

# Grace Bible Fellowship

CONSTITUTION  
AND BYLAWS

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# Church Governance

The local church consists of believers who professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. After accepting Him as their Savior, they were baptized and organized themselves under the leadership of a Pastor, Elders, and Deacons to carry out the Great Commission and conduct the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The biblical form of church governance presents each church as an autonomous entity under the leadership of the Pastor/Elder as the head of the church and a plurality of elders to help shepherd the people of God. The congregational form of governance is not a model in Scripture nor a structure under which churches were initially established.

Therefore, the Church's organizational structure, as in its original organizational structure by the Apostle Paul, will be that of an autonomous Elder/Bishop/Pastor church with a plurality of Elders as the leaders and deacons as servant leaders, with the addition of Trustees. The Trustees are select men and women from the congregation who will represent any matter of the congregation before church leadership. The Church organization and leadership, as prescribed in the Bible, will be as such:

In the New Testament, three words—Elder, Bishop, and Pastor summarize the responsibility of the local church leader.

1. In Greek, the word for Elder, *Presbuteros*, signifies the office and the position of authority.
2. In Greek, the word for Bishop, *Episcopas*, emphasizes the function of the office, which is oversight-overseer. The word Episcopalian originates from this word (Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:1-2; Titus 1:7; 1 Pet. 2:25).
3. In Greek, the word Pastor, *Poimanos*, emphasizes shepherding and feeding God's flock (Act 20:28; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-2).

The duties of the Elder/Bishop/Pastor as mandated by Scripture include:

1. To lovingly lead God's people is emphasized by the title "Elder" (1 Tim. 3:4-5; 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12).
2. To oversee God's people emphasizes the responsibility of the "Bishop" (1 Tim. 3:1; 5:1-3).
3. To feed God's people emphasizes the office of the "Pastor" (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2).
4. To guard and teach sound doctrine (Titus 1:9; Acs 15:1-6; 15:22-29; 16:4; Heb. 13:17).

5. To pray for and anoint the sick (James 5:14-15).
6. To supervise and steward God's resources, supervise the financial matters of the church (Acts 11:27-30).



# Constitution and Bylaws

## Grace Bible Fellowship

Adopted on the 30th day of June 2024

### Preamble

In recognition that Jesus Christ is the foundation and head of the Church and as a local body of believers in Him, the members of this assembly establish this constitution. By it, we state the basic principles of our Christian faith and practice to help us preserve our faith's fundamental aspects and better enable our assembly to function in an orderly and proper manner that honors God, in surrendering to the Holy Spirit, praying in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### ARTICLE I. Church Name

The name of this corporation is **Grace Bible Fellowship of Crowley, Texas** (hereafter referred to as the “Church.” This body of Christians which was originally established on December 27, 2016 and incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the Laws of the State of Texas. It is intended that the Church have the status of a corporation that is exempt from federal income tax under Section 503(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended or any corresponding provision of any future tax laws (from now on referred to as “IRC”), as an organization described in Section 501(c)(3) of the IRC. The Church was organized pursuant to the Texas Non-Profit Organization Act and operated as a Texas Non-Profit Organization under Chapter 22 of the Texas Business Organization Code.

### ARTICLE II. Registered Office

#### 2.1 Church Office

The Church's principal office is located at **10417 Old Cleburne Junction, Crowley, TX 76036**. It may only be moved with the approval of the membership.

#### 2.2 Registered Office

The Church's registered office is required to be maintained in the State of Texas by the State of Texas Business Organizations Code and may be identical to its principal office in the State of Texas. The Senior Pastor and Elders may change the address of the registered office without action of the membership

## ARTICLE III. PURPOSE

### 3.1 The Purpose of the Church

The purpose of the Church is to be a vibrant Christ-centered spiritual body empowered by the Holy Spirit to share the good news of Jesus Christ with the people of Crowley, surrounding communities, and the world. This Church is organized exclusively for religious and charitable purposes within the definition and meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. In pursuit of the purpose, the Church shall be a worshipping Christian fellowship of Christ-followers, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His person expressed in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and responding in obedience to His Lordship. The Church will use its gifts, talents, and resources to help people experience an experiential knowledge of God to minister unselfishly to persons in the community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

### 3.2 The Expressed Purpose of the Church

Because the local Church is the earthly body of Jesus Christ in the present age, we are to do on earth those things that Jesus Christ would do; therefore, whether we gathered or dispersed throughout the community, our purpose is expressed through the following:

- a) To bear witness to the truth of God.
- b) To proclaim the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.
- c) To unify in Christ and minister to one another, the community, and the world.
- d) To offer genuine praise and worship to God.
- e) To study and teach persons to obey God's word, the Bible.
- f) To receive biblical instruction from those the Holy Spirit has appointed in the church.
- g) To pray for and encourage one another in obedience to the commands of Christ Jesus our Lord.
- h) To execute programs, services, and ministries to which the Holy Spirit leads us in impacting the community for Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE IV. CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

### 4.1 Church Government

The Church's government rests in the leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Senior Pastor as the head of the Church and the Elders (**Elder Selection: See Appendix 4**). The Church is an autonomous church, not under the control of any other ecclesiastical body. The membership retains to itself the exclusive right of self-government in all phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the church. The governance of the Church is, on occasion, vested in the body of believers who compose the church (from now on referred to as "Members"). While the ultimate authority

for governance of the Church is vested in the Members in a congregational form of church governance, the Bylaws delegate substantial authority to the Senior Pastor and Elders of the church pursuant to Article 2.5 (b) of the Church Bylaws.

## **4.2 Relationship**

The Church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical entity, but it recognizes and sustains a relationship of mutual cooperation among theologically sound biblical churches. If the Church elects to affiliate with other conventions in the state of Texas, it does so voluntarily and without surrendering its autonomy.

# **ARTICLE V. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

## **5.1 Baptist Faith and Message**

The Church affirms the Christian Doctrines adopted by the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963 (See Appendix 2). However, the Church holds that it is an autonomous entity. As such, it holds to the orthodox teaching of the Christian, i.e., the essential doctrines (e.g., the Virgin birth, deity of Christ, Inspiration of Scripture, and the atoning death of Christ) are non-negotiable for its faith and practice.

## **5.2 Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

The Church believes that every person is created in the image of God with intrinsic worth as prescribed by their Creator. Therefore, every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity despite ethnicity or socio-economic status (Gen. 1:26-27; Acts 17:24-29; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Thus, any hateful or harassing mistreatment of any person is to be repudiated because they are not in accord with God's view of humanity or with Scripture, God's special revelation of Himself to humanity, or the Church.

The Church believes that God has created every person, male or female, fearfully and wonderfully. The two distinct, complementary sexes together reflect God's image and nature. Rejecting one's biological sex is rejecting the image of God that every person uniquely holds.

The Church believes "marriage" has only one meaning: uniting one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25). We believe marriage is between one man and one woman for life, uniquely reflecting Christ's relationship with His church (Eph. 5:21-33). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur between a man and a woman who have joined together in holy matrimony (1 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). Therefore, we hold to the biblical teaching that all sexual activity is for the marital relationship and is not to be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman who have joined together in marriage.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including but not limited to adultery, fornication, pedophilia, all homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or pornography use) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of the Church as a local body of believers and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that every person employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serves as a volunteer, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-16; 1 Thess. 5:22).

Our faith is rooted in the belief that God, in His infinite mercy, offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sins, seeking His forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts. 3:19-21; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11).

## **BYLAWS**

### **Grace Bible Fellowship**

### **Crowley, Texas**

The Church Bylaws serve as a legal and practical framework for governing the work of the Church. All entities of Grace Bible Fellowship (from now on referred to as the “Church”) are subject to these Bylaws (from now on referred to as the “Bylaws”) unless the entity incorporates into a separate legal entity, in which case, its bylaws would apply.

## **ARTICLE I. BIBLICAL FOUNDATION**

### **1.1 Church Mission**

The mission of the Church is to develop fully devoted Christ-Followers and to share the message of Jesus Christ with the unbelieving world.

### **1.2 The Church Values Which Are Held**

- a) Jesus Christ, the Lord of all, the head of the church, and the sole means of salvation stands before us in all His glory and majesty.
- b) The Bible, God’s inspired and inerrant word, stands as the unshakable foundation of our beliefs, providing us with unwavering guidance and truth.
- c) We, as believers, hold the sacred responsibility of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with everyone, a mission that empowers us and gives our lives profound purpose.

- d) The Great Commission states that we are responsible for making disciples by teaching and nurturing Christ-followers in their spiritual growth.
- e) Prayer is essential to all we do in the name of Jesus Christ.
- f) An important aspect of the Christian faith is that we are commanded to help people who are in need.
- g) We are accountable to be good stewards of God's gifts through serving and giving.
- h) We believe that a growth in our experiential relationship with God and others is essential.
- i) Corporate and individual worship is an expression of our love for God.
- j) God established marriage and the family, and it is our responsibility to encourage and promote biblical family values. We believe, out of sincere belief and religious conviction, that marriage is between one man and one woman for life.
- k) We believe that every person is equally valued and loved by God.

### **1.3 Church Ordinances**

The Church's ordinances (hereinafter referred to as the "Ordinances") are believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. We refer to these ceremonies as "Ordinances" because Jesus Christ ordained them during His earthly ministry. We do not hold to the view that either of these ordinances is a means of salvation; rather, they are symbolic, meant to remember the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- a.) Believer's Baptism. A person who has trusted in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior by faith, by the public profession of faith in believer's baptism, and agrees to follow Jesus Christ in "newness of life." Baptism shall be by immersion and administered by the Senior Pastor or members of the Pastoral Staff Team. It shall be administered as an act of worship and commemoration in any of the church's worship services.
- b.) The Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is an act of obedience whereby members of the Church, through partaking of the bread and the cup, commemorate the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ in anticipation of His second coming. The Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly (quarterly or bi-quarterly). The Senior Pastor, or one whom he designates, and the deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper to the congregation.

## **ARTICLE II. MEMBERSHIP**

### **2.1 General**

The membership of the Church shall be composed of persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, give evidence of regeneration, and have experienced believer's baptism by immersion. They are individuals who subscribe to the constitution of this Church and embody

the very essence of our faith. Their affirmation of membership by the Church is a testament to their commitment. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this Church and the conditions of membership, a power that underscores the importance of our shared values and beliefs.

- a) Resident members shall be those living in the Church's geographical area.
- b) Non-resident members shall be those persons living outside the geographical area of the Church, at a distance which precludes their regular attendance and participation in the worship, life, and ministry of the Church or with whom the Church, after one year, is unable to communicate or make contact. Persons shall be moved from resident to non-resident status upon notification to the Church Executive Secretary by Ministerial Staff to other church officers after a proper investigation has been completed. A non-resident member will be moved to a resident upon his/her request.

