

## **IMAGO DEI METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH BYLAWS**

### **Article I – Name**

The name of this church shall be Imago Dei Metropolitan Community Church, also known as Imago Dei MCC, hereinafter referred to as “the Church.”

### **Article II – Affiliation**

This Church is a member Congregation of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC); ascribes to the government, doctrine, vision, mission, and values of UFMCC; and agrees to abide by the UFMCC Bylaws and decisions made by General Conference.

~~A. Successor Corporation – The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches is the 501(c)(3) corporation designated to receive the Church’s property in the event of dissolution or abandonment of Imago Dei MCC or disaffiliation from the UFMCC, in accordance with UFMCC Bylaws.~~

~~B.A.~~ Disaffiliation – A decision to disaffiliate from the UFMCC shall require two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Members present at a duly called Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of disaffiliating and shall be decided in accordance with UFMCC Bylaws.

### **Article III – Purpose**

The purpose of this Church is Christian worship, witness, service, and fellowship; all born in the cooperation, program development, and implementation of UFMCC and local Church Bylaws, Standard Operating Procedures, and Policies.

### **Article IV – Members and Friends**

Members and Friends make a commitment to God and this Church, which yields both benefits and responsibilities. As a church body, Imago Dei MCC is committed to providing a place of worship to God, a community for individuals to grow spiritually and be nurtured as they step out into the service of Jesus Christ making a positive difference seeking to bring the Kingdom of God on Earth as it is in Heaven.

A. Member of the Church - A person who supports the vision, mission, core values and strategic plan of the Church and desires to be a part of the work of the Church through the making of a covenant to practice an active prayer life, to faithfully attend worship and commit to becoming a disciple of Christ, to steadfastly serve God by sharing gifts and talents, to make a financial commitment to this Church, and to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect.

Approved: Sunday, November 14, 2004; Revised December 2019

1. Criteria for Membership – Any baptized Christian who has completed a membership class or presented a letter of transfer from another MCC may become a Member by participating in the Rite of Membership. A Member in good standing is a Member who registers her/his attendance, provides identifiable financial support, makes a definite service contribution, and demonstrates interest and loyalty.
2. Membership List – The Clerk, who shall report changes monthly to the Board of Stewards, shall maintain the list of Members in good standing.
3. Membership Review – The Board of Stewards shall review the membership list in the month of January of each year.
  - a. A Member, who does not have registered attendance, identified financial support, definite service contribution, and demonstrated interest and loyalty within the preceding period of six (6) months may be removed from the list of Members in good standing and placed on a list of inactive Members.
  - b. The Board of Stewards shall notify this Member in writing that she/he has been placed on a list of inactive Members and is not eligible to vote at any business meeting of the Church.
  - c. If the inactive Member has not registered attendance, provided identifiable financial support, and demonstrated further interest or loyalty for a period of two (2) months immediately following notification, the Board of Stewards shall have the authority, by vote, to drop any such inactive Member from the local Church membership roll.
  - d. If the inactive Member has registered attendance, identifiable financial support and has demonstrated interest and loyalty during the period of two (2) months immediately following notification, the Board of Stewards shall have the authority, by vote, to restore the inactive Member to the list of Members in good standing without a public reception into membership during the April meeting of the Board of Stewards.
  - e. The inactive Member who is not restored after the period of two (2) months immediately following notification shall be considered a former Member.
  - f. A former Member may be restored to the list of Members in good standing after completing a membership class and participating in the Rite of Membership.
4. Right to Appeal. A vote by the Board of Stewards to drop an inactive Member from the local Church membership roll may be appealed by the now former Member to the next regular Congregational Meeting. The decision of the Congregational Meeting is final. Pending the outcome of the appeal, the now former Member is not eligible to vote at any business meeting of the Church.
  - a. Appeal process. The request for an appeal shall be submitted, in writing, to the Clerk of the Board of Stewards within thirty (30) days following the date when the inactive Member was dropped from the local church membership roll.

