

# **BEMC**

## **Membership Guide**

---

### **Table of Contents:**

- **What is Church Membership? ..... 2-3**
- **Membership Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline .....3-5**
- **The Membership Process .....6**
- **The Membership Covenant & Ceremony .....7-8**
- **Vision and Purpose of Breslau EMC .....9-14**
- **History of the Evangelical Missionary Church 14-16**
- **History of the Breslau EMC 16-17**
- **Statement of Faith and Core Doctrines 17-18**
- **Lifestyle Questions 19-20**

*“...so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” - Romans 12:5*

---

# **Membership At BEMC**

---

## **Overview**

This booklet is designed to be a resource as you consider becoming a member of Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church (BEMC) or as you help another through some of their questions about what membership means, what it requires and what it offers. The following pages should serve as a springboard for further questions and discussion and will hopefully give you the information you need to make, or help make, an informed choice about church membership.

## **What Is Church Membership?**

When a person becomes a Christian they are called to grow in faith and love for Christ. We believe that the Church is a great place for this growth to happen as we try to become spiritually mature in our faith and practice and as we seek to grow together even as we grow individually. This corporate responsibility, one for another is clearly mentioned in Romans 12:4-5 where it states,

*“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”*

This shared goal of growing in Christ leads us to into participation within the church. As we participate in the church and grow in our faith and our relationships within that body it becomes an obvious step to commit to that “family” through church membership. This act of commitment is a public alignment of self with the vision, passion, direction and doctrine of the local church. It means the individual is committed to seeing the purpose of the church embodied in their life as they fully participate in its ministry.

Church membership is a commitment before God and with the other members of the church to work together to see God’s kingdom come through the life and ministry of the church. Church membership is NOT a substitute for baptism or salvation.

Membership helps identify a body of people who are committed to the work of the church. This is important, since it is members who are active in the leadership and decision-making processes in the church. It is members who, under God, affirm leadership and the officers of the board and approve the budget. It seems

only practical then that only those people who have “signed on the dotted line” should be making those decisions.

Membership also helps produce spiritual growth. Members benefit from the experience of membership. By taking steps into recognizable membership there is an important step of commitment. It is a defining moment of saying that they are committed to this local ministry, its values and goals, and that they are truly part of this local family.

In short, membership is an indication of a desire to be a faithful, loyal and growing member of the Church of Jesus Christ and specifically of Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church.

## **Membership – Rights, Responsibilities and Discipline**

### **Rights**

A participating member is a follower of Jesus Christ who is committed to the local church and desires the church to hold him/her accountable for his/her spiritual walk. Participating members are active in the leadership and decision-making dynamics of the church. They have applied for and been accepted into Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church membership.

Other reasons to consider membership include:

- 1) The local church is the visible witness of Jesus Christ in this place; membership means this is where I want to belong, this is where I want to share and worship.
- 2) Scripture teaches an organizational structure for the operation of a church; it sets standards, e.g. for the qualifications of Deacons and Elders.

Membership provides a standard and a method of discipline for the Body of Christ. It provides standards in spiritual matters, and a means of exhorting and encouraging members in their spiritual walk. Membership is an act of submission.

- 3) Members are provided with a voice and a vote in the process of the operation of the church; they are given an opportunity to share in the decisions that need to be made.
- 4) Membership is a personal commitment to belong to a local fellowship; a willingness to share in the joys and in the sorrows of these people; a willingness to share in the responsibilities and obligations of this Body
- 5) The commitment of membership indicates a member is available for Christian service; many serve who have not formally joined, but there are some positions of leadership that are reserved for members in good standing.

6) Membership is a testimony to friends and family of a person's covenant relationship with this church and the stability of their Christian walk.

7) Membership with the BEMC means automatic membership in the EMCC denomination and association with its many ministries: Evergreen Christian Ministries camps, Evangelical Missionary Youth events, EM Women's Ministry and Men's Ministry, etc.

8) Membership with the BEMC means automatic association with the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, and other parachurch ministries with which our church is associated.

