

BYLAWS

**MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH
175 SOMERSET STREET, NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. 08901
TEL.: 732-828-3165**

NAME

The name of this Church is The Magyar Reformed Church New Brunswick, New Jersey.

PURPOSE

This Church is a vital part of the Universal Christian Church adhering to the Reformed tradition which came into her inheritance through the venerable historic channel of the Magyar Reformed Faith. It belongs to the Hungarian Reformed Church in America - Eastern Classis. It participates in the common tasks of the Hungarian Reformed Church in American and together with them forms a living fellowship. Its purpose is to bring men and women, young people and children into the knowledge and service of God; into the transforming presence of Christ; and into the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, that people may be made over into His likeness; to teach and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, both in English and Hungarian; to continue the ministry of fellowship, compassion and reconciliation; and to do good to all men, especially to those who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:11) both locally and worldwide.

DOCTRINAL STANDARD

The Heidelberg Catechism and the Second Helvetic Confession.

LEGAL STATUS AND PROPERTY

This congregation shall belong to the Hungarian Reformed Church in America - Eastern Classis. It shall be governed by the Constitution of said Church and by the rules and bylaws of this congregation hereby set forth.

This congregation may in its corporate name, hold and receive title of and to any property, real or personal with power to mortgage, sell or convey the same, in accordance with the minutes of July 20, 1925 (par. 7) and the laws of the State of New Jersey.

SEAL

The circumscription of the round Seal, THE MAGYAR REFORMED CHURCH, NEW

BRUNSWICK, N.J. shall be the official name of this Church (in English) with the year of its incorporation 1905 (First organized in 1903).

I. CONGREGATION

A) Membership Description

1. Voting Members. Baptized Persons are members of the Church. Persons received into full communion with this congregation by confirmation, profession of faith or letter of transfer shall be Voting Members. The first three section under “Responsibilities of church members: Worship Regularly, Commune Faithfully, Donate Generously” shall determine full voting membership. They are described more fully under “Responsibilities of church members”
2. Unconfirmed Members. Persons baptized but not Members shall be enrolled as Unconfirmed Members. Unconfirmed members are welcomed to Voting Membership after completing an adult confirmation process, and fulfilling responsibilities as described in “Voting Member Responsibilities”, sections 1, 2 and 3.
3. Non-Resident Members - Live too far from the Church but prefer to retain their membership with the Church. They shall be entitled to all rights if they keep the Church office informed as to their address and make treasured yearly contributions.
4. Non-Members - Are welcome at all time in our Church. As guests, they may partake in the worship services and in the sacraments. They shall have no right to church weddings or church funerals in the sanctuary without the approval of Consistory. Their children are welcome at church school and confirmation classes but shall live with no other rights.

B) Responsibilities of church members

Members of the Church shall live sober, righteous, and godly lives. They shall take an active part in the life and work of the Church which shall include:

1. Worship Regularly - Attend, God willing, the public, corporate services of the Church each Lord’s Day and on such special occasions as the high and holy festival days of the Church year.
2. Commune Faithfully - Fellowship with Christ and other Christians about His Table according to the traditions of our Church.
3. Donate Generously - Practice Christian stewardship in regard to our material possessions, contributing liberally toward the Church’s maintenance and benevolent undertakings. Members are urged to use the weekly offering envelopes. The amount of financial contribution shall be determined by the faith and conscience of every member, not as to men but as to God. The Church shall, however, each year, set a certain minimum, equivalent to dues and classis assessment, and only

- those persons shall be considered voting members who contribute at least this minimum amount. Suggested minimum annual donation \$100.
4. Learn Continuously - Be teachable - to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and in the application of His spirit and Teachings to life. Parents shall have their children baptized, bring them to church school and prepare them for confirmation in due time; provide adequate Christian training for their entire household; observe diligently private and family devotions; and take advantage of the official papers and other publications of the Church.
 5. Serve Willingly - Spend self and be spent in the service of God and be helpful to our fellowmen, never counting the cost. Members of legal age shall not only accept office, but when elected shall faithfully serve according to ability until term of office ends. Each member shall strive to participate in the work of the Church organizations, and Committees and follow the established law and authorities.
 6. Witness Courageously - Confront persons with the Gospel in order to bring others to Christ and the unchurched under the influence of the Church, always enforcing the testimony of our lips by the manner of our Christian concern, attitudes and actions.