- b. The Board of Stewards may consider the appeal and reverse its earlier decision without taking the matter to the Congregational Meeting.
  - c. Should the Board of Stewards sustain its earlier decision and the now former Member wishes the appeal to continue, the request shall be included as an agenda item for the next regular Congregational Meeting
- B. Friend of the Church – A person who, for one reason or another, feels unable to become a Member but who supports the vision, mission, core values, and strategic plan of the Church and desires to be a part of the work of the Church may be designated as a “Friend of the Church.”
1. Criteria for Friend of the Church – Any person who has completed a membership class may become a Friend of the Church. A Friend in good standing is a Friend who registers her/his attendance, provides identifiable financial support, makes a definite service contribution, and demonstrates interest and loyalty.
  2. The List of Friends of the Church - The Clerk, who shall report changes to the Board of Stewards, shall maintain the list of Friends of the Church.
  3. Limitations on Friends of the Church – Friends may serve on appointed teams and may participate in all activities of the Church. Friends may not vote at Congregational Meetings, serve on the Board of Stewards, or represent the Congregation as a Lay Delegate. Friends shall not be considered in determining the number of Lay Delegates representing the Church at Network meetings and/or General Conferences.
- C. Discipline of Members and Friends – The Church cannot condone disloyalty or unbecoming conduct on the part of any Member or Friend. The Board of Stewards is empowered to remove, by majority vote, any Member or Friend from the list of Members and Friends in good standing, or take other appropriate disciplinary action. Therefore, the Board of Stewards shall develop and implement a procedure for taking appropriate disciplinary action, as it deems necessary.
1. Right to Appeal – The disciplined Member or Friend may appeal the action of the Board to the next regular Congregational Meeting or at a Special Congregational Meeting called for that purpose. The decision of the Congregational Meeting is final. Pending the outcome of the appeal of discipline, the disciplined Member or Friend shall remain under discipline and the Member shall retain the right to vote at all Congregational Meetings, including the Congregational Meeting held to consider the appeal.
  2. Appeal Process – The request for an appeal shall be submitted in writing to the Clerk of the Board of Stewards within twenty (20) days following the date when a Member or Friend is notified that the Member or Friend has been placed under discipline.
  3. The Board of Stewards may consider the appeal and reverse its earlier decision without taking the matter to the Congregational Meeting.
  4. Should the Board of Stewards sustain its earlier decision and the Former Member or Former Friend of the Church wishes the appeal to continue, the request shall be included as an agenda item for the next regular Congregational Meeting or a Special Congregational Meeting called for the purpose of considering the appeal.

### **Article V – Congregational Meetings**

Government of the Church is vested in its Congregational Meeting, which exerts the right to control its affairs, subject to the provisions of the UFMCC Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, documents of legal organization, and the General Conference.

- A. Name – The Congregational Meeting is where the Members of the Church conduct the business of the Church. All are welcome to attend.
- B. Time and Place – An Annual Congregational Meeting shall be held each year in the month of November. The Board of Stewards shall determine the time and place of the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- C. Notification – The Board of Stewards shall notify Members of the Annual Congregational Meeting in writing at least four (4) weeks in advance of the Meeting. The Meeting shall also be announced at public worship and in Church publications.
- D. Voting Rights – Each Member in good standing has the right to vote. Proxy or any other form of absentee voting shall not be allowed.
- E. Votes Required for Approval – Decisions, including elections, require approval by a vote of more than fifty percent (50%) of those Members in good standing present and voting, unless otherwise required by UFMCC Bylaws or otherwise stated in these local Church Bylaws.
- F. Quorum – In order to transact business, no less than twenty percent (20%) of the Members in good standing must be present.
- G. Agenda – The agenda for Congregational Meetings shall be determined by the Board of Stewards and made available to the Congregation by the Clerk. The Clerk shall make the Agenda and all related documents available to the Congregation.
  - 1. Content – The agenda shall include, but is not limited to, election of members to the Board of Stewards, election of Lay Delegates in the appropriate year, presentation of a financial report, approval of Church budget, and reports from the Board of Stewards and the Pastor.
  - 2. Additions to Agenda – Members may request the Board of Stewards to add agenda items by submitting additional agenda items to the Clerk, in writing, no later than two (2) weeks prior to the Congregational Meeting. The Board of Stewards retains the right to refuse to add an item to the agenda of a Congregational Meeting if it was submitted past the deadline for agenda submissions or if the item is deemed inappropriate.
- H. Elections – All voting for elected positions shall be taken by secret and written ballot. Votes of affirmation from the floor are not permitted.
  - 1. Counting Ballots - Two persons chosen by the Clerk will collect and count the ballots and will report the outcome to the Clerk and Moderator. The Moderator will report the totals for each candidate.

