern its own affairs and to select its own leaders;
 - 2.5.1.2 each local church has the responsibility to conduct its own affairs in a way compatible with the policy and governance of the EMCC and in the spirit of the covenant relationship;
 - 2.5.1.3 a local EMCC church shall have an Operating Bylaw that does not contravene the EMCC Bylaw;

- 2.5.1.4 the affairs of a local church are governed by its governing board as authorized by the local church bylaw;
- 2.5.1.5 the ministry of the local church is the responsibility of all its members; and
- 2.5.1.6 the role of the pastor is one of servant leadership.
- 2.5.2 Minimal standards expected of a local church are:
 - 2.5.2.1 Governing Board: The board is to administer the affairs of the local church in accordance with its bylaw and to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities including the matters pertaining to finances and the holding of assets;
 - 2.5.2.2 Budgeting: Each local organization will have a procedure for the preparation, adoption and control of the annual budget;
 - 2.5.2.3 Accounting Records: A local organization will maintain records of the general ledger and supporting journals, detailed records of pledges, investments, loans, yearly budget reports and annual financial reports including record of annual audit or internal review;
 - 2.5.2.4 Administrative Records: Each EMCC local organization will have securely maintained records which include Board minutes, personnel files, employment records, legal documents and all financial documents according to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency Records Retention Requirements;
 - 2.5.2.5 Policies and Procedures: A local EMCC organization will create, implement and publish any necessary policies and procedures such as job descriptions, staff acquisition procedures, staff evaluations, risk management, discipline of members, etc;
 - 2.5.2.6 Property and Facilities: All facilities will be maintained in accordance with local building and fire codes. Adequate risk and liability insurance will be secured and periodically reviewed. Adequate security for the public will be provided;
 - 2.5.2.7 Publicity and Development: Development efforts for every local EMCC organization shall demonstrate Biblical values, ethical standards, and responsibility to donors. All initiatives should engender good public relations and confidence in both the local church and its membership in EMCC;
 - 2.5.2.8 Reporting: The local church shall do its best to provide to EMCC such reports as are needed for the functioning of EMCC, including an annual update of the names and addresses of church leaders, and of any persons who hold local church properties in trust. It is also expected that a church will satisfy all its legal reporting obligations.

2.6 ***Intervention by EMCC in Local Church Affairs***

- 2.6.1 It is our understanding that recognized representatives of the EMCC family of churches and recognized leaders in EMCC churches can and may exercise their Christian duty to admonish, exhort, and counsel leaders in matters that are bringing disrepute or disharmony to the EMCC family or the cause of Christ generally.
- 2.6.2 A member church has a covenant obligation to conduct its affairs in a way that brings no disrepute to the family of the EMCC and that promotes harmony among EMCC's member churches.

- 2.6.3 Based on the above, unless a member congregation has already (previous to commencement of any such intervention) adopted and communicated to EMCC in writing an alternative formal written process for resolution of such matters which expressly waives the provisions of this article, each member church recognizes the right of EMCC, on behalf of the EMCC family of churches, to intervene as described herein in circumstances in EMCC's discretion warranting the same, which shall include, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following:
- 2.6.3.1 the local church ceases to function as an organized EMCC local church or is no longer able to maintain the organizational standards of a local EMCC church;
 - 2.6.3.2 the local church is at risk of, or is contemplating, closure;
 - 2.6.3.3 the local church, according to local governance policy, by a majority vote of members or its board in a formal resolution, invites the intervention of the EMCC, specifying in the invitation the specific cause or reasons for such invitation;
 - 2.6.3.4 there are reasonable grounds to suppose that the financial affairs of the church are not in order – in which case the EMCC may audit the financial records of that church and take such steps as necessary to set things in order;
 - 2.6.3.5 there is a moral or ethical problem which has not been resolved by ordinary means and where the local leadership has been unable or unwilling to deal satisfactorily with these matters;
 - 2.6.3.6 there has been protracted divisive or disruptive teaching or conduct which is bringing disharmony or disrepute to the EMCC family of churches;
 - 2.6.3.7 there have been credible reports of teachings and/or practices which are incompatible with the Articles of Faith and Practice and which have not been amenable to ordinary means of correction and where the local leadership has been unable or unwilling to deal satisfactorily with these matters; or
 - 2.6.3.8 there have been formal allegations brought against a credentialed minister, made in writing and endorsed by two signatures, filed with both the Church Board of the local church and with the National Office of the EMCC – in which case the EMCC shall proceed, in keeping with the provisions of these Bylaws governing the discipline of ministers, expecting and receiving the full cooperation of the congregational leadership and of the congregation in pursuing the investigation to its appropriate conclusion.
- 2.6.4 Any such intervention shall be an interim measure taken for the purpose of returning the local church to a condition in which it is once again able to govern its own affairs.
- 2.6.5 Whenever and insofar as possible, intervention shall proceed in consultation with the Church Board of the member church, recognizing that it is always preferable for any such intervention to occur at the request of the local leadership.
- 2.6.6 In keeping with the principles of natural and biblical justice and due process, any such intervention by the EMCC shall be communicated in a clear and timely way together with appropriate supporting documentation. The course of the intervention shall utilize the least disruptive or intrusive options possible.
- 2.6.7 Remedies or actions available to EMCC on such intervention in respect of a member church shall without limitation include the following:

