

**Constitution and By-Laws
Peace Church in Christ
Browntown, Wisconsin, 2016
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Constitution:

Article 1: Name

The name of this church shall be “Peace Church in Christ” of Browntown, State of Wisconsin (hereafter referred to as Peace Church).

Article 2: Mission/Purpose Statement

It shall be the mission/purpose of this church family to accomplish God’s will by: glorifying God, worshiping God, being pleasing to God in everything that we do, enjoying God forever, edifying and training all believers, advancing the kingdom of God through evangelism, discipleship, and service at home and abroad.

Article 3: Affiliation

This church family may be a member of any denomination(s) and/or an Association or several Associations of Churches, of its own choosing, that preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and adhere to the sole authority of God’s Word, the Bible.

Article 4: Statement of Faith

This church family shall adhere to the principles of the historical creeds of the Church including the Apostle’s Creed and the Nicene Creed.

Peace Church in Christ conceives of itself as conservative and evangelical.

Peace Church in Christ believes that the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God for all time. The Holy Bible is inerrant and infallible in its original autographs and fully sufficient for faith and practice.

Peace Church in Christ believes that salvation can only be received as a gift by God’s grace through personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9-10).

Peace Church in Christ believes 1 John 1:9 – “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Peace Church in Christ believes in two sacraments/ordinances: The Lord’s Supper/Communion and Baptism.

Peace Church in Christ is a “welcoming but not affirming” Church family (please refer to our Human Sexuality and Homosexuality position paper).

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Article 5: Brief Historical Statement

Peace Church in Christ had its beginnings on September 10th, 1887 when a group of Germans met with Rev. Koch at Pleasant Valley School and the group there was organized into a religious society of the German Evangelical Synod of North America. The Ebenezer church was located on County Y and Ridge Road. Another group met at Cadiz Methodist on County B and Friedens Evangelical and Reformed Church was established. Later they built in Browntown on the present site at a cost of \$800.00. Services were every three weeks with the one minister serving two churches. St. Paul's church joined the circuit in 1888 and the three churches were served by the one minister. In the 1950's the Ebenezer Church was torn down and the lumber was used for remodeling the Peace United Church of Christ, formerly known as Friedens Evangelical and Reformed Church. In the late 1990's, St. Paul's and Peace United Church of Christ separated. In early 2000, the name of the church in Browntown was changed to Peace United Church in Christ. The church family gives thanks for all previous church family members who have gone before us in upholding the gospel and enabling this church family to continue.

Article 6: Meetings

The church family shall have an Annual meeting and other meetings as stated in the By-laws.

Fifteen (15) members shall constitute a quorum at the Annual Meeting.

Article 7: Membership

- A. All Christians, children, youth, or adult, who believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord and have been baptized, and who request to be members of Peace Church in Christ, either by statement of faith or transfer of membership from another church family, shall be received as members into Peace Church in Christ by vote of the Church Council and the extending of the right hand of fellowship from the Peace Church family.
- B. All new Christians, either children, youth, or adult, who believe in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, and have gone through a confirmation class and/or a new member's class, and who have been baptized, and who request to be members of Peace Church in Christ, shall

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- be received as members into Peace Church in Christ by vote of the Church Council and the extending of the right hand of fellowship from the Peace Church family.
- C. Baptism or confirmation does not mean that an individual is automatically a member of Peace Church in Christ. An individual must personally request the Church Council and be extended the right hand of fellowship to become a member of Peace Church in Christ.**
 - D. The benefits, responsibilities, and expectations of all Peace Church family members are stated in the By-laws.**
 - E. Any Church family member who has permanently changed his/her residence to another state, city or community, is encouraged to obtain a letter of transfer and, as soon as possible, join another church family.**

Article 8: Organization

- A. Peace Church in Christ is comprised of all of its members who exercise the right of voice and vote of all of its affairs as assembled in legally called meetings as provided in the By-laws.**
- B. It is the prerogative of the members of the Peace Church in Christ church family to decide such matters as the buying and selling of property, extensive building projects, extensive repairs of the church property, the call and election of a pastor, and questions of the policy of the Peace Church family, and changes to the Constitution and By-Laws.**
- C. Peace Church family members who are 18 years or older are allowed to vote on any legal matters concerning Peace Church.**
- D. For the transaction of all other business the Peace Church church family entrusts the Church Council, who are chosen and composed as provided in the By-laws.**

