

# BY LAWS

## Crystal Congregational Church

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# CRYSTAL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

## CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this organization shall be the Crystal Congregational Church, located in Crystal, Michigan.

### ARTICLE II - Covenant

We are banded together as a Christian Church to promote the worship of God, to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, to develop in mankind a consciousness of their relations and duties to God and their fellow men, and to inspire them with love for truth, passion for righteousness, and enthusiasm for service. To this end we pledge our loyalty to Christ and covenant with each other to strive to express His Spirit in our individual and corporate life; to live together as Christian Brethren and to submit ourselves to the government of this church working, giving, praying for its increase, its purity, its peace, and seeking in every way to make it a power for the building up of the Kingdom of God.

### ARTICLE III - Polity

This Church shall be an independent local congregation of Christian believers. The Crystal Congregational Church seeks ways to be part of the wider body of Jesus Christ through involvement in networks, organizations, associations, and/or denominations of Christians. Any and all involvement with said wider church entities shall be instituted and/or terminated by a majority vote of a duly called congregational meeting.

### ARTICLE IV - Mission Statement

It shall be the mission of the Crystal Congregational Church to be a beacon of light to our community by serving Christ, through the

understanding and sharing of His Holy Word.

## STATEMENT OF FAITH

We embrace the affirmation of faith as contained in the Apostle's and Nicene Creeds, and, we believe God has challenged us to follow his Word as exemplified by his Son to share and grow with others in his service.

We believe God's desire is for us to grow spiritually with His blessings.

That

We are grounded in His faith, and Spiritual well-being will come to those who follow his word.

We believe all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. We strive toward the day of perfection promised by Christ through our repentance.

We also believe in the goodness of man and that all are welcome to grow and learn with us.

We believe in the saving grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

## ARTICLE V - Membership

### A. Qualifications

The membership shall consist of those persons who have heretofore signed the charter of the church and all those who shall hereafter sign the rolls of the church, have been baptized, have given public assent to the covenant of the church, with the approval of the Diaconate, and have been publicly welcomed into the fellowship.

### B. Reception

The reception of members shall ordinarily be upon some Lord's Day when the Lord's Supper is administered and may be by one or more of the following:

1. Letter of transfer from another church.
2. Confession of one's faith
3. Re-affirmation of one's faith.

### C. Duties

The duties of church membership include:

1. Actively agree with the purpose of the church.
2. Regular support of its parish and benevolent activities.
3. Service in its mission.

### D. Dual Members

Those adults and family members who worship regularly with us but who, because of prior relationships, wish to retain membership elsewhere are granted upon request and approval by the Prudential Board, the status of Dual Membership. All rights of a member are included.

### E. Rights

Under laws of the state, only such members as have attained the age of eighteen (18) years shall have the right to vote upon questions involving the acquisition and disposition of property, the expenditure of money, and the calling and dismissing of a pastor. All members of the church shall have the right to vote on matters not involving corporate governing body actions.

### F. Termination

Any person, who has absented himself for two (2) years from the church, or its allied organizations, may be placed on the inactive list. Such persons' membership may be re-activated by renewed interest in the Church. Letters of transfer and withdrawal shall be granted by vote of the Diaconate.

## ARTICLE VI - Officers & Prudential Board

### A. Prudential Board

Members of the Prudential Board of the Crystal Congregational Church shall be members or dual members of the church. The Prudential Board shall consist of all ministerial staff, moderator, vice moderator, clerk, treasurer, recording secretary, the chair of the Trustee

committee, the chair of the Diaconate, a representative of the Women's Fellowship, and a representative of any other arm of the church. (i.e. Men's group, youth group, etc.)

The responsibilities of the Prudential Board shall be:

- Pastor - Church Relations (Supplemented)
- Nominating Committee (Supplemented)
- Search Committee (Supplemented)
- Interim Committee
- Long Range Planning (Supplemented)
- Ad-hoc committees may be appointed as required
- Provide and oversee Employment Agreements

#### B. Minister

A minister shall be called or dismissed by a majority vote of the members of the church present at a meeting of the church called for the purpose in accordance with Article IX. The ministerial relations may be dissolved by either the minister or the church giving three months written notice, if the call is for an indefinite period.