2. Voided Ballots - Illegible ballots, ballots with more names than positions, and ballots where names are repeated for the same position shall not be counted.
- I. Special Congregational Meetings – In addition to the Annual Congregational Meeting, Special Congregational Meetings may also be held. Special Congregational Meetings are governed by the same rules as those pertaining to the Annual Congregational Meeting, with the following exceptions:
1. Calling a Special Congregational Meeting – A Special Congregational Meeting may be called by (a) majority vote of the Board, (b) the Pastor, or (c) a petition signed by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members in good standing and submitted to the Clerk.
  2. Nature and Purpose - The nature and purpose of the Special Congregational Meeting shall be stated in the petition, in all notices related to the Special Congregational Meeting and be written into the agenda.
  3. Time and Place – A Special Congregational Meeting shall be held when duly called. The Board of Stewards shall determine the date, time and location of the Special Congregational Meeting.
  4. Notification – The Board of Stewards shall notify Members of a Special Congregational Meeting in writing at least two (2) weeks in advance of the Meeting. The Meeting shall also be announced at public worship.

#### **Article VI – Local Church Administrative Body**

The UFMCC has adopted a form of local church government which vests control in the Congregational Meetings of its members. Within this structure a basic “Board of Stewards/Chief Executive Officer” model of governance is used to carry out the will of the Congregation. The work of the Board of Stewards should be seen, like any other service in the Congregation, as a ministry, whose successful efforts are essential to the vision, mission, core values, and strategic plan of the Church.

- A. Name - The Local Church Administrative Body shall be the Board of Stewards.
- B. Qualifications of the Board of Stewards - Board Members must have demonstrated the ability to adhere to the leadership expectations as outlined in the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One).
  1. Membership – Members of the Board of Stewards must be Members in good standing of the Church.
  2. Conflict of Interest – More than one person from a household, family, or committed relationship; someone who is a church employee, or someone who is a Clergy Candidate shall not be eligible to serve on the Board of Stewards.
- C. Responsibilities of the Board of Stewards:

1. The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for providing the Church with a set of Bylaws, which are subject to approval by Congregational Meeting and the designated denominational staff.
  2. The Board of Stewards shall have charge of all matters pertaining to:
    - a. The documents of legal organization and incorporation,
    - b. Church property and maintenance,
    - c. Risk management and financial affairs of the Church,
    - d. Naming the fiduciary body for any property acquired by the Church.
  3. The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for:
    - a. Preparing the budget, including collecting and disbursing funds,
    - b. Keeping adequate Church records,
    - c. Making timely reports to the Congregation and UFMCC.
  4. The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for facilitating:
    - a. A Stewardship Program,
    - b. A Fundraising Program,
    - c. Long range strategic planning.
  5. The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for Membership Review as outlined in Article IV. A. 2.
  6. The Board of Stewards is responsible for providing advice and consent regarding personnel appointments made by the Pastor.
  7. In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Board of Stewards shall facilitate the formation of the Pastoral Search Committee in consultation with the designated denominational staff person.
  8. Each Board member shall regularly attend worship service, represent the Church as a whole, and work toward consensus, while knowing the Church's vision, mission, core values, strategic plan, policies, and programs.
  9. Each Board member shall make every effort to attend regularly-scheduled meetings within the calendar year.
- D. Composition – The Board of Stewards shall consist of a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of seven (7) members, including the Pastor who shall serve as Moderator. The number of board members shall be based on the number of Members within the Congregation, as follows:  
Up to 50 members: 5 Board members  
51 to 100 members: 6 Board members  
More than 101 members: 7 Board members
- E. Term of Office – The term of office for members of the Board of Stewards, except the Pastor, shall be two (2) year staggered terms, with half of the elected members being elected at each Annual Congregational Meeting. A Member shall not be elected to more than two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms.