- 2.6.7.1 The church may be admonished or reprimanded;
- 2.6.7.2 The church may have its vote(s) as a Corporate Member suspended for a time, or it may be expelled from EMCC membership by action of EMCC's Board;
- 2.6.7.3 Upon recommendation of the EMCC Board of Directors, the church may be dissolved, either by action of a meeting of the members of that member church where it is adequately functional to be able to do so, or otherwise by EMCC by action taken at a meeting of EMCC members.
- 2.6.7.4 At the discretion of the EMCC Board of Directors the local church may be asked to reaffirm, by official action, the commitments made in the Covenant Agreement.

2.7 **Local Church Property**

- 2.7.1 **Title** -Each local congregation shall beneficially own and hold title to all real and personal property over which it exercises direct control and governance. All property of a local congregation which may be held for the time being in the name of EMCC shall be held in trust only, and shall be transferred to the local church upon its satisfactory incorporation or other organizational provision (such as by trustees) in accordance with the laws of the Province in which it is situated. No property owned by any local church shall be charged with or encumbered by the debts and liabilities of the EMCC.
- 2.7.2 **Discontinuance of a Local Church with Property** - A member congregation of the EMCC shall have in its incorporation provisions or in its bylaw, a provision such as the following: "In the event of dissolution or winding-up of the (name), all its remaining assets after payment of its liabilities shall be distributed to the EMCC or its successor."

2.8 **Process for Dissolution of a Local Church**

It is a disappointing circumstance when a local church comes to the place where dissolution is viewed as the best course of action. However, there are times when this is the case. A member congregation considering dissolution must:

- 2.8.1 notify the EMCC National Office of its consideration of dissolution at least 30 days prior to any congregational meeting in which a motion to dissolve will be presented. Any motion to dissolve before such notice is out of order;
- 2.8.2 provide at least 10 days written notice and 2 Sundays announcement of a congregational meeting (in which a motion to dissolve shall be presented) to all members of the congregation entitled to vote. The written notice and announcement shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting;
- 2.8.3 grant a vote to all members of the local church, present at the duly called meeting, who are sixteen years of age or older and who have held membership for at least one year prior to the meeting;
- 2.8.4 surrender organizational control to the EMCC if a motion to dissolve carries by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of those present;
- 2.8.5 invite the EMCC to establish a transitional steering committee if the motion does not carry.

2.9 *Process for Membership Withdrawal by a Local Church*

It is desirable that people can, in good faith, walk together in the common cause of the Gospel. History tells us, however, that there are circumstances in which a local congregation deems that membership withdrawal is the best course of action. The process in this Article 2.9 is established to:

- 2.9.1.1 establish good faith attempts at reconciliation and understanding;
 - 2.9.1.2 ensure, to the satisfaction of the EMCC, that a congregational vote to withdraw is truly representative of the stakeholders in the local congregation;
 - 2.9.1.3 clarify and discharge all outstanding obligations to the EMCC; and
 - 2.9.1.4 seek to maintain a relationship of good grace that neither brings reproach upon the name of Christ nor hinders the fulfillment of the mission of the EMCC or of the local congregation.
- 2.9.2 A congregation may withdraw from membership in the EMCC in the following manner:
- 2.9.2.1 congregational leaders intending to bring a motion to withdraw before the local congregation must give the EMCC President written notice at least 90 days before the meeting at which such motion will be made;
 - 2.9.2.2 at least 10 days advance written notice of such a meeting shall be given to all members of the congregation entitled to vote. In addition to written notice, announcement shall be made on two (2) Sundays immediately prior to the congregational meeting at which the question of withdrawal will be considered. The announcement shall state the time, place and purpose of the meeting;
 - 2.9.2.3 voting for the purpose of withdrawal will be restricted to members of the local church who are at least sixteen years of age and who have held membership for at least one year prior to the meeting;
 - 2.9.2.4 a seventy-five percent (75%) majority in support of the motion to withdraw is required to continue the process of withdrawal;
 - 2.9.2.5 notification of the result of the vote shall be delivered to the EMCC National Office;
 - 2.9.2.6 the EMCC President shall assign persons to partner with the local church either to negotiate the terms of withdrawal (if the vote did receive the seventy-five percent majority) or to seek resolution of the issues that led to the motion to withdraw (if the vote did not receive the seventy-five percent majority);
 - 2.9.2.7 the negotiated terms of withdrawal must be approved by the EMCC Board of Directors at their regular meeting, and then shall be communicated by the local church to its members;
 - 2.9.2.8 following such publication of the terms of withdrawal, the local congregation must confirm its motion to withdraw by by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority, in a duly called meeting;
 - 2.9.2.9 any outstanding financial obligations shall be settled. If necessary, the parties shall agree to binding mediation and arbitration as set out in these Articles of Governance.