## **Responsibilities**

As followers of Christ, BEMC asks that its members strive to follow the teaching and practice outlined in the Bible and in the life of the early church. To this end some of the responsibilities of membership include:

a) Persons desiring membership shall give credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. They shall give evidence of compliance with the biblical standard of Christian practice and manifest spiritual growth by evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit in their lives: love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22.23).

b) They shall refrain from acts of the sinful nature: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies and the like (Gal 5:19-21).

c) They shall treat their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit, making it inconsistent with both Christian testimony and sound principles of health to compromise their influence and injure their bodies through inappropriate practices or substance abuse.

d) Persons desiring membership should be baptized as believers, preferably by immersion. If they were baptized in another manner, they may be admitted into membership at the discretion of the Elders. If they request rebaptism, the significance of that step will be discussed.

e) Applicants for membership should be desirous of living in harmony with this body of believers; shall accept the doctrinal standards set out in the EMCC Articles of Faith and Practice; should be familiar with the Bylaws of BEMC; and be willing to submit to the due process of church discipline.

f) Members are expected to be good stewards of all that God has given to us: our gifts, our time, our money. We are good stewards when we utilize all we have for God's glory - how we do that may be quite different for each of us.

The biblical guideline for giving to the work of the church is expressed in Malachi 3:10: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house. Test me in this say the Lord Almighty and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven..." The tithe which represents 10% of our income is given as an act of faith and worship. God does amazing things when we give him first place in our lives through the first fruits of our work (Ex. 13). Over and above our tithes, we give offerings as ability, need, and opportunities arise.

In addition to local church, denominational and missionary needs for funds, members must also be aware and responsive to the physical and spiritual needs of those in our world not as fortunate as we.

## **Discipline**

The Church is commanded in Scripture to discipline those members who choose to continue in open and unrepentant habitual sin (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 7:8-10; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14, 15; 1 Tim. 5:19,20).

The aim of Church discipline is the restoration of the individual to Christ and His Church (Gal. 6:1). The process of confrontation and church discipline shall be done in a spirit of Christian love, care, sensitivity, and commitment to Biblical teaching with the ultimate goal of reconciliation and forgiveness.

## **Why Membership Might Be Removed**

If a participating member makes a request to the church that their membership be removed, their request will be granted.

If a member ceases to attend services and functions of the church for an extended period of time, their membership may be removed. (Efforts to contact the member will be made prior to removing membership. It is noted that in some instances extenuating life circumstances may be taken into consideration.)

If the Elders conclude that a participating member is living a life of unrepentant sin, by action of the Elders the membership in question can be removed.

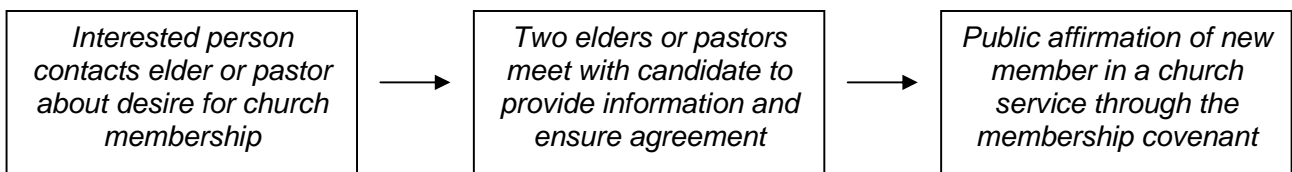
If a participating member should conduct him/herself in a manner which the Elders see as causing dissension or undermining aspects of unity within the church, by action of the Elders the membership in question can be removed.

## The Membership Process

A person interested in becoming a member of BEMC should consider the following qualifications before entering into the membership process:

- 1) An individual who has personally received Christ as their Saviour and Lord, who gives a clear testimony of their faith in Christ and has been baptized as a believer.
- 2) An individual of at least 18 years of age.
- 3) An individual who has attended BEMC for at least 6 months.
- 4) A person prepared to commit to the vision, ministry and people of BEMC.

Those interested in membership should first contact an elder or a pastor about their desire to become a member. This can be done verbally or through the use of the BEMC membership pamphlet that allows a tear-off card to be completed and placed in the pastor's mailbox or given to an appropriate leader. Two elders or pastors will meet with the membership candidate to answer membership questions, to ensure agreement on core doctrinal issues and to outline the vision and ministry of the church. Upon successful completion of this interview the new member will be publicly affirmed and received in a BEMC membership service by the congregation.