Article 9: Administration

- A. The Church council shall be composed of the: pastor (ex-officio), and elected members and officers as defined in the By-Laws.**
- B. The manner of election, terms of office, and all other rights and duties for the members of the Church Council shall be defined in the By-Laws. Such members of the Church**

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Council shall be appropriately voted into office by the Church family at the Annual meeting or at a Special Meeting.

- C. The Church Council shall oversee all the committees/teams of the Church family, who shall submit written reports as defined in the By-Laws.**

Article 10: Pastor

- A. The Church family shall elect a pastor who has been recommended by the Peace Church in Christ pastoral search committee.**
- B. The Church Council shall nominate only one candidate for pastor to be voted upon by the Peace Church in Christ church family.**
- C. The Church family shall consider only one pastoral candidate at a time and vote by secret ballot for or against their election.**
- D. If elected, the Church Council shall issue a call.**

Article 11: Property

- A. The Church family may, in its corporate name, enter into litigation, hold, purchase, and receive title by gift, grant, or other conveyance of and to any property, real or personal, with the power to mortgage, sell, or convey the same, as the State of Wisconsin laws permit.**
- B. The Peace Church in Christ church family must meet the requirements of section 501 C (3) to be considered tax exempt.**
- C. Upon dissolution, the Peace Church in Christ real assets (upon vote of the Peace Church family at an Annual meeting or Special meeting) shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 C (3) of the Internal revenue code, or corresponding section of any future tax code, or shall be distributed to any denomination(s) and/or Church Association(s) that Peace Church in Christ is a member of, or federal, state, or local government(s), for a public purpose.**

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Article 12: Societies/Committees/Teams

- A. All Peace Church in Christ societies/committees/teams are subordinate and must cooperate with the Peace Church in Christ church council and shall report at least annually to the church family at the Annual Meeting and whenever the Peace Church in Christ church council requests additional reporting.**

Article 13: Amendments/alterations

- A. Amendments and alterations to the Constitution and By-Laws shall be referred to the church council, which shall consider the same and report to the next duly called meeting (Annual or special) of the Peace Church in Christ church family.**
- B. The Peace Church in Christ church council shall appoint a Constitution and By-Laws Revision Committee to review any proposed changes to the current Constitution and By-Laws.**
- C. Any and all proposed amendments and alterations to the Current Constitution and By-Laws shall be made available at least four (4) weeks prior to a duly called Annual or Special meeting of the Peace Church in Christ church family by announcing the Peace Church family's intention to changes during the Sunday morning announcements, posting any changes on the Peace Church inside bulletin board, and including a copy of such changes in the Sunday bulletin on at least two (2) Sundays of the four (4) weeks prior to voting.**
- D. Any amendments and alterations to the Constitution may be adopted only by a 2/3 majority of all voting members present. Any amendments and alterations to the By-Laws may be adopted by a simple majority vote of all voting members present.**

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By-Laws:

Article 1: Meetings

- A. The Peace Church Annual meeting shall be held the 1st or 2nd Sunday of February of each year.**
- B. Special meetings must have a two (2) week notification period prior to voting on a third Sunday.**
 - 1. Notice shall include: time, place, and purpose of the meeting.**
 - 2. Notice shall be: posted on an interior bulletin board, included in the Sunday announcements, and copies of the content of the Special meeting made available to all members.**
 - 3. A Special meeting may be called by The Church Council, and/or by a written request by 10% of the Peace Church family membership which will be submitted to the Peace Church Council for approval.**
 - 4. Either the Annual meeting or any Special meeting may be postponed due to inclement weather. The Church Council members will make this decision.**

