

# **Bylaws of Alto Reformed Church**

N3697 County Road EE, Waupun, WI 53963

## **ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this Wisconsin non-profit religious organization is “Alto Reformed Church”, hereafter referred to as “the congregation” or “the church”.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this congregation is to know Jesus and make Jesus known. All will be done in accordance with the Bible, our supreme authority for faith and life. Our Statement of Faith articulates the essential beliefs and practices of the congregation, while our bylaws give further clarity of our practices. We also hold to the Organizational Convictions of the Alliance of Reformed Churches.
2. This church is formed for charitable and religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended.
3. This church shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or (b) by a corporation whose contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.
4. The church has not been formed for pecuniary profit or gain. No part of the assets, income, or profit of the church will inure to the benefit of its officers or the Board of Directors. However, the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth above.
5. No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene (including the publishing or distribution of statements) in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

## **ARTICLE III: CATEGORIES OF PARTICIPANTS**

1. **Overview:** The Office Administrator, at the direction of the Elders, shall maintain a database including those who are Guests, Attendees, Covenant Children, Professing Believers, Covenant Partners, and Inactive.
  - 1.1. Guests are those visiting the church. They are welcome to take Communion, if they are repentant and trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior as our liturgy and Statement of Faith explain.
  - 1.2. Attendees are those who attend regularly, but do not wish to join as Covenant Partners. They may or may not be Professing Believers, but have shared reasons they do not plan to become Covenant Partners. They are welcome to take Communion, if they are repentant and trust Jesus as their Lord and Savior as our liturgy and Statement of Faith explain.
  - 1.3. Covenant Children are baptized children of Covenant Partners. Parents are encouraged to explain to their Covenant Children the meaning of Communion. Parents may allow their children to take Communion, but they are encouraged to wait until their children profess faith in Jesus.

- 1.4. Professing Believers are those who have made a public profession of faith and have been baptized, but have not yet become Covenant Partners. They are encouraged to take Communion.
  - 1.4.1. If baptism, as a profession of faith, is done separately from becoming a Covenant Partner, the following Profession of Faith vow shall be used.
    - 1.4.1.1. I confess Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord.
    - 1.4.1.2. Before the baptism, the individuals must show understanding to the Pastor of the following doctrines: human sinful nature, Christ's redemption on the cross, our call to live by faith, and the meaning of baptism.
- 1.5. Covenant Partners are those who have joined the church by taking vows. The Elders will designate each Covenant Partner as either an Approved Leader, Participating, or Concerned About Involvement.
  - 1.5.1. Approved Leaders are those who have affirmed the Leadership Covenant and been approved by the Elder Board to teach, lead teams, and serve in leadership positions. The Leadership Covenant needs to be re-signed by Approved Leaders every five years and then reviewed by the Elders.
    - 1.5.1.1. Deacons are those elected by the church to serve in ministries of finance, facilities, and missions.
      - 1.5.1.1.1. They must meet the Biblical qualifications of a Deacon in 1 Timothy 3, affirm our Leadership Covenant, and affirm the Covenant of the Ordained from the Alliance of Reformed Churches.
    - 1.5.1.2. Elders are those elected by the church to oversee the spiritual health of the church.
      - 1.5.1.2.1. They must meet the Biblical qualifications of an Elder in 1 Timothy 3, affirm our Leadership Covenant, and affirm the Covenant of the Ordained from the Alliance of Reformed Churches.
      - 1.5.1.2.2. Ministers/Pastors are those who are called by God, endorsed by the local church Elder Board, and ordained by an approved denomination for the purpose of teaching God's Word, shepherding the flock faithfully, leading ministries and worship services, administering the sacraments, maintaining proper discipline in the church, and equipping the church for ministry.
      - 1.5.1.2.3. Ministry Elders are those called by the Elders and congregation to serve in ministry leadership roles.
    - 1.5.1.3. Consistory members are those elected and installed as Deacons, Elders, or Ministers/Pastors.
    - 1.5.1.4. Greater Consistory members are all those who have been elected and installed as Deacons or Elders, and remain as Approved Leaders.
    - 1.5.1.5. Ministry Staff are those who oversee ministry areas on behalf of the Consistory.
    - 1.5.1.6. Shepherds are those who assist the Elders in care of the congregation.
  - 1.5.2. Participating are those actively involved in the church as Covenant Partners.
  - 1.5.3. Concerned About Involvement are those not actively participating in the church, but who are Covenant Partners.

- 1.6. Inactive are those the elders have removed from being Covenant Children and Covenant Partners.

## **2. Covenant Partnership in the Alto Reformed Church**

- 2.1. The Covenant Partnership Process: To become a Covenant Partner, individuals must:
  - 2.1.1. Complete our Covenant Partnership Class
    - 2.1.1.1. If one is coming from another church, the teacher shall seek to understand the reasons for leaving and if deemed helpful, communicate with that church about the reasons.
  - 2.1.2. Be baptized, either as a child or as a public profession of their faith.
  - 2.1.3. Confess faith in Jesus Christ, affirm core orthodox beliefs, and promise to live out core Christian commitments before the Board of Elders and the congregation, as stated below in our Covenant Partner vows.
    - 2.1.3.1. Confession
      - 2.1.3.1.1. I believe in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; confess Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord; and accept the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme authority for faith and life.
      - 2.1.3.1.2. I accept the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed as ecumenical expressions of the Christian faith.
    - 2.1.3.2. Commitments
      - 2.1.3.2.1. I will trust Jesus as the only Savior and Lord, connect deeply with Jesus' followers, grow to be like Jesus, serve sacrificially as Jesus did, reach out to the world with the love and truth of Jesus, and worship Jesus as the ruler of all.
      - 2.1.3.2.2. I will maintain a life of prayer, study God's Word, participate in the Lord's Supper, gather with believers regularly, use my spiritual gifts and financial resources to further the mission of Jesus through the local church, live a life pleasing to God, and accept the spiritual guidance of the church leadership.
      - 2.1.3.2.3. I will walk in a spirit of Christian love, seeking unity, purity, and peace within this congregation.
  - 2.1.3.3. A majority of the Board of Elders must then approve a motion to receive the individual as a Covenant Partner.
  - 2.1.3.4. Upon completion of the above, the Covenant Partner will be given a certificate of Covenant Partnership.
- 2.2. Covenant Partnership Termination: Covenant Partnership shall be terminated in the following ways
  - 2.2.1. Death,
  - 2.2.2. Acceptance by the Elders of a letter of transfer to another church of like faith,
  - 2.2.3. Acknowledgement by Elders when a Covenant Partner has joined another church,
  - 2.2.4. Motion by the Board of Elders to move the individual to Inactive for failure to live out our Covenant Partner vows. The Elders will make efforts to contact and reengage Covenant Partners of concern. Individuals are encouraged to return and renew their Covenant Partnership through the process above.

- 2.3. Covenant Children: In accordance with our Statement of Faith and the Reformed confessions, we include children in the visible family of God by celebrating God's grace and promises to us and to our children through baptism. In baptism, we renew our vows, trusting God's grace to abound to our children.
- 2.3.1. Requirements of parents: At least one parent must be a Covenant Partner and affirm our baptismal vows.
- 2.3.2. Parental vows: I will instruct my child in the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, pray for him/her, teach him/her to pray, and train him/her up in Christ.
- 2.3.3. Promises of the church: We promise to love, encourage, and support these brothers and sisters by teaching the gospel of God's love, by being an example of Christian faith and character, and by giving the strong support of God's family in fellowship, prayer, and service.
- 2.3.4. The goal: Covenant Children are urged to confess Christ as their Lord and Savior. The church will record and celebrate any such decisions. Individuals will remain Covenant Children until they become Professing Believers or Covenant Partners, or until they are made Inactive by motion of the Elders because they have joined another church, moved away, or have ceased to participate in the church.