The minister shall have in his/her charge the spiritual welfare of the church. To this end he/she shall preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, have under his/her care all services of public worship, be active in pastoral services to the members of his/her parish, and administer the activities of the church in co-operation with the various boards and committees appointed by the church. He/she shall be unofficially a member of all boards and committees of the church and a voting member of the Prudential Board.

He/she may be requested by the Prudential Board or at a Church meeting to preside in the absence of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator.

Dual membership may be offered to the minister and his/her family. He/she shall be an active participant of the Association to which the Church belongs.

#### C. Moderator / Vice Moderator

A Moderator and Vice Moderator shall be elected by vote of the congregation at the annual meeting. He/she shall be responsible for preparing the agenda, with the minister, for the Prudential Board meetings, and meetings of the Church. He/she shall preside at the official meetings of the Church and the Prudential Board. He/she shall serve for one year with eligibility of re-election twice in succession. After a one year recess, he/she shall be eligible again for election.

#### D. Clerk

A clerk shall be elected at the Annual Meeting to serve for one year and until a successor is elected. He/she shall see that a complete record of all the affairs of the church; including membership, baptisms, deaths, etc., and of the transactions of all business meetings of the church. He/she shall also notify all officers, members of committees and delegates of their election appointment. He/she shall issue letters of recommendation voted by the church. He/she shall bring to the notice of the church all communications intended for the church and, when not otherwise provided, conduct all of its correspondence. He/she shall preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meetings, where such notice is necessary as indicated in these by-laws, and perform all other duties usually pertaining to secretaries of assemblies.

#### E. Treasurer

A Treasurer shall be elected at the annual meeting to serve for one year and until his successor is elected. It shall be his/her duty to receive all money from the Recording Secretary, (except the treasuries of the auxiliary organizations of the church), and to disburse all money as directed by the Board of Trustees. A complete record of the receipts and disbursements of the church shall be kept by the treasurer and reported at the annual meeting of the congregation.

#### F. Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary shall be elected each year at the Annual Meeting and shall serve for one year, or until a successor is elected. The duties of this office shall include receiving all offerings and special collections, and to keep an accurate account of all money received. All money received shall be paid to the Treasurer by way of bank deposits and reports. All members may request a quarterly statement of their

designated accounts from the Recording Secretary. The Board of Trustees shall supply one person each week to assist the Recording Secretary in the counting of the offering. At least two (2) people shall be present at all such counting.

#### G. Board of Trustees

A Board of Trustees consisting of eight (8) persons with two or more elected at the annual meeting for a three (3) year term. After serving two (2) terms in succession, they shall be ineligible for re-election for one (1) year.

It shall be their duty to 1) have care and custody of the Church real property, 2) receive a proposed church budget from the finance committee and modify, if necessary, and present it to the Prudential board who may also modify, if necessary, and then present it to be approved by the Church at its annual meeting, 3) administer the financial affairs of the church in accordance with the adopted budget, 4) appoint an Auditing Committee of two (2) persons at their first organizational meeting, to serve for one (1) year.

A quorum of the Board of Trustees is constituted by five (5) of its members.

#### H. Diaconate

The Diaconate shall consist of a board of eight (8) members. Two (2) or more shall be elected at each annual meeting for a term of three (3) years. No person shall be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms. When possible, at least one (1) member shall be under the age of eighteen (18). It shall be their duty to audit the Membership Rolls of the Church annually. This will include the preparation of an inactive list, with the assistance of the Minister, Church Clerk, as stated under Article V, section F.

The Diaconate, together with the Minister, shall look after the spiritual needs of the congregation, take an active interest in the sick and needy, recommend policy in regard to worship, the Lord's Supper, and the Special Services of the Church. The Diaconate, in addition, shall prepare and govern the elements for observance of the Lord's Supper, supervise education, music, and special services of the church. The Diaconate, together with the minister, shall act as the membership committee.

### I. Staff - Parish Relations Committee

The Staff - Parish Relations Committee is established to offer an objective view within the fellowship of our church.

The committee shall offer support and discuss issues of relevance to the mission of the church. These issues might arise with members of the staff and congregation, both at the individual or group levels. Through a process of mediation, an attempt can be made to reconcile issues.

