



Constitution of  
The Canadian Society  
of the Mothers' Union

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July 1, 2016

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**CONSTITUTION OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF  
THE MOTHERS' UNION**

**Preamble**

WHEREAS The Canadian Society of The Mothers' Union is a Christian organization that promotes the well being of families worldwide by developing prayer and spiritual growth in families, and by studying and reflecting on parenthood, family life and marriage and their place in society,

AND WHEREAS The Canadian Society of The Mothers' Union equips its members to take practical action to improve conditions for families, both nationally and in the communities in which they live, for the objectives stated above,

AND WHEREAS, being an autonomous organization, it is desirable that The Canadian Society of The Mothers' Union have a constitution that embodies its vision, aim and objectives, and values and that provides direction for its embodiment and procedures:

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT STATED AS THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CANADIAN SOCIETY OF THE MOTHERS' UNION AS FOLLOWS:

**Name**

1. The name of this organization is The Canadian Society of The Mothers' Union, hereinafter referred to as "Canadian Mothers' Union".

## **Definitions**

2. In this Constitution,

“Church” means The Anglican Church of Canada;

“Member” means a person who has been duly enrolled as a member of Canadian Mothers' Union and has paid her/his dues. She/he can vote at branch meetings;

“Lone Member” means a member who worships in a parish or church that has no branch or who is unable to attend branch meetings;

“Diocesan Member” means a member who supports Mothers' Union by paying dues, may attend rallies and conferences, but does not usually attend branch meetings;

“Canadian Council” means the duly constituted governing council. It includes the Canadian Council Executive, Coordinators, Past President, Diocesan Presidents and Diocesan Representatives;

“Canadian Council Executive” consists of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary and Chaplain of the Canadian Mothers' Union;

“Canadian Council Coordinators” means members of the Canadian Council elected on an as-needed basis to coordinate the activities of the Society, including but not limited to Link, Literature and Marketing, Lone Members, Newsletter, Historian, Northern Clergy Families' Fund, and Conferences;

“Diocesan Representative” means a member who is appointed by the Canadian Council to promote, encourage and institute new branches in dioceses that do not have a Diocesan Council but that may have active branches;

“Diocesan Council” means a duly constituted council for a Diocese. It consists of the Diocesan Executive, Coordinators, Past President and Branch Leaders;

“Diocesan Council Executive” consists of the Diocesan President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Chaplain;

“Diocesan Council Coordinators” means members of the Diocesan Council elected on an as-needed basis to coordinate the activities of Diocesan Council, including but not limited to Link, Literature and Marketing, Lone Members, and Historian;

“Branch Leader” is a member who has been elected to prepare and enroll members, chair meetings, attend and vote at Diocesan Council meetings and complete annual forms;

“Branch Executive” consists of the Branch Leader and an Assistant Leader (if applicable), Secretary, Treasurer (or a combination of the offices of Secretary and Treasurer), and Chaplain;

“National Organization” consists of all Canadian Council members, all past Canadian presidents and all Branch Leaders, all of whom are eligible to vote at biennial meetings;

“biennial meeting” means a meeting of the National Organization held in the second year of the Canadian Council’s term of office;

“national conference biennial meeting” means a meeting of the National Organization held in the fourth year of Canadian Council’s term of office. A national conference is usually held in conjunction with this meeting;

“cleric” includes a bishop, a priest or a deacon of the Church duly licensed and appointed to serve in a Diocese, church or parish;

“fiscal year” is the calendar year;

### **Vision, Aim and Objectives, and Values**

3. (1) The Canadian Mothers' Union upholds the vision, aim and objectives, and values as advanced by the Worldwide Mothers' Union.
- (2) The Mothers' Union **vision** is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful and flourishing relationships. This is the essence of our work.
- (3) Mothers' Union members **aim** to demonstrate the Christian faith in action through the transformation of communities worldwide.

Our objectives are:

- (a) to promote and support married life
- (b) to encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
- (c) to maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service,
- (d) to promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children, and
- (e) to help those whose family life has met with adversity.