3 **MINISTERS**

3.1 ***Foundations***

- 3.1.1 Ministers are persons called of God to serve the church in an official leadership capacity. Scripture clearly indicates (I Timothy, Titus) that there are standards against which Christian leaders are measured and held accountable. To ensure a person's qualifications and credibility for service, the EMCC engages in the formal credentialing of those called to serve.
- 3.1.2 Both Biblical teaching and Christian tradition recognize the importance of those “set apart” for the Gospel work of leadership in the Church of Christ. While history chronicles that there was a long period in which the Church overlooked the fact that all followers of Jesus are “ministers,” we in our day must be careful that we do not overlook the fact that God calls and gifts (sets apart) individuals for Gospel work as leaders.
- 3.1.3 We understand that the “setting apart” of individuals is God’s prerogative but the believing community has been given the responsibility of examining individuals to ensure that they have been “appointed” or “set apart” or “ordained” to a particular Christian Ministry. In short, the biblical teaching of the “priesthood of all believers” and the gifting for service of all followers of Jesus does not contradict the importance of recognizing the biblical teaching concerning leaders. The biblical terms of “pastor” (shepherd), “presbyter” (elder), and “bishop” (overseer), as well as “deacon” (servant, minister), or “leaders” generally, and other terms, such as apostle, prophet, evangelist, teacher illustrate the richness of the terminology in the early church.
- 3.1.3.1 Leadership gifts revolve around two focal points “leading” and “ministry of the Word.” Some of the leaders were primarily local while others were transcongregational. The granting of denominational credentials constitutes recognition of this transcongregational gifting by God.
- 3.1.3.2 While it is our view that it is God alone who sets apart, we recognize that the believing community has the responsibility of determining whether a particular individual has been so set apart. The “credentialing process” serves as a means for the believing community to confirm an individual’s personal conviction of God’s call to leadership ministry and the granting by EMCC of “credentials” pursuant to that process serves as a standard of recognition across the whole EMCC community.

3.2 ***General Principles on Credentialing***

Church leaders who wish to hold the teaching and preaching office shall be examined and credentialed according to standards that assure agreement with the EMCC Articles of Faith and Practice, and evidence of Christian maturity, gifting and call. Only one EMCC credential shall be held by an EMCC minister. It is our understanding that:

- 3.2.1 a local church has the right to select its own pastoral leaders, respecting the right of the EMCC to exercise its responsibility to oversee the credentialing process;
- 3.2.2 the EMCC has a right to credential pastoral leaders of EMCC churches;
- 3.2.3 our leaders who hold the teaching and preaching office (pastors and the like) shall be examined and credentialed according to standards that assure unity and compatibility with the EMCC Articles of Faith and Practice, and giftedness and call to their office;

- 3.2.4 the calling by a congregation of pastoral staff shall be subject to credentialing;
- 3.2.5 all leadership ministry staff (engaged in teaching or public leadership) are accountable to the same standards of ministerial conduct, whether or not they hold EMCC credentials;
- 3.2.6 a member in good standing of a local congregation may be a minister credentialed by EMCC, although he or she may have ministry in other groups or countries;
- 3.2.7 the exercise of discipline of a minister shall be the responsibility of the local leaders in concert with the credential granting body of the EMCC;
- 3.2.8 if a minister has had his or her credentials suspended the minister is also automatically suspended from his or her duties in a member church or any other duties which would normally be performed as a credential holder;
- 3.2.9 if a minister has had his or her credentials removed the minister is also terminated from his or her duties in a member church and from any other duties which would normally be performed as a credential holder.

3.3 ***Ministerial Covenant Agreement***

- 3.3.1 Maintaining credentials in the EMCC requires and implies compliance with the Articles of Faith and Practice, Bylaw, and Articles of Governance of the EMCC. Compliance includes submission to the discipline laid out therein. Ministers are required to sign a Ministerial Covenant Agreement with the EMCC on entering a ministerial relationship with the EMCC. The substance of this agreement consists of the declaration of the minister to adhere to the Bylaw of the EMCC and to advance the purpose, promote the values and support the ministries of the EMCC and to maintain the moral and ethical standards of a Christian minister. This covenant agreement shall be signed annually as part of the requirement for maintaining credentials.
- 3.3.2 It is a recognized fact among us that greater accomplishments can be achieved for the kingdom of God by combining our efforts in a cooperative fellowship for the outreach of the gospel at home and abroad. In the interests of furthering the work of the Church under our great Head the Lord Jesus Christ, it is incumbent upon us that we work together in mutual cooperation and harmony making common cause for Christ. It is, therefore, right for credential holders to covenant with the people, churches and leadership of the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada (EMCC). The following constitutes the content of the minister's covenant agreement:
 - 3.3.2.1 I understand that my signature indicates my commitment to enter into a Covenant with the people, churches and leadership that are corporately known as the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada.
 - 3.3.2.2 I understand that inasmuch as the credential granted makes me a representative of the EMCC I covenant to advance the purpose, promote the values and support the ministries of the EMCC to the best of my ability and to honour the commitments expressed in the EMCC Bylaw.
 - 3.3.2.3 I will endeavor to establish personal, spiritual disciplines that will foster and promote a deep, intimate relationship with God, which is essential to effective service as a Christian believer, including prayer, Bible study, regular church attendance, and sharing my faith with others.
 - 3.3.2.4 I understand I am entering into an accountability relationship with the EMCC, wherein