C. Rights

All members are entitled to a full share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of the church. All members shall have the right to attend divine worship services, live with the blessings of the sacraments, use the Church buildings and the Pastor's services to conduct special rites (including confirmation, weddings, renewal of wedding vow, funeral services in the Church) and call upon the Church for Christian teaching of their children.

Members, who have attained age of 18 years shall be entitled at congregational meetings to voice and vote, and at the age of 21 to hold office, if they meet full voting requirement (see Responsibilities of church members sections 1, 2 and 3). No members shall be elected into office who did not attend church services, live with the Lord's Supper for a year or has not donated his affordable yearly contribution.

D. Termination of Membership

1. If a member shall neglect to partake of the Holy Communion or to contribute to the support of the Church or continuously absent himself from the public worship for one year, such person shall be reminded of his duties by Consistory. If after the reminder he continues in such neglect of duty for another year, the Consistory shall notify him that he is no longer in good and regular standing, and his name shall be placed on an inactive list. If he shall give evidence of change of heart and conduct, his name shall be returned to the active membership roll

- of the congregation.
2. It is regarded as the duty of members in good standing to ask for letters of dismissal and recommendation, stating the name of the Church with which they wish to unite. If any member shall unite with another congregation without a letter of transfer, Consistory shall erase his name from the Church register.
 3. Membership termination shall be acknowledged by Consistory upon death or voluntary withdrawal from the rolls.

E. Membership Reinstatement

A former members may request to be reinstated. As he will be considered a new members, he does not have any past financial obligations to fulfill.

II. Consistory and its Officers

The Consistory of the Church shall consist of the Pastor and 15 elders, half of them from the English speaking service and half of them from the Hungarian speaking service.

A. Pastor - Is a servant of God devoting himself entirely to the service of the church, and therefore, as long as he properly fulfills his obligations of the sacred office he shall be regarded with honor, obedience and love.

1. Duties - It shall be the duty of the Pastor to conduct worship services in English and Hungarian; administer the Holy Sacraments in Church as well as in private homes and hospitals for the sick, perform marriage ceremonies and arrange for burials; instruct the confirmant and perform the confirmation rites; keep a record of all services performed and issue certificates whenever requested; take pastoral care of the members and visit them whenever needed; visit the sick; direct the work of religious education; co-sign all contracts, loans, deeds; issue an annual report of his work to the congregation; prepare in due time all reports requested by the Synod or the Church; and supervise all the work of the congregation and the organizations connected with the Church.
2. Rights
 - a. Salary - Shall consist of salary (paid semi-monthly); auto grant; social security; pension and the use of a house (including all utilities) or housing allowance.
 - b. Vacation - Shall be one (1) month annually and taken either consecutively or periodically with Consistory's approval. Up to one week's vacation may be carried over to the following year with not more than five (5) weeks to be taken in a given year. The carried over week must be used within the year or forfeited.
 - c. Raises - Shall be proposed by the Financial Committee to Consistory and voted upon by the congregation at the annual congregational meeting.

- d. Leave - IF for any reason the Pastor must be away for more than two days, he must give proper notice and obtain the approval of the Officers of Consistory.
- e. No other clergyman shall perform any religious ceremony in the Church without his consent.