## **2.2 Candidacy for Membership**

Any believer in the Lord Jesus Christ may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in the Church. If there is a disagreement about any candidate joining the membership, the dissent shall be referred to the Senior Pastor and Elders for review and investigation. The Senior Pastor shall recommend to the Elders whether the candidate shall be presented to the Church for membership. All candidates for membership shall be presented to the Church at any regular church service in any of the following ways:

- a) Upon an acknowledgment of a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, the most significant moment in their spiritual journey (Although believer's baptism is not necessary for salvation, the Church will lovingly encourage all who have not made a public declaration in being baptized by immersion to be baptized, one of the two sacraments of the New Testament).
- b) Upon the promise and receiving their transfer letter from another church that confirms their belief in Christ.
- c) Upon their statement of faith, prior conversion experience, and baptism by immersion in a church of like faith and order.
- d) By a statement of a prior conversion experience, they shall be accepted into the fellowship of the Church.

## **2.3 Effective Membership**

Members shall become effective upon:

- a.) Their presentation to the Church according to Section 2.2-Candidacy for Membership.
- b.) Baptism by immersion, as presented under subparagraph 1.3a, is the method that the Church will follow for all those who desire to publicly declare that they are identifying with the Lord Jesus Christ. However, obedience to the sacrament is commemorative and not salvific in nature. Therefore, it will not be held as a requirement for Church membership.

- c.) Completion of new membership orientation.
- d.) Completion of section 2.3 a-c and after their affirmation from the membership, membership will become effective.

## 2.4 Expectations of Members

Membership in a New Testament body of believers is not a trivial or passive association (Heb. 10:24-25). Therefore, active membership in the Church will aim to connect each Christian to the ongoing work of the Lord Jesus Christ and provide a venue to exercise one's spiritual giftedness given by God for the edification of the church (1 Cor. 12:1-31; Eph 4:1-25). Members of the Church agree to follow the principle of active membership in the local church. Active membership in the Church is vital to the health of the congregation and every church member. Therefore, all members are expected to maintain an active role and involvement in utilizing their spiritual gifts and talents to edify others in the Church.

- a) The following criteria underscore the importance of active membership:
  1. Pray for the Pastor, his wife, and his family (Ephesians 6:18-19).
  2. Regularly attend weekly worship regularly (Hebrews 10:25).
  3. Commit to practicing the disciplines of the Christian faith and living under the authority of God's word as a follower of Jesus Christ.
  4. To contribute financially, time, talents, and resources to the work of God proportionally and sacrificially of the things God has entrusted to each member's stewardship.
  5. To impact the world by reaching out with the love of Christ and the good news of the Gospel by inviting unchurched neighbors, co-workers, or friends to Church and praying for their salvation and growth in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  6. To faithfully support the work of the Church through prayer, maintaining a Christ-like attitude of humility, considering others more than self, and maintaining a teachable spirit.
  7. Serve selflessly and willing to sacrifice one's comfort and preference for the local Church's best interest and God's glory (Philippians 2:3-5).
  8. To exercise one's spiritual giftedness, which is given to every believer by God by involvement in at least one ministry area of the Church.
  9. Function as the body of Christ by serving according to one's God-given gifts (1 Cor. 12-13); commit to be equipped for ministry (Eph. 4:12), mature in faith (Eph. 4:13-15), and cooperate for the growth and strengthening of the body of Christ in love (Eph. 4:16).
  10. To diligently promote unity within the Church by refraining from spreading dissent (1 Cor. 1:10) and recognizing that the Pastor must please God before men (Acts 5:29; Galatians 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4).

- b) Benefits and responsibilities of active membership for the individual believer include but are not limited to:
1. To experience the opportunity to enjoy God's ministering presence and to participate with other believers in efficacious corporate worship.
  2. To experience the growth and excitement of discovering God within the Scriptures and increasing one's experiential relationship with God through an intimate communing relationship with Him.
  3. To experience the profound joy and satisfaction of grace giving, a tangible way to support the needs of the Church and contribute to the sharing of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  4. To lead others to Christ in sharing the gospel and the satisfaction of impacting the kingdom of God in this world in the local community.
  5. The establishment of meaningful spiritual relationships is a cornerstone of our community. These relationships not only edify one another to spiritual maturity and godliness but also provide a robust support system for personal growth.
  6. The experience of fostering ongoing spiritual growth and a deepening spiritual relationship and maturity as one's spiritual gifts are identified and exercised in the local Church for the glory of God.
- c) To exercise membership authority by voting on Church matters as outlined in Section 2.5a. Benefits and responsibilities of active membership for the individual believer include but are not limited to:
1. To enjoy God's ministering presence and participate with other believers in efficacious corporate worship.
  2. Enjoy the thrill of discovering God's teachings within the Scriptures and watch as your personal relationship with Him deepens through intimate communion. Experience the joy of grace-giving in supporting the Church's needs and preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  3. Lead others to Christ and experience the fulfillment of making a tangible impact for the kingdom of God in our local community, establishing meaningful spiritual maturing relationships that edify one another to spiritual maturity and godliness.
  4. The experience of fostering ongoing spiritual growth, a deepening spiritual relationship, and maturity as one's spiritual gifts are identified and exercised in the local Church for the glory of God.
  5. To exercise membership authority by voting on Church matters as outlined in Section 2.5a.

Any member who does not maintain an active membership over a calendar year will be contacted by the Church to determine how the Church may assist them in becoming an active member. If, after being contacted, the member remains inactive, the Elders will remove the



member from the active Church member role. However, because the Church is commissioned to a dual ministry of reconciliation, any person whose membership has been declared inactive may be re-instated to active membership upon recommendation by the Senior Pastor and Elders. The re-instated member will be expected to resume one or more of the practices outlined in Section 2.4(a) and will have done so regularly over six months prior to being designated as an active member of the Church.

## **2.5 Rights and Authority of Active Members**

The Church, a sovereign and democratic autonomous entity, operates under the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ. The active membership is entrusted with the exclusive right of self-government in the priesthood of the believer, encompassing all aspects of spiritual and temporal life within the Church. This authority is subject to the provisions of the Constitution, these Bylaws, and any responsibilities and authorities delegated by the membership.

Every active member of the Church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in a business meeting, provided the member is present, or by action taken by active members.

- a.) Every active member of the Church is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in a business meeting, provided the member is present, or provision has been made for absence balloting (See Section 3.6 (c)). The members have retained the following authority exercised via the Church vote under section 3.6.
  1. Voting on the installation of a New Senior Pastor.
  2. The approval of an interim Senior Pastor.
  3. Voting on the licensing and ordaining of those called to full-time vocational ministry.
  4. The affirmation of deacons and approval of Deacon Ministry Policies.
  5. Electing and removal of Elders/Trustees.
  6. The approval or amending of the Mission Statement of the Church, the Statement of Faith, or Ordinances.
  7. The amendment of or adoption of the Church's Constitution or Bylaws.
  8. The adoption of the Church's annual budget.
  9. Purchasing or selling of real property.
  10. Borrowing money other than that consistent with the approved annual Church budget or accruing debt.
  11. Establishing other autonomous churches as a church planting church.
  12. Approving church affiliation with conventions, associations, or groups.
- b.) The members have delegated all other congregational authority to the Senior Pastor and Elders. The Church has the power, through an amendment to the constitution or Bylaws, to withdraw this delegation of authority and responsibility, either in part or in its entirety, at any time. The Senior Pastor and Elders are authorized to act on behalf of the Church in

all matters (see Section 4.1) not specifically retained by the members in Section 2.5 (a), or the Senior Pastor.

- c.) All active members of the Church are eligible for consideration as candidates for elective positions in the Church according to the Church policy and biblical guidelines.

## **2.6 Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways:

- a) The death of a member.
- b) Request for membership to another church.
- c) Exclusion by action of the Elders on behalf of the Church (Section 2.7(b)).
- d) Erasure upon request or proof of membership in another church.

## **2.7 Discipline of Membership**

- a) The Church, consistent with the teaching of Scripture (Gal. 6:1), will use every reasonable effort to minister and assist any member experiencing spiritual, emotional, financial, or other problems. The Church, through its Senior Pastor and Elders, may discipline any member whose conduct is inconsistent with the teachings of the Church. Because of the sensitive nature of such action and to protect all parties concerned, the Church has committed to the Senior Pastor all dismissal issues. Should any difficult situation exist that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the Church, the Pastor, and Elders will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem, following the process outlined in Scripture (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1).
- b) According to the instructions from the Lord Jesus Christ, any proceeding to discipline a member of the Church shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance. If a case arises that the Senior Pastor and Elders determine that the exclusion of a member best serves the welfare of the Church. In that case, the Senior Pastor and Elders may act on behalf of the Church. They may take this action by voting under Section 5.12, and the Senior Pastor and Elders may proceed to declare the person no longer in fellowship with the Church. The attitude of the members toward one another shall be guided by the concern for redemption and reconciliation in the fellowship rather than punishment.
- c) Because reconciliation and redemption rather than punishment is the guideline that governs the attitude of one believer toward another, any person whose membership has been terminated by the Senior Pastor and Elders under Section 2.7(b) may, upon request to the Senior Pastor and with a recommendation of Senior Pastor and Elders, be presented to the Church for the reinstatement of membership. The Church may then restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, examination by the Senior Pastor and Elders of evidence of the excluded person's confession, repentance, and reformation, and by vote of the Church.

## ARTICLE III. MEETINGS

### 3.1 Worship Services

- a) The Church shall meet weekly for preaching, teaching, evangelism, and other modes of worship. The Senior Pastor, or someone designated by him, shall direct these services to benefit the Church membership and all people who choose to attend.
- b) The senior pastor can cancel services and any Church activity due to inclement weather or extraordinary circumstances. Except in extreme conditions, at least one worship service shall be held each Sunday.
- c) Understanding the Church's needs, the Senior Pastor shall schedule such special services as he deems appropriate for worship, praise, teaching, celebration, baptism, remembrance, or child dedication. These events are not just occasions but significant milestones in our spiritual journey.

### 3.2 Business Meetings

- a) Types of Meetings
  1. A regular business meeting of the Church shall be held quarterly. The Senior Pastor and Elders shall designate the date and agenda. At such meetings, the Elders shall report on the Church's activities.
  2. In situations where matters cannot wait for the next scheduled business meeting, a special business meeting is called. This is a significant event that can be initiated by the Senior Pastor and Elders, who have the power to call the Church into a special session. This is done for the consideration or approval of items as per Section 2.5(a) and to address items as per Section 3.2 (b). The date of the called meeting is selected at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, Elders, and Church staff, with a notice period of at least ten (10) days to the members as per Section 3.2(b). The nature of the business meeting is clearly stated at the time of the announcement, ensuring transparency and clarity.
- b) Presentation of Resolution by the Elders
  1. A resolution is any item of business presented to the Church that requires a vote by the Church pursuant to Section 2.5(a).
  2. Prior to submitting any resolution to the Church for a vote, the Senior Pastor and Elders, in their commitment to transparency and open communication, shall first present such resolution to the Church members for review and prayer. The Senior Pastor and Elders shall determine the best way to present the resolution to the members, ensuring that all necessary information is shared. The presentation will occur at least seven (7) days prior to the first date on which the voting shall occur, giving the congregation ample time to consider and prepare for the vote.

