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## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The First Community Church had its inception in 1921 when Charles F. Miller of Basil began holding services on park benches in the rear of the Lake Breeze Hotel. The Church continued in a cottage on Mill Street called "Liberty Hall" until a successful building campaign resulted in the erection of the Miller Church in 1923.

For over 24 years Rev. Charles Miller pastored the little Church on Picnic Point and, in 1947, upon his death, "Miller Church" closed its doors.

The Church remained closed for six weeks until interested Christians, with the assistance of ministers from the First Community Church in Columbus, formed a constitution and changed the name to the "Miller Memorial Community Church" affiliated with the International Council of Community Churches of Columbus, Ohio.

In August 1947, Rev. Charles Alspach of Canal Winchester was engaged as Pastor and he served faithfully until April 19, 1953.

Continuing the progress of Miller Memorial Community Church, on April 26, 1953 Howard A. Meacham was engaged as Pastor and the need for a larger Church became evident. In 1953 the Church purchased two acres of land on Route 79 anticipating the future needs of the congregation. At a Special Congregational Meeting April 13, 1958, the new Church was voted in and ground breaking took place July 27, 1958. The first service in the new Church took place on Good Friday, March 27, 1959.

The focal point in the beautiful Church is the stained glass window that surmounts the chancel, a gift created by Ludwig von Gerichten of Munich, Germany.

The following year, the congregation voted to erect a four bedroom parsonage adjoining the Church. In 1961, Dr. Clyde Reed donated the Fellowship Center in memory of his wife, Mamie, which is used by all organizations. In 1969, the Bell Tower holding the original bell from the Picnic Point Church was erected in memory of Beth Braig.

Rev. Meacham retained leadership until September 1969 when Rev. Jack Swick became the Pastor and served until June 1974.

Rev. Edwin Baldwin was called as Pastor in 1974 and served for 15 years. During the summer of 1989, Rev. Baldwin announced his retirement from the pulpit, surprising many in attendance.

Rev. Arnold Ettenhofer, a retired Methodist minister, provided Pastoral Care on an interim basis while a nationwide search was conducted.

Following a search that extended for most of the next 12 months, Rev. Kevin Roach became full-time Pastor in July 1990. Rev. Roach served the Church for the next 2 ½ years, through December 1992.

In January 1993, Rev. Kevin Blade was appointed Associate Pastor to serve the Church's needs while a Pastoral search was conducted.

In August 1993, following a search that drew applications from across the nation, Rev. David Moody became the 7<sup>th</sup> full-time minister in the 70-plus year history of First Community Church.

The Church broke ground for construction of a new fellowship hall on Palm Sunday, April 5, 1998. The addition was constructed entirely through the efforts and donations of time and resources of the membership. A service dedicating the new hall, officially named Koinonia Hall, was held in conjunction with a Thanksgiving Dinner on November 18, 2001.

### **Preamble**

The membership of the First Community Church of Buckeye Lake adopt the constitution and bylaws, herein revised, at the Annual Congregational Meeting on October 9, 2005. The revised constitution and bylaws shall serve as the basis for local governance of this congregation.

### **Name**

Our Church shall be called the First Community Church of Buckeye Lake.

**Article I.**

**MEMBERSHIP**

A. Qualifications for Membership

Any person may become a member of the First Community Church who accepts the following covenant:

“I will endeavor to practice within the fellowship of my Church, and in every relationship of life, the two commandments which Jesus called the greatest, namely:

‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind;’ and

‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

B. Reception of Members

Members may be received into the Church membership by confession of faith or by letter of

B. Reception of Members (continued)

transfer. A letter of transfer will be accepted from any Christian Church.

Membership classes shall be offered to inform prospective members, who shall be not less than thirteen years of age, concerning the government and policy of the Church, the expectations of membership, and their opportunity for service.

The reception of members shall take place at a public worship service.

Children of families received into membership, but not yet thirteen years of age, shall be listed as provisional members. When a person thirteen years of age or older attends the membership classes and accepts the covenant and vows of membership they shall receive voting privileges. All adult members of the Church shall be listed in the permanent record book according to the date of their reception.