Each member subscribes to the same **values**: Mothers' Union is a Christian mission organization working with people of all faiths and none. Mothers' Union is firmly rooted in a voluntary ethos centered on mutual respect and collaboration. Our governance, leadership and programs are undertaken and driven by members within their own communities worldwide.

### **Autonomy**

4. (1) While cherishing its links with The Worldwide Mothers' Union and accepting in principle the provisions of its Royal Charter of June, 1995, it is affirmed that the Canadian Mothers' Union is completely autonomous and is free to make its own by-laws, decisions, directions, regulations and rulings pursuant to this Constitution and its by-laws as adopted from time to time.
- (2) On or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of March in each year the Canadian President shall submit a report of the activities for the previous year to the Chair of the Board of Trustees of The Mothers' Union (the Worldwide President) with a copy to the Provincial Representative Trustee, the report to be sent to such addresses as are the current address of those recipients.

## **Canadian Mothers' Union and the Anglican Church Women**

5. With its worldwide links of prayer and fellowship, the Canadian Mothers' Union offers a special ministry to families, and values its links with the Canadian organization known as Anglican Church Women.

## **Membership**

6. (1) The membership comprises all enrolled members of the Canadian Mothers' Union.
- (2) The Diocesan membership comprises all members within a Diocese.
- (3) A person is eligible to be enrolled as a member if she/he is a Christian person baptized in the name of the Trinity and has declared her/his support for the vision, aim and objectives, and values as they are set out in this Constitution. This is achieved by praying, enabling and campaigning together.
- (4) A person shall be enrolled as a member in accordance with the provisions of “The Canadian Mothers’ Union Handbook” as they are comprised from time to time.

## **Chaplains**

6. (1) The Bishop of the Diocese in which the Canadian President-elect resides shall, on the recommendation of the Canadian Council-elect, appoint a Chaplain to the Canadian Council.
- (2) The Bishop of the Diocese in which the diocesan President-elect resides shall, on the recommendation of the Mothers' Union Diocesan Council appoint a Chaplain to the Mothers' Union Diocesan Council.
- (3) Whenever possible the incumbent cleric in a parish of the Church having a Branch shall be the Chaplain of that Branch.

## **Constituent Bodies**

### **National Organization**

7. (1) Each member of the National Organization or her/his proxy may vote at biennial meetings, national conference biennial meetings and their own Branch meetings.
- (2) A member who is entitled to more than one vote at a duly constituted biennial or national conference biennial meeting by virtue of holding more than one office may appoint, by a proxy procedure established by by-law, another enrolled member to exercise a vote on her/his behalf.

### **Canadian Council**

8. (1) The Canadian Council shall manage the business, property and affairs of the Canadian Mothers' Union.

- (2) The term of office of a member of the Canadian Council is four years, commencing on January 1 of the year following her/his election and expiring on December 31 of the fourth year thereafter.
- (3) The Canadian Council Elect shall determine the date of Installation of Canadian Council.
- (4) The Canadian Council shall meet at least five times in each calendar year and in addition shall meet immediately prior to a national conference biennial meeting; and a meeting may be held in person or by electronic or any other means.
- (5) One-third of the membership of the Canadian Council constitutes a quorum for purposes of a meeting of the Canadian Council.
- (6) The term of office of a member of the Canadian Council shall cease if the member
  - (a) submits a letter of resignation to the Recording Secretary of the Canadian Council, or
  - (b) in the opinion of the Executive of the Canadian Council fails to carry out her/his assigned tasks, to the detriment of Canadian Mothers' Union, or
  - (c) has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Canadian Council unless there are exceptional circumstances, or
  - (d) has died.
- (7) The Canadian Council may appoint a member to fill a vacancy in its membership.
- (8) A member may not hold the same office on Canadian Council for two consecutive terms unless the member has taken a hiatus of at least twelve consecutive months between the terms.
- (9) All members of the Canadian Council may vote at meetings of Canadian Council, her/his Branch, and biennial and national conference biennial meetings.

### **Biennial and National Conference Biennial Meetings**

9. (1) As the national governing council, the Canadian Council shall hold a meeting of the National Organization biennially, and a national conference, in conjunction with the biennial meeting held during the fourth year of its term of office.
- (2) The biennial meeting held by the Canadian Council in the second year of its term shall conduct such business as it may deem appropriate.