#### **ARTICLE IV: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

1. **Regular meetings:** An annual meeting of the Covenant Partners shall be held each year on or near the 2nd Sunday in November, at which time they shall elect Approved Leaders to fill the vacancies created by the expired terms of the Elders and Deacons in the Consistory and to transact any other business as may be properly brought before the meeting.
2. **Special meetings:** Special meetings of the Covenant Partners for any purpose(s) may be called at any time by the Consistory.
3. **Notice of meetings:** Notice of the annual congregational meeting shall be given on at least two Sundays preceding the date of such meeting. Notice for special meetings shall be given on at least one Sunday preceding the date of such meeting.
4. **Eligible voters:** All Covenant Partners of the congregation shall be eligible to vote in all elections and on issues at any meeting of the congregation. Each Covenant Partner has one vote for each motion at congregational meetings.
5. **Quorum:** Any number of Covenant Partners present at any duly called regular or special congregational meeting may transact the business of said meeting, provided a majority of the members of the Consistory are present at said meeting.
6. **Majority rule:** Unless otherwise required or agreed on by the body, any action to be approved at a congregational meeting shall be passed by a majority of the Covenant Partners present or voting by absentee ballot. The absentee ballots only count for the first vote.
7. **Presiding officer:** The Lead Pastor (or in his absence an Alliance pastor, the Vice President, the Assistant Vice President, or a consistory appointed Elder) shall preside at all official congregational meetings.
8. **Procedures:** All meetings shall be facilitated in good order, most often in accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, but less formal methods of decision making may be used.

#### **ARTICLE V: THE CONSISTORY**

1. **Definition:** The Consistory, is the leadership board and is the governing body of a local church. The Vice President, Assistant Vice President, and Chair of the Deacons are the Board of Directors and Trustees of the church and may act only at the direction of the Consistory. The Consistory combines the ministerial functions and governmental powers of the offices of the Minister/Pastor, Elder, and Deacon in the service and supervision of a local church. The whole body acts as the representative of the congregation.
2. **President:** The Lead Pastor is the President of the Consistory and Elders and shall preside at all congregational, Consistory, Executive Team, and Elder meetings.
3. **Members:** Members are the installed Minister/Lead Pastor, the nine Elders, and the nine Deacons currently installed in office. Ministry Staff may be asked to participate in Consistory, Elder, and/or Deacon meetings, but they do not have a vote.
4. **Consistory Nomination and Election Process:**
  - 4.1. **Ballot Committee:** The Consistory will appoint at least six Covenant Partners to the Ballot Committee, along with two alternates to be called upon in the event an absence is unavoidable or that an appointed Covenant Partner ends up on the ballot.
  - 4.2. **Eligible Nominators:** Each Covenant Partner may nominate Covenant Partners for the office of Elder or Deacon.
  - 4.3. **Eligible Candidates:** After a person has served a term of three years, they are ineligible to be elected to Consistory during a period of four years. However, they are eligible for immediate re-election if they complete less than half of an unexpired term. Only one person per household may serve on the Consistory at the same time. Ministry Staff members are ineligible to serve as Elders or Deacons.
  - 4.4. The Office Administrator will prepare a “not eligible” list of nominees, which will be distributed to the congregation two weeks prior to the date nominations will be collected.
  - 4.5. The Ballot Committee will collect and tabulate the nominations immediately following the worship service on the second Sunday of September and deliver this tabulation to the Clerk that same day.
  - 4.6. The Consistory will approve a list of biblically qualified nominees and decide how many nominees should receive nomination letters.
  - 4.7. The Clerk will give the Office Administrator the list of nominees for Elder and Deacon (approximately 25 each) who are to receive a letter, informing them that their name has been received in nomination for that particular office and that they are being considered for that slate. This letter is to be mailed no later than the third Monday of September. A copy of the Leadership Covenant and Statement of Faith must also be sent, along with instructions to communicate to the Clerk or Vice President any concerns with affirming these documents.
  - 4.8. In case one is nominated for both offices, the Elders will designate them to one office, based on their position in the list of top candidates and on the needs of the church. The person would then be 1) advised of the office for which they are primarily considered, and 2) asked if, in the event they cannot serve in that office, they would then be willing to serve in the other office. This would be done with a special paragraph added to the nomination letter or by phone.
  - 4.9. Any nominees seeking to be excused from the ballot must request removal during or prior to a special meeting of the Executive Committee held on the Sunday immediately prior to

the October Elder meeting. Requests made prior to the special meeting should be submitted to the Vice President or Clerk with reasoning for withdrawal.

- 4.10. The Elders will establish a slate at the October Elders' meeting, to be approved by the Consistory at the October Consistory meeting. Nominees must be Covenant Partners, affirm our Statement of Faith, and sign the Leadership Covenant.
- 4.11. The slate shall be published in the bulletin on two Sundays prior to the election.
- 4.12. Elders and Deacons are elected at the annual congregational meeting with a simple majority vote.
- 4.13. Absentee ballots will be permitted subject to the following:
  - 4.13.1. One Elder ballot and one Deacon ballot per signed envelope.
  - 4.13.2. May be turned in at or before the meeting.
  - 4.13.3. Must have the signature of the voter on the outside of the envelope.
  - 4.13.4. Counts on the first ballot only.
  - 4.13.5. To be opened after the vote is taken.
  - 4.13.6. Ballots will be available in the office two weeks before election or one week before a special meeting.
  - 4.13.7. Only Covenant Partners are eligible to vote.
  - 4.13.8. None of the above is to be construed to mean that absentee ballots are to be used simply as a matter of convenience.

**5. Consistory Vacancy Policy:** In the event of the death, retirement, voluntary abdication, or removal of a member of Consistory with six or more months remaining in their term, the Consistory will fill the position in one of the following ways:

- 5.1. The Consistory may appoint and install a member of the greater Consistory to the same office of their previous service until the next annual congregational meeting or for the remainder of the unexpired term.
- 5.2. The Consistory may decide to allow the congregation to elect and install a person from the Covenant Partners of the congregation to serve the remainder of the unexpired term at a special congregational meeting.