The committee shall also consider pastoral and staff compensation and make suggestions concerning such issues to the Trustees.

This committee shall also be responsible for creating and maintaining job descriptions for all employees of the church. These descriptions shall be reviewed annually by the Prudential Board and shall be made available for review by request of any member of the church.

The committee shall report relevant issues to the Prudential Board. This shall be a standing committee of the Crystal Congregational Church. It shall consist of five (5) members, including the Moderator and the Treasurer: the three remaining members shall be nominated from the membership of the church by the Nominating Committee and shall be elected at the Annual Meeting. The terms of membership shall be three (3) years and may not serve for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

### J. Removal of Officers

The Congregation may, upon recommendation of the Prudential Board, and after careful counseling and prayer, remove an officer from his/her position by a two-thirds majority of the members present at any legally called meeting.

### K. Finance Committee

The finance committee shall consist of the: Treasurer; Recording Secretary; Chairperson of the Trustees; Chair of the Staff - Parish Relations Committee; Moderator and the Pastor. This committee shall be responsible for bringing the proposed annual budget to the Board of

Trustees and subsequently to the Prudential Board who will in turn present it to the church at its annual meeting. It shall also be responsible for pledge campaigns of the church when directed by the trustees.

#### L. Vacancies

Vacancies in any of the offices, boards, committees named above shall be filled by nominations being presented to the Congregation by the Prudential Board, and the elected filling out the unexpired term.

### ARTICLE VII - Sacraments

#### A. The Lord's Supper

The church shall celebrate the Lord's Supper once each month, or at the discretion of the minister and the Diaconate.

#### B. Baptism

Baptism shall be administered to adults who have not previously received it at the time of their admission to the church; and to infant children at the discretion of the Minister and the Diaconate. The congregation recognizes and accepts all forms of Christian baptism currently existing among churches.

### ARTICLE VIII – Meetings

#### A. Annual Meetings

The Annual Meeting shall be held on the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) Sunday of July. At this meeting the annual reports of the various boards, committees, and organizations shall be presented; officers elected, and such other business transacted as may be specified in the call or authorized in the by-laws. The chairman of all elected boards, all auxiliary organizations, and all elected officers of the church or their appointed substitutes shall submit written reports at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. The entire packet of reports, including the treasurer's

reports, the annual budget, and the nominating committee reports shall be made available to the congregation one week before the Annual Meeting for preview.

In the event the Prudential Board recommends a change of the annual meeting date, the proposed change will be announced and read on three (3) consecutive Sundays during the Worship Service.

"Notice of meeting specifying time, place, and object thereof shall be read from the pulpit on the two successive Sundays preceding such meeting, on which services were held; provided however, that in case it is proposed to amend the articles of association, the proposed amendment shall be read from the pulpit on three (3) successive Sundays immediately preceding such meeting on which services shall be held; and the proposed amendment shall not itself be amended in any material point in the same meeting. And provided further, that if there should be no public services at which the notice herein required may be given, said notice may be posted on the church door or published in the town, city, or county newspaper whose circulation among the members is greatest, for three (3) weeks preceding such meeting, specifying the time, place, and object thereof." (State Law)

#### B. Special Meetings

Special meetings shall be called in the manner specified in ARTICLE VIII - A for the calling of an annual meeting, upon the request of the minister, the Prudential Board, or the written application of any five (5) qualified members.

#### ARTICLE IX - Quorum

Twenty (20) per cent of the qualified voters shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the church. A Majority vote of the qualified voters present at any meeting shall constitute a vote of the church and shall be necessary for any action by the church.

#### ARTICLE X - Constitutional Changes

##### A. Amendment

These articles of association and by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the qualified members present at an annual meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided that the

proposed amendment has met the condition set forth in ARTICLE VIII

#### B. Revision

Once, at least every five (5) years, the Prudential Board shall appoint a committee to examine these by-laws and make necessary recommendations for changes and alterations.

### ARTICLE XII

#### DISSOLUTION

Upon the dissolution of the Crystal Congregational Church, all property which it possesses, whether real, personal or mixed, tangible or intangible, and including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instruments (whether held in trust or otherwise and whether to the church) shall be transferred to a religious and/or charitable institution and/or purpose.