Those interested in transferring a membership from another church will inform the pastor or an elder of their desire to transfer their membership to the BEMC. They will be asked to provide a certificate or letter of transfer from their previous church.

Those coming from another Evangelical Missionary church will meet with two elders or pastors to answer membership questions and to outline the vision and ministry of the BEMC. The elders or pastors will also contact their previous church to ensure that they were a member in good standing upon their departure. Upon successful completion of these interviews the transferred member will be publicly affirmed and received "on a letter of transfer" in a BEMC membership service.

Those seeking a transfer of membership from another church outside of the Evangelical Missionary Church will go through the same process as those seeking first-time membership. The elders or pastors may contact the previous church at their discretion.

## **The Membership Ceremony**

Membership ceremonies will be held as often as needed. The ceremony will be included as part of a regular worship service at BEMC. This ceremony commemorates the desire of the individual to join the Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church. It also serves to remind the current members of the church of their own commitment to the life of the church body. Finally the ceremony is an occasion to formally welcome these new members into the fellowship.

The ceremony will be comprised of the following components (where appropriate):

i) Introduction of Membership

The covenant of membership will be introduced and explained as a step of commitment to the Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church.

ii) Introduction of Candidates

Candidates for membership will be called forward and introduced to the congregation. Participants may be given an opportunity to introduce themselves if they so desire. During the introductions candidates will be identified as new members or members received by transfer.

iii) Membership Covenant - Candidates

The first half of the membership covenant will be read and the candidates will be asked to collectively answer the questions within the covenant with the response, "We will, as God enables us."

*The Membership Covenant*

Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God that teaches the only way of salvation and do you take this Word to be your rule of faith and conduct?

Will you live a moral and ethical lifestyle consistent with the teaching of the Bible in light of our understanding of Scripture?

Will you spend time in private prayer, study and contemplation of God's Word and seek to draw others to Him?

Will you endeavour to discover and use your spiritual gifts as you faithfully attend and participate within this church body?

Will you be loyal to this church and its leadership, sustaining this church and its ministries with regular prayer?

Will you contribute cheerfully and regularly as God prospers you, being a good steward of your spiritual gifts, money, time and relationships with others?

iv) Congregational Covenant – Congregation

The congregation will be asked to stand and collectively read the second half of the membership covenant (the congregational covenant).

*The Congregational Covenant*

We covenant, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love and to join in mutual labours for the Kingdom of Christ.

We covenant to encourage each other in our spiritual gifts and work together as a body, serving Jesus Christ as the head.

We covenant to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech and to be slow to take offense and always be ready for reconciliation.

We covenant to witness faithfully to the saving and keeping power of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ and His promise that all who call on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.

v) Prayer

At the conclusion of the covenant agreement the presiding pastor or elder will pray a prayer of blessing over the new members.

vi) Welcome

The presiding pastor or elder will say: "In the name of Christ and His church, I welcome you into the fellowship of Breslau Evangelical Missionary Church. May God enable you to be a faithful and useful member of this church until you are presented without fault before the throne of God."

He/she shall then shake hands with each candidate and present them with certificates of church membership. At that point the congregation will be invited to come to the front to welcome the new members into this covenant.

## **Purpose and Vision of BEMC**

*Our purpose is to passionately pursue Christ to transform our world and bring Him honour.*

## **Discipleship Model**

Our discipleship model at BEMC is based on a 5-step funnel-shaped idea that seeks to move people deeper in their walk with Christ and into a mature expression of their faith through the life and ministry of the church.

These 5 steps are:

### ***Circle of Influence***

These are people we rub shoulders with every day who have yet to become followers of Christ but are in relationship with those that have.

### ***Crowd***

People who have been introduced to the idea of a relationship with Christ but are simply asking questions and not yet ready to commit.

### ***Congregation***

These people have expressed a public commitment to God and are seeking to commit to the people and ministries of the BEMC.

### ***Community***

This group is committed to deep, caring and growing relationships within the body, demonstrating significant life change as God directs and exhibiting a growing spiritual maturity.

