

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
OF
COMMUNITY COVENANT CHURCH
OF
EAST BRIDGEWATER
MASSACHUSETTS**



**January 1, 2010
(Approved at the Congregational Meeting on April 26, 2009)
(Amended at the Congregational Meeting on April 10, 2011)**

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

(An historical statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church as adopted by the Evangelical Covenant Church in 2002.)

The Evangelical Covenant Church is a communion of congregations gathered by God, united in Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit to obey the great commandment and the great commission. It affirms its companionship in faith with other church bodies and all those who fear God and keep God's commandments.

The Evangelical Covenant Church adheres to the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation regarding the Bible. It confesses that the Holy Scripture, the Old and the New Testament, is the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. It affirms the historic confessions of the Christian Church, particularly the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed, while emphasizing the sovereignty of the Word of God over all creedal interpretations.

In continuity with the renewal movements of historic Pietism, the Evangelical Covenant Church especially cherishes the dual emphasis on new birth and new life in Christ, believing that personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is the foundation for our mission of evangelism and Christian nurture. Our common experience of God's grace and love in Jesus Christ continues to sustain the Evangelical Covenant Church as an interdependent body of believers that recognizes but transcends our theological differences.

The Evangelical Covenant Church celebrates two divinely ordained sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Recognizing the reality of freedom in Christ, and in conscious dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit, we practice both the baptism of infants and believer baptism. The Evangelical Covenant Church embraces this freedom in Christ as a gift that preserves personal conviction, yet guards against an individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and the mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.

The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity, the Protestant Reformation, the biblical instruction of the Lutheran Church of Sweden, and the great spiritual awakenings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. These influences, together with more recent North American renewal movements, continue to shape its development and distinctive spirit. The Evangelical Covenant Church is committed to reaching across boundaries of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, age, and status in the cultivation of communities of life and service.

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the Constitution and Bylaws of the Community Covenant Church of East Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this church shall be Community Covenant Church of East Bridgewater, Massachusetts.

ARTICLE II

Affiliation

The church is a member of the Evangelical Covenant Church (hereinafter "ECC") and its East Coast Conference. It is pledged to work in harmony with the ECC and East Coast Conference, and to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of each.

ARTICLE III

Confession of Faith

We believe in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct.

ARTICLE IV

Purpose

We covenant to cultivate a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, race, age, culture, and class. In so doing, we covenant to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ--evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed. This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

ARTICLE V

Membership

Membership in the church is granted as provided in the by-laws to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations.

ARTICLE VI

Governance

Section 1: Membership

The authority of the government of this church is vested in its membership acting through duly called congregational meetings. The management, administration and oversight of business and spiritual affairs are delegated by the congregation to appropriate leadership as delineated in the Bylaws. All elected leadership specified in the Bylaws shall be members of the church.

Section 2: Leadership Team

The administration of the church shall be vested in a body known as the Leadership Team. In circumstances where law requires action(s) by "Trustees" the Leadership Team shall be known as the "Board of Trustees" and the members of it as "trustees." The Leadership Team shall also serve as the diaconate to supervise the spiritual life of the church, as stated in I Timothy 3:8-13.

ARTICLE VII

Officers

The officers of the church shall be a Chair, Vice-chair, Clerk, and Financial Officer. All officers shall be members of the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE VIII

Congregational Meetings

Section 1: Regular Meetings

Regular congregational meetings of the church membership shall be held at stated intervals as set forth in Bylaws Article VI, Section 3, but not less than twice yearly. The annual meeting shall be held as specified in the Bylaws.

Section 2: Annual Meeting

At the Annual Meeting, written progress reports shall be submitted by the Pastor and by each ministry team of the church. The Financial Officer shall submit annual reviewed financial reports, to include any independent organizational accounts, to the Annual Meeting.

Section 3: Notice

Notice of all congregational meetings shall be posted to members not less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting and shall include the date, time of meeting and an annotated agenda.

Section 4: Special Meetings

Special congregational meetings may be called by the Chair of the church, after conferring with the Pastor, or by the Leadership Team.

ARTICLE IX

Assets of the Church

Section 1: Title

Community Covenant Church shall hold title to its own assets.

Section 2: Schism

In the event of schism within the church, in which there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by the Constitution and Bylaws, as determined by the East Coast Conference Executive Board.