3. The Senior Pastor and Elders shall provide information concerning the resolution and receive recommendations and suggestions from the members for amendments, additions, or deletions. The Elders may amend the proposed resolution based on the recommendations from the congregation at the informational meeting.
  4. If the Senior Pastor and Elders fail to present a resolution to the members for action within sixty (60) days of receiving such resolution for consideration from the Church. In that case, the Deacon Chair may submit such a resolution to the Church for action after notice and opportunity for discussion consistent with Section 3.2(b) 1. In presenting the resolution to the Church, the Elders shall determine a date, time, place, agenda, and procedures for the informational meetings required by Section 3.2(b) 1-2. However, they shall conduct the informational meeting within the next sixty (60) days. The Senior Pastor presenting the resolution and the Elders shall have equal time and opportunity to present their respective views, comments, and recommendations about the resolution at any informational meeting and in all communication with the members of the Church. The Edler chairperson shall agree with the Senior Pastor and Deacon Chair upon a suitable date for the Church to vote on the resolution.
- c) Presentation of Resolution by an Individual Church Member.
1. If the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chair decide not to proceed with a presentation of the member(s) resolution to the Church, the resolution will not be brought forward for consideration.
  2. All Church members must refrain from proposing a resolution directly from the floor during a regular or special business meeting. A resolution may be presented by an active individual Church member or members of the Church in writing to the Elders for their consideration. Within sixty (60) days of receipt of the resolution, the Elders may move to present the resolution at the next scheduled business meeting, or the Elders may elect not to proceed with a presentation to the Church. If the Elders elect to present an active member's resolution, the presentation will follow the same procedure outlined in Section 3.2 (b).
  3. If the Elders decide not to present the resolution to the Church, they are required to inform the member(s) of their decision. In the event that the Elders do not act, or if the member(s) wish(es) to appeal the decision of the Elders, the member(s) have the right to present the resolution to the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chair for consideration. If the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chair votes to present the resolution to the Church, the Elders will present the resolution to the Church following the guidelines in Section 3.2(b).
  4. If the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chair declines to proceed with a presentation of the member(s) resolution to the Church. In that case, the resolution shall not be presented to the Church, and the member(s) presenting the resolution will be notified of that decision by the Deacon Chair or Senior Pastor. Once the Senior Pastor or Deacon Chair has declined to proceed with a presentation of the

member(s) proposed resolution to the Church, the decision may not be appealed any further.

### **3.3 Qorum**

For any resolution to be approved, at least ten percent (10%) of the active membership must participate by submitting a vote, and an affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of valid votes cast by active members must be received.

### **3.4 Parliamentary Rules**

Robert's Rules of Order, current edition, shall be the parliamentary guide for the Church business meetings, except where the rules conflict with Scripture or the express provisions of this Constitution and these Bylaws.

### **3.5 Moderator**

The Elders will moderate all business meetings.

### **3.6 Voting Rights of Members**

- a) Only active Church members may vote. Each member present at any meeting may vote only once on each matter submitted for a vote.
- b) Members may not vote by proxy, i.e., represent someone else in voting other than themselves.
- c) Absentee voting may be allowed on an issue-by-issue basis if the membership decides to provide the opportunity. Care shall be exercised to ensure that each member has only one vote on the election or resolution.
- d) Every active member of the Church, regardless of their role or status, is encouraged and entitled to vote at all elections and on all resolutions submitted to the Church.
- e) The Deacon Chair, Elder Chair, or the Church Executive Secretary shall maintain a record of all actions taken by the members, including a copy of the resolution and the voting record thereon.

## **ARTICLE IV. THE ADDITION OF CHURCH TRUSTEES**

### **4.1 Trustees**

The Trustees are selected members of the congregation and approved by the Senior Pastor and Elders to help the Church pursue God's direction and vision. They will represent the congregation's interests before the Senior Pastor and Elders of the Church. The Trustees will be added after the Church has reached four hundred active members.

### **4.2 Trustee Responsibilities**

In a testament to their trust and respect, the other members of the Church shall empower the Trustees to pray for and pursue God's vision for the Church. The Trustees, in their role, provide counsel and support to the Senior Pastor and Elders on behalf of the congregation. This Trust is further solidified by their limited governing authority that the Trustees possess, a responsibility

not specifically retained by the members in the Constitution or these Bylaws, demonstrating the congregation's confidence in their decision-making abilities.

### **4.3 The Number of Trustees**

There shall be a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of ten (10) Trustees, consisting of Church staff and non-church staff. A minimum of fifty-one percent (51%) of the Trustees must be non-church staff. The Senior Pastor shall serve as one of the Trustees.

### **4.4 Tenure of Trustee Service**

The Church shall elect Non-Church Staff Trustees to serve a maximum of one four (4) year term.

### **4.5 Qualifications of Trustees**

In seeking to fill the office of Trustee, the Church's goal is to identify Spiritually mature members from the congregation who have demonstrated the love described in 1 Corinthians 13 towards God's people, mission, kingdom, and the Church. That is, the Trustee is to have demonstrated by his/her life an unwavering devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, a love for the Church and its members in Christlike patience, kindness, humility, and self-sacrifice.

All Trustees, except the Church Staff Trustees, may not serve as a deacon officer, a member of a standing team, an employee of the Church, or be an immediate family member of an employee of the Church at the same time that person serves as a Trustee.

Immediate family members of a current Trustee cannot serve as a Trustee—immediate family members, defined as a spouse, parent, sibling, or child (ren). Immediate family members of a current Trustee may serve on other Standing Teams.

All Trustees' lives are expected to reflect the fruits of the Spirit as described in Galatians 5. In addition, a nominee for Trustee must meet the following qualifications:

- a) A nominee must be at least thirty (30) years of age and have been a member of the Church for a minimum of four (4) years at the time service as a Trustee begins. Staff Trustee are exempt from this requirement.
- b) A nominee must reflect and demonstrate spiritual maturity, godly wisdom, and a commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, which reveals a continual surrender to God in their experiential knowledge of Him in an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.
- c) A nominee must affirm that they are consistent in their stewardship of giving as God has prospered them to the Church, with the tithe being a minimal level of giving.
- d) A nominee must be actively involved in the Church and must have demonstrated a commitment to its mission, objectives, and core values and beliefs.
- e) A nominee must be willing to submit to God in the following scriptural principles for conflict resolution: maintain confidentiality and make decisions objectively without bias toward particular areas of Church ministry.
- f) A nominee must be viewed as demonstrating the high standards of a follower of Jesus Christ and be free from behavior that would negatively impact any ministry of the Church.

- g) A nominee must affirm that they are consistent in their stewardship of giving as God has prospered them to the Church with the tithe being a minimal level of giving.
- h) A nominee must be actively involved in the Church and must have demonstrated a commitment to the mission of the Church, its objectives, and its core values and beliefs.
- i) A nominee must be willing to submit to God in the following scriptural principles for conflict resolution, maintain confidentiality, and make decisions objectively without bias to particular areas of the Church ministry.
- j) A nominee must be viewed as demonstrating a high standard of the Christ-like and be free from behavior that would negatively impact any ministry of the Church.
- k) A nominee shall agree with all the essentials of the Christian faith as spelled out in the Baptist Faith and Message of 1963 under the Church's statement of faith in the Constitution.

#### **4.6 Nominations and Elections of Non-Church Staff Trustees**

Annually, the Trustees will prayerfully evaluate the makeup of the Trustee body. They will determine whether the existing Trustees should continue to serve and whether open seats should be filled.

The current Trustees will be presented to the congregation if no vacancies exist for recognition and affirmation. The congregation will have ample time for prayer, consideration, and feedback on the proposed list of Trustees.

If an open seat is being filled, the Trustees shall form an ad hoc Trustee nominating committee. The committee will include Trustees, Non-Trustees, the Elder Body Chairman, and the Senior Pastor.

Any member of the Church may nominate a member meeting the requirements of Section 4.4 for service as a Trustee. Those persons nominated by a member shall be included in the pool of candidates for the vacancy.

The Trustees will prayerfully consider all qualified nominees and determine a list of names to be presented to the congregation for review.

The congregation will have ample time for prayer, consideration, and feedback on the proposed list of Trustees.

#### **4.7 Nomination and Election of Church Staff Trustees**

- a) Church Staff Trustees are nominated by the staff and affirmed by the existing Trustees.

#### **4.8 Officers of Trustees**

The Trustees shall elect a Chairperson, Vice Chair from among the Trustees. These offices represent the congregation's interest before the Senior Pastor and Elders. The Trustees will also participate in the Church's vision and future planning.

## **4.9 Chair of Trustees**

The Chair will be the primary voice for the interest of the congregation.

## **4.10 Vice-Chair of the Trustees**

The Vice-Chair will act on behalf of the Chair if the Chair cannot perform His or Her duties.

## **4.11 Secretary of the Trustees**

The Secretary of the Trustees shall be the Executive Secretary of the Church and shall be responsible for:

- a) Keep the minutes of all meetings and proceedings in one or more books provided for that purpose.
- b) See that all notices are duly given per the provision of the bylaws or as required by the law.
- c) Keep a register of post office addresses, electronic mail addresses, and phone numbers of the Trustees, which each Trustee shall furnish.
- d) Perform all duties incidental to the office of the Secretary of the Trustees and the Church, which includes keeping a register of the names of all members, their dates of admission, dismissal, or death, and records of baptism.
- e) The Executive Secretary shall issue letters of dismissal approved by the Senior Pastor and Elders, preserve on file all communications and drafted official reports, and provide legal notice of all meetings of membership where such notice is necessary, as indicated by the Church Constitution, Bylaws, or applicable law. The Executive Secretary may delegate clerical responsibilities to other administrative personnel of the Church.

## **4.12 Removal of a Trustee**

Any of the Trustees, except the Senior Pastor, may be removed by:

- a) A seventy-five percent (75%) vote by the Trustees.
- b) By the action of the active membership under Section 2.5 (a) 5, following the procedures of Section 3.2.

## **4.13 Resignation of a Trustee**

A Trustee may resign at any time by tendering his or her resignation in writing to the Chairperson or, in the case of the chair's resignation, to the Executive Secretary. A resignation shall become effective upon the date specified in their notice or, if no date is specified, upon receipt of the resignation by the Church at its principal place of business.

## **4.14 Standards of Conduct**

A Trustee or an officer of the Church shall discharge his or her duties as a Trustee, including the duties as a member of a team:

- a) In good faith



- b) With the care, an ordinarily prudent person in a like position would exercise under similar circumstances,
- c) In a manner, he or she, with reason, believes it to be in the Church's best interest.

### **4.15 Bad Faith**

A Trustee is not acting in good faith if he or she fails to act on any knowledge concerning any matter in question damaging to the name of Christ, the Church, or a member of the Church or by engaging in any behavior unbecoming to the name of Jesus Christ.