**6. Responsibilities of the Consistory**

- 6.1. The Consistory shall regularly consider the health and strength of the ministry of the congregation in accordance with the Bible and in response to the needs of the local community and the world.
- 6.2. The Consistory shall act in all matters calling for judgment and decision, which are not specifically assigned to the Board of Elders or to the Board of Deacons.
- 6.3. Hiring staff:
  - 6.3.1. The Consistory shall provide a Minister/Pastor(s) for the church. It has the authority to call persons to the ministry of the church. The approval and support of our denomination should be sought. The Consistory shall endeavor to learn the mind of the congregation with respect to any person who may be called to the ministry of the church. Their name shall be presented to the church on two successive Sundays, so that opportunity may be afforded for the raising of lawful objections. The judgment of the congregation in such matters shall be considered to be of significant weight, but not binding. The terms of the call to a Minister/Pastor shall be signed by the members of the Consistory. If the call is

- accepted by the person called, the Minister/Pastor shall be installed in the church at a special service of worship, thanksgiving, and commissioning.
- 6.3.2. The Consistory may call one or more Ministers/Pastors in the same manner as described above. When more than one Minister is called to serve, each Minister shall receive a separate call.
  - 6.3.3. The Consistory shall fulfill the provisions of calling a Minister/Pastor in accordance with the regulations stipulated by our denomination.
  - 6.3.4. The Consistory may contract with one or more Ministers/Pastors, Ministry Staff, or Maintenance Staff to serve along with, or in place of, a Minister/Pastor(s) serving under a call. The contract(s) shall follow the guidelines established by our denomination. The Minister/Pastor may be commissioned as a Minister/Pastor under contract, but shall not as a result be a member of the church or the Consistory.
  - 6.4. The Consistory shall not incur any indebtedness unless approved by a predetermined percent of the congregation set by the Consistory.
  - 6.5. The Consistory shall make all decisions in accordance with the Bible.
  - 6.6. The Consistory shall provide direction and organization for the church and oversee the church's ministry. The Consistory may appoint standing or special committees, teams, or task forces as needed, to assist with fulfilling this responsibility.
  - 6.7. The Consistory members shall remember and honor business that is deemed confidential.
  - 6.8. The Consistory members shall never act for the entire Consistory unless authorized to do so.
  - 6.9. Attendance at Consistory meetings, regular worship services, and special services is expected, unless absence is unavoidable.
  - 6.10. The Consistory members shall provide leadership when possible, wherever needed in the church, remembering that people look to them for an example.
  - 6.11. Meetings
    - 6.11.1. Regular Consistory meetings shall be held once per month (except July or August, meaning they choose one month to skip), with the date and time set by the Consistory.
    - 6.11.2. Unless otherwise required or agreed by the body, a majority in attendance shall decide any action.
    - 6.11.3. Special meetings of the Consistory may be called by the President, the Vice President, or by three of the Consistory members. A 24-hour notice shall be given to each Consistory member. At any special meeting, only the business for which the meeting was specifically called may be acted upon, unless  $\frac{2}{3}$  in attendance approve adding new business to the agenda.
    - 6.11.4. All meetings shall be done in good order. Decisions may be reached by consensus or by a majority vote. The President shall cast the deciding vote when necessary, but in these situations, greater consensus should first be prayerfully pursued.
    - 6.11.5. All meetings shall include Scripture and prayer.
    - 6.11.6. A majority of the Consistory, regularly convened, constitutes a quorum.

- 6.11.7. The minutes of the Consistory, maintained by the Clerk of the Consistory, shall be official and authoritative minutes of the church. Once approved, they may not be changed.
- 6.11.8. Waiver of Notice: Attendance without objection at any meeting shall constitute waiver of notice of that meeting.
- 6.11.9. Action Without Meeting: Any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Consistory may be taken without a meeting if written or digital consent is given, stating the action so taken. It shall be entered into the minutes of the next meeting as Action Taken on the given date.
- 6.11.10. Telephone and Video Conferences: A Consistory member may participate in a meeting of the Consistory by phone or a similar communication device and shall be deemed actually present at the meeting.

**7. Accountability of the Consistory:** The Consistory is accountable to itself, the congregation, and the supervising denominational authorities.

**8. Authority of the Consistory**

- 8.1. The Consistory shall have the power and authority to bargain, sell, mortgage, lease or release any real property belonging to the church or held by it, as trustees, and to erect churches, parsonages, and other buildings for the direct and legitimate use of said church.
- 8.2. The Consistory shall have the power and authority to alter and modify the church buildings and the church parsonages as may be deemed advisable.
- 8.3. The Consistory shall have the power and authority to set the salary of its Pastors and Staff.
- 8.4. Only the Consistory shall have the authority to add to or subtract from the bylaws. This can be done by a simple majority vote of the Consistory.

**ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS OF CONSISTORY, ELDERS, AND DEACONS**

**1. Election of officers:**

- 1.1. The Lead Pastor shall be President of the Board of Elders and Consistory.
- 1.2. Other officers are elected for one-year terms, by the Consistory, Elders, and/or Deacons, at its first meeting (in December).
- 1.3. The Board of Elders shall elect a Vice President, an Assistant Vice President, and a Clerk of Elders from its members. These individuals are the nominees for the corresponding offices in the Consistory.
- 1.4. The Board of Deacons shall elect a Chair of Deacons, a Chair(s) of Facilities, and a Clerk of Deacons.
- 1.5. The Board of Deacons shall nominate a General Treasurer and a Benevolent Treasurer to the Consistory.
- 1.6. The Consistory as a whole shall elect a Vice President, an Assistant Vice President, and a Clerk of Consistory from the Board of Elders. They shall elect a General Treasurer and Benevolent Treasurer from the Board of Deacons. All officers may be elected by show of hands or ballot as the individual groups choose.

**2. Responsibilities, Authority, and Accountability of Officers:**



- 2.1. President
  - 2.1.1.1. The President must be, or in process to be, a Minister/Pastor as defined in Article III.1.5.1.2.2.
  - 2.1.2. Responsibilities
    - 2.1.2.1. The Lead Pastor is the President of the Consistory, Executive Team, and Elders and shall preside at all congregational, Consistory, Executive Team, and Elder meetings.
    - 2.1.2.2. The President shall state and explain the business to be addressed, enforce the rules of order, and maintain the general decorum and dignity belonging to the church of Jesus Christ.
    - 2.1.2.3. The Minister shall carry out the duties articulated in their call or contract.
  - 2.1.3. Accountability: The Lead Pastor is hired by and accountable to the Consistory. The Ordination Oversight Teams of our denomination must permit the hire, approve the terms of the call or contract, and approve any dissolution of the call or contract. The Ordination Oversight Teams maintain theological and ethical oversight of the Lead Pastor. The Executive Team shall oversee the ministry, doctrine, and life of the Pastor on behalf of the Consistory and shall share concerns with the Ordination Oversight Team when appropriate. If concerns arise, issues should be addressed as outlined in Matthew 18. If a matter needs to be brought before the Elders or Consistory, an individual from the Network Covenant Keeper Team or Hub shall be present if either party makes a request. Decisions may then be appealed to the Network and Global Covenant Keeper Teams.
  - 2.1.4. Authority: The Lead Pastor oversees the ministry staff and ministry teams, but hiring and firing is at the discretion of the Consistory.
- 2.2. Vice President
  - 2.2.1. Responsibilities
    - 2.2.1.1. If the Lead Pastor or another approved Pastor is unable to preside over a meeting, the Vice President shall carry out the responsibilities of the President.
    - 2.2.1.2. The Vice President shall oversee the ministry staff in the absence of a Lead Pastor.
    - 2.2.1.3. The Vice President shall arrange pulpit supply, as needed, including hospitality, housing, payment, and mileage expenses.
    - 2.2.1.4. The Vice President will appoint a person, as needed, to update the Christian Service Banner and Servicemens' Board.
  - 2.2.2. Accountability: The Vice President is accountable to the Elders.
  - 2.2.3. Authority: The Vice President has the authority to carry out the responsibilities stated above.
- 2.3. Assistant Vice President
  - 2.3.1. Responsibilities: If the Vice President is unable to perform any of his/her duties, the Assistant Vice President shall perform the duties and exercise the power of the Vice President or President.
  - 2.3.2. Accountability: The Assistant Vice President is accountable to the Elders.