- (3) The national conference biennial meeting shall elect the succeeding Canadian Council and may conduct other business.
- (4) Any member may attend a biennial meeting or a national conference biennial meeting, but only members of the National Organization may vote at these meetings.
- (5) Financial support shall be given to Canadian Council and Incoming Canadian Council members to assist with travel expenses for biennial and national conference biennial meetings.
- (6) Should there be sufficient funds available Branch Leaders may be given financial assistance to encourage participation of voting delegates at biennial and national conference biennial meetings.
- (7) Conference Fees for Canadian Council Executive, immediate Past President, and the Coordinators shall be factored into the conference budget.

### **Canadian Council Elections**

11. (1) During the second half of its four-year term the Canadian Council shall invite members to be nominees for the next succeeding Canadian Council.
- (2) Members of a Diocesan Mothers' Union who wish to become the next succeeding Canadian Council Executive shall inform Canadian Council.
- (3) Upon acceptance by Canadian Council, the Diocesan Council shall establish a nominating committee to select candidates for positions on the Canadian Council Executive.
- (4) A Diocesan Council nominating committee shall submit a slate of candidates to the Canadian Council for presentation at the national conference biennial meeting.
- (5) A member of the National Organization may nominate a candidate from the floor of the meeting referred to in (4) herein provided that the candidate has consented in writing to the nomination.
- (6) The members of the National Organization shall first elect the Canadian President, and then shall elect the other members of the Canadian Council Executive and the Canadian Council Coordinators.

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### **Canadian Council Executive**

12. (1) The Canadian Council shall have an Executive, four members of whom shall constitute a quorum for purposes of a meeting of the Executive.

- (2) The Executive of the Canadian Council shall meet at the call of the Canadian President to conduct business of an urgent or emergency nature and to fulfill such other duties as may be delegated to the Executive by the Canadian Council from time to time.
- (3) All actions taken by the Executive of the Canadian Council shall be submitted for ratification by the Canadian Council at its next regular meeting.

### **Diocesan Mothers' Union**

13. (1) There shall be a Diocesan Mothers' Union, in each Diocese of the Church where Mothers' Union members are present.
- (2) Each member enrolled within a Diocese is a member of the Diocesan Mothers' Union for that Diocese.
- (3) A Diocesan Mothers' Union shall meet at least once annually to conduct business and other activities pursuant to the vision, aim and objectives, and values as set out in this Constitution.

### **Diocesan Council**

14. (1) Where numbers of members in a diocese allow it, a Diocesan Mothers' Union shall elect a Diocesan Council that shall promote and manage the work of Canadian Mothers' Union within the Diocese.
- (2) The term of office of a member of a Diocesan Council is two years, commencing on January 1 of the year following her/his election and expiring on December 31 of the second year thereafter, and such a member is eligible to be elected for one further term of two years.
- (3) A Diocesan Council shall meet at least four times in each calendar year and a meeting may be held in person or by electronic or any other means.
- (4) A report of the activities of the Diocesan Mothers' Union during the calendar year will be submitted to the Corresponding Secretary of the Canadian Council on or before December 31 in each year by the Diocesan President.
- (5) The members of a Diocesan Council may vote at meetings of their Diocesan Mothers' Union and at their own Branch meetings.
- (6) The term of office of a member of a Diocesan Council shall cease if the member
  - (a) submits a letter of resignation to the Secretary of the Diocesan Council, or
  - (b) in the opinion of the Executive of the Diocesan Council fails to carry out her/his assigned tasks, to the detriment of Canadian Mothers' Union, or

(c) has been absent from three consecutive meetings of the Diocesan Council unless there are exceptional circumstances, or

(d) has died.

(7) A Diocesan Council may appoint a member of a Diocesan Mothers' Union to fill a vacancy on the Diocesan Council.

### **Diocesan Council Executive**

15. (1) There shall be an Executive of each Diocesan Council, a simple majority of which shall constitute a quorum for meeting purposes.

(2) A Diocesan Council shall appoint the Diocesan Council Executive at the first meeting of the term of the Diocesan Council.