## **ARTICLE V. CHURCH STAFF**

### **5.1 General Church Staff**

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the President of the Church and corporation for Texas Law purposes and moderator of any Members, Elders, Deacon, or Trustees meetings. The Senior Pastor will be responsible for hiring and firing all other ministerial and Church staff positions. As the congregation increases, the Senior Pastor will select the members of his pastoral staff team, including but not limited to the Worship Leader, Church Executive Secretary, Pastoral Staff Team, Executive Pastor, Executive Assistant, Custodian, and Facilities Maintenance. The Executive Pastor shall be responsible for providing the day-to-day supervision of all support staff (See Section 6.4 (b)).

### **5.2 The Senior Pastor**

- a) The Role and Accountability of the Senior Pastor
  1. The Senior Pastor is the spiritual leader and under-shepherd of the Church and is accountable to Elders who act on behalf of the congregation. The Senior Pastor shall be called in accordance with sections 2.5 (a) and 3.6. The Church assigns and provides opportunities for the Senior Pastor to focus on these roles as the spiritual leader and under-shepherd of the Church.
  2. The Senior Pastor is to shepherd the congregation after God's example (Ezekiel 34:15-16; 1 Peter 5:1-3) and with the love that Christ has for His bride.
  3. The Senior Pastor of the Church must exemplify personal devotion to private and corporate prayer (Acts 6:4), model proper interpretation and application of God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15), preserve the church's mission to make disciples (Matthew 28:18-20) by aligning the ministries and ministers of the church toward this purpose; Seniors the preaching and teaching ministry of God's Word (Acts 6:4) and offer loving correction to the flock of the Church (2 Timothy 4:2); to oversee the care of the flock (1 Peter 5:2); equipping the saints for the ministries of the local church (Ephesians 4:12); and set an example of godliness by living communion and fellowship with God and fellow believers ( 1 Jn 1:5-8)
  4. The Senior Pastor will preach lovingly and competently in the pulpit ministry through the study of God's Word, well-prepared sermons, and continued growth in the knowledge and application of God's Word (2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16-17).

5. The Senior Pastor will oversee all church ministries and the Pastoral staff as a steward of God's flock, showing the character of our Good Shepherd (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-8).
6. Appropriate pastoral care for those who have strayed, sick (Ezekiel 34:15-16), and those who have strayed from the church refraining by ignoring or undervaluing any part of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:14-25).
7. The Senior Pastor will be available to the flock and be reachable during the week while at Church and while he is away from Church.
8. The Senior Pastor will provide godly leadership in the worship services with propriety and order (1 Cor. 14:40), including setting and communicating expectations for those who help in church worship.
9. Maintenance of all connection group ministries of the church (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9) for the equipping of the saints (Ephesians 4:12) so that believers will grow spiritually in Christ (Colossians 1:28).
10. The Senior Pastor will supervise church ministries' leaders in overseeing their administration (1 Timothy 3:3).
11. Receive input with wisdom and righteousness (Proverbs 9:9), being quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger (James 1:17), knowing that a soft answer turns away wrath (Proverbs 15:1).
12. Loyalty and adherence to the Church Discipline are examples of holiness and unity to the members (1 Timothy 4:12).
13. Maintain integrity and a life without reproach (1 Tim. 3:2), be incredibly transparent and accountable when ministering to women, and never counsel women without the presence of a witness of the Executive Secretary or another member of the pastoral staff team.
14. Management of his household in a way consistent with his calling to care for God's church (1 Tim. 3:4-5), including marital fidelity (1 Tim. 3:2), financial integrity (1 Tim. 3:3), and consistency of lifestyle in all places and times (1 Tim. 3:7).

b) Pastoral Succession

The Senior Pastor, Elders, and Trustees are responsible for planning pastoral succession. The succession plan intends to ensure a smooth and orderly transition from one Senior Pastor to the next and to protect the Church and its ongoing ministries. When the time comes, the Senior Pastor will inform the Elders and Trustees of his decision to step down from his role as the shepherd. The candidates for succession will be identified, and the successor will be chosen via the process outlined in 5.3 (d) below. Ideally, the successor to the Senior Pastor will be on staff for 6-12 months before the Senior Pastor's departure. During this transition period, the Senior Pastor will prepare the successor to assume the role of the new Senior Pastor. The effective date the successor assumes the duties as the new Senior Pastor will be determined by mutual agreement between the retiring Senior Pastor and His successor, the Elders, and the Trustees. If the Senior

Pastor desires to retire before identifying a successor, the provision of 5.2b 1) below is to be followed.

1. In the event of a vacancy in the Senior Pastor position (see 5.3 below), and no successor has been identified, the Elders of the Church shall appoint a Pastor Search Committee to seek the next Shepherd of the Church (See 5.3 (d) below). The Pastor Search Team shall function as an ad hoc team assigned to follow the scope and timeline established by the Elders. The recommendation of a successor by the Pastor Search Team shall constitute a nomination by the Elders. That nomination shall be presented to the Church for a vote in a special business meeting following the provision of 3.2 (a) 2. The team shall bring to the Church only one nominee at a time for consideration.
2. The Senior Pastor may only be terminated by the Church for a moral failure or misuse of Church funds while serving as the Senior Pastor of the Church. If the Senior Pastor dies or cannot fulfill his responsibilities or other circumstances, and his successor has not been identified, the Elders of the Church may appoint an ad hoc team to coordinate filling the pulpit in the Senior Pastor's absence or recommend an interim Pastor subject to the Church and Trustee approval.

c) Interim Pastor Search Team

1. The Elders shall see that the pulpit is filled until an Interim Pastor is elected.
2. The Elders shall appoint the Trustees to serve as the Interim Pastor Search Team. The Trustee Chairperson will lead the Interim Pastor Search Team.
3. The Interim Pastor Search Team shall recommend an interim pastor to the Church for approval. The Search Team will consult with the Elders about the compensation package and responsibilities of the Interim Pastor.
4. Should a vacancy occur in the Search Team, the Elders will replace that member to ensure that the members of the Search Team remain at five (5) members.

d) Pastor Search Team

1. The Pastor Search Team will be selected at an appropriate time, as recommended by the Elders. The Chair of the Elders will inform the Church that the process has started.
2. The Elders shall appoint seven active members of the Church willing to serve on the Search Committee. No ministerial or Church staff person or his/her immediate family member is eligible to serve. If a person on the Interim Search committee is selected, he/she must resign from the Interim Team. The Elders will appoint the seven to the team and will only fill vacancies if the number of the team drops below five (5) members. The Church shall bear the expense of the teams' work, including travel expenses. The Elders shall determine the appropriate rate for per diem, and the mileage for personal vehicles will be at the current federal rate.
3. The responsibilities of the Pastor Search Team are as follows:

- a. They will search for the person they feel God has called to Lead the Church. They shall consider, but are not limited to, names recommended by Church members. Should the Interim Pastor be considered the successor to the Senior Pastor, he must resign.
  - b. They are to recommend only one person at a time to the Church to be considered for the position of Pastor. The team shall consult with Elders and Trustees on the compensation package, which will be discussed with the prospective Senior Pastor.
4. To extend the call to the new Senior Pastor, a ninety percent (90%) affirmative vote of those members voting by paper ballot will be required. The vote shall take place at a special business meeting after at least one week's notice is given to the Church's membership.
  5. Professional Qualification: The Senior Pastor must hold a professional certification/degree of an MDIV or greater from an accredited Seminary and be ordained by an ordaining body (1 Tim. 4:14; Titus 1:5).

### **5.3 Termination of the Senior Pastor**

The Senior Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. He shall serve until the relationship is ended by resignation, death, or incapacitation.

- a) Resignation/Retirement. The Senior Pastor may terminate his relationship with the Church by resignation, preferably giving at least four (4) weeks' notice before terminating responsibilities. If the Senior Pastor is considering retirement, the Elders should initiate the pastoral succession plan 18-24 months before the projected retirement, as indicated in Section 5.2 (b).
- b) Church Initiated Termination
  1. The termination of the Senior Pastor is only considered if there has been a moral failure or Church funds embezzlement and every attempt to reconcile the situation has been made.
  2. The Elders must recommend dismissal by letter to the active Church members two (2) weeks before the vote, with the reasons given in the recommendation.
  3. The moderators will be the elder and trustee chair at the time of setting the termination vote. The vote shall be taken by paper ballot and counted by the Elders and Trustees and five (5) persons selected by the Trustees from among the active members at the meeting.
  4. Seventy-five percent (75%) of those members voting shall constitute termination, and severance shall be immediate. The Elders and Trustees shall recommend a severance package, which the Church shall approve.

### **5.4 The Executive Pastor**

- a) The Senior Pastor will be responsible for hiring the Executive Pastor but shall consult with Elders and Trustees for their counsel and input. In the event of a vacancy in the position, the Senior Pastor shall seek a suitable replacement to serve the needs of the Church.

- b) **Accountability and Role of the Executive Pastor.** The Executive Pastor shall report to the Senior Pastor. The duties assigned to the Executive Pastor are (1) The day-to-day administrative responsibilities of the Church, (2) the authority for overseeing and supervising Church staff, (3) responsibility for coordinating the ministries of the Church, (4) the task of serving as the primary staff liaison with the teams of the Church, (5) such duties that the Senior Pastor may assign. Additionally, the Executive Pastor shall be responsible for designating the documents to constitute the Operations Manual of the Church. These documents will include policies, positions, descriptions, and other guidelines, procedures, and reports necessary to conduct the daily operations of the Church and its programs. The Senior Pastor shall collaborate with the Executive Pastor to establish goals and conduct an evaluation at least annually.
- c) **Termination.** The Executive Pastor may only be terminated by the Elders on the counsel and direction of the Senior Pastor.

## **5.5 Ministerial Support Staff**

- a) **Hiring of Upper-Level Ministerial Position.** The Senior Pastor may delegate to the Executive Pastor, in consultation with the Lead Pastor, the recruiting for all upper-level ministerial staff positions (i.e., ministerial staff who will supervise other full-time ministerial staff members), except for the Lead Pastor and Executive Pastor positions. In the absence of an Executive Pastor, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for recruiting and hiring all Church support staff. However, in the case where the Executive Pastor is present, he shall present all upper-level ministerial candidates to the Senior Pastor and Elders for consideration and review. Upon approval of such upper-level ministerial position candidates, the Executive Pastor and Senior Pastor will present the selected candidate, the Trustees, to the Elders and Trustees, and the congregation. After the candidate is selected to be hired, they will undergo the employment process. Any candidate recommended to be hired for an upper-level ministerial position who is already employed by the Church as staff shall require the approval of the Senior Pastor.
- b) **Hiring of Other Ministerial and Staff Positions.** The Senior and Executive Pastors shall recruit all other ministerial staff positions. The candidates selected shall be presented to the Elders, and the selected candidate shall be presented to the Trustees and the Church. The selected ministerial candidate shall undergo the employment process upon being presented to the Church. In the absence of an Executive Pastor, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for recruiting other ministerial staff. In addition, the Senior and Executive Pastor, acting within the pre-approved budget and position parameters established for ministerial positions, shall have the authority to hire any administrative and non-exempt employee to fulfill any specific need of the Church. The Senior and Executive Pastors shall have the authority to fill any open position and any hiring decision of a non-exempt staffer.