### ***Core***

The core is dedicated to using their gifts to serve and disciple those around them and is fully aware of their ministry and mission along with the ministry and mission of the BEMC.

## **BEMC Ministry Overview**

The following is a quick look at the size, scope and key elements of each of BEMC's major ministry areas.

### **Elders**

---

The Elders Board and the Pastor(s) are responsible for the spiritual care and direction of the church and for administering the missions and benevolence ministries.

### **Deacons and Trustees**

---

The Deacons and Trustees are responsible for business and property matters of the church.

### **Children's Ministries**

---

BEMC's children's ministries have been an integral part of the church for many years. Primarily Sunday-based, FaithBuilders (F.B.) and our Nursery and Toddler programs provide care, Bible-based teaching, exciting times of praise and worship, games and crafts all unified under a central weekly theme that helps kids learn what it means to have a relationship with God. These ministries serve up to 40 children per week with the support of a very capable and enthusiastic staff.

Our VBS program is essentially a week-long outreach opportunity, touching the lives of up to 90 kids each summer with a line up that is eye-catching, innovative, anticipated by the community and always rooted in a love for Christ.

#### **Components:**

FaithBuilders (age 4 to Gr. 5)  
Nursery (age 0 to 1)

Toddler Ministry (age 2 to 3)  
VBS (1 week – August - annually)

**Key Values:**

- Introducing and teaching children about Jesus and biblical truth
- Providing opportunities for growth and practical application
- Providing opportunities for children to build relationships with peers and leaders
- Teaching and practicing prayer and worship
- Providing a loving, fun and safe environment for children
- Freeing parents to participate freely and fully in worship

**Youth Ministry**

---

One of the fastest growing segments of our church, the youth programs are an essential component of our overall ministry serving over 50 young people and several other sponsors. Combining small-group based Bible study and worship times with relationship-building social outings, our regular youth meetings are raising up youth who are connected to Jesus and to each other.

**Components:**

Senior Youth (Gr. 9 to Gr. 12)

Junior Youth (Gr.6 to Gr. 8)

**Key Values:**

- Evangelism: opportunities to share the good news of Jesus
- Discipleship: assisting youth in their personal relationships with Christ
- Relationships: with peers, parents and the church
- Service: to the community, the church, and each other

**Music and Worship Ministry**

---

Music and worship has become a significant part of life at BEMC. We are fast becoming a church that loves to spend time in corporate praise of our Father led by the Holy Spirit: the body worshipping together. These Sunday morning worship events are characterized by blended music, Scripture readings, prayer and sharing times, and engaging sermons.

Our adult choir and special music add life to all of these elements.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month we gather for Sunday Night Praise, a more casual and contemporary worship opportunity with new songs, testimony, prayers by and for each other and the occasion for each person to minister and be ministered to in the pattern of the early Church.

**Components:**

Sunday Worship Service (9:30-11:00am)

Sunday Night Praise (monthly)  
Adult Choir (seasonal)  
Special Music

**Key Values:**

- Joyful, intimate, Holy Spirit-led worship and praise
- Meaningful, authentic participation by the entire congregation
- Diversity in style and practice; centrality of Christ and the Word

**Adult Ministries**

---

As followers of Christ we are always seeking to be more like Him in all that we do. We are committed to spiritual growth, meaningful fellowship and genuine care for one another. This kind of honest, authentic discipleship and significant relationship building happens first in our small group ministry. To date we have well over half of the congregation involved in a variety of small groups for men, women, couples and families directed by leaders and assistants and overseen by our small group coordinator.

On top of this, we have an Adult Fellowship program that gives further opportunities for fellowship and outreach. This ministry plans several events throughout the year.

**Components:**

Small Groups  
(weekly, various times, locations, types)

Adult Fellowship  
(special events – various times)

**Key Values:**

- Allowing opportunities for care and fellowship so that healthy relationships can be developed
- Providing opportunities for spiritual growth and the practical application of Scripture
- Matching the right people with the right passion and the right place to serve
- Training and supporting people with a call to serve

## Prayer Ministry

---

Prayer is vital in the life of the church because it connects us to God and keeps us in line with His purposes and His plans. It is of primary importance if the church is to have any effect on the community it is attempting to serve. The Prayer Ministry Team is a group of intercessors who actively pray during our worship services and are ready to minister to those in the congregation in need of assistance during times of ministry.