### C. Rights of Members

All members may participate in the worship, teaching and fellowship of the Church. Members not less than thirteen years of age may vote on all matters pertaining to the life of the Church except when prohibited by State law. Members not less than eighteen years of age may hold any office elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

### D. Duties of Members

- 1 To fulfill their covenant with God through Jesus Christ.
- 2 To attend the services of the Church.
- 3 To give regularly toward the support of the Church.
- 4 To share their talents in the ministry of the Church.
- 5 To cooperate with other Christian Churches.

### E. Transfer of Membership

Any member, on request, may receive a letter

E. Transfer of Membership (continued)

of transfer or certificate of good standing to any other Christian Church. Any member moving from the community shall be encouraged to attend and support the Church of their choice.

**Article II.**

**ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

A. Procedure

The Annual Congregational Meeting shall consist of the members of the Church and shall be conducted in October each year. Public announcement of the meeting shall be made at the Sunday School and worship services on two Sundays preceding the meeting. The president of the Board of Trustees shall preside and the secretary of the Board shall record the minutes.

A. Procedure (continued)

Special Congregational Meetings may be called by the minister or the president of the Board of Trustees.

Only members of the Church may vote. The voting age shall be thirteen and over, except on legal decisions when the corporation laws require a limitation of eighteen years of age. No person shall hold more than two elective offices as elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting. Unless specified, a majority vote shall be sufficient to transact any item of business. In case any elective office is vacated during the year, the office shall be filled by the Board of Trustees upon the recommendation of the Nomination Committee.

B. Responsibilities

At the Annual Congregational Meeting the members in attendance shall authorize all buying, selling, mortgaging or transferring of Church property in excess of \$1,500 by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

B. Responsibilities (continued)

In an emergency or other critical situation, as determined by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Trustees, and when acting in the interests of health, compliance with laws, and other matters critical to the safety of the Church and congregation, the Board of Trustees are compelled to act decisively, the \$1,500 provision shall be waived. The Board of Trustees shall make a report to the congregation detailing any such actions at a Special Congregational Meeting called according to the provisions of these bylaws.

The membership in attendance shall:

- 1 Consider and approve, as appropriate, the annual budget submitted by the Board of Trustees;
- 2 Approve the program, teachers and budget submitted by the Board of Trustees; and
- 3 Elect from a ballot submitted by the Nomination Committee and approved at the Annual Congregational Meeting the Trustees, the Deacons, the Board of Women, the Sunday School Superintendent, the Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, the Historian, the Home

B. Responsibilities (continued)

Missions, Missionary, and Music Committees.

In the event of a tie vote, those counting the ballots and the president of the Board of Trustees shall cast a supplemental vote in order to break the tie.

Absentee ballots may be supplied only to members who are shut-ins or to those members for whom unavoidable, extenuating circumstances prevent them from being in attendance at the Annual or Special Congregational Meeting.

Those who are called to the Ministry and to office in the Church are to lead a life of obedience to scripture and in conformity to the standards of the Church. Among those standards is the requirement to live in either fidelity within the covenant of marriage of a man and woman or chastity in singleness. Persons refusing to repent of any self-acknowledged practice which scripture calls sin shall not be installed as an officer or Minister of the Church.

The membership in attendance shall:

- 1 Ratify, by two-thirds vote of the members present, any amendments or changes in the constitution and bylaws of the Church;
- 2 Be presented with reports concerning the work, finances and future programming from the president, the financial clerk, and the treasurer of the Board of Trustees, the head deacon of the Board of Deacons, the president and treasurer of the Board of Women, the Sunday School Superintendent, and the Audit, Home Missions, Missionary, and Music Committees, the

B. Responsibilities (continued)

presidents and treasurers of the Choir, Bible Class, Ladies Guild, Men's Club, Willing Workers Class, Promise Keepers, Ladies Discipleship, Youth Fellowship, and any other committees or fellowships created;

- 1 Take action on any reports which involve the programming or financing for the Church; and
- 2 Transact any business they deem necessary for the proper function of the Church.

**Article III.**

**BOARDS**

A. Board of Trustees

1. Procedure

The Board of Trustees (the Board) shall consist of nine members of the Church. Three members are to

1. Procedure (continued)

be elected each year at the Annual Congregational Meeting for a term of three years. The term of office shall be limited to two consecutive terms or six consecutive years.

The Board shall organize at the first monthly meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting and elect from their membership a president and vice president, and shall appoint a treasurer, secretary and financial clerk, all of whom shall be members of the Church.