## **5.6 Termination of Upper-Level, and Other Ministerial Staff Positions**

- a) Resignation: The senior level, ministerial staff, or other staff may terminate his/her relationship with the Church by resignation, preferably giving at least two (2) weeks' notice before terminating responsibilities. If this period is four (4) weeks or longer, the Senior and Executive Pastor will decide on the ministerial staff person's final day.
- b) Termination for Cause or due to the needs of the Church, will be initiated by the Senior and Executive Pastors. The Elders, Trustees, and Church shall be informed of the termination and the cause or grievances that were violated in the Church's Staff Handbook of Human Resources policies and procedures.

# **ARTICLE VI INDEMNIFICATION AND ADVANCEMENT OF EXPENSES**

## **6.1 Mandatory Indemnification of Elders and Church Officers**

To the maximum extent permitted by the previous provisions of the Texas Business Organization Code Section 8.051, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Code in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such an amendment shall apply only to the extent of mandated by law and only activities of person subject to indemnification under this section which occurs subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), the Church shall indemnify and advance expenses to or for the benefit of any person who is an officer of the Church, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators and legal representatives, for the defense of any threatened, pending, or completed action. Suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, and whether formal or informal (any such action, suit, or proceeding being hereinafter referred to as the "Proceeding"), to which such person was, is threatened to be made, named defendant or respondent, which indemnification and advancement of expenses shall include counsel fees incurred as a result of the Proceeding or any appeal thereof. Reasonable expenses incurred concerning the Proceeding, including all fines, judgments, penalties, and amounts paid in settlement thereof. Subject to the following conditions:

- a) The Proceeding was instituted because such person is or was an officer of the Church.
- b) Moreover, the officer conducted himself/herself in good faith, and he or she reasonably believed (1) in the case of conduct in his or her official capacity with the Church, that his or her conduct was at least not opposed to the best interests; and (2) in all other cases, this his or her conduct was at least was not opposed to the best interests of the Church; and (3) in the case of any criminal Proceeding, that he or she had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. Terminating the Proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent is not determinative that the Church officer did not meet the standard of conduct herein described.

## **6.2 Permissive Indemnification of Employees and Agents**

The Church may, to the maximum extent permitted by the provisions of the Texas Business Organization Code Section 8.101 and 22.406.1, as amended from time to time (provided, however, that if an amendment to the Code in any way limits or restricts the indemnification rights permitted by law as of the date hereof, such amendment shall apply only to the extent mandated by law and only to the activities of the Persons subject to indemnification under this section which occurs subsequent to the effective date of such amendment), the Church shall indemnify, and advance expenses to or for the benefit of any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Church, or to such person's heirs, executors, administrators, and legal representatives, to the same extent as outlined in Section 6.1 above, provided that the Proceeding was instituted because such person is or as an employee or agent of the Church and met the standards of conduct set forth in Section 6.1 (b) above. The Church may also indemnify and advance expenses in a Proceeding on behalf of any person who is or was an employee or agent of the Church to the extent consistent with public policy, as may be provided by the constitution, by these bylaws, by contract, or by general or specific action of the Senior Pastor of the Church.

## **6.3 Non-exclusive Application**

The rights to indemnification and advancement of expenses set for in Section 6.1 and above 6.2 above are contractual between the Church and the person being indemnified and his or her heirs, executors, administrators, and legal representatives. They are not exclusive of other similar rights of indemnification or advancement of expense to which such person may be entitled. Whether by contract, by law, by the constitution, be a resolution of the Senior Pastor and Elders, by these bylaws, by the purchase and maintenance by the Church provided for such indemnification, all of which means of indemnification and advancement of expense are her by specifically authorized.

## **6.4 Non-Limiting Application**

The provision of this Article VI shall not limit the power of the Church to pay or reimburse expenses incurred by an officer, employee, or an agent of the Church, or such person's heirs, executors, administrators, or legal representative:

- a) If a judgment or other financial adjudication adverse to such person establishes his or her liability for any breach of the duty to the loyalty to the Church, for acts of omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law, or under Sections 8.101, 8.102, and 8.103 of the Texas Business Code.
- b) Or alternatively, in connection with a Proceeding by or in the right of the Church in which such person was adjudged liable to the Church or in connection with any other Proceeding charging improper personal benefit to such person, whether or not involving action in his or her official capacity, in which he or she was adjudged liable on the basis that he or she improperly received personal benefit.

## **6.5 Repeal of Modification not Retroactive**

No appeal or modification of the provision of this Article VI, either directly or by the adoption of a provision inconsistent with the provision of this Article, shall adversely affect any right or protection set forth herein, existing in favor of a particular individual at the time of such repeal or modification.

# **ARTICLE VII. CHURCH DEACONS**

## **7.1 The Role and Responsibilities of Deacons**

In accordance with the meaning of the word, the work and practice reflected in the New Testament, Deacons are the servants of the Church. The Greek word *diakeno* is the root word for the English word deacon and was initially chosen (Acts 6:2-4) to serve by the Church's Elders to take care of the poor in the Church. Therefore, the task of Deacons is not that of leadership in the Church. Deacons are servant leaders who will serve with the Senior Pastor in meeting the physical needs of the Church and other people in the community.

## **7.2 The Office of Deacon**

The office of deacon is a vital component of the New Testament church. The Church shall recognize and select as deacons those whose lives are characterized by the qualification listed in Scripture (Acts 6:3-4; 1 Tim. 3) and who are duly ordained by New Testament and Church policy. The Church shall elect a given number of deacons in accordance with the congregation size and the number of ministries of the Church.

## **7.3 Qualifications of Deacons**

The qualification for deacons shall be the five New Testament qualifications outlined in Acts 6:3-4. (1) They are devoted followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, with an unwavering devotion to Him characterizes their lives; (2) They are well respected and of an excellent report in their reputation in the personal, public, and church life; (3) They are spiritually mature and not a novice; (4) They demonstrate that they are wise and able to meet the needs the Church equitably and with biblical wisdom.

Deacons will also be required to possess the same general qualifications as Elders pursuant to Section 3.4 (a-g), except for a minimum length of Church membership, which shall be one year. Deacons shall annually affirm their commitment to serve the Deacon Chairperson. They shall serve until released by the Holy Spirit, become unfaithful in performing their role in the deacon ministry, or fail to meet the abovementioned qualifications.

## **7.4 Ordination of Deacons**

The Church shall elect and ordain those qualified to serve the needs of the Church. Ordination is for life unless the deacon fails to perform his ministry of service or disqualifies himself by misconduct contrary to the New Testament Standards set forth in Acts 6:3-4 and 1 Timothy 3.



## **7.5 Deacon Body**

Deacons are ordained in accordance with the approved ministries of the Church and constitute the Deacon Body.

## **7.6 Deacon Ministry Officers**

The Deacons Ministry Officers shall elect officers in accordance with Church Policy. The officers are the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary/Treasurer. The deacon ministry officers shall be responsible for matters related to serving the Church through the Deacon body set forth in these Bylaws and approved by the Senior Pastor, Elders, and Trustees.

# **ARTICLE VIII CONGREGATIONAL TEAMS**

## **8.1 The Teams of the Church**

The Trustees are ombudsmen of the Church and are established to provide a voice of the congregation to the Senior and Executive Pastor and the Elders of the Church. The Trustees will serve as the entity within the church to resolve complaints and conflicts, address concerns, or mediate between a member and any entity of the Church. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be under the direction and serve at the pleasure of the Trustees. The Trustees shall manage all matters per these bylaws, maintain a permanent record of all actions and proceedings, and regularly submit a report of any actions to the Senior Pastor and Elders.

# **ARTICLE IX. CHURCH FINANCES**

## **9.1 Role and Responsibility of the Treasurer of the Church**

The Church Treasurer in consultation with the Senior and Executive Pastor and the Elders, the duties of the Treasurer shall:

- a) In coordination with the Executive Pastor, provide oversight to the Business Administration in performing his/her duties. The Church Treasurer may delegate to his/her staff any or all of the administrative duties described in this section, but exercise oversight of the duties performed under his/her purview for the Church. The Treasurer, as the Church Business Administrator, shall have the primary duty to receive, preserve, and pay, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the Church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.
- b) Ensure the development of fiduciary policies and procedures and submit them to the Senior and Executive Pastor for approval.
- c) Monitor the performance of the Church's fiduciary policies by reviewing financial statements prepared in accordance with fundamentally accepted accounting principles.
- d) Render to the Church a summary report of the receipts and disbursements for the preceding quarter as directed by the Senior and Executive Pastor and the Elders of the Church.

- e) The Church Treasurer will provide an Independent Auditor with all necessary receipts, financial statements, monies received, preserved in designated accounts, payouts, or any document dealing with the Church's finances.
- f) Review all financial transactions of the Church to ensure compliance with the IRS guidelines and the Texas Business Organization code regarding the Church's non-profit status.

## **9.2 Accounting Practices**

The Church Treasurer shall assist the Senior and Executive Pastors in establishing and maintaining a system of accounting consistencies with sound business principles and faithful stewardship.

## **9.3 Church Audit or Review**

On behalf of the Church, the Church Treasurer shall engage an independent certified public accounting firm to audit the Church's financial statements annually. The audit report shall be delivered to the Senior and Executive Pastors and the Elders for review. Any auditor management letters received by the Treasurer shall be copied to the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, and Elders. The Senior and Executive Pastors shall approve the report.

## **9.4 Financial Records and Reports**

All financial records are the property of the Church and shall be kept as per the Church's records retention policy. The Treasurer shall collaborate with the Executive Pastor to prepare monthly financial reports and deliver them to the Senior Pastor and Elders. The Treasurer and executive pastor shall also deliver a quarterly financial report to the Church.

## **9.5 Church Staff Compensation and Benefits**

The Church Treasurer shall develop and propose to the Senior Pastor, Executive Pastor, and Elders annual guidelines for appropriate funding for staff compensation and benefits. The Treasurer, under advisement from the Executive Pastor, shall determine compensation and benefits for the Senior Pastor and the Executive Pastor based on the median to upper level of income for Senior and Executive Pastors. The Treasurer, Senior, and Executive Pastor will agree upon an annual total funding amount based on the expected future revenue budget of the Church for the upcoming year. Additionally, the Treasurer, in consultation with the Senior and Executive Pastor and Elders, will agree upon a rolling plan for expected funding for staff resources in order to provide the Church with future staffing decisions. The Treasurer shall collaborate with the Executive Pastor to implement compensation within the staffing budget approved by the Church.