Section 3: Closure

No action for the sale or transfer of assets may be taken when the closure of the church is under consideration without the prior approval of the East Coast Conference Executive Board. In the event the congregation votes to cease, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of the ECC and the East Coast Conference, shared equally for the furtherance of the mission of both in that region, primarily through church planting.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

Amendments in harmony with this Constitution, the Model Constitutions for Local ECC Churches, non-profit laws of Massachusetts, and not in conflict with ECC principles and policies may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in an Annual Meeting of the church, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at a preceding congregational meeting held a minimum of six (6) months prior to said Annual Meeting. This Constitution shall be reviewed every five (5) years by a committee appointed by the Chair for this purpose.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Membership

Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of membership is to join with other followers of Christ in building a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, race, age, culture, and class. In so doing, the membership covenants together to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ – evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

Section 2: Responsibilities

The members of this church do covenant together by God's grace to live lives in a manner consistent with the standards of biblical teaching, including the support of this congregation in attendance, prayer, service, and giving, to live lives in word and deed that are an encouragement to others to know and be like Jesus Christ, to reflect in all our relationships the servant love of our Lord, and to support the broader mission of Christ through the ECC and the East Coast Conference.

Section 3: Admission into Membership.

- a. Any person upon personal confession of faith in Jesus Christ may make application to the Pastor or a member of the Leadership Team. All applicants shall complete a course in the Inquirer/Welcome class and be examined in written and/or oral testimony by representatives of the Leadership Team. Such applicants as are approved by the Pastor and the Leadership Team shall be recommended and voted upon for church membership at a congregational meeting of the church and officially welcomed into the congregation, preferably at a communion service.
- b. Applicants from Christian churches shall submit letters of transfer to the Pastor or a member of the Leadership Team and shall attend a course in the Inquirer/Welcome class with recommendations the same as the preceding paragraph.

Section 4: Children

Children of the church shall be nurtured under its spiritual care. They shall receive instruction in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, normally using the confirmation/discipleship material of the ECC.

Section 5: Discipline.

- a. **Negligent members** – a member who willfully neglects his/her duties or fails to attend services of the church regularly or to contribute to its support shall be asked by the Leadership Team to reaffirm his/her membership. If membership is not reaffirmed, he/she shall be removed in accordance with this Article.

- b. **Erring members** – A member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. A fellow member having knowledge of such error shall in the spirit of Christian love seek to restore him. If such member does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Leadership Team, which shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member.

Discipline shall then be administered in the spirit of Christ, with due regard for the welfare of the individual as well as the church, which may result in dismissal from membership.

- c. **Dismissal of members** – Dismissal of a member must be acted upon by the church, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present and voting at a congregational meeting is necessary for such action.
- d. **Transfer or withdrawal of members** - Any member desiring to transfer or withdraw from membership shall make such request in writing to the Pastor or Leadership Team. Letters of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor if so requested, and the member is in good standing.
- e. **Removal of members** - The Leadership Team shall annually review the membership roster to determine inactivity. Those determined to have neglected their responsibilities may be approached under the process outlined in this Article. After careful consideration the Leadership Team may present a recommendation for removal from membership to a congregational meeting for a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Section 6: Recording. The names of those withdrawing or transferring membership shall be duly recorded and reported to the congregational meeting following action.

ARTICLE II

The Leadership Team

Section 1: Purpose

The Leadership Team shall be responsible for building, maintaining and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the congregation and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church.

Section 2: Composition

The Leadership Team shall be comprised of seven (7) members, one of whom shall be the Senior Pastor as a voting member. The Leadership Team may appoint other pastors or staff members as non-voting advisors, and may remove the same.

Section 3: Qualification

Any member of the church meeting the biblical standards of character and giftedness for church leaders may be nominated and elected to the Leadership Team.

Section 4: Election

Leadership Team members shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by a majority vote of those members voting at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose.

Section 5: Term of Office

Leadership Team members shall be elected for a term of two (2) years and may succeed themselves one time. After at least one year off the Leadership Team, a person may be eligible for subsequent service on the Leadership Team, subject again to the terms stated in this article.

Section 6: Vacancies and Removal

A Leadership Team member may resign. A Leadership Team member may be removed from office by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of congregational members voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Vacancies created by resignation or removal may be filled by appointment through the 2/3 vote of the Leadership Team. A Leadership Team member appointed to serve an unexpired term of less than half the remaining term shall not be precluded from being elected thereafter to two full consecutive terms.

Section 7: Notification of Meetings

All Leadership Team members shall receive a minimum 3-day advance notification of any meeting, including time and place of the meeting. In emergency situations, the 3-day notice may be waived by the 2/3 vote of the entire Leadership Team.

