

# ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT NORTHSIDE ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES (NAM)

*Approved by both congregation in May, 1970,  
By higher judicatories in June and November, 1970,  
And ratified by governing boards June 22, 1972  
Amended by governing boards November 19, 2008*

## PREFACE

Northside Presbyterian Church and St. Aidan's Episcopal Church have met in the same building since January 9, 1966. The relationship established by that fact, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has gone beyond the provisions of the five-year contract which brought the two worshipping congregations into an initial relationship. "Open-ended", "growing", and "dynamic" are adjectives that properly describe the relationship, and indicate the possibility that ministries in addition to those of the two original congregations might use the church property on Broadway Hill in Ann Arbor held by Presbyterians since 1959.

These Articles of Agreement describe the desire of the two congregations to express the unity that underlies the brokenness of the Body of Christ in a very specific way on the North Side of Ann Arbor since the beginning of the 1970's and which continues to this day. The Articles also indicate the direction in which the mutual commitment may grow.

In December 2004, the congregations established a task force to study this relationship between the two churches, to survey the membership of both congregations, and to identify needs and opportunities for changes to the partnership. The task force report, completed in November of 2005, underscored that the members continue to believe strongly in this ecumenical enterprise, as well as the need to fine tune certain organizational structures and processes to better meet the needs of the community. These priorities have informed the process which has resulted in an updated version of these Articles.

## I. PURPOSES

The working relationship provided in these Articles of Agreement is intended to provide the means for the congregations to serve God better through their combined strength. The objectives envisioned are:

- Healing of denominational divisions, while retaining freedom of doctrine, discipline, and worship according to different traditions;
- Better utilization of physical facilities;
- Better Christian education of children and youth;
- Better preparation of adult members for Christian evangelism, mission, and service;
- Mutual understanding, awareness, and respect.

## II. WORKING RELATIONSHIP

### A. JOINT CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS AND FELLOWSHIP

1. The governing boards of the individual congregations, meeting in Joint Assembly, arrange for joint meeting of the congregations, as needed, to hear and discuss reports dealing with the common life of the congregations, to have members of the congregations advise the Joint Assembly, and to introduce members of the governing boards.
2. All meetings of the Joint Assembly and its committees are open to members of the congregations.
3. Occasions of fellowship among members of the congregations may be planned by the standing committees, or by special committees of either or both churches. For purposes of orderly scheduling, plans for such occasions of fellowship should be reported to the NAM Office.

### B. THE JOINT ASSEMBLY

1. The governing boards of the individual congregations, plus the additional members of the Administrative Council (see Section C below) meet together at least twice per year as the Joint Assembly, which is charged with the leadership of the common life of the two congregations. The Joint Assembly may act as Trustees at any meeting as provided for in Section 1(d) of the By-Laws of the Corporation.
2. The President or Vice President of the Corporation shall preside at the Joint Assembly meetings. The agenda is determined by the Administrative Council. The meetings will be held in the Easter and Advent Seasons.
3. The purpose of each Joint Assembly meeting:
  - a) The Easter Season Meeting is convened to receive reports from the clergy and chairs of joint committees, determine the direction and goals of the congregations' common life, and empower the work of joint committees or individuals to realize those goals. Standing committee chairs are approved. Ad hoc committees may be established, with chairs. Officers of the Corporation and at-large members of the Administrative Council are elected for one-year terms.
  - b) The Advent Season Meeting is also convened as a meeting of the Trustees. An annual budget is approved.
4. Meetings, including special meetings of the Joint Assembly, are called by the Administrative Council. Notice of meetings must be given, stating the purpose of the meeting, at least 24 hours in advance. Minutes of each meeting are kept by the Secretary and disseminated to the members of the Joint Assembly within 5 business days.

5. When action is not unanimous or by common consent, a majority of those Joint Assembly members present from each congregation must approve before a resolution or motion can be passed.

6. Robert's Rules of Order will be observed when informal procedures of order are challenged by any member of the Assembly.

7. A quorum consists of a quorum of each congregation's governing board. A quorum of the Council consists of 50% of its members with at least one member from each Member Church present.

### C. ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

The Northside Associated Ministries Administrative Council manages the programs and goals set out by the Joint Assembly at its Easter Season Meeting and is responsible for the ongoing operations of the corporation.

#### 1. Membership:

- a) The Administrative Council is composed of the four officers of the Corporation, as described in Section 2 of the By-Laws of Northside Associated Ministries. In addition to the four officers, the Council includes a minimum of two additional at-large members elected from the congregations or appointed by their governing boards so that there are an equal number of members from each congregation on the Council.
- b) All members of the Administrative Council, including the at large members, are also voting members of the Joint Assembly.
- c) The Clergy of each congregation are ex officio members and act as advisors.

#### 2. Duties of the Officers:

- a) The President is responsible for calling and moderating the meetings of the Administrative Council and the Joint Assembly. The President sets the agenda for these meetings in consultation with the Administrative Council. The President signs contracts as required to carry out previously approved major expenditures.
- b) The Vice President assists the President in all duties, and acts for the President when the President is absent.
- c) The Secretary records the minutes for meetings of the Administrative Council and the Joint Assembly, and disseminates the minutes of all meetings to the Administrative Council and the Joint Assembly within 5 business days after each meeting.
- d) The Treasurer manages the NAM budget and expenditures, prepares and distributes Expenditure Guidelines to Committee chairs, prepares a monthly report for the Administrative Council, and convenes the NAM Finance Committee.