Formatted: Highlight

- F. Election – The Board of Stewards shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- G. Meetings – The Board of Stewards shall meet at least once a month, with no fewer than ten months in a calendar a year hosting a meeting.
1. Executive Sessions - The Board of Stewards, upon a majority vote of its members, may hold an Executive Session. An executive session is a closed session for Board members only and is held to address the following issues: Board of Stewards training and development, personnel issues, consideration of disciplinary action, and review of Membership Rolls. Decisions arising out of business conducted in Executive Sessions must be reflected in the minutes of the meeting. Except for executive sessions, meetings shall be open to the Congregation and to the public to attend as observers without voice or vote.
  2. Minutes – Draft minutes and financial reports shall be available to the Congregation within two (2) weeks after each meeting of the Board of Stewards. Minutes shall include a record of those present and decisions made. A copy of the minutes shall become part of the permanent Church records.
  3. Agenda - The Moderator shall prepare the Agenda of each regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
  4. Reports - At each regular meeting, the Clerk, Pastor, and Treasurer shall submit written reports. All reports shall be distributed, if possible, to each of the Board members the Sunday prior to the Board meeting.
  5. Church Records - All official Church records shall be kept at the Church Office.
- H. Quorum – No less than a majority of the members of the Board of Stewards, including the Moderator, must be present in order to transact business. If the Moderator is unable to attend, a meeting of the Board of Stewards may be conducted with the consent of the Moderator; in such instance, no less than a majority of the members of the Board of Stewards must be present. If the Moderator is incapacitated or otherwise unable to consider granting consent, no less than a majority of the members of the Board of Stewards, including the Vice-Moderator must be present.
- I. Positions on the Board – Positions on the Board consist of the Official Officers of the Church and the Liaisons of the Church. The Official Officers of the Church are Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer. When applicable, Liaison positions are determined by the current needs and priorities of the church and may include Stewardship Liaison, Fundraising Liaison, and Building & Property Liaison.
1. Election of Officers – During the first meeting following elections to the Board, the Board of Stewards shall determine persons to serve as Official Officers of the Church and to fill the Liaison Positions.
  2. Duties of Officers
    - a. Moderator – The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Stewards. The Moderator serves in effect as the Chief Executive Officer of the Church.

- b. Vice-Moderator – The Vice Moderator shall work closely with the Moderator sharing the duties and responsibilities of chief executive officer as delegated by the Moderator. The Vice-Moderator shall serve as Moderator of the Board in the absence or upon the request of the Moderator.
  - c. Clerk – The Clerk shall be responsible for ensuring the maintenance of official correspondence and Church records, and for ensuring that accurate records are kept of all meetings of the Board of Stewards and of the Congregation. The Clerk is the officer authorized to receive petitions submitted to the Board of Stewards.
  - d. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring the preparation and maintenance of all financial records. This shall include, but is not limited to, a monthly financial report to the Board and an annual financial report to the Congregation. The monthly and annual reports shall reflect the financial income, assets, expenditures, and outstanding financial obligations of the Church.
  - e. Stewardship Liaison – The Stewardship Liaison shall be responsible for ensuring the facilitation of a year-round stewardship program within the Church, working with the Pastor and a team of laity, while reporting to the Board of Stewards on, at least, a quarterly basis.
  - f. Fundraising Liaison – The Fundraising Liaison shall be responsible for facilitating all fundraising events in the Church working with the Pastor and a team of laity, while making regular reports to the Board of Stewards whenever a fundraising event is proposed or in progress.
  - g. Building & Property Liaison – The Building & Property Liaison shall be responsible for overseeing building and property maintenance and repair, while working with a team of laity and reporting to the Board of Stewards on a quarterly basis at minimum.
- J. Vacancies – In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Stewards, the Board may appoint a qualified Member of the Church to fill the vacancy until the next Congregational Meeting, when an election shall be held to fill the un-expired term.
- 1. Notification of Vacancy - The Board of Stewards shall notify the Congregation when a vacancy has occurred and shall notify the Congregation when an appointment has been made to fill the vacancy. These notifications shall be given through Church publications and announcements at public worship.
- K. Nominations – Any member who has been a member for at least six (6) months at the time of the Annual Congregational Meeting is eligible for nomination. The Nominating Committee, appointed by the Board, shall endeavor to have multiple candidates for each term to be elected by actively soliciting members to be candidates for the vacant positions as well as considering potential candidates who approach the Nominating Committee.
- 1. Nominating Committee – The Nominating Committee will consist of at least two (2) members; one (1) active Board Member and one (1) Member in good standing who has been a member for at least six (6) months prior to the formation of the Committee. The members

of the Nominating Committee are appointed by the Board of Stewards; members of the Board of Stewards who are standing for election shall not participate in making the appointments.