## **9.6 Church Budget**

The Treasurer, Senior, and Executive Pastor shall supervise the development of an annual budget consistent with the Church's mission, objectives, and strategies and submit it to the Church congregation for approval. The Senior Pastor and Elders of the Church will provide the Church with a budget proposal for staff compensation, continuing education, and training expenditures, excluding the Senior and Executive Pastor's compensation, continuing education, and training expenditures. The Senior Pastor's compensation shall be at the Eighty (80%)-percentile level of compensation of all Senior Pastors, and the Executive Pastor's compensation shall be at the seventy-five (75%) percentiles of Executive Pastors. The four major budget categories of the Church and their percentage of the annual budget from which all ministries will be funded are:

- a) Staffing Personnel- Fifty Percent (50%).
- b) Evangelism and Missions- Ten Percent (10%).
- c) Church Ministries -Twenty Percent (20%).
- d) Facilities Maintenance- Twenty Percent (20%).

## **9.7 Monitoring of Expenditures**

The Senior and Executive Pastors and Elders shall be the Budget Oversight Team, assisting the Church Treasurer in monitoring the Church's budget. The team shall analyze and resolve variances from the Church's approved budget.

## **9.8 Guidelines for Unbudgeted Expenditures**

Unbudgeted Expenditures are those expenditures and commitments for which no budget has been approved by the Church, which could impact the approved budget for the year. All budgeted expenditures require prior approval of the budget Oversight Team. Any unbudgeted expenditures that would cause the total unbudgeted expenditures for the fiscal year to exceed one percent (1%) will require prior approval from the Budget Oversight Team. Any expenditures that would cause unbudgeted expenditures to exceed three percent of the approved comprehensive budget will require prior approval from the Budget Oversight Team and the Church via a business meeting and Church vote.

## **9.9 Guidelines for Budget Deficits**

If the Budget Oversight Team determines that a cash flow deficit has occurred or may occur. In that case, it shall consult with the Church Treasurer to reallocate the resources to ensure that actual expenditures do not exceed receipts in any budget period. Such reallocation shall be consistent with the Church's mission and vision. The Budget Oversight Team shall propose a plan for reallocating resources to the Elders, Trustees, and Church for consideration and approval. The ultimate responsibility for reallocating resources or adjusting expenditures shall be vested in the Budget Oversight Team.

## **9.10 Debt Management**

The Senior Pastor and Treasurer shall manage and control the Church's long-term debt. No officer or employee of the Church shall incur debt in the name of the Church or on behalf of the Church without the authorization of the membership per Sections 2.5 (a) and 9.13.

## **9.11 Guidelines for Budget Overages**

In the event that the Budget Oversight Team determines that a cash flow overage has occurred or may occur, the Senior Pastor and Budget Oversight Team shall recommend to the Elders, Trustees the use of such overage consistent with the Church's mission and vision, debt, and long-term plans. The Senior Pastor, Budget Oversight Team, Elders, and Trustees shall determine the overage use and report its decision to the Church.

## **9.12 Contracts and Employment as Agents**

Except as limited by the constitution and bylaws, the Senior Pastor may authorize any officer or agent of the Church to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church. The Senior Pastor shall be specifically authorized, in sole discretion, to employ and pay such agents, accountants, custodians, experts, consultants, and other counsel, legal, investment, or otherwise, as the Senior Pastor shall deem advisable, and to delegate discretionary powers to and rely upon information furnished by such individuals or entities. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

## **9.13 Securing of Loans or Lines of Credit**

No loans of lines of credit nor any amendments thereto shall be contracted on behalf of the Church, and no evidence of such indebtedness shall be issued in its name unless authorized by a resolution of the Church.

## **9.14 Checks and Drafts**

All checks and drafts, or other orders for the payment of money, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness issued in the name of the Church shall be assigned by such officer or officers, agent, or agents of the Church, and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Senior Pastor and Budget Oversight Team.

## **9.15 Deposits**

All funds received by the Church and not otherwise employed shall be deposited every day to the credit of the Church with such banks, trust companies, brokerage firms, investment managers, or other depositories, and the Senior Pastor and Budget Oversight Team may time to time select.

## **9.16 Investment Authority**

The Senior Pastor, Treasurer, and Budget Oversight Team shall be authorized to retain assets contributed to the Church, even though such assets may constitute an over-concentration in one

or more similar investments. Further, the Senior Pastor and the Budget Oversight Team shall have the authority to make investments in unproductive property or to hold unproductive property to the extent necessary until it can be converted into productive property at an appropriate time, provided the retention of such property is in the best interest of the Church and does not in any way jeopardize the tax-exempt status of the Church.

### **9.17 Church Property**

The Senior Pastor and the Treasurer shall hold title to all Church property on behalf of and in the Church's name.

### **9.18 Church Intellectual Property**

The Church shall own all rights to all works and subsequent derivative works created within the scope of a Staff Member's duties, which the Church has a right to direct and supervise. The Senior and Executive Pastors and Executive Secretary shall develop intellectual property policy guidelines. The Senior and Executive Pastors must approve works presented for publication outside the Church, the terms and provisions of the contracts, and promotional activity for such works. The Senior and Executive Pastors shall approve all uses of the Church's name and likeness.

### **9.19 Fiscal Year**

The Church's fiscal year shall be twelve (12) consecutive calendar months beginning on January 1st. It may be changed by a majority vote of Church members present and voting by paper ballot on a motion by the Trustees, Elders, or the Senior Pastor at a regular business meeting.

### **9.20 Giving**

Membership in the Church involves and includes the monetary responsibility of supporting the Church. Members are expected to practice Christian stewardship, giving to the Church as God has prospered them to support the Church and advance the gospel and Christ's Kingdom locally, nationally, and around the world.

## **ARTICLE X. PURPOSE AND USE OF CHURCH FUNDS**

### **10.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Church is to be a Spirit-filled and Spirit-led assembly of believers empowered and commissioned to share the Gospel and make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Church shall be a worshipping fellowship, experiencing an awareness of God, recognizing His Person, and obeying His leadership. The Church will use its spiritual gifts, talents, and resources to help people experience a growing knowledge of God and minister unselfishly to fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, the community, and the world in the name of Jesus Christ.

## **10.2 No Private Inurement**

The Church is not formed for financial pecuniary gain. Therefore, no part of the assets, income, or profits of the Church shall be distributable to or inure to the benefit of any Church officer or any other private person except for the reimbursement for expenses or reasonable compensation for services rendered to the Church and except to make payments and distribution in furtherance of the purposes of the Church as set forth herein.

No substantial part of the activities of the Church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. Furthermore, no part of the activities of the Church shall be the participation in or intervention in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office. However, the Senior Pastor and his ministerial staff are not to be hindered in any way from speaking publicly, in regular or special meetings of the Church or other venues, on matters of morality or Christian conduct addressed explicitly or implicitly in Scripture.

## **10.3 Dissolution**

The members of the Church shall have the authority to dissolve the Church if dissolution is appropriate or advisable by a majority vote of ninety percent (90%) of active members. In such event, after paying or making provision for the payment of liabilities of the Church then outstanding and unpaid, the Trustees, Treasurer, and Budget Oversight Team shall distribute the assets of the Church exclusively for religious purposes in accordance with Section 10.3 (a), (b), or (c) as appropriate. In the event that the Church should dissolve, be dissolved, or otherwise cease to exist as a charitable organization under the tax laws of the United States. In that case, the assets shall revert to another qualified charitable organization selected by the Trustees and approved by the existing Church members or Elders.

## **ARTICLE XI. NOTICES AND WAIVER OF NOTICES**

Unless otherwise provided herein, the notices provided in these bylaws shall be communicated to the members through standard church communication methods, including the bulletin, electronic mail, posting on the Church website, or announcing during regular worship services. Actions requiring a membership vote pursuant to Section 2.4(a) shall be noticed by written notice in addition to the usual Church communication methods. Written notice is effective at the earliest of (a) receipt, (b) five (5) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed and with first-class postage affixed thereon, (c) on the date shown on the return receipt, if sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, and the receipt is signed by or on behalf of the addressee. Or (d) ten (10) days after its deposit in the United States mail, if mailed correctly addressed and with other than first-class, registered, or certified postage affixed. Whenever any notice is required to be given to any officer or team member of the Church under the provisions of the constitution, these bylaws, or the act, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

## **ARTICLE XII. LICENSING AND ORDINATION OF MINISTERS**

### **12.1 Licensing and Ordination to the Gospel Ministry**

From time to time, the Church shall license or ordain to the gospel ministry those who have shown evidence of divine call on their lives.

- a) A license to the gospel ministry shall be issued upon examination of qualifications and evidence of a calling to the ministry of the gospel by the Senior Pastor, a recommendation of the Elders, and a majority vote of the congregation in any regular or special business meeting pursuant to Section 2.5(a) 3.
- b) A candidate shall be considered for ordination to the gospel ministry by being recommended to the Senior Pastor or Elders. Upon such request or recommendation, the Senior Pastor shall convene a council of ordained ministers and deacons to examine the candidate thoroughly. The candidate's life, doctrine, and call shall be examined in light of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, other applicable Scriptures, and usual Christian practice. This examination shall take place before an ordination service. Upon recommendation of the examining council, the pending ordination shall be voted on by the congregation pursuant to Section 2.5(a) 3.

### **12.2 Terms of Licenses and Ordination Granted by the Church**

The license and ordination of the Church are valid for the minister's lifetime. However, the Church reserves the right to withdraw, upon a majority vote, any license or ordination it has issued should the life of the minister cease to bear those qualities required for such recognition. It is understood that applicable laws shall govern the performance of civil duties by the person licensed or ordained.

## **ARTICLE XIII. EFFECTIVE DATE AND AMENDMENTS**

### **13.1 Effective Date**

The Constitution and Bylaws shall be in immediate effect when approved by the members of the Church upon a majority vote of eighty percent (80%).

### **13.2 Amendments**

Amendments to the Constitution or Bylaws may be proposed to the Senior Pastor, Elders, and Trustees by any member, staff member, or organization of the Church. All proposed amendments shall be referred in writing to the Elders and Senior Pastor. At the discretion of the Elders and Senior Pastor, an ad hoc Constitution and Bylaws Review Team may be formed to make a report on all proposals and recommend adoption or non-adoption. This report shall be presented to the Elders and Senior Pastor, who shall, in turn, present it to the Trustees and the Church for prayerful consideration and a vote following the procedures outlined in Sections 2.5(a) and 3.2 of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE XIV. CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMS**

The Church shall actively maintain Christ-centered Bible teaching programs for the equipping, edification, missions, education, action supporting evangelistic outreach and discipleship, and music education and training. Program organizations to facilitate these areas of ministry shall be maintained under the direction of the ministerial staff of the Senior and Executive Pastors of the Church. All program activities are subject to the direction, coordination, and approval of the Senior and Executive Pastors or their designee(s) shall be organized to minister to every member of the Church effectively.