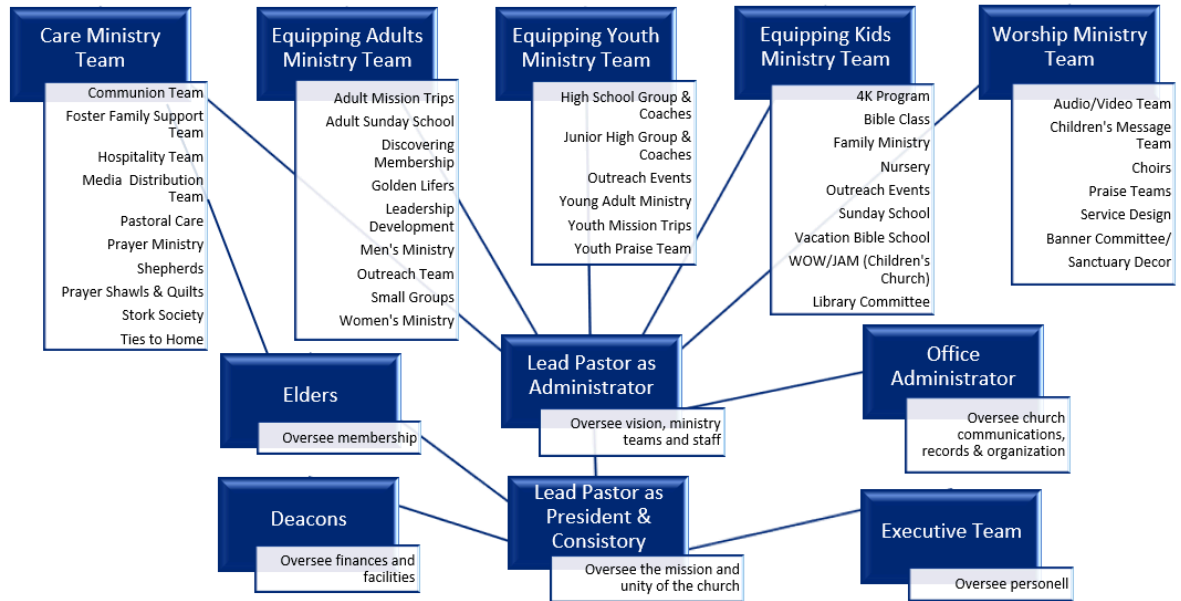
- 2.3.3. Authority: The Assistant Vice President has the authority to carry out the responsibilities stated above.
- 2.4. Chair of Deacons
  - 2.4.1. Responsibilities: The Chair of Deacons shall preside at all Deacon meetings and assure that the responsibilities of the Deacons are being carried out.
  - 2.4.2. Accountability: The Chair of Deacons is accountable to the Consistory.
  - 2.4.3. Authority: The Chair of Deacons has the authority to carry out the responsibilities stated above.
- 2.5. Clerk of Consistory, Elders, and Deacons
  - 2.5.1. Responsibilities:
    - 2.5.1.1. Clerks shall record all votes, decisions, and important discussion points in the minutes. These shall be given to the Office Administrator to be kept on record.
    - 2.5.1.2. Clerks shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings to the members of the board they serve.
    - 2.5.1.3. The Clerk of Consistory is responsible for contacting and recommending three audit committee members to the Consistory for approval.
  - 2.5.2. Accountability: The Clerks are accountable to the board they serve.
  - 2.5.3. Authority: The Clerks have the authority to carry out the responsibilities stated above.
- 2.6. Treasurers
  - 2.6.1. Responsibilities: The Treasurers shall have custody of the funds and securities and shall deposit all monies and other valuable papers in the name and to the credit of the church in such depositories as may be directed by the Consistory.
  - 2.6.2. Accountability: The Treasurers are accountable to the Consistory. All of their procedures shall be subject to the review and correction of the Consistory.
  - 2.6.3. Authority: The Treasurers have the authority to carry out the responsibilities stated above.

**ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES AND TEAMS OF CONSISTORY**

- 1. **Team/Committee Responsibilities:** The duties of each team/committee are partially outlined on these pages. Our desire is not for the team or committee to do everything in a given area, but to see that the mission and vision of the church is being pursued within the specified area. One of our guiding principles is to move decision-making authority closer to each ministry area through appointing leaders who are serving within their God-given giftedness, budgeting according to our vision, and empowering the leaders and teams.
  - 1.1. Teams/Committees will meet as often as necessary to complete their responsibilities.
  - 1.2. In general, decisions should be made by consensus. When a vote is necessary, the majority rules. The team leader shall cast the deciding vote. If there is concern over any decision, recommendations should be sent to the Consistory.
  - 1.3. All teams and committees shall communicate at least monthly in writing with the Consistory regarding general updates, decisions, recommendations, and requests. Teams/Committees are encouraged to share ~~celebrating~~ where they've seen God at work and request prayer, guidance, and/or approval as needed. Minutes and/or reports should

be submitted to the Office Administrator by the first Wednesday of the month with requests highlighted.

- 1.4. The basic structure is outlined in the organizational chart as a guide. This is not intended to separate our ministries, but to improve communication and enable the whole church to work together in accomplishing our mission and vision.



## 2. Executive Committee/Team

- 2.1. Leader: The Lead Pastor shall serve as the President and only votes when the team is split.
- 2.2. Members: The Lead Pastor, Vice President, Assistant Vice President, Clerk, Chair of Deacons, and Treasurer(s)
  - 2.2.1. Family members of Ministry Staff, including spouse, parents, siblings, and in-laws, will not be included in discussions regarding that staff member at the Consistory or Executive Team level.
- 2.3. Responsibilities
  - 2.3.1. Act on behalf of the Consistory when needed between Consistory meetings or in the areas assigned by the Consistory.
  - 2.3.2. Serve as a personnel committee.
    - 2.3.2.1. Meet with each pastor and ministry staff person in April and October.
    - 2.3.2.2. Set and discuss goals for each position and how those goals fit into the vision of the church.
    - 2.3.2.3. Review the past performance of the pastor(s) and staff persons.
    - 2.3.2.4. Recognize superior achievements and extraordinary service.
    - 2.3.2.5. Discuss general concerns.
    - 2.3.2.6. Specifically discuss financial needs, to include salary, housing, transportation reimbursement, insurance, continuing education, and retirement plan, as applicable.
    - 2.3.2.7. Consider financial needs beyond the day-to-day living expenses, such as medical bills, education costs, emergencies, and retirement.

- 2.3.2.8. Discuss other needs, such as family crises, illness, marital stress, depression, habitual sins, and ministerial frustration.
- 2.3.2.9. Discuss areas where the employee struggles with sin.
- 2.3.2.10. Give support and encouragement and offer specific ways to help with any issues above.
- 2.3.2.11. Discuss and facilitate good relationships between ministry staff.
- 2.3.2.12. Act as the communication link between staff and Consistory.
- 2.3.2.13. Present contracts and terms of call to the Consistory for approval after consulting with the employee and agreeing on changes desired by either party. The employee must receive the contract by December 1 and then sign and return it to the Executive Team by December 15, if they intend to remain on staff beyond their current contract.
- 2.3.3. Appointments of Consistory members to teams/committees are made by the Executive Team at the beginning of the year.
- 2.3.4. The Vice President, Clerk, and Chair of Deacons shall be responsible for a review of the Consistory and Lead Pastor at the end of the year.