The Board shall meet monthly in open session following Robert's Rules of Order. Their vote, affirmative, negative, or abstain shall be recorded if the vote is not unanimous.

Absences from three consecutive stated meetings shall constitute a voluntary resignation unless reviewed by the Board and absence is found unavoidable.

The Board shall have five Trustees present to constitute a quorum.

## 2. Responsibilities

The Board shall:

- 1 Represent the membership of the Church by managing the affairs of the Church in conformity with the Constitution and Bylaws of First Community Church, and the laws of the State of Ohio;
- 2 Be custodian of the Constitution and Bylaws, which shall be kept in the lock box at the bank;
- 3 Hold in trust the property and general funds of the Church;
- 4 Buy, sell and mortgage or transfer any property in excess of \$1,500 with a two-thirds vote of the congregation authorizing such action. In an emergency or other critical situation as determined by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Trustees and, when acting in the interests of health, compliance with laws, and other matters critical to the safety of the Church and congregation, the Board of Trustees are compelled to act decisively, the \$1,500 provision shall be waived. The Board of Trustees shall make a report to the congregation detailing any such actions at a Special Congregational Meeting

## 2. Responsibilities (continued)

called according to the provisions of these bylaws;

- 1 Keep the buildings, the furnishings and the equipment in good repair and safely insured against loss;
- 2 Consider permission for the buildings to be used by groups other than those of the Church;
- 3 Provide the means of raising funds for the Church, approve all disbursements and authorize payment of all bills from the general fund;
- 4 Submit a budget to the Annual Congregational Meeting for approval;
- 5 Appoint, upon recommendation of the Nomination Committee, a member of the Church to fill the unexpired term upon the resignation or removal of any officer elected by the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- 6 Appoint a pulpit committee to seek a minister (when a vacancy occurs);

## 2. Responsibilities (continued)

- 1 Present a written contract to the minister which shall be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the congregation present at the Annual or Special Congregational Meeting;
- 2 Notify the minister when a meeting of the Board of Trustees is in closed session; and
- 3 Arrange for flowers to be sent on behalf of the Church for funerals and other occasions the Board deems necessary.

## 3. Duties of the Board of Trustees Officers

### The President

The president shall:

- 1 Preside at the Congregational Meetings and at all meetings of the Board of Trustees;
- 2 Appoint a Financial Clerk and a chairperson of the Finance Committee at the first meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- 3 Appoint an Audit Committee; and

The President (continued)

- 1 Submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Vice-President

The vice-president shall preside and assume the president's responsibilities in the president's absence.

The Secretary

The secretary shall keep an accurate record of all Board proceedings and record the minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Financial Clerk

The financial clerk shall:

- 2 receive all collections and deposit them weekly in the name of the Church;
- 3 Keep a record of all gifts received by envelope;

The Financial Clerk (continued)

- 1 Distribute an annual record to each envelope contributor; and
- 2 Shall submit a monthly report to the Board of Trustees and a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

The Treasurer

The treasurer shall:

- 1 Pay all bills and keep an accurate record of such expenditures;
- 2 Report monthly to the Board of Trustees and at the Annual Congregational Meeting; and
- 3 Make his books accessible to the Board of Trustees and the Audit Committee.

B. The Board of Deacons

1. Procedures

The Board of Deacons shall consist of nine

## 1. Procedures (continued)

male members of the Church. Three members shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting each year for a term of three years. The term of office shall be limited to two consecutive terms or six consecutive years.

The Board of Deacons shall:

- 1 Meet and organize in the month following the Annual Congregational Meeting. They shall elect a head deacon, an assistant and a secretary for the term of one year; and
- 2 Meet quarterly to review its work and to transact its business. A special meeting may be called at the request of the minister or head deacon.

## 2. Responsibilities

The Board of Deacons shall:

- 1 Welcome, distribute bulletins and seat the worshippers;
- 2 See to the comfort of the congregation;
- 3 Register the attendance;
- 4 Receive and count the offering;

## 2. Responsibilities (continued)

- 1 Assist in the services of baptism and Holy Communion;
- 2 Assist in conducting worship; and
- 3 Close the Church after the service.