The Prayer Chain is another group of individuals linked together and ready to pray for the needs of the church and beyond as they are made aware.

Finally, once a month the church comes together to pray and fast in a Concert of Prayer, calling out to God to meet the needs of the church and its members, the community and the world. All of these elements are rooted in the truth that God wants us to seek Him and that He answers when we call to Him.

### Components:

Prayer Ministry Team (ongoing)  
Prayer Chain (ongoing)

Concerts of Prayer  
(Last Wednesday of each month)

### Key Values:

- Corporate, heartfelt prayer
- Seeking God's face, waiting on the Lord, listening for His voice and sharing what He is saying to His people
- Prayer as an underlying foundation of all church ministries
- Waiting with expectancy for God to move, heal, restore, free, strengthen and answer His church

## Support Ministries

---

It would be next to impossible for other ministries of the church to be effective without the work of the support ministries within the church. This varied group provides the framework of ministry needs necessary for the church to be effective, welcoming, helpful and efficient. From the warm welcome of the greeting ministry and ushers to the hot coffee provided by our hospitality ministry, these groups support the work of the church and help it fulfill its purposes. They are integral to its mission.

**Components:**

Fellowship Time (Sundays)  
Funerals and Wedding Showers  
Church Library  
Greeting Ministry

Ushers  
A/V Team  
Church Office  
Family Care Ministry (practical help  
in times of crisis ie. meals, rides etc.)

**Key Values:**

- Joyful, dynamic ministry expressed in a servant's heart as led by the Spirit
- Supporting the work of the church with vitality and professionalism

**History of the Evangelical Missionary Church**

- The Missionary Church traces its history to the 16th century, to the days of John Calvin in Switzerland, Martin Luther in Germany and Menno Simons in Holland

As the Protestant Church was formed, a group called the 'Anabaptists' arose: they were:

- Determined to keep themselves separate from the world
- Determined to keep a separation between church and state
- Dedicated to non-resistance
- Believed in repentance and a change of life
- Believed in forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ
- Believed in adult, not infant baptism.
  
- The name 'Anabaptist' means 'rebaptized,' to identify those who were rebaptized as believers and in doing so, they were labeled heretics, scoundrels and villains
  
- Severe persecution throughout Europe drove the Anabaptists to Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio and Illinois. During and after the American Revolution, some moved north into Canada
  
- The Missionary Church began at about the same time in Canada and in the United States. Revival broke out in Port Elgin in 1870 and spread to Elkhart, Ind. Both pastors, Solomon Eby and Daniel Brenneman were excommunicated (for speaking in tongues and for holding prayer meetings in English) and in 1875, a couple of Mennonite churches joined to form the United Mennonite Church
  
- Several others churches joined them, including the Brethren in Christ Church in Ohio, and they became known as The Mennonite Brethren in Christ in 1883, a name that was changed to United Missionary in 1947. In the US, other groups from old order Amish Mennonites formed the

Missionary Church Association, which became the Missionary Church Incorporation.

- In 1969, these two groups, the United Missionary and the Missionary Church, Inc. combined to form The Missionary Church with headquarters in Fort Wayne, Ind.
- In the mid-1980's, the Missionary Church of Canada was formed, taking responsibility for its own direction and sharing with the US Church in the matter of missions, in an organization known as World Partners
- In 1993, the Missionary Church of Canada merged with the Evangelical Church of Canada to form the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada. We were divided into two Districts, Canada East and Canada West, and took responsibility for our own mission outreach through World Partners Canada
- In 2005, the Districts were reorganized, downplaying the District function and becoming more of a National organization, with a President and several Regional Ministers
- In Canada East, that's Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick, there were 75 churches with 5575 members in 2004, with over 8100 in Sunday morning services. Total receipts in that year amounted to almost \$13 1/2 million and about \$ 1 ¼ million was given to missions