## APPENDIX 1: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

After having received Christ as my Lord and Savior, and having been baptized by immersion, and being in agreement with the constitution and bylaws of the Church, and leadership structure, I, feeling led by the Holy Spirit to unite my life to this Church and body of believers in faithful service to our Lord, agree to walk in the guidance of the Spirit to the glory of God the Father. In doing so, I commit myself with an unwavering devotion to God and to other family members to do the following:

### **I agree to protect the unity of my Church in my love for God and for others.**

1. By acting in love toward all members of this local assembly of believers and all who enter through its doors.
2. By refusing to use words that harms unity in gossiping or any behavior of the tongue that might cause division within the Church.
3. I agree to resolve matters quickly and in a Christlike manner so that the work of the ministry will not be hindered in any way.
4. By following the leaders of this local assembly.
  - a. “So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Ro. 14:19 NASB).
  - b. “Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus” (Ro. 15:5 NASB)
  - c. “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart” (1 Pet. 1:22 NASB).
  - d. “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4:29 NASB).
  - e. “Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person” (Col. 4:6 NASB).
  - f. “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17NASB).

### **I agree to share in the responsibility of my Church in reaching the lost and equipping those who are members of God’s family.**

1. By praying for the growth, protection, and impact in the community in which God has placed it that He is glorified in all things.
2. By inviting the un-churched to attend that they may become disciples of Jesus Christ.
3. By warmly welcoming all who visit despite their ethnicity and socioeconomic status.
  - a. “We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers” (1 Thess. 1:2 NASB)
  - b. “And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” Mark 15:15 NASB).
  - c. “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-19).
  - d. “Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.” (Rom. 15:7 NASB)

## **APPENDIX 1: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT**

### **I agree to serve in the ministry of my Church in making disciples and equipping the saints by using the gifts and talents given to me by God to glorify Him.**

1. By discovering and using my gifts and talents for the edification, equipping, and strengthening of fellow-believers in this local assembly.
2. By being equipped and ready to serve my Senior Pastor and the ministry in the area that aligns with my God given spiritual gifts and talents.
3. By developing a servant's heart that loves unconditionally, a heart that considers others more than myself.
  - a. "As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. 4:10 NASB).
  - b. "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11-12 NASB)
  - c. "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men" (Phil. 2:3-7 NASB).

### **I agree to support my Church by faithful attendance and financially to reach our community for the Lord Jesus Christ in making disciples and devoted followers of the Christian faith.**

1. By faithfully attending Church to encourage, pray for, and strengthen others in their walk with Christ.
2. By living confessionally and godly life in all areas of life.
3. By giving regularly to the work of the ministry in support of the preaching of the gospel and care for those who are ministers of the gospel.
  - a. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds,
  - b. not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near" (Heb. 10:23-25 NASB).
  - c. "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil 1:27 NASB)
  - d. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come" (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Membership \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX 2: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

We believe the Christian Faith is rooted in Jesus Christ, who is "the same yesterday, today, and forever." Therefore, Jesus Christ, whose will is revealed in the Holy Scriptures, is the sole authority for faith and practice for born-again Christians. A living faith must experience a growing understanding of truth and must be continually interpreted and related to the needs of each new generation.

### **I. THE SCRIPTURES**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is the record of God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It reveals the principles by which God judges us and, therefore, is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. The criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ.

- Ex 24:4; De 4:1-2; 17:19; Jos 8:34
- Ps 19:7-10; 119:11, 89, 105, 140
- Isa 34:16; 40:8; Jer 15:16; 36:1-32
- Mat 5:17-18; 22:29; Lu 21:33; 24:44-46
- Joh 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Ac 2:16; 17:11
- Rom 15:4; 16:25-26; 2Ti 3:15-17
- Heb 1:1-2; 4:12; 1Pe 1:25; 2Pe 1:19-21

### **II. GOD THE FATHER**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. To Him, we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

The eternal God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

#### **A. GOD THE FATHER**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

- Gen 1:1; 2:7; Ex 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11; 20:1
- Lev 22:2; De 6:4; 32:6; 1Ch 29:10; Ps 19:1-3
- Isa 43:3, 15; 64:8; Jer 10:10; 17:13
- Mat 6:9; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11
- John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7
- Rom 8:14-15; 1Co 8:6; Gal 4:6; Eph 4:6
- Col 1:15; 1Ti 1:17; Heb 11:6; 12:9; 1Pe 1:17; 1Jo 5:7

## **B. GOD THE SON**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, he was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself the demands and necessities of human nature and identifying Himself completely with humankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the Person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where He is the One Mediator, partaking of the nature of God and of man, and in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

- Gen 18:1; Psalm 2:7; 110:1; Isa 7:14; 53:1-12
- Mat 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16, 27
- Mat 17:5; 27; 28:1-6, 19; Mark 1:1; 3:11
- Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46
- John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30, 38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50
- John 14:7-11, 16:15-16, 28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20, 28
- Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5, 20
- Rom 1; 3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3, 34; 10:4
- 1Co 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8, 24-28; 2Co 5:19-21
- Gal 4:4-5; Eph 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Ph 2:5-11
- Col 1:13-22; 2:9; 1Th 4:14-18; 1Ti 2:5-6; 3:16
- Tit 2:13-14; Heb 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28
- Heb 9:12-15, 24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1Pe 2:21-25; 3:22
- 1Jo 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2Jo 7-9
- Rev 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16

## C. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through Illumination, He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts" by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in each believer is the assurance of God to bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

- Gen 1:2; Jud 14:6; Job 26:13; Ps 51:11; 139:7
- Isa 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32
- Mat 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mk 1:10, 12
- Luke 1:35; 4:1, 18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49
- John 4:24; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-14
- Acts 1:8; 2:1-4, 38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17, 39 Acts 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6
- Rom 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1Co 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11
- Gal 4:6; Eph 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1Th 5:19
- 1Ti 3:16; 4:1; 2Ti 1:14; 3:16; Heb 9:8, 14
- 2Pe 1:21; 1Jo 4:13; 5:6-7; Rev 1:10; 22:17

## III. ANTHROPOLOGY-DOCTRINE OF HUMANITY

- All of humanity was created by the special act of God, in His own image, and is the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice, man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God. He fell from his original innocence, whereby his posterity inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. As soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill God's creative purpose. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His image, and Christ died for man; therefore, every man possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.
- Gen 1:26-30; 2:5, 7, 18-22; 3; 9:6
- Ps 1:1-6; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isa 6:5; Jer 17:5
- Matt 16:26; Acts 17:26-31
- Rom 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6, 12, 19; 6:6
- Rom 7:14-25; 8:14-18, 29; 1Co 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22
- Eph 2:1-22; Col 1:21-22; 3:9-11

## IV. SALVATION

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Lord Jesus Christ obtained eternal redemption for the believer by His own blood. In its broadest sense, salvation includes regeneration, sanctification, and glorification.

- A. **Regeneration**, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.
- B. **Sanctification** is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.
- C. **Glorification** is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

- Gen 3:15; Ex 3:14-17; 6:2-8
- Mat 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6
- Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32
- John 1:11-14, 29; 3:3-21, 36; 5:24; 10:9, 28-29
- John 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31
- Acts 17:30-31; 20:32; Rom 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3
- Rom 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18; 29-39; 10:9-10, 13
- Rom 13:11-14; 1Cor 1:18, 30; 6:19-20; 15:10
- 2Co 5:17-20; Gal 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15
- Eph 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Ph 2:12-13; Col 1:9-22; 3:1
- 1Th 5:23-24; 2Tim 1:12; Titus 2:11-14
- Heb 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8, 14
- James 2:14-26; 1Pe 1:2-23; 1Jo 1:6-2:11
- Rev 3:20; 21:1-22:5

## V. GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE

The grace of God is His unmerited favor on undeserving sinners, in which He sanctifies and glorifies sinners who have accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. It is consistent with the free agency of

man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. Those who have accepted Christ as their personal Savior are sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit and kept by God's power to the end of their natural life on earth. Although believers may fall into sin through neglect and lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, or the boastful pride of life whereby they grieve the Holy Spirit and bring reproach on the cause of Christ, thereby disrupting their communion with God and experience temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God as sons and daughters of His family.

- Gen 12:1-3; Ex 19:5-8; 1Sa 8:4-7, 19-22
- Isa 5:1-7; Jer 31:31
- Mat 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22, 31; 25:34
- Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48
- John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45, 65; 10:27-29
- John 15:16; 17:6, 12, 17-18; Acts 20:32
- Rom 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7, 26-36
- 1Co 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Eph 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11
- Col 1:12-14; 2Th 2:13-14; 2Ti 1:12; 2:10, 19
- Heb 11:39-12:2; 1Pe 1:2-5, 13; 2:4-10
- 1Jo 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2

## VI. THE CHURCH

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a local body of baptized believers who are associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the two ordinances of Christ is committed to His teachings, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. This church is an autonomous body, operating through democratic processes under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. In such a congregation, members are equally responsible. Its Scriptural officers are pastors, elders, and deacons.

- Mat 16:15-19; 18:15-20
- Acts 2:41-42, 47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23, 27
- Acts 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Rom 1:7
- 1Co 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14, 12
- Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11, 21; 5:22-32
- Ph 1:1; Col 1:18; 1Ti 3:1-15; 4:14

## **VII. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, believer's baptism is the first step of obedience and a demonstration that the believer is a follower of Jesus Christ to the world.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Mat 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mk 1:9-11; 14:22-26

- Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23
- Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7
- Rom 6:3-5; 1Co 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Col 2:12

## **VIII. THE LORD'S DAY**

The first day of the week is The Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements and resting from secular employments, work of necessity and mercy only being excepted.

- Ex 20:8-11; Mat 12:1-12; 28:1; Mk 2:27-28; 16:1-7
- Luke 24:1-3, 33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1, 19-28
- Acts 20:7; 1Co 16:1-2; Col 2:16; 3:16; Rev 1:10

## **IX. THE KINGDOM**

The Kingdom of God includes His general sovereignty over the universe and His kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly, the Kingdom of God is the realm of salvation into which men enter by a trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians should pray and labor so that God's Kingdom may come, and His will is done on earth as in heaven. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of

this age.

- Gen 1:1; Isa 9:6-7; Jer 23:5-6



- Mat 3:2; 4:8-10, 23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29
- Mk 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32
- Luke 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36
- Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Rom 5:17; 8:19
- 1Co 15:24-28; Col 1:13; Heb 11:10, 16; 12:28
- 1Pe 2:4-10; 4:13; Rev 1:6, 9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

## **X. LAST THINGS**

God will bring the world to its appropriate end in His own time and way. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. In their resurrected and glorified bodies, the righteous will receive their reward and live forever in Heaven with the Lord.

