

# LIVING PEACE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

## CONSTITUTION

**INTRODUCTION.** We, the people of Living Peace Church of the Brethren, have discerned together that God has called us to fulfill a mission: “to live Christ’s gospel by accepting, ministering, and proclaiming God’s love; peacefully, simply, and together.” We recognize that to fulfill this mission, responsibility and power must be shared as we pursue many activities in an orderly fashion. Therefore, we have established the following Constitution. We pray that God will help us to always use it in Godly ways for Godly purposes.

**DENOMINATIONAL AND DISTRICT RELATIONSHIPS.** Living Peace Church of the Brethren is a vital and active member of the Church of the Brethren denomination, and of the Southern Ohio District of the Church of the Brethren. Should Living Peace Church of the Brethren ever cease to be a vital and active Congregation of the Church of the Brethren, all properties would then revert to the ownership of the Southern Ohio District of the Church of the Brethren denomination.

### BASIC CONGREGATIONAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING

**MEMBERS.** Living Peace Church of the Brethren’s members are believers who have joined Living Peace Church of the Brethren, either by baptism, by transfer of membership letter, by reaffirmation of faith, or by covenant.

**DECISION MAKING.** All decisions shall be made by consensus. During the dialogue and discussion phase of consensus building, all persons, regardless of membership status, may participate. All persons are likewise welcome to participate in both the Quarterly Meeting and the Monthly Meeting. However, for a decision to be made, there must be a consensus among the congregation’s members.

**QUARTERLY MEETING.** Living Peace Church of the Brethren’s highest decision making body is the Quarterly Meeting. The Quarterly Meeting occurs in March, June, September, and December. Budget decisions for the upcoming year are made at the September Quarterly Meeting. Election of Officers for the upcoming year occurs at the December Quarterly Meeting.

**MONTHLY MEETING.** The congregation may meet each month in which a Quarterly Meeting is not held, to conduct the regular and normal business of the church. All members are invited to participate in these meetings; ministers and elected officers are especially encouraged to attend. The Monthly Meeting’s responsibilities include (a) planning and coordinating special events and services; (b) making urgent decisions between Quarterly Meetings; (c) calling special Quarterly Meetings when necessary; and (d) providing leadership and oversight regarding the Church’s mission. This last responsibility requires sensitivity to five basic functions of the church: worship, preaching, teaching, outreach, and facility management.

The dates for the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings will be published in the congregation's written communications, especially bulletins, emails, newsletters, and website.

**MINISTERS.** All licensed and ordained ministers who are members of the congregation may participate in Living Peace's plural nonsalaried ministry.

**OFFICERS.** The officers of the church include the Moderator, Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Clerk. All officers shall be chosen, with their consent, by consensus in the Quarterly Meeting.

**MODERATOR.** The presiding officer at a Quarterly Meeting shall be the Moderator. Ideally, the Moderator should be a member of another congregation in the Southern Ohio District of the Church of the Brethren.

**CHAIR.** The Chair facilitates the Monthly Meeting and develops agendas for the Monthly Meeting and for the Quarterly Meeting.

**VICE CHAIR.** The Congregation may request the outgoing Chair to become the Vice Chair, or another person may be chosen. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair assumes the responsibilities of the Chair.

**CLERK.** The Clerk records Minutes at each Monthly and Quarterly Meeting. Minutes from the previous Quarterly Meeting and from each of the Monthly Meetings since that time are presented for approval at the next Quarterly Meeting.

**TREASURER.** The Treasurer keeps records in accordance with accepted principles of accounting, and submits written reports to each Quarterly Meeting. The Treasurer also keeps the Monthly Meeting informed about the Church's financial status and affairs. The Church will undergo a financial audit twice yearly.

**AMENDMENTS.** This Constitution may be amended at any Quarterly Meeting by consensus and in accordance with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

*Approved by the Congregation, March 16, 2008*