#### 3. Management responsibilities, on behalf of the Joint Assembly:

- a) The Administrative Council directs and coordinates the work of the NAM committees.

- b) The Council receives Committee, Treasurer and Clergy reports at each of its meetings.
- c) The Council controls NAM special funds and capital reserve for projects designated or approved by the Joint Assembly.
- d) The Council controls NAM funds for emergency needs.

#### 4. Meetings

- a) The Administrative Council meets four times per year: in January, March, July, and September.
- b) A quorum of the Council consists of 50% of its members with at least one member from each Member Church present.

### D. STANDING COMMITTEES

1. Northside Associated Ministries has five Standing Committees. They are composed of approximately equal numbers of persons from each congregation. Vestry and Session are responsible for recruiting committee members, and staff may serve with a committee in an *ex officio* capacity. Committees report to and are overseen by the Administrative Council, and they set their meeting schedules as required to do their work.
2. Budget Management: Once the Joint Assembly has approved the annual NAM Budget, Committees are authorized to manage their budget allocations *following the procedures laid out in the NAM Expenditure Guidelines*. Guidelines are set by the NAM Treasurer, with the approval of Administrative Council, and may be revised from time to time. Committee chairs receive a copy of the guidelines from the Treasurer at the beginning of each year. A copy of the 2008 Guidelines is appended to this document.
3. The **Christian Education Committee** arranges and supervises the joint Education program for children, youth and adults. It is composed of three sub-committees:
  - Adult Education
  - Youth Education, including any special programs for youth
  - Youth Group
4. The **Youth Education** and **Youth Group** subcommittees are supervised by the Clergy as required by Diocesan Canon. Each subcommittee manages its own budget line item.
5. The **Building and Grounds Committee** supervises maintenance and operation of all properties. It is responsible for long range planning and for investigating and recommending major improvements. The committee manages the Building and Grounds Budget line item.
6. The **Finance Committee** presents a recommended NAM Budget to the Joint Assembly in the Advent Season Meeting for the coming year. The Committee would also meet on an as needed basis, for example, to recommend a way to finance major property improvements. The Committee is convened by the NAM Treasurer and is composed of the NAM Treasurer, the Treasurer or Financial Secretary of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, and the Treasurer or Financial Secretary of Northside Presbyterian Church.

7. The **Social Action Committee** is charged with leadership of the joint mission activities of the congregations as they relate to the community at large. It manages the Mission Budget line item.
8. The **Communications Committee** disseminates information about the member churches and their joint operations to the congregations and the public. The Committee develops and carries out the yearly plan for advertising. The Committee includes one member from each congregation and may also draw on the expertise of others who manage various means of communication for the two congregations. The Committee manages the Advertising Budget line item.

In addition to purchased advertising, the churches may use a newsletter, email lists, congregational web sites, advertising, and any other appropriate media for communication.

### III. RESPONSIBILITY TO HIGHER JUDICATORIES

These Articles of Agreement and the corporation's By-Laws are subject to the ecclesiastical law adopted by the Episcopal Church in the United States and the Presbyterian Church (USA), and are to be interpreted in accordance with those bodies of church law.

Any case of contradiction between Episcopal and Presbyterian law shall be resolved by the Joint Assembly/Trustees, and shall be approved by the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan and the Presbytery of Detroit.

### IV. RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

- A. In the event that any issue before the Assembly or Trustees becomes a disagreement between governing boards, the matter may, by common consent, be referred to the Administrative Council for its consideration and recommendation.
- B. If a more serious matter of disagreement is not readily resolved by the Assembly/Trustees or Administrative Council, they may call for the establishment of an Investigating Committee. An equal number of members of this committee will be elected or appointed by each governing board such a way that all points of view are fairly represented. The Committee should be given a specific timeframe in which it is to conduct its deliberations, at the end of which it should report its findings to the Joint Assembly/Trustees for approval and action.
- C. If the Investigating Committee does not reach a judgment by the time of its first report, or if its judgment is rejected by the Assembly/Trustees, it may be asked to give further consideration to the matter. After the first report of the Investigating Committee, any concerned governing board may invite a representative of its higher judicatory to take part in the deliberations and give opportunity for other governing boards to do likewise.

D. If the expanded deliberations of the Investigating Committee do not produce a resolution to the problem, then an independent adjudicator shall be agreed upon by all governing boards concerned. (An attorney with experience in ecclesiastical law would be preferred.)

E. Final determination and decision on matters referred to an Investigating Committee are approved by a majority of each governing board.

#### V. CHANGES TO THESE ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT

These Articles of Agreement are effective upon approval of a simple majority of the governing boards of Northside Presbyterian Church and St. Aidan's Episcopal Church. Any changes in the working relationship may also be put into effect similarly by resolution of the governing boards, meeting jointly, upon a simple majority vote of each board.