B. Elders

1. Consistory consists of 15 elders
2. Election - Elders shall be elected at the annual congregational meeting upon the recommendation of the nominating committee. Each voting member has the right to make additional nominations from the floor.
3. Qualifications - An Elder shall be a member of good standing of the congregation, of an exemplary Christian life, 21 years of age (or older), a member of the congregation for two consecutive years.
4. Term of Office - An Elder shall be elected for three years and shall be ineligible for one year after serving two consecutive terms.
5. Rights and Duties - It shall be the right and duty of an Elder to visit the Church's member with the Pastor, to cooperate in all activities of the Church, to watch over the spiritual and material interest of the congregation, participate in the collecting and counting of the offering, and to attend Consistory meeting voicing his opinion and have voting privileges.
6. Dismissal - If an Elder is absent at three consecutive meeting without valid reason, he shall be dismissed from office.
7. Officers. The following officers will be elected yearly from the 15 elected Elders:
 - a. Chief Elder - With the exception of the Nominating Committee, he shall be an ex officio members of all committees. In the name of the congregation, he shall co-sign all contracts, loans, deeds, and may co-sign checks; be in charge of the preparation of the Lord's Table, the work of the congregation, and be responsible for carrying out the instructions of the congregation and Consistory; with the Pastor, represent the congregation at worldly courts; oversee all Church buildings issue and annual written report of his work at the annual congregational meeting. In the absence of a chief elder one of the vice-chief elders would fill in the office for the term, based on the the consistory's vote.
 - b. Vice Chief Elders - (one from English and one from Hungarian) - Shall assign ushers, oversee the passing out of bulletins, oversee counting of offering, shall assist the Chief Elder in fulfilling his duties, responsibilities, and obligations, such as the preparation of the Lord's Table. In his absence, they shall assume all his responsibilities except co-signing of contracts, loans, deeds, and checks. They shall keep an accurate record of church attendance. With the exception of the Nominating Committee, they shall be ex officio members of all committees.

- c. Secretary - Shall keep an official record of all Consistory and congregational meetings; notify Consistory members of all meetings; keep a record of attendance at Consistory meetings; and issue the required correspondence, and sign papers as needed, and co-sign checks.
- d. Treasurer - Shall have charge of all monies for congregational and benevolent support; co-sign with the Chief Elder all checks; keep a record of all congregational receipts and expenditures; submit a monthly written report to Consistory and the Church to the congregation; and chairman the Financial Committee. In all financial transactions, he shall follow the instructions of Consistory which can request him to make a report to the financial status at any time. The Treasurer shall be bonded and insured.
- e. If a new officer would need to be elected in midterm, and no consistory members would be able to take the vacant office, the consistory will appoint a church member to be a consistory member and fill that office. At the following year's congregation meeting the the appointed person can be officially elected as consistory member by the congregational meeting to start a new term.
- f. Honorary Office - May be granted by the congregation to an officer who served the congregation with particular faithfulness for a long period of time. Such an election shall be fore life and revocable only by the congregation, if an honorary officer be unworthy of such distinction. Such officers being only titles shall involve no special obligations, but such officers may attend Consistory meetings in advisory capacity without vote. The congregation shall expect the honorary officers to show forth an example to others.

C. Auditors

Three members of the congregation who are nominated by the nominating committee and elected at the congregational meeting to serve a three-year term shall serve as auditing committee. Auditors shall be elected for successive three-year terms in an annual rotation and shall be ineligible for one year after completing the three-year term. Quarterly they shall follow the audit procedures established by the Financial Committee to examine all the financial reports to Consistory and at the annual congregational meeting submit and annual report. All church organizations are subject to audit.

D.

III. Church Employees

A) Pastor - His duties and rights as described in Part II:A:1-2

B) Choir Director

1. Duties - Shall be responsible for all the musical preparations and organizations as required by the Church under the direction of the Pastor and the Worship Committee.
2. Compensation and Raises - Shall be proposed by the Financial Committee to Consistory and voted upon by the congregation at