the officers of the EMCC act on behalf of the people and churches of the EMCC and I covenant to be amenable to their counsel and direction.

- 3.3.2.5 I have read, understand and agree to comply with the provisions of the EMCC Bylaw specifically the Articles of Faith and Practice and the standards and discipline of ministers.
- 3.3.2.6 I understand that the credential granted is at the continuing pleasure of EMCC, and can be revoked for beliefs incompatible with or conduct unbecoming a minister of the EMCC.
- 3.3.2.7 I understand and subscribe to the theological perspectives and positions of the EMCC and am committed to upholding these principles in my preaching and teaching. I will not teach or promote personal biases or interpretations which are at variance with clearly delineated EMCC doctrine and practice. If I come to hold things at variance I agree to immediately communicate with the EMCC in writing.
- 3.3.2.8 I understand that as a Christian minister I am called to a life of exemplary speech and conduct. I understand that the following unbecoming conduct (not an all-inclusive list) is incompatible with Christian standards and is just cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from service and revocation of ministerial credentials:
- breach of trust or confidence, theft, fraud, lying, criminal activity, marital unfaithfulness, sexual intimacy or intercourse (either homosexual or heterosexual) before or outside of marriage (being the exclusive covenant union of one man and one woman), sexual harassment abuse or interference, substance abuse (including tobacco, alcohol or other drugs), addictive behaviour including use of materials that devalue and debase sexuality (e.g. pornography), violent or abusive behaviour or speech.
- 3.3.2.9 I understand, in the event that my EMCC ministerial credential is revoked, that neither the EMCC nor the local church is liable for any damages or loss that might occur as a result of forfeiture of this credential.
- 3.3.2.10 I understand that in the event that disciplinary action is taken, such action shall be conducted in keeping with the principles of Biblical justice and conduct and in cooperation with the local EMCC congregation where I hold membership. I also understand that my accepting this credential constitutes an implicit consent to submit to the regular process of discipline of ministers.
- 3.3.2.11 I understand that signing the Minister's Covenant affirms I have understood that compliance with the standards and principles set out in this Covenant is a term and condition of my credentials with the EMCC and of ministry in an EMCC congregation.
- 3.3.2.12 I covenant to conduct my life and ministry in such a way that Christ is honored and His Kingdom is advanced.

3.4 *Credential Categories*

3.4.1 *Ordained Minister*

Ordination is the validating action of the church in recognition of an individual's calling, gifting, training and personal suitability for ministry which has been proven under the review and support of the EMCC. An ordained minister is a licensed minister affirmed in ministry by the EMCC. *Ordination* credentials will remain in effect if the minister:

- 3.4.1.1 retains membership in good standing with a member or affiliate congregation of the EMCC,
- 3.4.1.2 remains active in a ministry recognized by the EMCC,
- 3.4.1.3 reports annually through written report to the National Office, and
- 3.4.1.4 Either (a) signs the Ministerial Covenant Agreement annually, or (b) has been ordained by, or received as an ordained minister by, the EMCC, is recognized as having retired from service, and continues in good standing within the EMCC.

Should a minister leave a designated position and enter a field outside the categories of ministry recognized by the EMCC, the National Office shall make a recommendation to the Board of Directors concerning the credentials of the said minister.

3.4.2 ***Licensed Minister***

A *licensed minister* is a person who is examined, approved and appointed to ministry in the EMCC. Licensing will remain in effect only as long as the person:

- 3.4.2.1 retains membership in good standing in a member or affiliate congregation of the EMCC,
- 3.4.2.2 remains active in a ministry recognized by the EMCC,
- 3.4.2.3 reports annually through written report to the National Office, and
- 3.4.2.4 signs the Ministerial Covenant Agreement annually.

3.4.3 ***Candidate***

A *candidate for ministry* is a person who is examined and approved as described for a Licensed Minister above, for potential appointment to ministry within the EMCC, and is available for such appointment, but who at the time of such approval does not have a recognized ministry assignment. Candidate status will remain in effect only as long as the person:

- 3.4.3.1 retains active membership in good standing with a member or affiliate church in the EMCC,
- 3.4.3.2 continues to be actively seeking appointment to ministry within the EMCC,
- 3.4.3.3 reports annually through written report to the National Office, and
- 3.4.3.4 signs the Ministerial Covenant Agreement annually.