2. Term of Office – The term of office for the members of the Nominating Committee will begin two (2) months prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting and end at the close of the Annual Congregational Meeting.
- L. Accountability, Discipline, Removal, and Right of Appeal – The Church cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of duty on the part of any member of the Board of Stewards and, therefore, makes the following provisions for accountability, discipline, or removal.
1. Accountability – All members of the Board of Stewards shall be accountable to the Church and the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One).
  2. Discipline – All charges brought against a member of the Board of Stewards must be in relation to a violation of the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One) and submitted in writing to the entire Board of Stewards. In the event of any formal discussion regarding allegation of charges being filed, the Board must notify the Board member being charged of the allegations and of the Board’s intention to hold a meeting to consider the charges. The person being charged shall have the opportunity to hear all of the charges and to respond to those charges at the meeting of the Board.
  3. Removal - The Board of Stewards may remove by a majority vote of the full Board of Stewards any of its members guilty of violation of the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One), with the exception of the Pastor who must be disciplined in accordance with the UFMCC Bylaws. A petition submitted to the Clerk and signed by twenty-five percent (25%) of the members in good standing of the Congregation may also initiate such a procedure.
  4. Right to Appeal - A disciplined member of the Board of Stewards may appeal the action to the Congregation at a Congregational Meeting. The decision of the Congregational Meeting is final. Until the Congregational Meeting to consider the appeal, the position held by the disciplined member of the Board of Stewards shall be considered vacant. The vote of the Congregation shall be reported to the designated denominational staff person.
- M. Limitation of Liability – No board member or officer of the Church shall be liable for any act or failure to act by any other board member or officer of the Church or by any employee of the Church. No board member or officer of the Church shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in the title to any property acquired by the Church. No board member or officer of the Church shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in any security in which the Church might invest, or from bankruptcy, insolvency, or wrongful act by any person to whom the Church might entrust its property. No board member or officer of the Church shall be liable for any loss due to error of judgment or oversight on his/her part, or for any other loss whatsoever occurring in the carrying out of the duties of his/her office, unless the loss arises from the board member’s or officer’s own willful neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions.
- N. Indemnity - The church shall protect every board member and officer of the Church against all costs arising in relation to his/her relations with the Church, unless they are occasioned by her/his neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions.

### **Article VII – Pastor**

- A. Role – The Pastor is the UFMCC clergy person with a license to practice that has been called by God and elected by the Church to be responsible for the duties of teacher, preacher and spiritual leader of the Congregation until such time that the relationship is terminated. The Pastor shall also fulfill such other roles and responsibilities as are stated in the UFMCC Bylaws and policies of the Church.
- B. Responsibilities of the Pastor -
1. The Pastor shall have authority for ordering all worship services of the Church, determining when other worship services will be held, subject to approval of the Board of Stewards.
  2. The Pastor shall direct the performance of the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion as set forth in the Bylaws of the UFMCC.
  3. The Pastor shall direct performance of the Rite of Attaining Membership to the Church as set forth in the Bylaws of the UFMCC.
  4. The Pastor shall direct performance of the Rite of Holy Union or Holy Matrimony.
  5. The Pastor shall direct performance of the Rite of Funeral or Memorial Service, the Rite of Laying on of Hands, the Rite of Blessing, as set forth in the Bylaws of the UFMCC. The Pastor may delegate such duties as seem wise.
  6. The Pastor shall direct the Spiritual Development of the Congregation. The Pastor may delegate such duties as seem wise.
  7. The Pastor shall direct the congregational care of the Church. The Pastor may delegate such duties as seem wise.
  8. The Pastor shall direct all of the Programs of the Church and may delegate such duties as seem wise.
  9. The Pastor shall accept appointment to UFMCC offices or tasks representing the Fellowship if asked to do so by any Elder of the Fellowship, the MCC Board of Administration or an MCC Staff Member.
  10. The Pastor shall appoint compensated and uncompensated church staff, subject to the approval of the Board of Stewards.
  11. The Pastor shall determine compensation, vacation periods, and titles of office of the Church staff, subject to approval of the Board of Stewards.
  12. The Pastor shall serve as a voting member of the Board of Stewards, Moderator of the Board of Stewards and of Congregational Meetings, personnel director, and as the primary

spokesperson of the Church to the community. The Pastor may delegate such duties as seem wise.