- Isa 2:4; 11:9; Mat 16:27; 18:8-9
- Mat 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64
- Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48; 16:19-26
- Luke 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3
- Acts 1:11; 17:31; Rom 14:10; 1Co 4:5
- 1Co 15:24-28, 35-58; 2Co 5:10; Ph 3:20-21
- Col 1:5; 3:4; 1Th 4:14-18; 5:1; 2Th 1:7; 2:1-17
- 1Ti 6:14; 2Ti 4:1, 8; Tit 2:13; Heb 9:27-28
- James 5:8; 2Pe 3:7; 1Jo 2:28; 3:2
- Jude 14; Rev 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13

## **XI. EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The Holy Spirit's new birth of man's spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. Every child of God must constantly seek to win the loss to Christ by personal effort and all other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

- Gen 12:1-3; Ex 19:5-6; Isa 6:1-8
- Mat 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19
- Mat 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53
- John 14:11-12; 15:7-8, 16; 17:15; 20:21
- Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3
- Rom 10:13-15; Eph 3:1-11; 1Th 1:8; 2Ti 4:5

- Heb 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1Pe 2:4-10; Rev 22:17

## **XII. EDUCATION**

The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence. Along with these, education should receive the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian schools is necessary for a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education, there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by Jesus Christ's pre-eminence, the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

- De 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28
- Ps 19:7; 119:11; Pro 3:13; 4:1-10; 8:1-7, 11; 15:14
- Eccl 7:19; Mat 5:2; 7:24; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40
- 1Co 1:18-31; Eph 4:11-16; Ph 4:8; Col 2:3, 8-9
- 1Ti 1:3-7; 2Ti 2:15; 3:14-17; Heb 5:12-6:3
- James 1:5; 3:17

## **XIII. STEWARDSHIP**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the entire world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. Therefore, all Christians are under obligation to serve the Lord Jesus Christ with their time, talents, and material possessions and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute financially cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Christian Gospel on earth.

- Gen 14:20; Lev 27:30-32; De 8:18; Mal 3:8-12
- Mat 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29
- Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47
- Acts 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Ro 6:6-22; 12:1-2
- 1Co 4:1-2; 6:19-20, 12; 16:1-4; 2Co 8-9; 12:15
- Ph 4:10-19; 1Pe 1:18-19

## **XIV. COOPERATION**

On certain occasions, Christ's people will require the unity and organization of associations and conventions to best secure cooperation to preach the gospel for advancing the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of Christ's people most effectively.

Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations when the end to be attained is itself justified and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

- Ex 17:12; 18:17; Jud 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15
- Ne 4; 8:1-5; Mat 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20
- Mk 2:3; Luke 10:1; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1; 4:31-37; 13:2-3
- Acts 15:1-35; 1Co 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 2Co 8:1-9:15
- Gal 1:6-10; Eph 4:1-16; Ph 1:15-18

## **XV. THE CHRISTIAN AND THE SOCIAL ORDER**

Every follower of Jesus Christ is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in his own life and human society. The means and methods used to improve society and establish righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus. The Christian should oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice. He should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society under the influence of the biblical principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. To promote these ends, Christians should be ready to work with all men of goodwill in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

- Ex 20:3-17; Lev 6:2-5; De 10:12; 27:17
- Psalm 101:5; Mic 6:8; Zech 8:16
- Mat 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35
- Mk 1:29-34, 2:3; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25
- John 15:12; 17:15; Rom 12-14; 1Co 5:9-10; 6:1-7
- 1Co 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Gal 3:26-28; Eph 6:5-9
- Col 3:12-17; 1Th 3:12; Phm 1:1-25; Jas 1:27; 2:8

## **XVI. PEACE AND WAR**

Every Christian must seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. By the spirit and teachings of Christ, they should do all in their power to end war. The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations and the practical application of His law of love.

- Isa 2:4; Mat 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38
- Rom 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Heb 12:14; Jas 4:1-2

## **XVII. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has Left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men that are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to civil powers to conduct its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone to pursue its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by civil power.

- Gen 1:27; 2:7; Mat 6:6-7, 24; 16:26; 22:21
- John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Rom 6:1-2; 13:1-7
- Gal 5:1, 13; Ph 3:20; 1Ti 2:1-2; Jas 4:12
- 1Pe 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19

## **XVIII. THE FAMILY**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It comprises of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. The biblical principle of marriage is uniting one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel for sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He is responsible for providing for, protecting, and leading

his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the loving servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to Christ. The wife, being in the image of God as her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to help him manage the household and nurture the next generation. Children, from conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values of God, lead them through consistent lifestyle examples and loving discipline, and make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

- Ge 1:26-28; 2:18-25; 3:1-20; Ex 20:12; De 6:4-9; Jos 24:15
- 1Sa 1:26-28; Ps 78:1-8; 127:1-4; 128:1-6; 139:13-16
- Pro 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24
- Pro 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15
- Pro 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31
- Eccl 4:9-12; 9:9; Mal 2:14-16
- Mt 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9
- Mark 10:6-12; Ro 1:18-32; 1Co 7:1-16
- Eph 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Col 3:18-21; 1Ti 5:14; 2Ti 1:3-5
- Tit 2:3-5; Heb 13:4; 1Pe 3:1-7

## APPENDIX 3: SELECTION OF ELDERS

Serving as a Church elder is a significant responsibility that requires a call from God and a deep spiritual commitment to shepherd His people. Therefore, biblical principles for selecting elders will be followed in choosing those to serve as elders in the Church. In the New Testament, the biblical selection of elders by Paul and Barnabas reveals that they appoint elders in every church after a time of prayer and fasting. (Acts 14:23, 20:17; Titus 1:5; 1 Tim.5:17). Although the Bible does not present systematic instruction or process for the election of elders, it suggests norms regarding how they should be nominated for their sacred posts (Acts 14:21-23). However, the one explicit guideline within Scripture is that they cannot nominate themselves. The biblical conclusions and divine directions regarding the selection of Elders are:

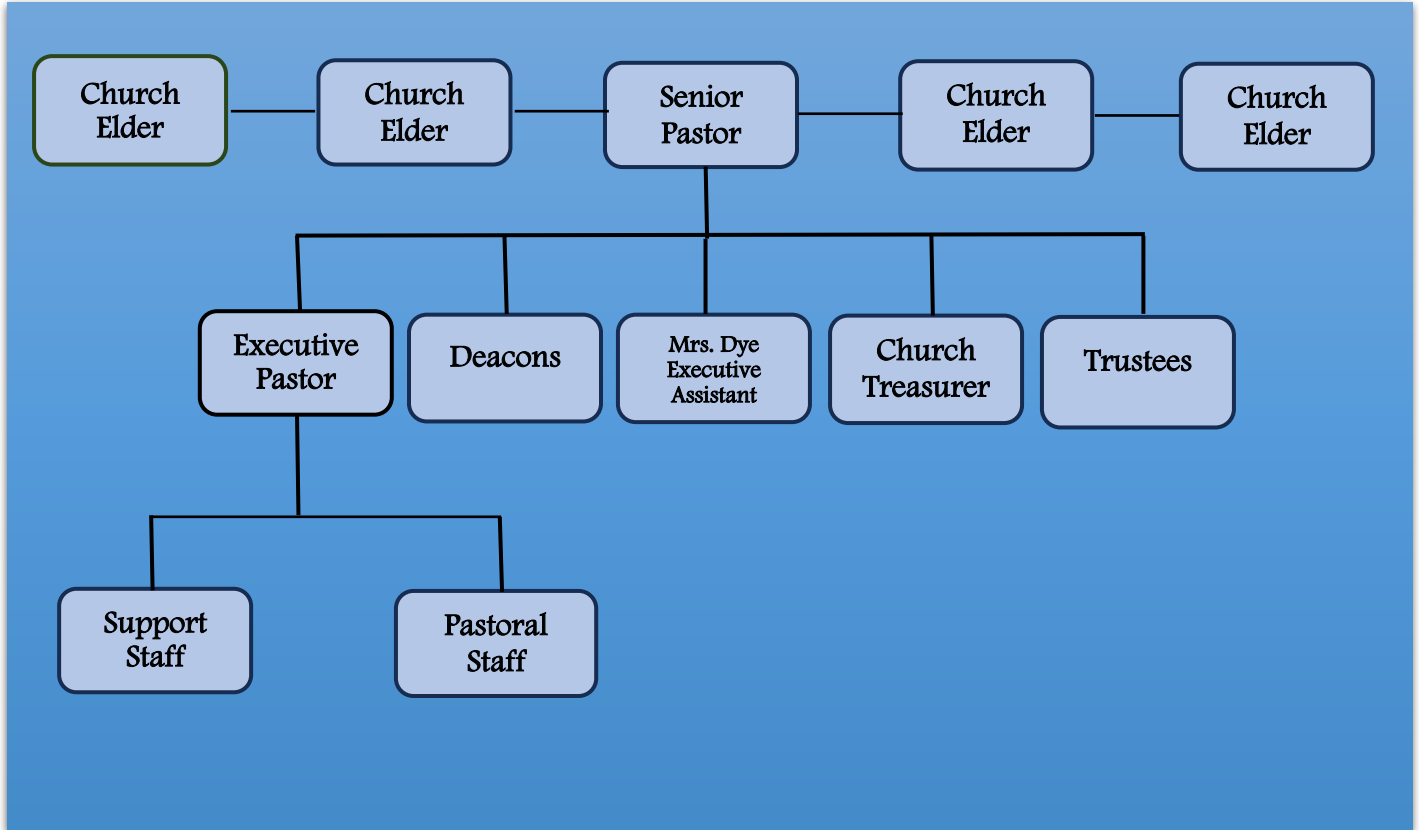
1. Elders are not voted on or volunteered by the congregation in a democratic exercise where the church selects a man by majority vote.
2. Elders are chosen, appointed, raised up, or ordained (set alongside) by the existing Pastor/Elder that has been appointed.
3. In a church without elders, the Pastor/Elder raises up elders ([Titus 1:5](#)), and those Elders can appoint other Elders.
4. Therefore, the New Testament Process and Cycle for selecting an Elder is:
  - a) The Pastor/Elder raises up/selects, appoints, or raises up other Elders according to the qualifications and guidelines outlined in the New Testament.
  - b) The Pastor/Elder is also responsible for seeking out, training, and appointing Elders.
  - c) Anyone who meets the qualifications of an Elder should ask themselves the question below.
    1. Do others recognize my gifts and abilities in this area?
    2. Have other people requested me to serve in activities of leadership?
    3. Have others encouraged me to preach and teach?
    4. Has someone suggested my name to be church elder?
    5. Is God leading me in that direction?
5. Biblical Support for Elders (Acts 20:17; 14:23; 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:17-18; Rev. 4:4; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; 1 Tim. 4:14; Acts 15:2; 16:4; 1 Tim 3:2)

### The Wife of Elders

God has given the leadership role in the church, but He has also described the wife who complements that leader in serving the church and honoring Him.

1. She is a wife who loves God and lives honorably, discretely, and soberly.
2. She is a woman who honors God in the stewardships that He has given to her as a wife.
3. She is a woman who can teach other women how to serve God, family, and community.

## APPENDIX 4: CHURCH ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE



## ADOPTION

These bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present. These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of the Church.

Date: June 30, 2024

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Jeanie Dye  
Executive Secretary  
Grace Bible Fellowship

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Jerome T. Jones  
President/Senior Pastor  
Grace Bible Fellowship