Article 2: Members Benefits

- A. All Peace Church family members are entitled to a full share of:**
 - 1. Spiritual blessings of the Church family**
 - 2. Ministry of the Pastor, officers, and all other workers**
 - 3. The Christian sympathy and support of all members**
 - 4. Voice and vote in all Church family meetings**
 - a. Only Peace Church family members who are 18 years or older can vote on legal issues/matters concerning Peace Church.**
 - 5. Serving on the Church Council, upon due election, and any other societies/committees/teams of the Church family.**
 - a. All Peace Church family members may serve on societies/committees/teams by their own free will based on their individual talents, gifts, and abilities.**

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Article 3: Member Responsibilities and Expectations

- A. All Peace Church family members are expected to take an active part in the ministries of Peace Church (which include, but are not limited to):**
- 1. Participation in the Sunday Worship celebration(s).**
 - 2. Participation in the sacrament/ordinance of the Lord's Supper.**
 - 3. Participation in Bible study and Christian book studies.**
 - 4. Prayer for the welfare of our personal families, the Church family, the community, and the nation.**
 - 5. Provide a Biblical upbringing for our children.**
 - 6. Gifts, money, time, talents, and spiritual fruit and gifts to the ministry of Peace Church.**
 - 7. Obedience to the Bible.**

Article 4: Administration

- A. The administration of the Peace Church family will be the responsibility of the Church Council.**
- B. The Church Council will be composed of at least 7 and no more than 9 members of the Peace Church family and the Pastor as an ex-officio member.**
- C. The Church Council members shall be elected by a simple majority vote cast at the Peace Church Annual or Special meeting.**
- 1. At least two (2) Church Council members shall be elected for a three-year term at every Annual Meeting.**
- D. No Peace Church family member shall be eligible for re-election who has served two consecutive 3-year terms as a member of the Church Council until at least one (1) year shall have lapsed after the expiration of the second consecutive three (3) year term of office.**
- E. The Peace Church Council will present candidates for the replacement of Church Council members to the Peace Church Family at the Annual or Special Meeting. The Peace Church Family may also make nominations from the floor at the Annual or Special Meeting.**
- F. Married couples shall not hold a position on the Church Council at the same time.**

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- G. The Church Council shall meet within a week (this can be extended due to inclement weather) after each Peace Church family Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing Officers.**
- H. The Church Council will meet once a month, at a time and place convenient for the Church Council members, for the coordination of ministry and for the transaction of business.**
- I. Special Church Council meetings are subject to the call of the Church Council President or the Pastor with prior notification to all Church Council members.**
- J. The Church Council will operate primarily by Robert's Rules of Order.**
- K. The Church Council will elect by a simple majority vote: a President; a Vice-President; a Treasurer; and a Secretary.**
- L. The Church Council will appoint committees/teams as are necessary, appoint a Financial Secretary, and appoint committee and team leaders.**
- M. The Church Council will meet with representatives of all societies/committees/teams at least yearly.**
- N. Some (the following list is not all inclusive) of the duties of the Church Council will be:
 - 1. The coordination of all ministries of Peace Church.**
 - 2. The transaction of all business of Peace Church within the scope allowed to the Church Council by the By-Laws.**
 - 3. The preparation of a yearly budget. This will be the primary responsibility of the treasurer, financial secretary, the president, and the pastor.**
 - 4. Make provisions for the preparation and raising of the yearly budget of Peace Church family, as well for the apportionment of any benevolences.**
 - 5. The auditing of all financial records.**
 - 6. Maintain an on-going record of all ministries and business transactions.
 - a. All records shall be the property of Peace Church Family and upon dissolution of the Peace Church Family, any or all records shall become the property of the denomination and/or Association(s) that the Peace Church family is/are affiliated with.******