When a candidate is unable to secure a recognized appointment within two years of the issuance of the credentials, the candidacy shall expire.

3.4.4 ***Certified Ministry Worker***

Certification of a Ministry Worker is a special limited credential intended for a person in one of three categories:

- 3.4.4.1 a person who is not now licensed or ordained, but who will be employed in some specific pastoral or ministry role by an EMCC Congregation or by a denominational ministry of EMCC for which credentialing is deemed advisable by both the local and denominational leadership. It is expected that a Certified Minister will be supervised by a Licensed or Ordained Minister and only in exceptional situations shall a Certified Minister serve as the sole or senior pastor of a charge and only for a specified time, under the direct supervision of

a regularly credentialed minister as designated by the National Office;

- 3.4.4.2 a person who is a member in good standing of an EMCC congregation, and who is employed by an educational, medical, residential, personal care, or other such institution in a Christian ministry capacity or who is a missionary in a recognized ministry for whom this credential is deemed advisable by the leadership of both the local congregation and the denominational leadership;
- 3.4.4.3 a person who is engaged in a ministry in a local congregation where the individual is on a development path of study and service in preparation for regular licensing, and who is strongly recommended and endorsed on a continuing basis by the local congregation.

This credential intends to maintain the same standards of character and conduct as required for licensing and ordination but where the preparation in Bible and Theology is at a lower level. This credential is tied directly to the particular recognized ministry assignment and is not portable.

3.4.5 *Missionary Credential and Recognition*

3.4.5.1 *Missionary Credential*

A credentialed missionary is a person who is not otherwise credentialed and is examined, approved and appointed to ministry under direct supervision of EMCC or an EMCC Partner Agency. The missionary credential will remain in effect only as long as the person:

- 3.4.5.1.1 retains membership in good standing in a member or affiliate congregation of the EMCC;
- 3.4.5.1.2 remains active in a ministry assignment with EMCC;
- 3.4.5.1.3 completes an annual report; and
- 3.4.5.1.4 signs the Minister's Covenant Agreement annually.
- 3.4.5.1.5 A credentialed missionary who retires in good standing and remains in good standing within the EMCC shall be listed among the credentialed missionaries (retired).

3.4.5.2 *Missionary Recognition*

A recognized missionary (ministry worker) is a person who is serving with a recognized mission agency or organization and who is not supervised by EMCC. This person may apply to EMCC for this recognition. Upon approval the recognition will remain in effect as long as the person:

- 3.4.5.2.1 retains membership in good standing in a member or affiliate congregation of the EMCC;
- 3.4.5.2.2 has the continuing endorsement of the EMCC congregation where membership is held
- 3.4.5.2.3 remains active in ministry and remains in good standing with that agency;
- 3.4.5.2.4 subscribes to EMCC Bylaw and the Articles of Faith and Practice.
- 3.4.5.2.5 reports annually through written report to the National Office
- 3.4.5.2.6 pays the annual fee set by EMCC.

- 3.4.6 *Other Designations* - It is the prerogative of the Board of the Directors with the recommendation of the President from time to time to particularly recognize those distinguished ministers whose specialization is commended for exercise within the larger church as a "minister-at-large."

3.5 ***Transfers Between Fraternal Groups and like Denominations***

In recognition of fraternal relationships with the Evangelical Church USA and the Missionary Church USA, the credentials of a minister shall be recognized if they are accompanied by a letter of recommendation stating clearly that the recommendation is without reservation, and with the further proviso that the minister will avail himself/herself of such courses and the like that will enhance his/her appreciation and understanding of the history and mission of the EMCC. Bilateral agreements on credentials may also from time to time be signed with like denominations with the consent of the President and the approval of the Board of Directors.

3.6 ***Applicants from Outside the EMCC***

Applicants from outside the EMCC may have their credentials recognized following the appropriate review of their application, references and history of service.

3.7 ***Restrictions on Credentialing***

3.7.1 ***In the Case of the Separation of Minister and Spouse***

In the event that a credential holder becomes separated from his/her spouse the minister and the local church (or responsible party of the mission or ministry concerned) shall report the matter immediately to the EMCC National Office. The circumstances shall be examined without delay. In cooperation with the local or ministry leadership, the National Office shall decide on the best course of action. Every reasonable attempt shall be made to help the ministerial couple to effect a redemptive solution. In the event that it is judged that the minister should be placed on leave of absence the local church leadership shall do all within its power to facilitate the leave. Where the evidence dictates the propriety of the minister resigning, the local or ministry leadership is encouraged to consider factors of legal requirement, and the ability to apply generosity. Where the case is judged to require it, the process of ministerial discipline will be applied.¹

¹ I Tim. 3:2,4,5, 4:12, Titus 1:7

3.7.2 ***In the Case of Divorced Persons***

3.7.2.1 It is the usual policy of the EMCC not to credential persons who have been divorced or married to a person who has been divorced. At the sole discretion of the EMCC (as expressed through the decisions of the President or the Board or both), however, an applicant may be considered for credentials where there may be extenuating circumstances, as those are described below. In that event, the applicant's case will be first adjudicated by an ethics committee and if the ruling of the ethics committee is favourable, AND the ruling is approved by a 75% vote of the Board of Directors, the applicant may proceed to the regular credentialing process.