### **Current Distribution**

- There are about the same number of churches from Winnipeg to Vancouver as there are in the Canada East. Emmanuel Bible College in Kitchener and Rocky Mountain College in Calgary are EMCC sponsored schools. There are 2 camps in Ontario, and 5 in western Canada
- There are several ethnic churches in Mississauga, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Ottawa, Calgary, and Vancouver. These include Chinese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Tamil congregations.
- Overseas outreach from Ontario started as early as 1881 and there are now Missionary Churches in Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Portugal, Spain, France and India, and a Missionary Church in Greece
- The Missionary Church sponsors approximately 200 missionaries, many of them on loan to other mission organizations, serving in Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Columbia, Cyprus, England, Guam, Guatemala,

Indonesia, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lesotho, Nepal, Niger, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Zaire and several other countries

- Our missionaries have been noted for their church planting, leadership training, medical ministries, translation work and development of materials in the language of the people, literacy courses, and theological training
- There are Bible Schools in Brazil and Sierra Leone; Theological Colleges in Nigeria and Jamaica; and TEE (Theological Education by Extension) in several countries, into Russia and the Ukraine, so pastors can study without leaving their homes, ministry, or jobs

Evangelical Missionary Churches welcome all who wish to fellowship with us. We don't insist on membership – many come from differing backgrounds, from widely differing church experience, for teaching and encouragement. In the process of ministering to them, we present the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ.

### **A Brief History of BEMC**

Since about 1872 a group of believers who followed the teaching of Rev. Solomon Eby and experienced spiritual awakening had been meeting regularly in Breslau. Rev. Eby had come out of the Mennonite church and was instrumental in founding the Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church (which has since undergone several name changes to today's designation as the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada). Early records tell us that on May 16, 1880, nine people were baptized and eight were received into the fellowship.

Camp meetings of the United Mennonites were held in Breslau near the end of the 19th century. At a meeting in June 1882, several thousand people were present. Following these camps, churches were organized in Breslau, Blair, West Montrose, Hespeler, Puslinch and Conestoga.

In 1882, the church building at 102 Woolwich St. was erected for a total cost of \$2,250. (This included some sheds to accommodate horses.) The dedication service was held on Christmas Day, a stormy Monday, at 10am. The current sanctuary with its thick stone walls is the original building from that time. In the 1930's, the building was raised and a basement was dug without the aid of power equipment. Horses were used to haul out loads of dirt that was dug by hand. In 1960, further renovations took place. The orientation of the sanctuary was reversed, so the seats now faced the street, the platform area was added and the foyer, library, office and nursery area was added, along with its upper storey and basement.

The church has been active in ministry for over 125 years. Young People's groups, Women's Missionary Societies, Sunday School Classes, Prayer Meetings, Worship Services, Missions Weeks, Vacation Bible Schools, Outreach Events, and many other activities have served to encourage believers and draw many to faith in Jesus Christ. Revival meetings were held from the beginning up until the 1960's, oftentimes lasting two weeks, with the express purpose of bringing individuals to personal decisions for Christ. Following decisions, baptisms were held in Hopewell Creek until the baptistery was constructed as part of the renovations in 1960. In more recent years, outreach events have focused on our community and those in our circle of influence. We continue to see God adding to our fellowship as we seek to serve Him.

For more on the history of the EMCC and of BEMC, please consult *Common Bonds*, 2002, by Eileen Lageer and *Breslau Missionary Church 1882-1982: 100th Anniversary*, by Delbert Blake.

## **Statement of Faith and Core Doctrines**

We believe the following to be vital and necessary in the life of every Christ-follower:

- Evangelical Theology, based on the teachings of the Bible.
- Spirit-led Living, emphasizing the new birth, culturally sensitive living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, biblically based discipleship, active service for the Kingdom, and vital worship.
- Theological Education, valuing the spiritual formation and training of children, youth, adults, and families; the development of a Christian mind; and the preparation of men and women for both professional and volunteer leadership and service.
- Servant leadership that is Christ-like in its humility, trainability, and integrity as well as committed to serving others through varied leadership styles, Spirit-led, gift-based, team ministry, consensus decision-making, and ministry accountability.

