

## **Policy on Local Churches**

### **A Policy of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada**

#### **Article 1 - Affiliated Church**

- 1.1. A non-Alliance church may become affiliated with the C&MA upon approval of the District Executive Committee of the district within which the church is located. Affiliated churches are not member churches of the C&MA and consequently are not represented at District Conference or General Assembly by lay delegates.
- 1.2. The non-Alliance church shall:
  - a) agree with the statement of faith of the C&MA in Canada;
  - b) call only pastoral and other ministry staff who are licensed by the C&MA;
  - c) contribute to the Alliance Retiral Fund on behalf of the pastors and staff in accordance with its guidelines;
  - d) support the national and global ministries of the C&MA through prayer, recruiting workers and giving to the Global Advance Fund, and (if applicable) to the District Operating Budget; and
  - e) sign a memorandum of understanding with the District Executive Committee that shall expire at the end of five years and is subject to renewal.

#### **Article 2 - Member Church**

- 2.1. A member church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada (the "C&MA") shall be established when an association of people who have voted to become a member church of the C&MA and to abide by the governing documents of the C&MA has been accepted as a member church by the District Executive Committee of the district within which the church is located.
- 2.2. Member churches of the C&MA that are fully organized shall be governed by the Local Church Constitution. The local church may adopt additional bylaws, policies, and regulations that govern the local church, but in no case shall such bylaws, policies, and regulations contradict the provisions of the Local Church Constitution and the policies, procedures, and statements contained within the Manual of the C&MA in Canada.
- 2.3. Member churches of the C&MA that have fewer than fifteen (15) members or that are not yet fully organized shall be governed by the Constitution for Developing Churches. The developing church may adopt additional bylaws, policies, and regulations that govern the church, but in no case shall such bylaws, policies, and regulations contradict the provisions of the Constitution for Developing Churches. The Developing Church may become fully organized and adopt the Local Church Constitution upon approval of the district superintendent.
- 2.4. Member churches of the C&MA that are incorporated shall be governed by the incorporating documents and corporate bylaws approved by the District Executive Committee. The incorporating documents, corporate bylaws, and policies of incorporated churches shall conform to the provisions of the Local Church Constitution and the policies, procedures, and statements contained within the Manual of the C&MA in Canada.
- 2.5. In addition to abiding by the governing documents of the C&MA, member churches shall contribute to the Alliance Retiral Fund on behalf of the pastors and staff in accordance with its guidelines.

### Article 3 – Church Closure

- 3.1. In the rare and unfortunate situation where it seems appropriate to close a church, the District Superintendent shall explore possible ways to keep the church open, engaging both church leadership and the congregation. In the case of an organized church, the church may be moved from organized to developing status.
- 3.2. The District Executive Committee of the District in which the church resides has authority to close a church if:
  - a) The church leadership requests that the church be closed, or
  - b) Church attendance is static or declining over a period of several years and two or more of the following conditions have existed for one year or more:
    - The church is unable to pay its bills or support its pastor,
    - The District Superintendent has not been able to appoint a pastor,
    - The church does not have a viable plan for effective ministry,
    - For an organized church, the church cannot elect an elder’s board, or
    - For an organized church, the membership of the church has fallen below the number required for a church to be organized.
- 3.3. When it is not possible to keep a church open, the District Superintendent shall ensure that the affairs of the church are concluded in a proper manner to abide by the regulatory and legal requirements.

### Article 4 - Amendments

This policy may be amended by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Adopted – Board of Directors, April 2012

Amended – Board of Directors, February 2020

Amended – Board of Directors, February 2023

Amended – Board of Directors, May 2023

Amended – Board of Directors, November 2023