3.7.2.2 It is further the policy of the EMCC to review the credentials of a credentialed minister who, subsequent to credentialing, is divorced or who marries a divorced person. Upon occurrence (or the inevitable imminence) of such an event, the credentialed minister shall immediately surrender his/her credentials and cease ministry. The matter shall then be investigated by an ethics committee and a recommendation brought to the Board of Directors without delay to either confirm the revocation of credentials, or to reinstate the credentials. A recommendation to reinstate must be approved by a 75% majority vote of the Board of Directors before it can become effective.

3.7.2.3 Extenuating circumstances are cases where it can be ascertained with reasonable certainty that there has been infidelity or abandonment by the spouse of the credentialed person, or where the divorce occurred prior to conversion of the credentialed person. Any recommendation to grant or reinstate credentials in such event shall be entirely contingent upon clear and sufficient evidence of personal integrity and marital stability of the credentialed person, as determined at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors, requiring a 75% majority vote as referred to above.

3.8 *Agreement of Ministers to Submit to the Process of Church Discipline*

An EMCC credential implies agreement to submit to discipline as expressed in these articles. Such agreement includes the right to appeal a disciplinary decision using the Mediation and Arbitration Procedure of these articles. Notwithstanding anything else contained herein, a ministerial credential is given upon the strict condition that disciplinary proceedings and the results thereof, and of any other proceedings or matters carried out in accordance with the EMCC bylaw, Articles of Faith and Practice, and Articles of Governance, shall not give a minister cause for any legal action against the EMCC, or any staff member, director or officer of the EMCC, and the acceptance of credentials shall constitute conclusive and absolute evidence of a waiver by the minister of all rights of action, causes of action, and all claims and demands against the aforementioned.

4 REGIONAL MINISTERS

The EMCC will be served by regional ministers appointed on the basis of the following principles:

- 4.1 Regional ministers are appointed by the President after consultation with the constituency.
- 4.2 A minimum of three regional ministers (or the full-time equivalent thereof) shall be appointed.
- 4.3 Regional ministers are responsible to the President and serve as coaches and resource brokers to pastors and congregations. They shall promote denominational understanding and support for its mission.

5 DISCIPLINE

5.1 *Purpose of Discipline*

All members in the church are expected to conduct their lives according to the standards set forth in Scripture. In the redemptive purposes of God, the church is commanded to discipline its members when they continue in open and habitual sin¹. The desired result of such discipline is to bring restoration. Church discipline has multiple purposes including the following²:

- 5.1.1 encouraging sinning members to repent, thus restoring them to fellowship with Christ and the church;
- 5.1.2 warning other members against such sin;
- 5.1.3 upholding and maintaining the moral purity and blameless testimony of the church.

¹ Matt. 18:15-18; I Cor. 5:1-13 . ²II Cor. 2:6-11; I Tim. 4:19-20.

5.2 *Discipline of Ministers*

5.2.1 *Preamble*

Those who hold positions of ministerial leadership in the church are held to an even stricter accountability¹. Such conduct includes moral purity, personal honesty, and biblical fidelity². Ministers are to be consistent examples of authentic Christianity as they seek to emulate the character of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit³. Furthermore, they shall promote the unity of the church rather than seeking to divide it. The entire process of discipline shall be carried out and enforced in a spirit of Christian love, care, and sensitivity⁴.

¹I Tim. 3:1-7. ²II Tim. 3:14-17. ³Gal. 5:22-23. ⁴Eph. 4:3; Gal. 6:1.

5.2.2 *Causes of Ministerial Disciplinary Action*

Violation of principles as stated in the EMCC Bylaw (including appendices) give just cause for disciplinary action by the Board of Directors. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, such causes for action may be:

- 5.2.2.1 any moral failure including but not limited to breach of trust or confidence, theft, fraud, lying, criminal activity, marital unfaithfulness, sexual intimacy or intercourse before or outside of marriage either homosexual or heterosexual, sexual harassment abuse or interference, substance abuse (including tobacco, alcohol or other drugs), addictive behaviour including use of materials that devalue and debase sexuality (e.g. pornography), violent or abusive behaviour or speech;
- 5.2.2.2 the propagation of doctrines and practices contrary to those set forth in the Articles of Faith and Practice of the EMCC;
- 5.2.2.3 a contentious, authoritarian or non-cooperative spirit;
- 5.2.2.4 any conduct generally unbecoming a minister of the gospel.