## C. Board of Women

### 1. Procedures

The Board of Women shall consist of nine female members of the Church. Three members shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting each year for a term of three years. The term of office shall be limited to two consecutive terms or six consecutive years. The Board of Women shall:

- Meet and organize the month following the Annual Congregational Meeting. They shall elect a president, vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer;
- Shall meet monthly to review its work and to transact its business. A special meeting may be called at the request of the minister or the president;

## 2. Responsibilities

- 1 Prepare the Church for baptisms;
- 2 Prepare the elements and arrange the table for Holy Communion;
- 3 Prepare the Church for weddings and serve the reception when the married couple so desires;
- 4 Change and care for the paraments and symbols on the altar and pulpit;
- 5 Arrange for flowers to be used during worship services;
- 6 Send cards to the visitors and the ill;
- 7 Recruit door greeters and provide greeters with name tags;
- 8 Recruit sponsors for the Church bulletin; and
- 9 Serve refreshments when requested by the minister.

## D. Board of Education

### 1. Procedures

The Board of Education shall consist of the Sunday School Superintendent, Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, the secretary and treasurer of the Sunday School, the Sunday School teachers, the librarian, the children's director, the youth advisor, and the president of the Youth Fellowship. These persons shall be members of the Church.

The Board shall organize at the first meeting following the Annual Congregational Meeting. They shall elect a secretary, treasurer and librarian.

The Board shall meet monthly to transact their business. The Sunday School Superintendent shall preside at the meeting. A special meeting may be called by the minister or the superintendent.

## 2. Responsibilities

The Board of Education shall:

- Plan, promote and supervise the entire program of education among children, youths and adults;
- Establish and conduct a teacher training program from which the teachers, the children's directors and the youth advisor shall be selected;
- Maintain a library and assist study groups who are seeking materials;
- Provide a Jr. Church and nursery program during the worship service;
- Present a report on the program, teachers and finances at the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- Present a report for approval at the Annual Congregational Meeting; and
- Report to the Board of Trustees on their program and finances.

### 3. Sunday School

The Sunday School shall meet each Sunday for the Christian instruction of children, youth and adults. The program shall be planned and promoted by the Board of Education.

#### Superintendent

The superintendent shall:

- 1 Be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting to serve for one year; and
- 2 Preside over the meeting of the Board of Education, have general supervision of the Sunday School and submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

#### Assistant Superintendent

The assistant superintendent shall

- 1 Be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting to serve for one year; and
- 2 Assist the superintendent in any way possible.

### Secretary

The secretary shall:

- 1 Be elected by the Board of Education to serve for one year; and
- 2 Keep an accurate record of attendance and finances received.

### Treasurer

The treasurer shall:

- 1 Be elected by the Board of Education to serve for one year;
- 2 Keep an accurate account of all finances received and disbursed by the Board of Education;
- 3 Present the books for audit prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting. The treasurer shall present a financial report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

### Librarian

The librarian shall:

- 1 Be elected by the Board of Education to serve for one year;
- 2 Codify the literature and keep a file of books borrowed and returned; and

Librarian (continued)

- 1 Present a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

4. Teachers

The teachers shall:

- 2 Be members of the Church with a vital interest in Christian growth; and
- 3 Be selected by the Board of Education from the teacher training program and be amenable to the Board of Education.

5. Children's Director

The children's director shall:

- 1 Be a member of the Church who loves children;
- 2 Be selected from the teacher training program, be elected annually by the Board of Education and be amenable to it;
- 3 Present an annual program to the Board of Education for children in the Church and direct the Vacation Bible School; and
- 4 Present a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

5. Youth Advisor

The youth advisor shall:

- 1 Be a member of the Church who understands and is sympathetic with youth;
- 2 Shall be selected from the teacher training program, be elected annually by the Board of Education and be amenable to it;
- 3 Shall present an annual program to the Board of Education; and
- 4 Shall present a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

**Article IV.**

**PAID PERSONNEL**

A. The Minister

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the Board of Trustees shall appoint a Pulpit Committee to seek a candidate.

## 1. Rights

The minister shall:

- 1 Be free to preach the truth in love as it is revealed to him;
- 2 Receive a ministerial contract written by the Board of Trustees. The contract shall be ratified by two-thirds vote of the congregation present at the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- 3 Be notified when the Board of Trustees meet in closed session; and
- 4 Be a nonvoting member of all boards and committees.