### **3. Board of Elders:**

- 3.1. Leader: The Lead Pastor shall serve as the President and only votes when the Elders are split.
- 3.2. Members: The installed Elders make up the board. Other staff and Ministry Elders may be invited to participate, but they do not vote.
- 3.3. Purpose: Oversees the doctrine and life of the congregation and fellow leaders, exercise pastoral care with admonition and discipline, and guard the mission, purity and unity of the church.
- 3.4. Responsibilities and Authority
  - 3.4.1. Oversees adherence to and clarifications of our Statement of Faith, considering any questions, concerns, or confusion being raised.
  - 3.4.2. Oversees Covenant Partnership/Membership:
    - 3.4.2.1. Meets with candidates who have completed the Covenant Partnership Class and have agreed to the Covenant Partner Vows.
    - 3.4.2.2. Issues transfers of membership when in order.
    - 3.4.2.3. Each Elder pursues the Covenant Partners on their district list, seeking to understand needs, discover concerns, encourage participation, pray for and with them, communicate with shepherds, and staff and recommend action to the Elder Board.
    - 3.4.2.4. The whole board reviews the Covenant Partners and acts upon recommendations from individual Elders.
  - 3.4.3. Acts on any judicial business coming before it.
  - 3.4.4. Approves individual members for the Approved Leader List, based upon their affirmation of our Statement of Faith, their character, and their active participation. Covenant Partners serving as teachers, coaches, Consistory members, children's message leaders, small group leaders, interns, choir directors, and worship team leaders must be on the Approved Leader List. Elders should address this every spring and when new Covenant Partners join the church. Elders will recommend

members to the list at a regular meeting, send a letter inviting the Covenant Partner to sign the Leadership Covenant of Alto Reformed Church affirming our Statement of Faith, receive the signed covenant, and then place the Covenant Partner on the Approved Leader List. Approved Leaders need to re-sign the Covenant every 5 years. This should be done as a whole church starting in 2025 and every 5 years thereafter.

- 3.4.5. Recommends individuals to the congregation for ordination as Ministry Elders. Ministry Elders are ordained to ministries such as teaching, care, prayer, or church planting for the purpose of recognizing the call, gifting, and Christ-like leadership of the candidate. They do not serve on the Consistory. However, they are part of the greater Consistory. The congregation must affirm the candidates at a congregational meeting.
- 3.4.6. Elders are to serve on the Media Distribution Team.
- 3.4.7. Elders rotate leading devotions and prayer at the regular Consistory and Elder meetings.
- 3.4.8. Elders are asked to serve in offices or on various teams. Positions include: Vice President, Assistant Vice President, Clerk, Worship Ministry Elder, Equipping Adults Ministries Elders, Equipping Youth Ministries Elder, Equipping Children & Families Ministries Elder, Outreach Ministry Elder, and Care Ministry Elder.
- 3.4.9. Oversees Sacraments
  - 3.4.9.1. Approves requests for baptism. One Elder, not necessarily currently installed on the Consistory, assists the Pastor with each baptism service by offering prayer and presenting a certificate of baptism.
  - 3.4.9.2. Provides communion at least four times each year to the congregation and seeks to provide communion privately to those who are unable to attend services. One Minister or Elder may administer the Lord's Supper, but two are preferable.
  - 3.4.9.3. The Care Ministry Elder(s) provide the elements for communion, arrange clean-up, and schedule Elders to serve communion at regular services.
- 3.5. Accountability: The Elders are accountable to one another, the congregation, and our denomination.

#### **4. Board of Deacons**

- 4.1. Leader: The elected Chair of Deacons shall oversee the board.
- 4.2. Members: The installed Deacons make up the board. Other staff may be invited to participate, but they do not vote.
- 4.3. Responsibilities and Authority
  - 4.3.1. The Deacons are to present a report to the Consistory for information regarding routine items and for assistance in decisions, as needed, if items are not routine.
  - 4.3.2. The Deacons shall rotate opening the regular Consistory meetings with prayer.
  - 4.3.3. The Deacons are to serve in offices or on various teams. Positions include: Chair of Deacons, Clerk, General Treasurer, Benevolent Treasurer (Care Ministry and Missionary Support), Worship Ministry Deacon, Equipping Ministries Deacon, Outreach Ministry Deacon, and two Deacons to oversee Facilities.

- 4.3.4. The Deacon board will oversee the following areas, either as a body, through its treasurers, or through committees appointed by the Board of Deacons:
- 4.3.4.1. Finances
- 4.3.4.1.1. Handles offerings and expenses, including reports at monthly Consistory meetings.
  - 4.3.4.1.2. Maintains a strong program of benevolence, recommending to Consistory a regular schedule of offerings.
  - 4.3.4.1.3. Works toward reduction of debts.
  - 4.3.4.1.4. Brings to the attention of the full Consistory areas of financial concern, stewardship needs, etc.
  - 4.3.4.1.5. Maintains careful record of individual contributions in accordance with tax law.
  - 4.3.4.1.6. Oversees the ordering and distributing of offering envelopes and providing of envelopes for new Covenant Partners throughout the year.
  - 4.3.4.1.7. Maintains and reviews an internal budget.
  - 4.3.4.1.8. Supervises an accounts payable clerk, who is appointed by the Consistory at the recommendation of the Deacons.
  - 4.3.4.1.9. They have the authority to disburse up to \$10,000 for non-budgeted expenses and assistance. Anything over this amount needs Consistory discussion.
- 4.3.4.2. Facilities
- 4.3.4.2.1. The entire Board of Deacons shall tour all the church property, including the parsonage(s), annually.
  - 4.3.4.2.2. Arranges both routine and special care of buildings, including parsonage(s).
  - 4.3.4.2.3. Arranges care of grounds, with all seasonal needs.
  - 4.3.4.2.4. Arranges janitorial services and supplies.
  - 4.3.4.2.5. Maintains a good general appearance of the property, including repairs and redecorating.
  - 4.3.4.2.6. Maintains adequate insurance coverage on church property.
  - 4.3.4.2.7. Handles requests for use of church facilities and enters such on the church calendar through the Office Administrator. (See also *Planning Your Wedding at Alto Reformed Church* guide.)
  - 4.3.4.2.8. Evaluates, approves, and arranges for the purchase and maintenance of audio, video, lighting, and staging equipment upon request of the Worship Ministry Team.
- 4.3.4.3. Missionary Support
- 4.3.4.3.1. The Deacons are to select and approve individual missionaries. All missionaries should affirm our Statement of Faith. The Benevolent Treasurer is to budget missionary benevolence funds for annual support of missionaries in the first quarter of the year. Remaining missionary benevolence at the end of the year is to be distributed to missionaries selected by the Deacons.

- 4.3.4.3.2. The Office Administrator is responsible for receiving updates from the missionaries (letters, emails, etc) and making these available to the congregation. The Office Administrator is responsible for coordinating congregational updates during morning church services (a minimum of twice per year). This includes coordination and scheduling of missionary visits.
- 4.3.4.3.3. The Golden Lifers is responsible for coordinating mailings and for direct contact with missionaries at Christmas time.
- 4.3.4.3.4. All recommendations for missionary support should be directed to the Benevolent Treasurer.
- 4.3.5. Accountability: The Deacons are accountable to the Consistory, the congregation, and our denomination.