Section 8: Quorum

A majority of Leadership Team members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 9: Decisions

The Leadership Team shall strive for unanimity. Matters shall be determined by a majority vote of a Leadership Team quorum, unless on a matter in which the Constitution and Bylaws require a different percentage.

Section 10: Organization

The congregation shall elect two (2) at-large members to serve upon the Leadership Team with the senior pastor and four (4) duly-elected officers:

- a. **Chair.** The Chair shall preside at all business meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team. The Chair shall confer with the senior pastor in preparing the agenda for such meetings, and shall utilize the counsel that the senior pastor can give by virtue of training, experience, and calling.
- b. **Vice-chair.** The Vice-chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence, assist in the Chair's duties, and chair the Ministry Support Team.
- c. **Clerk.** The Clerk shall keep and preserve the minutes of all congregational meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team, conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated, and be responsible for the official seal and documents of the church.
- d. **Financial Officer.** The Financial Officer shall ensure proper policies, processes, reporting, and reviewing of all matters related to the finances of the church, including the submission of monthly financial reports to the Leadership Team.

Section 11: Responsibilities of the Leadership Team

In being responsible to the congregation for building, maintaining and overseeing the spiritual welfare of the church and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church, the Leadership Team shall:

- a. Present annual mission and ministry objectives to the congregation;
- b. Determine Ministry Teams needed to carry out the church's mission and ministry, and appoint appropriate leadership for the Ministry Teams;
- c. Establish administrative and program policies in conformity with the spirit of the Constitution;
- d. Represent the congregation in certain credentialed and non-credentialed staff relationships including:
 - 1. hiring and dismissal of non-credentialed ministry staff subject to the provisions of these Bylaws. Action shall be by 2/3 vote;
 - 2. annual appraisal of the senior pastor and of the ministry staff (credentialed and non-credentialed), and providing godly counsel or discipline as required;
 - 3. annual review and recommendation of credentialed and non-credentialed staff compensation; and other personnel expenses for any staff member or activity;
 - 4. establishment of personnel policies;
 - 5. approval of changes in all staff job descriptions and approval of job descriptions for new staff positions; and
 - 6. maintenance of current job descriptions for all staff members;
- e. Oversee the preparation and submission of a proposed budget for each fiscal year to the membership for approval at the October congregational meeting. A copy of the church budget shall be posted to all members in October at least one week in advance of the congregational meeting. Upon approval of the budget by the membership, the Leadership Team shall be responsible for seeing that the budget is carried out as approved. The Leadership Team shall have the authority to appropriately adjust budget items and amounts where ministry objectives necessitate but in no event shall total expenditures exceed the total authorized budget without prior approval of the membership;
- f. Supervise church membership, including recommendations relative to admission, removal, or dismissal of members;
- g. Assist the Pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the church and in the service of communion;
- h. Evaluate the total church program on a monthly basis;
- i. Review and approve the schedule of church activities;
- j. When necessary, present the name of a candidate for interim pastor to the church after careful consideration of his/her qualifications;
- k. Annually appoint a member of the church as Financial Secretary who shall be authorized to receive monies on behalf of the church and annually appoint a Bookkeeper to disburse funds for church purposes in accordance with standard accounting procedures for non-profit organizations; and
- l. Hear and respond appropriately to concerns of members.

Section 12. Unity

Action by the Leadership Team shall be taken in such manner as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

ARTICLE III

Ministry Teams

Section 1. Purpose

Ministry Teams shall be formed as required to implement the varied ministries of the church.

Section 2. Establishment

Ministry Teams shall be established by the Leadership Team to implement specific ministries. The configuration of Ministry Teams shall be reviewed as needed, but at least annually, by the Leadership Team, in accord with the church's purpose, strategies, and objectives for mission and ministry.

Section 3. Duties

The duties of Ministry Teams shall be to:

- a. Meet as required to plan and execute specific mission and ministry objectives as established by the Leadership Team;
- b. Recruit and train ministry members;
- c. Define and provide the necessary materials required for ministry;
- d. Submit annually to the Leadership Team proposed budgets and objectives for the forthcoming year and manage consistent with approved budgets; and
- e. Report as requested to the Leadership Team.

Section 4. Leadership

- a. The leader of a Ministry Team shall be a member appointed by the Leadership Team in consultation with the pastor(s). The team leader may serve as liaison to the Leadership Team to provide reports and information when requested, and to forward requests to the Leadership Team when necessary.
- b. Ministry Team members shall be selected by the Ministry Team leader and reported to the Leadership Team for affirmation. Only the Leadership Team may remove a Ministry Team member upon recommendation of the Ministry Team leader to the Leadership Team.
- c. Each Ministry Team shall organize itself as required to perform its ministry.
- d. The Leadership Team may appoint one of its members to be a voting member of any Ministry Team, who may also serve as that Ministry Team's leader.