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- 7. Approve all bills for payment and authorize the treasurer to make such payments.
 - a. The Church Council may approve all expenses for the Peace Church family up to \$3,000.00.**
 - b. Expenses exceeding \$3,000.00 must receive approval of the Peace Church family at the Annual Meeting or at a called Special Meeting.****
- 8. Upon request, submit any or all records (to be approved by the Church Council) to any denomination and/or association(s) that the Peace Church family chooses to be affiliated with.**
- 9. Direct the Peace Church family Secretary or Historian to complete records of baptisms, confirmations, professions of faith, births, marriages, and deaths.**
- 10. Annually complete a Pastoral Evaluation form and distribute a Member's Pastoral survey, compile the results of both surveys, and present the results to Church Council.**
- 11. Decide to cancel the Sunday morning worship celebration, and/or any other meetings due to inclement weather or any other emergency situation.**
- 12. Provide a report to the Church Family at each Annual Meeting.**
- 13. Be a witness to Jesus Christ.**

Article 5: Some Duties of the Church Council Officers

- A. The President shall: preside at all Church Council meetings (with the exception of extenuating circumstances); see that all meetings of the Church Council are regularly called; follow primarily Robert's Rules of Order; provide a Church Council agenda; follow the Peace Church in Christ Constitution and By-Laws; preside over the Annual meeting and all Special meetings; appoint special committees/teams as necessary; assist in preparing the annual Peace Church family budget; be an ex-officio member of all committees/teams; assist in coordinating the ministries of Peace Church; be a spiritual leader and a witness for Jesus Christ for the Peace Church family.**

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- B. The Vice-President shall: preside at all Church Council meetings when the President is not present, and also when business pertaining to the President is before the Church Council and/or Church family for consideration at a Church Council meeting, Annual Meeting or any Special meetings; Assist the President as much as is possible; be the chairperson for the nominating committee/team; be the chairperson for the auditing committee/team which will audit (at regularly scheduled intervals) the treasurer's income and expense report(s), building funds, and societies/committees/teams funds, memorial funds, scholarships, education and discipleship funds, etc.; assist in coordinating the ministries of Peace Church; be a spiritual leader and a witness for Jesus Christ for the Peace Church family.**
- C. The Secretary shall: record all minutes at Church Council, Annual Meeting, and all Special Meetings; announce the Annual Meeting and all Special meetings; respond to all Correspondence concerning the Peace Church family; be responsible for the safe-keeping of all important documents (including, but not limited to deeds, etc.); assist the Peace Church historian team in keeping a list of all members and their addresses, and appropriate membership information; assist in coordinating the ministries of Peace Church; be a spiritual leader and a witness for Jesus Christ for the Peace Church family.**
- D. The Treasurer shall: keep an accurate record of all Peace Church finances (income, expenses, funds, benevolences, etc.); make payments, authorized by Church Council; report monthly at Church Council meetings; report annually at the Annual Meeting of the Peace Church family; assist in preparing the annual Peace Church family budget; maintain all insurance and contract records; assist in coordinating the ministries of Peace Church; be a spiritual leader and a witness for Jesus Christ for the Peace Church family.**

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- E. All Church Council members are encouraged and shall willingly volunteer and/or be appointed (all Church Council members have the right to decline to serve on any committee/team) to fill the following committee/team positions (the following list is not all inclusive):**
- 1. Special fund raisers such as: the pancake breakfast; the ham supper; pie sales; etc.**
 - 2. Building and Grounds maintenance such as: lawn mowing; snow plowing; cleaning committee; building projects; building repair; equipment purchase and maintenance; etc.**
 - 3. Sanctuary preparations such as: candles; flowers; altar cloths (paraments); banners; posting hymn page numbers; etc.**
 - 4. Spiritual growth such as: baptisms; the Lord's supper/Communion preparation; confirmation classes; new member's classes; prayer meetings; Sunday morning worship celebrations; etc.**
 - 5. Christian education and discipleship such as: Bible studies; Christian book studies; Christian movie viewing; etc.**
 - 6. Special worship programs such as: Christmas program; Christmas decorations; Easter Sunrise worship celebration; Easter decorations; Sunday evening worship celebrations; Memorial Day; Veterans Day; Mother's Day; Father's Day; etc.**
- F. All chairpersons of all societies/committees/teams shall report to the Church Council at appropriate intervals, or whenever requested by the Church Council.**