## **5. Worship Ministry Team**

- 5.1. Purpose: To inspire all people to worship Jesus with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.
- 5.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.
- 5.3. Team: Members will include at least one Elder, one Deacon, the Lead Pastor, one Sound Tech, the Office Administrator, and at least five at-large members. The at-large members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least five people involved in worship ministry.
- 5.4. Length of Service: Consistory members will serve for one year, starting January 1. All other members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.
- 5.5. Responsibilities:
  - 5.5.1. Provides worship services that inspire members and visitors to know Jesus and make Jesus known.
  - 5.5.2. Supervises the praise teams.
    - 5.5.2.1. Praise teams have the responsibility of inviting new members onto their teams, but teams should seek approval from the Worship Ministry Team. Ultimate authority rests with the Elders, if a problem arises.
  - 5.5.3. Supervise the choirs.
  - 5.5.4. Work with praise teams and choirs in the planning of special services.
  - 5.5.5. Schedule special music during the summer months, when the choirs are not active.
  - 5.5.6. Recommend to the Deacons any upgrades and repairs to audio, video, lighting, and staging equipment.
  - 5.5.7. Oversee training and scheduling of audio and video techs.

## **6. Equipping Adults Ministries**

- 6.1. Purpose: To equip adults to live missionally through discipleship, community, leadership development, outreach, and mission experiences.
- 6.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.
- 6.3. Team: Members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least five people involved in adult ministry. One Elder and one Deacon will serve the Equipping Ministries for communication and advisory purposes, attending meetings as requested.

6.4. Length of Service: Consistory members will serve for one year, starting January 1. All other members will serve a minimum of one year, starting July 1.

6.5. Responsibilities: TBD

**7. Equipping Youth Ministries**

7.1. Purpose: To equip youth to live missionally through discipleship, community, leadership development, outreach, and mission experiences.

7.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.

7.3. Team: Members will be the coaches who are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least five people involved in youth ministry. One Elder and one Deacon will serve the Equipping Ministries for communication and advisory purposes, attending meetings as requested.

7.4. Length of Service: Consistory members will serve for one year, starting January 1. All other members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.

7.5. Responsibilities: TBD

**8. Equipping Children & Families Ministries:**

8.1. Purpose: To equip children and families to live missionally through discipleship, community, leadership development, outreach, and mission experiences.

8.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.

8.3. Team: Members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least five people involved in children's or family ministry. One Elder and one Deacon will serve the Equipping Ministries for communication and advisory purposes, attending meetings as requested.

8.4. Length of Service: Consistory members will serve for one year, starting January 1. All other members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting January 1.

8.5. Responsibilities: TBD

**9. Care Ministries**

9.1. Purpose: To effectively care for all members and for the community through consistent communication, follow-up, prayer, shepherding, pastoral care, and assistance.

9.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.

9.3. Team: Members will include at least one Elder, the Benevolent Treasurer, all Pastors, and at least three additional members. The additional members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will be involved in care ministry.

9.4. Length of Service: Consistory members will serve for one year, starting January 1. All other members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.

9.5. Responsibilities: TBD

**10. Sub-Committees of Ministries**

**10.1. Outreach Team**

10.1.1. Purpose: To mobilize the congregation to bless, invite, and evangelize to the community.

10.1.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.

10.1.3. Team: Members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least five people.

10.1.4. Length of Service: Members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.

10.1.5. Responsibilities:



- 10.1.5.1. Arrange any special evangelistic programs or series of meetings.
  - 10.1.5.2. Arrange any program of calling or outreach into the community.
  - 10.1.5.3. Work toward assimilation of new members into the full life of the congregation.
- 10.2. Foster Family Support Team
- 10.2.1. Purpose: To mobilize the congregation to encourage and help foster families and children thrive.
  - 10.2.2. Leader: The Team Leader (Welcomed Advocate) will be appointed from the Consistory.
  - 10.2.3. Team: Members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include an additional Welcomed Advocate and all Care Community Team Leaders.
  - 10.2.4. Length of Service: Members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.
  - 10.2.5. Responsibilities: Provide regular and ongoing practical help to foster families and their children.
- 10.3. Hospitality Team
- 10.3.1. Purpose: To mobilize the congregation to provide a great first impression on visitors, an incredibly welcoming experience in fellowship for all attendees, and to connect them in the best way for them to grow and serve so that they can't wait to come back.
  - 10.3.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.
  - 10.3.3. Team: Members are appointed by the Team Leader from the Approved Leader List and will include at least two more people. Many people will be invited to carry out the vision.
  - 10.3.4. Length of Service: Members will serve for a minimum of one year, starting July 1.
  - 10.3.5. Responsibilities:
    - 10.3.5.1. Provide an after-church coffee hour, continually seeking to improve fellowship offered and connections.
    - 10.3.5.2. Offer a welcome so people can't wait to tell their friends about the great experience they had at our church.
    - 10.3.5.3. Engage attendees in groups and ministries where they can grow, serve, and connect.
- 10.4. Women's Ministry Team
- 10.4.1. Purpose: To affirm the salvation message of Jesus Christ, the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, and the importance of prayer. Through these avenues, we will care for one another, our body of believers, our community, and our world.
  - 10.4.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.
  - 10.4.3. Team: A minimum of six women will serve on the coordinating board. The wife of the pastor(s) may be on the board, if they desire. Ideally, two board members will each represent a specific age group: 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and above.
  - 10.4.4. Length of Service: Each board member will commit to a one year term, starting July 1 (one year minimum, four years maximum).
  - 10.4.5. Responsibilities and Authority:

- 10.4.5.1. Come together to discuss, recruit, and approve replacements. Committee members must give notice by January 1 if they will not continue the following year, in order to give the committee six months to find a replacement.
- 10.4.5.2. Members will rotate providing an opening devotion and prayer at the beginning of each meeting.
- 10.4.5.3. Members are under the authority of the Equipping Adults Pastor.
- 10.4.5.4. Plan and oversee events that will provide opportunities for women to grow spiritually, enjoy fellowship, reach out to others, and serve the community.
- 10.4.5.5. Keep notes of all meetings, report monthly to the Consistory, provide monthly articles/updates for the AMEN, and collaborate with the Office Administrator to ensure all information has been distributed to the congregation.
- 10.4.5.6. Verify that all events are Christ-centered, that the gospel is shared, and that spiritual growth is encouraged with the women of the church.
- 10.4.5.7. Director:
  - 10.4.5.7.1. Responsible for training their replacement prior to the end of their term.
  - 10.4.5.7.2. Preside over, create an agenda for, and schedule meetings. The committee will meet monthly, unless deemed unnecessary by the committee.
  - 10.4.5.7.3. Exhibit Godly character and consult with leadership of the church whenever issues arise.
- 10.4.5.8. Secretary:
  - 10.4.5.8.1. Record minutes of the meetings, and highlight requests for checks/expenses from the Deacons.
  - 10.4.5.8.2. Submit a copy of the minutes to the Director to be shared with the board at least one week prior to the monthly meeting.
  - 10.4.5.8.3. Submit a brief written summary and/or minutes of the Women's Ministry meeting to the Office Administrator by the first Thursday of each month to be shared with Consistory.
- 10.4.5.9. Treasurer:
  - 10.4.5.9.1. Be a liaison with the Deacons.
  - 10.4.5.9.2. Keep a record of expenditures and reconcile the budget.
  - 10.4.5.9.3. Bring a proposed budget each July to the committee for revision, approval, and submission to the Deacons.
  - 10.4.5.9.4. Present requests to the Deacons that would be above and beyond budgetary needs.
- 10.5. Men's Ministry Team
  - 10.5.1. Purpose: Ephesians 4:12-13 To equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
  - 10.5.2. Leader: The Team Leader will be appointed by the Consistory.