5.2.3 *Process of Discipline*

5.2.3.1 *General*

- 5.2.3.1.1 Formal church discipline is to be regarded as an expedient of last resort. Only after every reasonable effort has been made to correct any wrong and adjust any existing difficulty should steps be taken to initiate disciplinary action;
- 5.2.3.1.2 The teaching of the Scriptures shall inform the process. No accusation shall be entertained against a minister unless it is brought by two or three witnesses¹. Should any minister depart from the standard of Scripture and engage in conduct which conflicts with biblical principles of holiness, the steps of discipline outlined in Scripture shall be followed².

¹ I Tim. 5:19. ² Mt. 18:16-18; I Cor. 5:1-13; Titus 3:10;

- 5.2.3.1.3 Reports or complaints shall be investigated where there is judged to be sufficient credibility to these reports or complaints, and the matter is judged to fall within the letter and spirit of these articles;
- 5.2.3.1.4 The office of the president shall have jurisdiction and shall deal with the case consistent with the principles of Scripture and natural justice.

5.2.3.2 ***Guideline for Discipline***

The following shall be used as a guideline to the steps to be followed for the disciplinary procedure:

- 5.2.3.2.1 A preliminary investigation to determine the source and validity of the accusations, allegations or communicated problem;
- 5.2.3.2.2 Where there are injured parties, the respective local church (or other agency) shall be encouraged to take such steps as are right and possible to help these parties;
- 5.2.3.2.3 In the event sufficient grounds are established by such initial investigation, a fuller investigation by an appointed committee shall follow:
 - 5.2.3.2.3.1 *interview with complainants.* The persons involved shall be interviewed to ascertain the facts in the case and the reasons underlying the persistence of the reports or complaints;
 - 5.2.3.2.3.2 *interview with accused minister.* The accused minister shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed to discuss the complaints received in the hope that the matter can be resolved;
 - 5.2.3.2.3.3 *signed complaints.* In the event the investigation so warrants, a signed complaint shall be filed with the EMCC National Office by each complainant describing the alleged offence;
 - 5.2.3.2.3.4 *conditions for ministry during investigation.* Continuance of ministry may be subject to restrictions or conditions during the time of investigation at the discretion of the EMCC, on the basis of evidence at hand and the nature of the alleged offence. In some cases credentials will be suspended immediately pending final outcome. Such conditions are subject to review in 3-month intervals until the investigation has been completed and determination made, either clearing the person of the allegations, or finding the presence of serious offensive conduct. The leadership of the local church or other agency shall be consulted in the process;
- 5.2.3.2.4 In the event that the minister confesses to conduct that is clearly inconsistent with the holding of a ministerial credential, the minister shall sign a statement of admission and sign an agreement to come under discipline. The minister shall immediately surrender ministerial credentials and minister's card pending the outcome of the process;
- 5.2.3.2.5 In the event that there is no confession, and if after due investigation it is determined that serious offensive conduct occurred, the investigative committee shall file its report with the EMCC National Office. The person against whom such determination has been made shall be informed in writing by certified mail, at the last address furnished to EMCC, or the like. In some cases credentials will be suspended immediately pending final outcome;
- 5.2.3.2.6 In the event that the case cannot be dealt with privately to the satisfaction of all concerned the minister shall be required to appear at a hearing in the hope the matter can be resolved. The hearing tribunal shall be composed of three or more seasoned ministers or qualified lay persons. The tribunal shall review the statements given, interview members of the investigative team and hear from the accused. The individual shall be entitled to attend the hearing and to speak on his or her own behalf. Neither the individual nor the tribunal, nor any other party present may be represented by legal counsel. The accused may bring a fellow EMCC minister for support. The tribunal in its sole discretion shall decide who may be

present at the hearing in whole or in part. If the accused minister does not appear at the hearing, the accused member may be subject to further discipline for failure to appear at the hearing. The tribunal shall deliver its decision in writing within fourteen days. This decision shall be communicated in writing to the accused minister;

- 5.2.3.2.7 Decision: The nature and length of the discipline shall consider the following factors: (a) the seriousness of the case, (b) the manner and thoroughness of repentance, (c) the attitude of the offending minister toward the discipline, and (d) the willingness to cooperate manifested.

5.2.4 *Restoration and Reinstatement to Ministry*

The EMCC recognizes the Biblical principle of justice tempered by mercy, and believes that the redemptive purposes of God tend toward restoration. The primary purpose is to restore a person to God, spouse and family. Where possible, reinstatement may follow. Reinstatement is a privilege granted out of mercy and not a right to be expected or demanded. Granting reinstatement shall be at the sole discretion of the EMCC following a process of rehabilitation.