The following articles are the non-negotiable Essentials of the Christian faith and fully consistent with the Articles of Faith of the Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada. The statement is Orthodox and Evangelical. Orthodox means in agreement with the historic teaching of the Christian faith as expressed in the historic creeds. Evangelical means an emphasis on the biblical gospel about salvation by faith in Christ and new life (regeneration) by the transforming work of the Holy Spirit. This new life is essential to the Christian walk.

We believe that the following statements of faith are essential and non-negotiable essentials of the Christian Faith:

- The Holy Scriptures as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy; and the only supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.
- One God, eternally existent in three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- Our Lord Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His personal return in power and glory.
- The salvation of lost and sinful people through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The unity in the Spirit of all true believers, the Body of Christ. The local church as the tangible expression of the Body of Christ, an organized body of believers in Christ who are voluntarily joined together for public worship and evangelism, teaching the Word, fellowship with the saints, observance of the ordinances, exercise in prayer, and who are commissioned with the responsibility to administer discipline.
- The resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

## Lifestyle Questions

The position of EMCC is that Scripture clearly commands believers to not be conformed to the world of which they are a part, either in world-view or in life style. Rather, we are to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16):

- In the world but not of the world
- Called out of the world but sent back into the world
- In the world to testify with our lives of the new standard by which we live

Therefore, we must follow the scripture pattern in all we say and do. Our words, our thoughts, our actions, our reading habits, the music we listen to, the television we watch, the friends we keep, must all be tempered by scriptural principles.

It is impossible to let your mind be filled with filthy, angry, violent thoughts, and not have some of those thoughts spill over in words and action.

Jesus said, 'It is out of the heart that the mouth speaks.' He said, 'You are not defiled by unwashed hands; you are defiled by what is within.'

It is therefore imperative that high standards be set for both our personal and corporate life. (Romans 12:1-2)

While it is impossible and impractical to list everything that a member of the EMCC, should or should not do, in keeping with biblical standards of faith and practice, nor list all the scriptural references, the following outlines the intent of both the positive and the negative aspects of how a believer is expected to live:

a) **Dispositions and Attitudes:** should be characterized by godliness and the fruit of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23)

These qualities are to be displayed in every situation and in every relationship. The apostle Paul said he was all things to all people: that did not mean he switched his spiritual qualities off and on. We cannot be one thing on Sunday and something else the rest of the week, and expect to have a consistent witness or a consistent walk with the Lord.

b) **Social Relationships:** should bear witness to loving acceptance of Christ; your entire conduct reflecting the spiritual ideals of Christianity rather than the mores of the world. Our relationships are to be noted by our love, one for another; and love excludes gossip, back-biting, envy, jealousy, selfishness.

It also precludes such practices as profanity, slander, harsh criticism, or any such relationally destructive behaviour, and any demonstration of anger, hatred, moodiness, harshness, unkindness, unfaithfulness, or such like disposition. (Ephesians 4:29-32)

c) **Care for your Bodies:** members should treat their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit, making it inconsistent with both Christian testimony and sound principles of health to compromise their influence and injure their bodies through inappropriate practices or substance abuse. (1 Corinthians 3:16-17)

We consider substance abuse to be inconsistent with a Christian testimony, but also recognize that we should not eat too much, consume too much caffeine, fail to get sufficient rest, or fail to give our bodies proper care.

d) **Marriage and Other Sexual Relationships:** members are expected to practice sexual abstinence until marriage; demonstrate fidelity to a marriage partner; and characterize the marriage relationship by tender and loving care.

We believe that as a matter of belief, doctrine and religious practice the term “marriage” shall be reserved for the covenant relationship between one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. (Genesis 2:24)

Such a position precludes such behaviour as fornication, adultery or homosexual practices or any sexually immoral activity, such as the reading or viewing of pornography. (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

The EMCC takes the position that a believer should not marry an unbeliever, but if they are already married, and the unbelieving partner is willing to stay, separation should not be considered. (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, 1 Corinthians 7:12-14)

Divorce is considered contrary to God's will. (Matthew 5:31-32)

e) **Other Relationships:** Christian principles should not be compromised by partnership with unbelievers; and believers are not to hold membership in oath-bound, secret societies. (Matthew 5:33-35)