## 2. Responsibilities

The minister shall:

- 1 Oversee the spiritual life and programs of the Church in accordance with the constitution and bylaws;
- 2 Be responsible for the stated services of the Church;
- 3 Serve in an advisory capacity on all boards, committees and organizations;

## 2. Responsibilities (continued)

- 1 Give support to all activities of the Church;
- 2 Visit the sick, the hospitalized, members and prospective members, counsel as needed, marry those who are prepared, and conduct funeral services;
- 3 Conduct membership classes to inform candidates for membership concerning the government and policy of the Church, the expectations of membership and their opportunity for service;
- 4 Keep an accurate record of the membership in a permanent record book;
- 5 Submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting;
- 6 Participate in community activities as a representative of the Church, as appropriate; and
- 7 Give the Board of Trustees a three months notice if he wishes to dissolve the relationship with the Church.

Weddings performed by the Minister shall be in keeping with the Biblical principle that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman.

The Minister's decision to perform or not perform a wedding is considered to be final.

B. The Custodian

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the hiring and the supervision of the custodian on an annual contract basis.

The custodian shall maintain the general cleanliness of the Church building.

C. The Choir Directors

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the hiring and the supervision of the choir directors. The choir directors shall cooperate with the minister and the music committee.

D. The Musicians

The Board of Trustees shall be responsible for the hiring and the supervision of the musicians. The musicians shall cooperate with the minister and the choir director.

**Article V.**

**COMMITTEES**

Committees may be established upon approval of the Board of Trustees for carrying out the work of the Church.

A. Audit Committee

The audit committee shall:

- 1 Consist of persons appointed by the president of the Board of Trustees; and
- 2 Audit the books of each treasurer in the Church just prior to the Annual Congregational Meeting.

B. Home Missions Committee

The home missions committee shall consist of three members of the Church. One member shall be elected each year for a term of three years.

B. Home Missions Committee (continued)

The home missions committee shall:

- 1 Meet in the month following the Annual Congregational Meeting and elect a president and secretary-treasurer;
- 2 Seek out and meet human need within the Church and in the community;
- 3 Cooperate with other agencies in the community; and
- 4 Submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

C. Finance Committee

The finance committee shall consist of the treasurer, the financial clerk and one member of the Board of Trustees appointed by the president of the Board who shall serve as chairperson.

The chairperson shall appoint from the Church membership such persons as he may desire to assist the committee.

They shall submit an annual budget to the Board of Trustees, which shall in turn be submitted at the Annual Congregational Meeting for approval.

D. Missionary Committee

The missionary committee shall:

- 1 Consist of three members of the Church. One member shall be elected each year for a term of three years;
- 2 Meet in the month following the Annual Congregational Meeting and elect a chairperson and secretary;
- 3 Promote and quicken the missionary interest of the Church in the community and throughout the world; and
- 4 Submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

E. Historian

The Historian shall:

- 1 Be a member of the Church and shall be elected each year for a term of one year;
- 2 Record the significant events in the life of the Church that occur throughout the year; and
- 3 Submit a report at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

F. Nomination Committee

The nomination committee shall consist of the presidents of the various boards and organizations of the Church.

The minister shall be the chairman.

They shall elect a secretary and submit a ballot of nominees for all the offices to be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting.

G. Pulpit Committee

The pulpit committee shall consist of persons appointed by the Board of Trustees.

They shall recruit and interview candidates to preach a trial sermon and arrange for an interview of the candidate with the Board of Trustees.

**Article VI.**

**FELLOWSHIPS**

The Choir, the Bible Class, the Ladies Guild, the Men's Club, the Willing Workers Class, the Youth Fellowship, the Ladies Discipleship, the Promise Keepers, and any other fellowships approved by the Board of Trustees shall form their own constitution and bylaws and elect their own officers in conformity with the Constitution and Bylaws of the First Community Church.

Each of these fellowships are amenable to the Congregation and to the Board of Trustees. An annual report shall be submitted at the Annual Congregational Meeting by the president and treasurer of each fellowship.

**Article VII.**

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION  
AND BYLAWS**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended or changed only by a two-thirds vote of the members present at the Annual or Special Congregational meeting.

An announcement shall be made two successive Sundays in both Sunday School and Church services prior to the date of the meeting.

This announcement shall include the nature of the proposed amendment or change.