- the annual congregation meeting.
3. Vacation and Sick Pay - Vacation shall be two weeks consecutively or periodically with Consistory's approval. One (Sunday) sick leave every six months with pay is permissible.
 4. Other matters relating to the Choir Director can be found in the most recent contract/job description. The Choir Director shall be under the supervision of the Worship Committee Chairman.
- C) Custodian
1. Duties - Shall perform all the necessary duties agreed upon to keep the property(s) owned by the Church serviceable and clean under the direction of the Property Committee.
 2. Vacation - Shall be two weeks consecutively or periodically with Consistory's approval
 3. Compensation and Raises - Shall be proposed by the Financial Committee to Consistory and voted upon by the congregation at the annual congregation meeting.
 4. Other matters relating to the Custodian can be found in the most recent contract/job description. The Custodian shall be under the supervision of the Property Committee's designee.
- D) Secretary
1. Duties - Shall perform all the necessary duties agreed upon.
 2. Vacation - Shall be two weeks consecutively or periodically with Consistory's approval
 3. Compensation and Raises - Shall be proposed by the Financial Committee to Consistory and voted upon by the congregation at the annual congregation meeting.
 4. Other matters relating to the Secretary can be found in the most recent contract/job description. The Secretary shall be under the direction of the Consistory and supervision of the Pastor.
- E. Additional Staff - Additional staff positions, as deemed necessary by Consistory, may be added as considered needed. Each position will be governed by a contract and job description as provided by Consistory.

IV. Congregational and Consistory Meetings

A. Congregational

1. The supreme legislative and administrative power of the congregation is vested in the congregation itself, assembled at meeting duly and legally called. The congregation shall have one regular meeting on the last Sunday of January or the first Sunday of February. Special congregational meetings shall be held in case of need by the request of the Consistory's majority or upon the well established written petition of one tenth of the voting members of the congregation.
2. The Pastor shall issue a written call for such meetings and shall announce the date of the meeting from the pulpit of two

- preceding Sundays.
3. The congregational meeting shall be constituted by members whose names are stated on the membership list prepared by Consistory ten days prior to the annual congregational meeting. Twenty percent of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
 4. It is the prerogative of the congregational meeting in every case to decide such a question as making or amending the Constitution and Bylaws of the Church; the call an election of a Pastor; the election of Officers and Elders the acceptance of the annual financial statements and the approval of the budget; the buying and selling of property; building projects and extensive repairs and other expenditures above \$25,000, major remodeling of church property . Church members wanting to place a motion on the agenda shall submit their motion, recommendation, or proposal in writing to Consistory for review at the regular Consistory meeting prior to the congregational meeting.
 5. The order of congregational meetings shall be as follows:
 - a. Opening of the meeting
 - b. Reading and Acceptance of minutes
 - c. Report of the Pastor
 - d. Report of Chief Elder
 - e. Report of Treasurer
 - f. Report of Auditors and approval of Treasurer's report
 - g. Report of Committees
 - h. Elections
 - i. Miscellaneous reports and new business
 - j. Appeals
 - k. Adjournment
 6. The Pastor shall preside at all congregational meetings. When the Pastor is personally involved in a discussion, the Chief Elder shall preside. When the congregation is without a Pastor, the Pastor, The Dean of the Classis or the Administrator appointed by him shall preside at the meeting. No congregational meeting shall be held without a minister presiding over the same.
 7. At congregational meetings, voting shall be by voice or by standing vote, but, upon the request of one fourth of the members assembled, voting shall be by roll call or by ballot. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. All speakers shall maintain the dignity of the congregational meeting. Remarks must at all time be pertinent to the subject matter. The Presiding Pastor shall have the authority to withdraw the right to speak in the event the said members is not speaking in favor of or against the subject matter is delving into personalities of any member of when common decency demands the same.
 8. The Secretary of the Consistory shall keep a record of the

proceedings of the congregational meetings. A copy of said minutes shall be provided to the congregation one week prior to the annual congregational meeting, made available at the church, and to be approved at the next annual congregational meeting and shall be authenticated by the signature of two members present at said congregational meeting.

9. **Electronic Participation and Voting in meetings**

Annual meetings shall take place in person. Members observing electronically will not have the right to vote or take part in discussion.