ARTICLE IV

Pastoral Staff

Section 1: Qualifications

The Pastor of the church shall meet the New Testament requirements of his/her office (I Timothy 3:2-7) and shall be credentialed by the ECC and be a member in good standing in the ECC Ministerium

Section 2: Duties of Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall by virtue of his/her call be a member of the church and a voting member of the Leadership Team, but a non-voting member of the boards of all other organizations, ministry teams, and committees within the church. He/she shall be devoted to the service of this church preaching and teaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments, and faithfully giving himself/herself to pastoral work. The Senior Pastor shall have no other employment without the recommendation of the Ministry Support Team and subsequent approval of the Leadership Team, to the church membership. He/she shall provide the church with an accurate record of his/her pastoral acts and present a written report to the church annual congregational meeting. He/she shall practice good administrative procedures and co-operate with the Leadership Team, membership, and church constituency.

Section 3: Cooperation

A Pastor shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the ECC, the East Coast Conference, and his/her fellow ministers.

According to Ephesians 4, God's plan is for the church and Pastor to engage in mutual ministry of working together for the goals of unity, knowledge, and maturity - all to be understood in terms of Christ and for his glory. This "work of ministry" belongs to each and all who are the church -- clergy and laity. We are a royal priesthood (I Peter 2:9), together ministering to each other and to the world.

Section 4: Call

A Pastor shall be called, upon a recommendation of the Pastoral Search Committee, at a regular or special congregational meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two (2) weeks in advance. He/she shall be chosen by ballot with a quorum of twenty percent (20%) of the membership and with a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of those present required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time.

Section 5: Charges against the pastor

A Pastor known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18: 15-18 and Galatians 6:1. A fellow member having knowledge of such error shall in the spirit of Christian love seek to restore him/her. If the Pastor does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Ministry Support Team in writing. If in the judgment of the Ministry Support Team the charges are valid, the chair of the Ministry Support Team will bring these charges to the Leadership Team. If in the judgment of the Leadership Team the pastor erred in doctrine or conduct, the Leadership Team will refer the case to the East Coast Conference leadership prior to further action. The Leadership Team will then decide the appropriate action to be taken and whether the charges will be brought to the church membership for action. A recommendation by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the Leadership Team will be made to the membership on that decision regarding the charges. Any action taken by a quorum of twenty percent (20%) of the membership must be by a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) vote of those present and voting. If dismissed by the church membership, the dismissal may take effect at once with immediate cessation of salary.

Section 6: Resignation

A minimum of six (6) weeks notice (or less by mutual agreement) shall be requested of a Pastor for resignation of his/her pastoral duties.

ARTICLE V

Committees

Section 1. Nominating Committee.

a. Composition

The nominating committee shall consist of one Leadership Team member designated by the Leadership Team, the Senior Pastor or staff member designated by the Senior Pastor, and three (3) members at-large elected by a majority of the members voting at a congregational meeting. The Leadership Team shall designate one of the committee members to serve as Chair of the nominating committee.

b. Term

The terms of the member from the Leadership Team shall be at the pleasure of the Leadership Team. The at-large members shall serve two year terms. The initial terms of the at-large members shall be alternated so that at least one at-large member shall be elected each year. At-large members may succeed themselves one time.

c. Quorum

A majority of members shall constitute a quorum of the nominating committee.

d. Responsibilities

The nominating committee shall be responsible for nominations to fill the offices of Leadership Team, the at-large members of the nominating committee, the at-large members of the Ministry Support Team, and any other positions assigned to it either by the Leadership Team or congregation.

Section 2. Pastoral Search Committee

The Pastoral Search Committee shall consist of the Chair, three (3) Leadership Team members, and three (3) members from the church at-large who shall be elected by a congregational meeting. The committee shall present the name of a candidate for church pastor to the church. After careful consideration and affirmative vote by the church membership, the candidate shall be called according to Article IV, Section 4 of the Bylaws.