- 10.5.3. Team: A minimum of six men will serve on the coordinating board. The Pastor(s) may be on the board, if they desire. Ideally, board members will represent a broad range of age groups: 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s, and above.
- 10.5.4. Length of Service: Each board member will commit to a one year term starting July 1 (one year minimum, four years maximum). The Men's Ministry Committee is responsible for coming together to discuss, recruit, and approve replacements. Committee members must give notice by January 1 if they will not continue the following year, in order to give the committee six months to find a replacement.
- 10.5.5. Responsibilities and Authority:
  - 10.5.5.1. Members will rotate providing an opening devotion and prayer at the beginning of each meeting.
  - 10.5.5.2. Members are under the authority of the Equipping Adults Pastor.
  - 10.5.5.3. Will plan and oversee events that will provide opportunities for men to grow spiritually, enjoy fellowship, reach out to others, and serve the community.
  - 10.5.5.4. Keep notes of all meetings, report to the Consistory, and collaborate with the Office Administrator to ensure all information has been distributed to the congregation.
  - 10.5.5.5. Verify that all events are Christ-centered, that the gospel is shared with the men of the church, and that spiritual growth is encouraged.
  - 10.5.5.6. Director:
    - 10.5.5.6.1. Responsible for training their replacement prior to the end of their term.
    - 10.5.5.6.2. Preside over, create an agenda for, and schedule meetings. The committee will meet quarterly, unless deemed otherwise necessary by the committee.
    - 10.5.5.6.3. Exhibit Godly character and consult with leadership of the church whenever issues arise.
  - 10.5.5.7. Secretary:
    - 10.5.5.7.1. Record minutes of the meetings and highlight requests for checks/expenses from the Deacons.
    - 10.5.5.7.2. Submit a copy of the minutes to the Director to be shared with the board at least one week prior to the monthly meeting.
    - 10.5.5.7.3. Submit a brief written summary and/or minutes of the Men's Ministry meeting to the Office Administrator by the first Thursday of each month to be shared with Consistory.
  - 10.5.5.8. Treasurer:
    - 10.5.5.8.1. Be a liaison with the Deacons.
    - 10.5.5.8.2. Keep a record of expenditures and reconcile the budget.
    - 10.5.5.8.3. Bring a proposed budget each July to the committee for revision, approval, and submission to the Deacons.
    - 10.5.5.8.4. Present requests to the Deacons that would be above and beyond budgetary needs.

## **ARTICLE VIII: OTHER POLICIES**

### **1. Financial Matters**

- 1.1. All offerings for any outside group must go through the deacons.
- 1.2. If an outside group/person comes in and conducts a service or leads a special program, the deacons have the option of taking an additional offering on their behalf.
- 1.3. When a group or individual gives a Sunday program, materials may be displayed and orders taken, but no money shall change hands on Sunday. Each group or individual shall be totally responsible for the collection of payment for the orders.
- 1.4. The church shall pay the summer registration fee for a Consistory approved camp for Covenant Partner families. The transportation fee shall be the responsibility of the individual attending.
- 1.5. All church treasurers shall have their records audited each year by the Consistory-appointed auditors. A report of the audit shall be made to the Consistory.
- 1.6. The church has set the following guidelines for an Adoption Assistance Program:
  - 1.6.1. The prospective parents must be Covenant Partners of Alto Reformed Church, in good standing, for a minimum of three years.
  - 1.6.2. Each case will be considered on an individual basis by the Board of Deacons and Consistory.
  - 1.6.3. Will be limited to married couples, consisting of husband and wife.
  - 1.6.4. All information will be kept confidential within the Consistory. The dollar amount will be reported only as local benevolence in the annual financial statement.
  - 1.6.5. Funds will be distributed from the benevolent fund, as needed.
  - 1.6.6. The dollar amount and guidelines will be reviewed by the Deacons.
- 1.7. The church has set the following guidelines for financially supporting students preparing for ministry/ordination:
  - 1.7.1. Each recipient must be a Covenant Partner of Alto Reformed Church and affirm our Statement of Faith.
  - 1.7.2. Each request must be approved by the Elders and will then be reviewed by the Deacons, who will make a recommendation to the Consistory to determine the grant amount for each year.
  - 1.7.3. There must be a sincere financial need to qualify for assistance.
  - 1.7.4. Grants will be paid directly to the education provider(s).

### **2. Offerings and Gifts**

- 2.1. Regarding gifts from individual Covenant Partners of the Alto Reformed Church to students and various causes: In previous years, personal contributions to various causes have been channeled through the church treasury. In 1977, the question was raised regarding the legality of this procedure. The Consistory obtained legal opinion and presents the following as a policy statement for such contributions in the future:
  - 2.1.1. We want to be sure that what we are doing is morally and ethically right.
  - 2.1.2. We cannot lend the church's name or support to that which is a personal obligation, a personal payment, or an otherwise non-deductible gift.
  - 2.1.3. Any contribution offered for causes of personal interest must be cleared by the Consistory before being disbursed.

### **3. Memorials**

- 3.1. Gifts of memorial monies will be received and deposited in a special Memorial Fund, to be maintained by the General Treasurer.
- 3.2. Such gifts will be recorded in a Memorial Gift Record Book, which shall be available for public viewing in the church building.
- 3.3. All memorial objects will be purchased from this Memorial Fund by Consistory, as the fund reaches adequate levels; thus, such objects would not be a memorial to one individual, but a result of the total Memorial Fund.
- 3.4. Suggestions for memorial purchases may be submitted, in writing, to the Consistory, for their consideration: however, it is understood that the Consistory shall make the final judgment of the need and advisability of a proposed purchase.
- 3.5. Items so purchased shall then be designated in the Memorial Gift Record Book.
- 3.6. Memorial contributions may be offered to the Memorial Fund through any Consistory member.

#### **4. Use of Church Facilities and Equipment**

- 4.1. Any church organization has the right to use all church facilities, but must leave them in the condition in which they found them.
- 4.2. Any organizations using tables shall be responsible for setting up and taking down the tables.
- 4.3. Reservations for use of the church basement and/or kitchen are to be made with the Office Administrator, who will confirm this date with the Chair of Deacons and Custodian.
- 4.4. Any non-member(s) wishing to use church facilities for meetings must contact the Office Administrator for Consistory approval. The Office Administrator will confirm this date with the Custodian.
- 4.5. Kitchen equipment is not to be loaned for public meetings.
- 4.6. Private use of kitchen equipment must be cleared with the Office Administrator and signed out on the sheet in the kitchen.
- 4.7. The Chair of Deacons must be contacted regarding the use of tables and chairs.
- 4.8. There is to be no smoking in any part of the building and no consumption of alcoholic beverages or controlled substances in any place on church property at any time.
- 4.9. Audio/visual equipment may not be used for personal purposes off of the church property.
- 4.10. In the case of a natural disaster, the church will be available to help if the community and/or Saputo employees need a place to go. The church basement and parsonage basement will be made available as a shelter in the event of a tornado during the Alto Fair.

#### **5. Weddings**

- 5.1. Permission to use church facilities for the purpose of a wedding hinges on the following policy items:
  - 5.1.1. Weddings performed at Alto Reformed Church are normally to be performed by a Pastor of this church.
  - 5.1.2. Exceptions, such as invitation to clergy who are members of the family of either party to the marriage, are to be cleared with the Pastor(s) and the Elders before the church can be reserved. All weddings must be performed by professionally ordained Christian pastors, at the discretion of the Elders. All pastoral officiants must affirm our Statement of Faith.