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Article 6: The Pastor

A. Term of Office

- 1. The Pastor shall establish a covenant relationship with the Peace Church family to be negotiated by the Pastor and the Church Council for a mutually beneficial specified time period stated specifically in the covenant relationship.**
 - a. The covenant relationship between the Pastor and the Peace Church family will be signed by the Church Council President and the Pastor.**
 - b. A copy of the covenant relationship will be kept on file by the Church Council Secretary.**
- 2. The covenant relationship between the Pastor and the Peace Church family can be discontinued by either party with a 90 day notification, or another time period, not less than 60 days, by mutual consent.**

B. Ministries, Expectations, and Rights of the Pastor

- 1. The Pastor shall be a witness to Jesus Christ.**
- 2. The Pastor shall preach during the Sunday morning worship celebration.**
 - a. If for any extenuating circumstances the Pastor is unavailable to preach during a Peace Church worship celebration, the Church Council shall seek another preacher to fill the pulpit.**
- 3. The Pastor shall preach during special worship celebrations such as: Easter; Christmas; Thanksgiving; Pentecost; etc.**
 - a. If the Church Council would like to invite a special speaker or another preacher to one of the Peace Church worship celebrations, the Church Council will seek the approval of the Pastor before any invitation is extended.**
- 4. The Pastor shall officiate at: Baptisms; weddings; funerals; etc.**
 - a. If a member of Peace Church desires to have another pastor officiate or participate in a Baptism, wedding, or funeral, they must first receive the approval of the Pastor and the Church Council.**

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- 5. The Pastor shall coordinate the ministries of the Peace Church family with the Church Council.**
- 6. The Pastor shall administer the sacraments/ordinances of the Lord's Supper/Communion and baptism.**
 - a. The Peace Church family believes in the Priesthood of all believers. Therefore, in the Pastor's absence, any member of Church Council can administer the sacraments/ordinances of the Lord's Supper/Communion and baptism.**
- 7. The Pastor shall work with the spiritual outreach team, appointed by the Church Council, to care for the members of the Peace Church family.**
- 8. The Pastor shall coordinate the worship celebrations with: the Praise Team; all Peace Church musicians; the Peace Church decoration team; the Church Council; etc.**
- 9. The Pastor shall coordinate the bulletin with the bulletin designer to prepare for the worship celebration each Sunday (except for extenuating circumstances).**
- 10. The Pastor shall report monthly to the Church Council concerning Peace Church ministries.**
- 11. The Pastor shall report annually to the Peace Church family at the Annual Meeting concerning Peace Church ministries.**
- 12. The Pastor shall participate by the writing of an article for the Peace Church newsletter.**
- 13. The Pastor shall be available for counseling at a mutually agreeable time and place.**
- 14. The Pastor has the right to belong to whatever Association(s) of Churches and ministerial alliances the Holy Spirit leads to join.**
- 15. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees/teams.**
- 16. The Pastor can not officiate or participate at any homosexual, bi-sexual, or transgender wedding, baptism, or funeral anywhere during their tenure at Peace Church (please refer to the Peace Church in Christ Position Statement on "Biblical Sexual Ethics and Homosexuality").**

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17. The Pastor is expected to take time off: during each week; during a vacation time; during a continuing education week; during any personal illness; during family emergencies; and during holiday seasons.
18. The Pastor shall not be expected to do all of the ministry of Peace Church.
19. The Pastor shall develop spiritual leaders from the Peace Church family.
20. The Pastor shall take the necessary time to prepare the sermon and Bible studies every week.
21. The Pastor's salary shall be promptly paid every two weeks and shall be sufficient to relieve the Pastor of temporal cares as far as possible, and to preserve the dignity between Pastor and the Peace Church family.
22. When the Peace Church family extends a call to a Pastor, the Peace Church family will provide compensation for the moving expenses of the Pastor.
23. The Peace Church family will offer the Pastor the parsonage for personal living space. The Peace Church family will be responsible for the utilities, maintenance, and upkeep of the parsonage.