13. The Pastor shall have other duties as outlined in the Pastoral Covenant.

- C. Pastoral Covenant – The Board of Stewards and Pastor shall develop a Covenant between the Pastor and the Church. The Covenant shall include a job description and address such matters as compensation that is consistent with equitable local standards, benefits, allowances, and leave. The Covenant shall be reviewed annually. All provisions of the Covenant shall be subordinate to the Bylaws of the UFMCC and the Bylaws of the Church.
1. Conference Expenses – To the best of its ability, the Congregation shall fund the Pastor’s transportation, registration, housing, and per diem at General Conferences.
- D. Pastoral Vacancy – It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Stewards to notify each member of the Congregation in writing of the Pastoral vacancy within ten (10) days of the Pastor’s notice of resignation or removal.
1. Interim/Provisional Pastor - In the event of a pastoral vacancy, the Board of Stewards will consult with the designated denominational staff person as to possible candidates for Interim/Provisional Pastor. The Interim/Provisional Pastor shall be appointed by the designated denominational staff person with affirmation of the Board of Stewards.
  2. Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader - In the event that a UFMCC clergy person is not available to serve as an Interim/Provisional Pastor, the Board of Stewards may request the designated denominational staff person to appoint an Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader, who shall be subject to a background check and credit check.
    - a. The term of office of the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader shall be no more than one (1) year and will end when an Interim/Provisional Pastor is appointed.
    - b. If the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader is a member of the Church, the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader shall have the authority to fulfill all of the roles and responsibilities of Pastor. If the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader is not a member of the Church, the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader shall have the authority to fulfill all of the roles and responsibilities of Pastor, except that the Interim/Provisional Pastoral Leader shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Stewards and Congregational Meetings with voice but no vote.
  3. Interim/Provisional Pastor/Pastoral Leader – The Board of Stewards and the Interim/Provisional Pastor/Pastoral Leader, in consultation with the designated denominational staff person, shall develop a covenant between the Interim/Provisional Pastor/Pastoral Leader and the Church. All provisions of the Covenant shall be subordinate to the Bylaws of the UFMCC and the Bylaws of the Church.
- E. Pastoral Search Committee - In the event of a vacancy in the position of Pastor, a Pastoral Search Committee shall be responsible for presenting a qualified candidate for election at a Congregational Meeting. The Pastoral Search Committee shall develop and implement the Pastoral Search Process, in consultation with the designated denominational staff person.

1. **Composition of Pastoral Search Committee** – The Pastoral Search Committee shall consist of a minimum of three (3) and maximum of seven (7) members. The committee will be approved by the Board of Stewards in consultation with the designated denominational staff person. Every effort shall be made for the composition of the committee to reflect the diversity of the congregation and the committee ought to include members of the Board of Stewards and non-board members.
- F. **Election of Pastor** – To be elected, the candidate presented by the Pastoral Search Committee must receive more than eighty-five percent (85%) of the votes cast during a Congregational Meeting. If the candidate is not elected or declines the Call, then the matter shall be referred to the Pastoral Search Committee for presentation of another candidate.
- G. **Termination of Relationship** – The Pastor and Congregation may choose at any time to terminate their relationship through mutual agreement. Unilateral failure to renew the Pastor’s covenant shall not constitute removal of the Pastor from office. No petition for removal of the Pastor based on irreconcilable differences is valid unless preceded by the process of conflict resolution and abiding by the UFMCC Bylaws.

#### **Article VIII – Lay Delegate**

The Church shall elect one (1) layperson for every one hundred (100) members in good standing, or part thereof, to serve as Lay Delegate. For every Lay Delegate elected, the church shall elect one Alternate Lay Delegate.

- A. **Name** – The Lay Delegate shall be the Congregation’s Representative at all General Conferences. If the Lay Delegate is unable to represent, the Alternate Lay Delegate shall do so.
- B. **Qualifications of the Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate** - The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate must have demonstrated the ability to adhere to the leadership expectations as outlined in the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One).
- C. **Responsibilities of the Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate:**
  1. The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall be responsible for representing the Congregation at General Conferences.
  2. The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall be responsible for providing a written report to the Congregation and the Board of Stewards within thirty (30) days following a General Conference.
  3. The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall communicate to the Congregation regarding UFMCC announcements, policy changes, opportunities for ministry and education, and concerns.
  4. The Lay Delegate, when unable or unwilling to perform the duties of the position, shall immediately inform the Clerk of the Board of Stewards in writing.
  5. The Alternate Lay Delegate shall be prepared to assume the responsibilities of any Lay Delegate who is unable or unwilling to perform said responsibilities.