- 5.1.3. Guests invited to assist in officiating are also to be approved by the Pastor and Elders.
- 5.2. Any church wedding date is to be cleared with the Chair of Deacons for inclusion on the church calendar, only after the Pastor(s) have been contacted.
- 5.3. Fees are set forth in the *Planning Your Wedding at Alto Reformed Church* guide.
- 5.4. When tables are to be used for any reception, the following procedure is to be followed:
  - 5.4.1. The party having the reception is responsible to set up tables for the group's use.
  - 5.4.2. Following the reception, the same party is responsible to take tables down, as they were before being set.
  - 5.4.3. Chairs need not be reset, as the floor will be cleaned by the Custodian. Any exceptions to this procedure should be cleared with the Custodian.
- 5.5. All weddings and receptions held on Saturday are to be completed by 6:00pm.
- 5.6. No same sex marriages will be allowed on church property.
- 5.7. All couples being married must complete at least four sessions of premarital coaching and be approved for marriage by our Pastor(s) and Elders, in accordance with the *Planning Your Wedding at Alto Reformed Church* guide.
- 5.8. A Bible and card of congratulations will be sent to baptized members, who we are aware of, that choose to get married outside of the church.

**6. Attendance Agreement Policy for Those Convicted of Sexual Offenses**

- 6.1. Our desire is for Alto Reformed Church (ARC) to be a safe place for everyone. In order to do so, our leaders believe it is necessary to adopt an official policy regarding those who are convicted as sex offenders (henceforth, referred to simply as "offenders") who desire to attend our services or join our church.
- 6.2. Definition of Terms: In the following statement of conditions, these terms shall have the assigned meanings:
  - 6.2.1. Service(s): Any gathered event held at Alto Reformed Church's facility/property.
  - 6.2.2. Activities: Small groups, service events, retreats, conferences, or any other function sponsored by Alto Reformed Church, regardless of the event location.
  - 6.2.3. Supervisor: A member of the Elder Board or a Pastor at the ARC designated to oversee the fulfillment of this contract with a given offender in fellowship with Alto Reformed Church.
  - 6.2.4. Chaperone(s): An approved delegate of the Supervisor who monitors the offender while attending an ARC service and/or activity. This person(s) must be the same gender as the sex offender and on the Approved Leader List. The offender must use unisex restrooms.
  - 6.2.5. Minor: Any person under the age of 18 years old.
- 6.3. Policies
  - 6.3.1. Any offender must self-disclose his or her status as an offender to a member of the Consistory or Staff prior to attending any services or activities at Alto Reformed Church. Whether through disclosure or discovery, as soon as the offender is realized, the protocols of this policy will be expected to be honored or the offender may not attend any ARC services or activities.

- 6.3.2. The Consistory and Staff must both be made aware of the offender. The Staff will then notify the church's insurance carrier and put into place the insurance-required procedures.
- 6.3.3. The Consistory or Staff will contact the offender's parole officer and/or counselor, if they have one, for the purpose of gathering information to be able to best keep the congregation safe and minister to the offender.
- 6.3.4. Offenders may not attend any ARC services and/or activities until signing the *Attendance Contract for Offenders*.
- 6.3.5. Offenders are prohibited from attending any ARC services and/or activities under any of the following circumstances:
  - 6.3.5.1. If any victim of the offender is a member of Alto Reformed Church or known to regularly attend.
  - 6.3.5.2. If the offender has a history of not following established contract agreements at other churches.
  - 6.3.5.3. If the offender does not agree to or comply with the conditions for fellowship at Alto Reformed Church.
- 6.3.6. Offenders must attend ARC services and/or activities with the chaperone, and those services must be predetermined. That chaperone must be approved by the Consistory. If the approved chaperone(s) is/are unavailable, the offender may not attend that service/activity.
- 6.3.7. Offenders are prohibited from volunteering in any ministries that directly involve minors, including nursery, children's message, Sonshine Singers, Bible Class, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, youth group, etc.
- 6.3.8. The congregation of the Alto Reformed Church must be notified that an offender is attending our church after the offender has signed the Attendance Agreement for Sex Offenders and the Attendance Agreement Policy for Those Convicted of Sexual Offences. The policy will be made available for the congregation's viewing. The offender's name is not to be released, unless the insurance carrier requires it.

**ARTICLE IX: INDEMNIFICATION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, EMPLOYEES, AND AGENTS**

**1. Third Party Actions**

- 1.1. This corporation has the power to indemnify a person who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to be threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal (other than an action by or in the right of this corporation) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Trustee, employee or agent of this corporation, or is or was serving at the request of this corporation as a Trustee, employee, or agent of another foreign or domestic business corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, whether for profit or not for profit, against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgements, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by that person in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding if that person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interests of of this corporation or its members, and with respect to a

criminal action or proceeding, that person had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct was unlawful. The termination of an action, suit or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interests of this corporation or its members and, with respect to a criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that the person's conduct was unlawful.

## **2. Actions in the Right of This Corporation**

- 2.1. This corporation has the power to indemnify a person who was or is a party to, or is threatened to be made a party to, a threatened, pending, or completed action or suit by or in the right of this corporation to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Trustee, employee or agent of this corporation as a Trustee, partner, employee or agent of another foreign or domestic corporation, business corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise, whether for profit or not, against expenses (including actual and reasonable attorney's fees) and amounts paid in settlement incurred by that person in connection with the action or suit if that person acted in good faith and in a manner reasonably believed by that person to be in or not opposed to the best interest of this corporation or its members. However, no indemnification shall be made for a claim, issue, or matter in which such person shall have been found to be liable to the corporation unless and only to the extent that the court in which such action or suit was brought has determined upon application that, despite the adjudication of liability, but in view of all circumstances of the case, that person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnification for the expenses which the court considers proper.
  - 2.1.1. Incurred by that person in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding, as well as in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding brought to enforce the mandatory indemnification provided in this subsection.
  - 2.1.2. An indemnification under section 1 or section 2 of this Article IX, unless ordered by a court, shall be made by this corporation only as authorized in a specific case upon a determination that indemnification of the Trustee, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because that person has met the applicable standard of conduct as set forth in either section 1 or section 2. That determination shall be made in any of the following ways:
    - 2.1.2.1. A majority vote of a quorum of the Board of Directors who were not parties to the action, suit, or proceeding.
    - 2.1.2.2. If that quorum is not obtainable, then by a majority vote of a Committee of the Board of Directors who were not parties to the action, suit, or proceeding. The committee shall consist of not less than two disinterested persons belonging to the Board of Directors.
    - 2.1.2.3. By independent legal counsel in a written opinion.
    - 2.1.2.4. By the members.
  - 2.1.3. If a person is entitled to indemnification under section 1 or section 2 of this Article IX for a portion of expenses, including attorney fees, judgments, penalties, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, but not for the total amount thereof, the



corporation may indemnify the person for the portion of the expenses, judgments, penalties, fines, or amounts paid in settlement for which the person is entitled to be indemnified.

**3. Expense Advances**

- 3.1. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit, or proceeding described in section 1 or section 2 of this Article IX may be paid by this corporation in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Trustee/Board of Directors, employee, or agent to repay the expenses if it is ultimately determined that the person is not entitled to be indemnified by this corporation. The undertaking shall be by unlimited general obligation of the person on whose behalf advances are made but need not be secured. The indemnification provisions of Sections 1 through 3 of this Article IX shall continue as to a person who ceases to be a Trustee, employee, or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

**Certificate:**

I, Kevin Van Wyk, Incorporator of Alto Reformed Church, certify that these bylaws were adopted as the Bylaws of Alto Reformed Church on \_\_\_\_\_.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Incorporator: \_\_\_\_\_