B. Consistory Meetings

1. Between congregational meetings, Consistory shall act on all Church matters at their monthly meeting being responsible for all its actions to the congregation. Special Consistory meeting shall be called by the Pastor or by the request of a majority of Elders. Notice of special consistory meeting and its purpose shall be given to each Elder no less than 48 hours prior to the planned meeting.
2. At consistory meetings, majority of members shall constitute a quorum. Voting shall be made by voice or by show of hands; but by the request of three (3) Elders voting shall be by roll call or secret ballot.
3. Consistory shall hold open meetings, but by the request of the chairman or of one fourth of the members, closed sessions shall be held.
4. Consistory shall transact the business of the Church, make provision to carry out the instructions of the congregation, watch faithfully over the spiritual and material interest of the church, keep a complete and accurate record of the receipt of new members, transfers, suspension and erasures of names. For the annual congregational meeting it shall prepare a list of voters which may be amended by the congregational meeting. Consistory shall approve all bills and expenditures under \$10,000.
5. The order of Consistory meetings shall be as follows:
 - a. Prayer and opening the meeting
 - b. Reading and acceptance of minutes
 - c. Reading approval of Treasurer's report
 - d. Report of officers
 - e. Report of committees
 - f. Unfinished and new business
 - g. Adjournment
6. Consistory shall appoint such committees as it may find necessary to accomplish its work. The Pastor and Chief Elder shall be ex-officio members of all committees.
7. The Secretary shall take minutes of the proceedings at all meetings, which shall be read and approved at the following meeting, who were present at the previous meeting and then recorded.
8. A motion adopted by the Consistory may be appealed at the congregational meeting if the reconsideration of the motion in

Consistory fails. The petition containing the signature of 10 percent of the total voting membership must be handed to the Pastor within 20 days from the date the motion had been reconsidered. The adopted motion under appeal shall be suspended until a favorable decision at the congregational meeting.

9. Electronic Participation and Voting in meetings

- a) Meetings of members may be held by remote or hybrid means.
- b) Members participating remotely are considered present and may vote.
- c) The board can adopt procedures for remote participation and voting.

V. Committees - Consistory shall each year organize itself into standing committees in order to fulfill its task. These committees shall have the right to enlarge their membership with regular Church members. The chairman can be an elder or a church member in good standing, who reports to Consistory at least quarterly on the activities, plans, and recommendations of the committee.

VI. Organizations - All societies which are organized within the Church shall be under the protection of the Church and the supervision of Consistory, and shall report annually to the congregation. To be eligible for office in such organization a candidate must be a member of the Church, and installed in office in the Church by the Pastor together with other officers of the congregation. Their records should be submitted annually to consistory or on request.

VII. Miscellaneous

1. Donations for services such as weddings, baptisms are voluntary but are within the tradition of our Church. It concerns the services of minister, organist and custodian. A guideline may be given by the consistory.
2. Funeral Services and weddings of non-church members cannot be held in Church except in special cases of former members when Consistory may grant permission under certain conditions.
3. Fees for usage of the auditorium shall be determined by Consistory.
4. All questions not covered in these By-Laws shall be controlled by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Hungarian Reformed Church in America.
5. All business proceedings of this Church shall be governed by "Robert's Rules of Order - Revised". A member in good and regular standing shall have the right to use the language of his preference (Hungarian or English); translations shall be provided or requested.
6. Decisions shall be made by a majority vote.
7. These Bylaws may be amended by a majority of all voting members present at an annual meeting or a meeting called for the purpose,

provided that (a) written notice of such amendment shall have been sent to each voting member at least 10 days before such vote; and (b) the proposed amendment shall have been read from the pulpit or printed in the Sunday Bulletin at least two Sundays preceding the meetings. The Bylaws shall be reviewed every five (5) years by a special committee appointed by the Church Consistory for this purpose.

8. These Bylaws were adopted at the congregational meeting of January 24, 2026 and shall become effective on _____