Article 7: Finances

- A. The Peace Church family believes in "tithing" as God's way of provision for the Peace Church family.
 1. "Tithing" means: 10% of the gross of one's finances, time, talents, gifts, abilities, etc. (please refer to Genesis 28:22; Hebrews 7:1-10).
 2. Peace Church believes that Malachi 3:8-12 and Luke 6:38 are a promise of provision by God to the Church.
 3. 1 Corinthians 16:2
- B. The Peace Church family also believes in special "fund raisers" to assist in the provision of the Peace Church family.
 1. "Gifting" is above and beyond the 10% Tithe.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 16:2 and Romans 15:25-29 talk about "gifting".

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- C. The budget of the Peace Church family will be formulated by the Church Council President, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and the Pastor. It will then be presented to and voted on by the Church Council to present to the Peace Church family at the Peace Church family Annual Meeting. Upon approval of the Peace Church family at the Annual Meeting, the budget will take effect.**
- 1. All members of the Peace Church family have the right to voice his/her opinion both pro and con concerning the budget at the Peace Church Annual meeting.**
 - 2. Amendments/alterations to the proposed budget may be moved, discussed, and voted upon separately, prior to the question of the entire budget.**
 - 3. The budget can be passed by a simple majority vote of all members present (as long as a quorum of voting members are present).**
- D. The budget will contain at least: Church support (including tithes and fund raising), and benevolences.**

Article 8: Conflict Resolution/Management

- A. Peace Church will approach conflict resolution/management by the Biblical models set forth in the Bible:**
- 1. Matthew 18:15**
 - 2. 1 Corinthians 5:1-13;**
 - 3. 2 Corinthians 2:6-8;**
 - 4. Galatians 6:1;**
 - 5. 1 Timothy 5:19.**
- B. Upon invitation from the Peace Church Council, an invitation to a third party for conflict resolution(s) may be extended to any association(s) or denomination(s) that we are affiliated with.**

Article 9: Statements

**Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI
Position Statement On**

Biblical Sexual Ethics and Homosexuality

We, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, believe that the Biblical standard of sexual morality for all Christians is chastity, that is, sexual abstinence in singleness and fidelity in marriage.

We, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, believe that marriage must follow God's creation order given in the Bible, that is, marriage must only be between two people, one biological male and one biological female (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:18-24; Matthew 19:3-12).

We believe, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, that homosexuality (both in practice and in orientation), bisexuality, and transgender are sin and contradicts God's creation intention of complementarity (wholly biological otherness) between all human biological males and biological females (Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-11).

We believe, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, that the Bible never endorses or condones genital sexual expressions between same-sex, bisexual or transgender friends. Therefore, we, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, reject same-sex, bisexual, and transgender unions as incompatible with Biblical teaching.

We believe, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, since homosexuality, bisexuality, and transgender are sin (as stated above), that we must reject the ordination of all homosexual, bisexual, and transgender clergy person(s).

We believe, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, that our Church must welcome all sinners, affirming them as persons of value in God's sight. But like Jesus, who boldly commanded the adulterous woman the Jewish leaders brought to Him, "...from now on do not sin again..." (John 8:11), the welcoming Church must steadfastly refuse to affirm any type of sinful behavior.

We affirm, therefore, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, that we must be a "welcoming but not affirming" Church. Therefore, all practicing homosexual, bisexual, and transgender persons can not be members of Peace Church in Christ.

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Position Statement On**

Sexual Ethics and Homosexuality

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We affirm, therefore, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, that this Church family will not be a member of any denomination that has “welcoming and affirming” Churches as part of their fellowship.

Furthermore, we reject, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, all homosexual, bisexual, and transgender caucuses within any denomination that Peace Church affiliates with.

Furthermore, we will not allow, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, any homosexual, bisexual, or transgender representatives on any of our Church boards and any of our Church committees, or to be pastors or teachers of our Church in any capacity.

Furthermore, we will not allow, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, authorization of any same-sex, bisexual, or transgender weddings on Church property.

Furthermore, we will not allow, as members of the Peace Church in Christ, Browntown, WI, any currently serving Pastor of this Church to perform same-sex, bisexual, or transgender weddings anywhere during their tenure at this Church.

February, 2015