Ethics for Congregations
Inventory

Part of being a healthy and vital congregation includes looking regularly at our systems and practices. This inventory facilitates a self-assessment of how a congregation or organization functions as an ethical community.

Each of the statements below reflect the Code of Ethics that is part of the Church of the Brethren's Ethics for Congregations polity. This is not meant to be a grade card by which organizations are graded, but rather a means to identify practices to celebrate or that need attention as a community.

Prayerfully discuss the responses as a group. Speak for yourself and refrain from making accusations. If you can, point to documents or policies that guide the congregation and support ethical conduct.

As a congregation-	*Always*	*Usually*	*Often*	*Rarely*	*Never*
1. We embody our traditional posture of separation of faith from politics by refraining from using our non-profit status to support political candidates.					
2. We honor the creative work of others by securing copyright permissions and compensating those who share their creative work with us.					
3. We seek to meet invoice due dates.					
4. We strive to not abuse discount privileges or use our standing in the community to solicit gifts, or use our non-profit status to compete unfairly with local businesses.					
5. We work to avoid Dual Relationships or Conflicts of Interest.					
6. We strive to be witnesses to Christ's peace in our relationships with one another and our wider community, especially in sharing our message and resources and how we speak to political issues of the day.					
7. We send delegates to Annual and District Conferences.					
8. We financially support denominational and district ministries.					

As a congregation-	*Always*	*Usually*	*Often*	*Rarely*	*Never*
9. We work cooperatively with other denominations in our community, refraining from proselytizing members from other faith communities.					
10. We support causes or organizations that reflect the historical and theological understanding of the church, and avoid partnering with groups that may detract from our stated mission.					
11. We seek to treat one another with love and respect, conducting the business of the church openly and according to our beliefs.					
12. We adequately compensate guest speakers, interim pastors, and other leaders who provide professional services for the congregation.					
13. We are a people of reconciliation and seek to resolve disputes or concerns through peaceful means rather than resorting to public courts for a resolution.					
14. We work to ensure that every person has access to our facilities and ministries.					
15. We aim to be sensitive to persons with special needs and seek to accommodate them with adequate access to our worship and pastoral services.					
16. Our call to discipleship prompts us to encourage and instruct our members in maintaining lifestyles, attitudes and actions that reflect the example and teachings of Christ.					
17. Our leaders responsibly and transparently manage all the resources and funds entrusted to them in the course of their duties.					
18. We address promptly incidents of dissent among us and have a method in place for seeking resolution and reconciliation.					
19. We express our gratitude to all those who contribute to the church's work and worship.					
20. We endeavor to maintain an environment and program free of sexual, psychological, or physical abuse and harassment.					

As a congregation-	*Always*	*Usually*	*Often*	*Rarely*	*Never*
21. We take accusations of abuse or harassment seriously and deal with them forthrightly, promptly, and fairly.					
22. We strive to be fair and equitable in our support of our staff, adopting the Guidelines for Pastor's Salaries and Benefits as our guide for determining what is adequate compensation.					
23. We adjust expectations and time requirements appropriate to scale, making use of the Integrated Ministry Agreement and Shared Ministry Priorities tools.					
24. We have an advisory committee that meets regularly with staff members in an advocacy and counseling capacity.					
25. We facilitate regular performance evaluation of all staff by providing opportunities for appropriate congregational input.					
26. We discourage our members from inviting former pastors to return to perform pastoral functions, such as weddings and funerals.					
27. Our leaders execute the duties of their office in accordance with congregational by-laws.					
28. We entrust our leaders with the work of the church and expect them to avoid asserting undue influence in the matters of the congregation or seeking favors by nature of their position.					
29. We address personnel or other sensitive business in confidential forums, and outline expectations of confidence with all involved.					
30. We ask that our members not seek to influence decisions outside of established open forums through alternative and closed meetings or by campaigns through alternative media—in letters, by phone, or on the internet.					