- a. Notification to Alternate Lay Delegate – When the Board of Stewards is informed that the Lay Delegate is unable or unwilling to perform the duties of Lay Delegate, the Clerk shall notify the Alternate Lay Delegate, in writing, to assume the responsibilities of Lay Delegate.
  - b. If the Alternate Lay Delegate is unable to serve, the Board shall appoint someone to serve in the absence of the Alternate Lay Delegate.
- D. Membership – The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall be a member in good standing of this Church.
- E. Term of Office – The term of office of Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall be three (3) years.
1. Replacement - If a Lay Delegate, for any reason, does not fulfill a term, an elected Alternate Lay Delegate shall assume the position for the remainder of the term, and the Board shall appoint a new Alternate Lay Delegate. Should the position of Alternate Lay Delegate become vacant, the Board shall appoint a new Alternate Lay Delegate. Any appointed Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall serve until the next Congregational Meeting when an election shall be held for vacant positions(s).
- F. Election – The Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting following each General Conference.
- G. Training - Each newly elected Lay/Alternate Lay Delegate shall receive training from the Pastor and the previous Delegates when possible. The Delegates shall attend any Delegate Training provided by the Fellowship.
- H. Funding - The Congregation shall fund the Lay Delegate’s transportation, registration, housing, and per diem at General Conferences. Funding for the Alternate Lay Delegate shall be the same as the Lay Delegate when the Alternate Lay Delegate is acting in the capacity of the Lay Delegate.
- I. Accountability, Discipline, Removal, and Right of Appeal – The Church cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of duty on the part of any Delegate and, therefore, makes the following provisions for accountability, discipline, or removal.
1. Accountability – The Delegates shall be accountable to the Church and the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One).
  2. Discipline – All charges brought against a Delegate must be in relation to a violation of the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One) and must be submitted in writing to the entire Board of Stewards. In the event of any formal discussion regarding allegation of charges being filed, the Board must notify the Delegate being charged of the allegations and of the Board’s intention to hold a meeting to consider the charges. The person being charged shall have the opportunity to hear all of the charges and to respond to those charges at the meeting of the Board.
  3. Removal - The Board of Stewards may remove by a majority vote of the full Board any Delegate guilty of violation of the Leadership Covenant (Addendum One). A petition

submitted to the Clerk and signed by twenty-five percent (25%) of the members in good standing of the Congregation may also initiate such a procedure.

4. Right to Appeal - A disciplined Delegate may appeal the action to the Congregation at a Congregational Meeting. The decision of the Congregational Meeting is final. Until the Congregational Meeting to consider the appeal, the position held by the disciplined Delegate shall be considered vacant. The vote of the Congregation shall be reported to the designated denominational staff person.

#### **Article IX – Conflict Resolution**

When there are conflicts or difficulty within the church that cannot be resolved, including conflicts between the Pastor and congregation, the Board of Stewards, the Pastor, any Lay Delegate, or a petition signed by a minimum of thirty-three percent (33%) of the Members in good standing may invite intervention by the designated denominational staff person to resolve the conflict, in accordance with UFMCC Bylaws.

A. Removing the Pastor from Office – The church shall follow the process as outlined in the UFMCC Bylaws for removing the Pastor from office for disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, dereliction of duty, or when irreconcilable differences arise that cannot be resolved through mutual agreement.

1. Any petition to initiate the process of removing the Pastor from office must be submitted to the Clerk of the Board of Stewards and be signed by at least twenty-five percent (25%) of the Members in good standing.
2. The Board of Stewards may initiate the process of removing the Pastor from office by a vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the full Board of Stewards.
3. The Clerk shall send a copy of the completed petition or motion of the Board of Stewards to the designated denominational staff person within three (3) days.
4. The Pastor shall remain fully compensated until the final action of the congregation.

#### **Article X – Church Finances**

A. Financial Stewardship – The Church adopts and teaches tithing as the scripturally affirmed means of supporting the Church and its ministries, and as the expression of good stewardship of time, talent, and money by individuals and church bodies. Therefore, the Church shall implement programs of stewardship both to help persons grow in the grace of giving and to fund the church's ministries.

B. Annual Budget - The Board of Stewards shall be responsible for the presentation of an annual balanced operating budget reflecting anticipated receipts and disbursements to the Congregational Meeting for approval by vote. The approved budget may be amended, as needed, by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Stewards, which shall immediately notify the members of the Church that such amendment has been made.