(3) The Executive of a Diocesan Council shall meet at the call of the Diocesan President to conduct business of an urgent or emergency nature, and to fulfill such other duties as may be delegated to that Executive by that Diocesan Council from time to time.

(4) Decisions made by an Executive of a Diocesan Council shall be submitted for ratification at the next regular meeting of the Diocesan Council.

### **Branches**

16. (1) With the consent of the incumbent cleric a Branch may be established in a parish or a church.

(2) A Branch shall enroll its members in accordance with the provisions of "The Canadian Mothers' Union Handbook" as they are comprised from time to time.

(3) With the consent of the incumbent cleric a Branch may elect as Branch Leader a person who is not a communicant of the Church if that person is a member in good standing of another Christian denomination and has been baptized in the name of the Trinity.

(4) In cooperation with and at the discretion of the Branch Chaplain a Branch shall conduct regular corporate worship that shall be integrated into the regular worship practices of the parish.

(5) Without limiting the provisions of (4) herein a Branch shall adhere to the provisions of the "Mothers' Union United in Prayer and Worship" text as they are comprised from time to time; share in corporate Holy Communion of the Church; and mark special observances of Lady Day (being March 25 in each year) and of Mothering Sunday (being the fourth Sunday in Lent in each year) as described in The Canadian Mothers' Union Handbook.

- (6) A Branch Leader shall present at each regular meeting of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese in which her/his branch is located a report of the activities of her/his Branch that have taken place since the last presented report.
- (7) Prior to December 1 in each year a Branch Leader shall submit to the Secretary of the Diocesan Council of the Diocese in which her/his branch is located an annual report of the activities of her/his Branch that have taken place since the last annual report.
- (8) If it appears that a Branch may cease to function the Branch Executive or any three of its members, or any six members of the Branch, shall notify in writing or by electronic means the Diocesan President, the Secretary of the Diocesan Council of the diocese in which the branch is located, the Chaplain of that diocese or the Diocesan Representative if applicable, and the Corresponding Secretary of the Canadian Council, indicating the status of the branch and requesting consultation or other assistance.

### **Branch Executive**

17. (1) The members of a Branch shall elect biennially a Branch Executive.
  - (2) The term of office of a member of the Executive of a Branch shall be two years, commencing on January 1 of the year following her/his election and expiring on December 31 of the second year thereafter, and a member is eligible to be elected for one further term of two years.
  - (3) A simple majority of the Executive of a Branch shall constitute a quorum.
  - (4) The Executive of a Branch shall manage the business and affairs of the Branch.
  - (5) Decisions made by the Executive of a Branch shall be submitted for ratification at the next regular meeting of the Branch.
  - (6) Without limiting the provisions of (4) herein the Executive of a Branch shall initiate, coordinate and deliver the programs of the Branch with the involvement of the full membership of the Branch and in furtherance of the vision, aim and objectives, and values as set out in this Constitution.

### **Diocesan Representatives**

18. The Canadian Council may appoint a Diocesan Representative for any diocese(s) containing one or more Branches, or members within that diocese may do so.

### **Dues for Membership**

19. (1) At a national conference biennial meeting the National Organization shall establish the dues to be payable by members, and shall determine the apportionment of those dues among the Canadian Council and the Diocesan Council of each Diocese.

- (2) A motion to increase the dues shall be forwarded by the Canadian Council to members of the National Organization at least forty-five days prior to the meeting at which it will be considered.
- (3) Branches and Diocesan Councils may negotiate the apportionment of dues to remain with the Branch and to be remitted to Diocesan Council.
- (4) At a national conference biennial meeting the National Organization shall establish, and the Canadian Council shall later remit, a portion of the dues to Mary Sumner House in England as part of membership to The Worldwide Mothers' Union.
- (5) On or before December 1 in each year the branch treasurer shall remit that portion of the dues that are required to be forwarded to the Diocesan Treasurer.
- (6) Prior to December 31 in each year the Diocesan Treasurer shall remit to the Canadian Treasurer the dues for membership that are required to be forwarded to the Canadian Council.
- (7) If there is no Diocesan Council within a Diocese, the Treasurer of each Branch in that Diocese shall remit the dues for membership directly to the Canadian Treasurer.
- (8) A Lone Member shall pay her/his dues for membership directly to the Lone Members Coordinator of the Canadian Council.
- (9) A Diocesan Member shall pay her/his dues for membership to her/his Diocesan Treasurer, or directly to the Canadian Treasurer if there is no Diocesan Council where she/he resides.