6 **MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION**

6.1 *Preamble*

It is our understanding that unresolved disputes and divisions amongst followers of Christ bring disrepute and dishonour to the name and the cause of Christ. The EMCC recognizes both the duty and the privilege to live according to the injunctions of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is therefore incumbent upon believers, churches, and any other agency or party of the EMCC to seek reconciliation and resolution of a dispute in keeping with Matthew 18:16. If a party considers that a matter cannot be forgiven and forgotten, thereby effecting resolution in oneself, the following steps will guide the process of seeking resolution and reconciliation. The pattern of Mat 18:15-19 and the principle and spirit of Mat 5:23, 24 are commanded and commended to us by our Lord. As such only those matters that cannot be resolved in a more informal manner of Mediation may advance to Arbitration. In keeping with the teaching of 1 Corinthians 6: 1-6, it is also our desire and intent to honour the Lord by submitting disputes to the judgment of Christian “judges.” It is our intent not to seek remedy for such matters in the courts of the land, but rather where necessary, to achieve resolution through the process of mediation and arbitration described in this Article, and commitment to the covenant relationship shall include commitment to that process where it is necessary to achieve resolution.

No matter of faith or practice of the EMCC shall be made the subject of any proceeding in the Courts by any member of a Church nor any individual member of the EMCC.

6.2 *Definitions*

- 6.2.1 “Mediation” shall mean the process between the parties where the parties attempt to resolve disharmony or differences through personal meetings or by involving others to assist in mediating a reconciliation between the parties.
- 6.2.2 “Arbitration” shall mean the process between the parties where the parties agree to be bound or are required by their adherence to the Bylaws of the EMCC to be bound by the decision of an Arbitrator or Arbitrators acting in accordance with the defined process.

6.3 *Steps*

6.3.1 *Informal Process*

The following steps shall be taken before institution of either formal mediation or arbitration:

6.3.1.1 The Parties shall first proceed through an informal process by seeking a direct meeting to resolve the matter so as to effect a reconciliation. Either party may initiate the contact, preferably by defining the cause of disharmony in writing and giving an invitation to meet.

6.3.1.2 Where the opposite party declines the opportunity to meet directly, or where, in the judgment of either party, the result of such a direct meeting is unsatisfactory, either party may involve two or more respected “witnesses” in accordance with the Biblical directive, such persons to act in this regard essentially as intermediaries, meeting and communicating with the same purpose of achieving resolution and reconciliation through Mediation between the parties.

6.3.2 *Mediation*

When the matter is not resolved by the informal process above, a process of formal mediation may be initiated according to the following procedure:

6.3.2.1 The conditions of this process of Mediation are to be reviewed and agreed to by both parties. Both parties are to read and sign that they have understood and read the provisions and the waiver. The lead Mediator is responsible for the safekeeping of this agreement and waiver;

6.3.2.2 The matter shall be submitted to a panel of Christian mediators whereby each party appoints a mediator and the two mediators so appointed jointly approve a third mediator. In the event that a third mediator cannot be agreed upon, the EMCC shall present two names to the two mediators, and one of the two shall be chosen, unless both names are unacceptable to both those mediators, in which event EMCC shall present two additional names, with no further right to reject both those names. If the two mediators are unable to agree on a choice between the two names so presented, the choice shall be made by lot.

6.3.2.3 Where the dispute involves multiple parties and the desire is to enter into Mediation, the multiple parties together shall select two mediators with the third selected by the two mediators.

6.3.2.4 The number of mediators may be reduced from three to one or two upon the agreement of both parties;

6.3.2.5 The mediators so appointed shall then meet with the parties to take such interviews, gather information and if possible negotiate a mutually acceptable resolution;

6.3.2.6 All costs of the mediators appointed in accordance with this section shall be borne equally by both parties; and

6.3.2.7 Mediators shall in no case be held liable by the parties for any material, emotional or other distress or hardship or damages that may result from the process or decisions of the Mediation, provided that the mediators deliberated and acted in good faith.

6.3.3 *Arbitration*

When the matter is not resolved by the mediation process above, a formal process of arbitration may be initiated upon written agreement of both of the parties to do so. All arbitrations undertaken hereunder

shall be conducted pursuant to the provisions of applicable arbitration legislation in the province of residence of the complainants. Every effort shall be made to agree on a single arbitrator to minimize the costs of the arbitration. Decisions of an Arbitrator or Arbitrators are deemed to be final and binding upon the parties and shall not be made the subject of any proceeding in the Courts except as may be permitted by a Court for a failure of natural justice.

6.4 ***Waiver***

Notwithstanding anything else contained herein, membership in an EMCC church and membership of a church in the EMCC is given upon the strict condition that disciplinary proceedings and the results thereof and any other proceedings or matters carried out in accordance with the EMCC Bylaw (including the Articles of Faith and Practice and these Articles of Governance) shall not give any person cause for any legal action against the EMCC, its directors, agents, officers or members, and membership or adherence in an EMCC church or membership of a church in the EMCC shall constitute conclusive and absolute evidence of a waiver by the member or adherent of a EMCC church or of the Member EMCC church of all rights of action, causes of action, and all claims and demands against the EMCC, its directors, agents, officers or any member or adherent of a church in relation to disciplinary proceedings and the results thereof and any other such proceedings or matters, and this provision may be pleaded as a complete estoppel (i.e., the prevention of an action in court) in the event that such action is commenced.