1. Budget Year – The annual budget of the Church shall cover the period from January to December, as required by the Fellowship for fiscal reporting.

Approved: Sunday, November 14, 2004; Revised December 2019

2. Failure to Adopt – Failure to adopt a new budget at a Congregational Meeting shall cause the current budget (weekly amounts) to be extended until a budget is approved at a subsequent Congregational Meeting.

C. Reporting:

1. Congregational Financial Report - The Board of Stewards shall provide, at minimum, an Annual Financial Report to the Congregation. The Board shall also provide a financial report whenever significant changes in income or expenditures occur.
2. Assessments – The Board of Stewards shall report quarterly the number of members in good standing for each month within the quarter and shall remit the Board of Pensions assessments as set by General Conference. The report and remittance are due to the Board of Pensions on or before the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of the month following the quarter reported.
3. Tithes – The Board of Stewards shall report all church receipts each month to the UFMCC, and with that report shall remit a percentage of the funds reported. The percentage of funds to be remitted shall be determined by General Conference.

D. Limit on Expenditures:

1. Pastor - The Pastor shall have the authority to commit church funds within the approved budget in any amount not to exceed five percent (5%) of the annual budget; any expenditure greater than that amount requires the approval of the Board of Stewards.
2. Board of Stewards - The Board of Stewards shall have the authority to commit church funds within the approved budget in any amount not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the annual budget; any expenditure greater than that amount requires congregational approval.

E. Authorized Signatures – Any church bank or other financial accounts shall require two signatures for withdrawals, at least one of which shall be that of a church officer; all members of the Board of Stewards shall have signature authority.

F. Record of Church Property: The Board of Stewards shall maintain a permanent record of all non-expendable items of physical property of the Church, the manner of their acquisition, the names of the donors of donated items, and the manner of their disposal. This record shall be maintained by the Clerk and kept on file at the Church office with a duplicate copy kept off site.

### **Article XI – Adoption and Amendments**

A. Adoption – These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon adoption by the Congregational Meeting and approval by the designated denominational staff person.

B. Amendments – These Bylaws may be amended or repealed at any duly convened Congregational Meeting. Proposed amendments or repeals shall be submitted in writing to the Board of Stewards no later than thirty (30) days prior to the Congregational Meeting at which the proposal is to be considered. Adoption of the amendment or the repeal shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3)

Approved: Sunday, November 14, 2004; Revised December 2019

affirmative vote and is subject to approval by the designated denominational staff person. Amendments that are necessitated by amendments made to the UFMCC Bylaws shall not require approval by the Congregation.

**Addendum One  
Leadership Covenant**

***Leadership Expectations***

1. ***Spiritual Growth:*** Leaders are committed to grow as Christians through regular worship, personal prayer and increasing study. The Church must be led forward by Christians who are going forward into their relationship with God.

2. ***Exemplify Positive Faith:*** Things that leaders say to others should demonstrate their faith in God's grace by choosing to be constructive, supportive and positive. Leaders believe that God can change a situation and rather than simply complain or criticize; leaders pray and do what they can to make a difference. They do not talk about the problem with anyone who is not directly involved in the problem or its solution.

3. ***Tithing:*** Leaders make a financial commitment to the church. They lead the membership in developing a financial base to ensure future viability of the church. The membership has no reason to trust the leader's integrity if they are not being honest in their financial covenant with God.

4. ***Praying:*** Leaders regularly pray for the Pastor, the Board, the Staff and Leaders who are guiding the church. We should be able to count on the sustaining prayers of our sisters and brothers.

5. ***Living a Morally Mature Life:*** Although MCC is not in the habit of dictating how people ought to live, leaders understand that members expect them to be healthy examples. Leaders evaluate their behaviors in light of that reality and attempt to live in such a way that they are not stumbling blocks for others.

6. ***Mutual Accountability:*** The Bible talks about being submitted to one another in love (Eph.5: 21). Leaders must be willing to receive instruction and even discipline from fellow leaders or those put in authority over them. It is healthy that everyone can be accountable to someone and willing to participate in a mature way in this process.

As a potential leader of Imago Dei Metropolitan Community Church, I am willing to participate in this covenant relationship with other leaders of this church. May God's power strengthen me to be faithful and may God's grace forgive me should I fail.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date