### **Charitable Appeals and Funds**

20. With the approval of the incumbent cleric and of the parish governing body of that parish, a Branch may conduct charitable appeals and other activities in that parish in furtherance of the vision, aim and objectives, and values as they are set out in this Constitution.
21. The Canadian Council may establish special appeal and other funds and may make by-laws or issue directives with respect to the management and distribution of money from those funds.

### **Constitutional Amendments; Enactment, Amendment, Repeal of By Laws**

22. The Canadian Council, a Diocesan Council or a Branch may initiate the procedure to amend this Constitution, or to enact, amend or repeal a by-law made pursuant to this Constitution.

23. An amendment to this Constitution, or the enactment, amendment or repeal of a by-law made pursuant to this Constitution, may be made as follows:
- (a) A Branch, a Diocesan Council or the Canadian Council may make a motion to approve an amendment, enactment or repeal as envisaged herein.
  - (b) Motions to approve an amendment, enactment or repeal as envisaged herein submitted on time must be presented to the National Organization at the next biennial or national conference biennial meeting.
  - (c) A motion to approve an amendment, enactment or repeal as envisaged herein shall be submitted to the Canadian Council at least three months prior to the biennial meeting or national conference biennial meeting at which it is to be considered.
  - (d) The Canadian Council shall send a motion to approve an amendment, enactment or repeal as envisaged herein to the National Organization at least forty-five days prior to the biennial meeting or national conference biennial meeting at which it is to be considered.
24. At a biennial meeting or national conference biennial meeting the National Organization may approve an internal or local by-law proposed for use by the Canadian Council, a Diocesan Council or a Branch.
25. That certain Constitution of the Canadian Mothers' Union in effect as of January, 2009 entitled "Constitution And By-Laws Of The Canadian Society Of The Mothers' Union" is hereby repealed.
26. This Constitution shall be in full force and effect as of and from the first day of July, 2016.

### **By-Law No. 1 – Voting by Proxy**

- (1) At a duly constituted biennial or national conference biennial meeting of the Canadian Mothers' Union a member who i) is entitled to more than one vote by virtue of holding more than one office or ii) is a voting delegate who is unable to attend such meeting, may appoint, by proxy, another enrolled member to exercise a vote on her/his behalf.
- (2) The donor of the proxy shall be a voting delegate in good standing and shall hold a position on Canadian Council (Executive, Coordinator, Diocesan President, and Diocesan Representative) or be a Branch Leader or a Past Canadian President.
- (3) The person to whom the proxy is given (the proxy holder) shall be a Mothers' Union member in good standing. She/he shall be a person trusted by the donor to vote the proxy taking into consideration the wishes of the donor.
- (4) A proxy shall not be delegated or transferred by the proxy holder.
- (5) A proxy shall be in writing in Form A as attached.
- (6) The original of a proxy Form A shall be presented by the proxy holder to the Canadian Mothers' Union Secretary at the meeting for which it was given. A faxed or emailed proxy, taken from the original, is also acceptable provided that it is received and registered by the Secretary at least one week prior to the commencement of the meeting for which it was given.

FORM A

**THE CANADIAN MOTHERS' UNION**

**PROXY VOTING FORM**

**FOR USE AT BIENNIAL AND NATIONAL CONFERENCE BIENNIAL MEETINGS**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being a voting delegate in good standing of The Canadian Mothers' Union but unable to attend, or entitled to more than one vote at the meeting to be held \_\_\_\_\_(date) in \_\_\_\_\_ (location), give my proxy to: \_\_\_\_\_ (name of proxy holder), and certify that this person fulfills all the conditions for a valid proxy holder pursuant to By-Law No. 1 (3) of the Constitution.

Dated this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of voting delegate)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Branch Number)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Position)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of proxy holder)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Branch Number)

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Witness)