Section 3. Ministry Support Team

The Ministry Support Team shall work toward a vital, healthy, mutually beneficial relationship between the congregation and the pastor(s) and credentialed ministry staff. The Ministry Support Team shall have four main areas of responsibility:

- a. care and encouragement for the pastors, ministry staff, and their families;
- b. receiving the perspectives and concerns of each pastor and ministry staff member relative to the congregation and ministry;
- c. communicating the perspectives and concerns of the congregation to each pastor and ministry staff member relative to that person's ministry; and
- d. periodic review of personal and church goals.

The Ministry Support Team shall be made up of the Vice-chair (who shall chair this committee), a member of the Leadership Team selected by the Leadership Team, and two (2) congregational members elected by the congregation at a congregational meeting. Elected at-large members shall serve a two year term and may not succeed themselves.

Section 4. Special Committees

The Leadership Team or the congregation may establish a committee to address a specific task. The committee shall report back to the body which formed it unless otherwise instructed by its founding body. The committee shall terminate upon the completion of its task or at the next Annual Meeting, unless specifically extended by said Annual Meeting. The chair of any special committee shall be selected from church membership, but committee members need not be members of the church.

Section 5. Qualifications

Any member of appropriate character, giftedness, and call may be considered for any position as Officer or on the Leadership Team. One or more candidates for the office of Leadership Team shall be nominated by the nominating committee. One or more candidates for the office of at-large members shall be nominated.

ARTICLE VI

Meetings

Section 1: Public Services

Services shall be conducted regularly for worship, preaching and teaching of God's Word and prayer.

Section 2: Conducting Sacraments

The sacrament of Holy Communion shall be conducted at least one Sunday of each month or as determined by vote of the Leadership Team. The sacrament of Baptism shall be conducted in keeping with Covenant principles and according to the needs of the constituency.

Section 3: Congregational Meetings

Church congregational meetings shall be held in April and October. The April congregational meeting shall be the Annual Meeting. Special congregational meetings may be called by the Chair of the church after conferring with the Pastor or by the Leadership Team. Non-members may attend any congregational meeting, but are not permitted to make motions, participate in motion discussion, or vote. Although at the Chair's prerogative they may be present for some or all discussion, no member or non-member shall be permitted to be present during any vote that directly affects them.

Section 4: Leadership Team and Ministry Team Meetings

Regular meetings of the Leadership Team shall be held not less than monthly. Ministry teams, special committees, and task forces, shall meet not less than at a frequency specified by the Leadership Team. Special meetings of the Leadership Team, the ministry teams, and various committees may be called by their respective chairs. A special meeting of the Leadership Team may be called by four or more members of the Leadership Team with one-week notice to the Chair of the Leadership Team and other members of the Leadership Team. Additional ministry team meetings may be called by a majority of that ministry team's members with one-week notice to the ministry team chair and other members of the team. Non-members may attend any church Leadership Team or ministry team meeting, but are not permitted to make motions, participate in motion discussion, or vote. Although at the Ministry Team Chair's prerogative, they may be present for some or all discussion, no member or non-member shall be permitted to be present during any vote that directly affects them.

Section 5: Church Functions

Ministry teams or committees sponsoring church functions shall refer their plans to the Leadership Team for approval.

ARTICLE VII

General Provisions

Section 1: Quorum

- a. Ten (10) percent of the membership (excluding the current members of the Leadership Team) present and capable of voting at a congregational meeting properly called shall constitute a quorum.
- b. The quorum for the Leadership Team, ministry team, or special committee meetings shall be a majority of their respective voting members.
- c. If a quorum is not present at either a. or b., then no votes shall be taken.

Section 2. Fiscal Year and Terms of Office

The fiscal year and terms of all elected positions shall run from January 1 to December 31.

Section 3: Rules of Order

All congregational meetings of the church and of the boards, committees, ministry teams, administrative ministry teams and organizations of the church shall be conducted according to parliamentary procedures.

Section 4: Formation of an Organization

Any member or group wishing to form an organization or committee must first apply to the Leadership Team for permission, stating in writing the purpose and structure of such organization. If approved, the Leadership Team will assign the new organization to a ministry team.

Section 5: Leading Public Worship

Only persons who are known to the Pastor or to the Leadership Team, either personally or by presenting satisfactory credentials, shall lead public services of worship or preach the Word of God in this church.

Section 6: Synopsis of Meetings

Approved minutes of each Leadership Team and ministry team meeting shall be available in the church office.

ARTICLE VIII

Amendments

These Bylaws may be changed or amended at the Annual Meeting of the church or at a meeting designated for such purpose and properly announced, providing the proposed change or amendment was presented in writing to a previous congregational meeting of the church. A two-thirds (2/3) majority of votes cast by members present and voting shall be required for adoption.