



**CORNERSTONE**  
BIBLE CHURCH • KATY

## **Constitution & Bylaws**

*My beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.*

1 Corinthians 15:58



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## **ARTICLE I: NAME, LOCATION, AND AFFILIATION**

The name of this church shall be Cornerstone Bible Church. The church is currently meeting at West Memorial Junior High 22311 Provincial Blvd Katy, Texas, Harris County, Texas 77493.

Cornerstone Bible Church is independent and is a church planted from Founders Baptist Church in Spring Texas.

## **ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purpose of this church is as stated in the New Testament Scriptures. This church exists for God's pleasure and to bring glory and honor to His name and the name of His Son, Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup> This is done through the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of its members to attain unity of faith and true knowledge of Christ to spiritual maturity.<sup>2</sup> Thus, we can be light in a darkened world in word and in deed.<sup>3</sup> The church shall be devoted to the shepherding of its members, the equipping of the saints, the worshiping of our God, and the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.<sup>4</sup>

## **ARTICLE III: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1: The Church Defined**

The word church (*ekklesia*) means "called-out ones," and can refer to the entire spiritual body of Christ or a local congregation of that body. In the New Testament, it most often refers to an established local congregation of believers.

Scripture teaches that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body

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<sup>1</sup> Col 1:15–19

<sup>2</sup> Eph 4:11–16

<sup>3</sup> Matt 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; Eph 5:7–8

<sup>4</sup> Matt 28:19; Eph 4:11–16



called the church, the family of God, of which Jesus Christ is the head.<sup>1</sup> The church is made up of individual local congregations of believers that assemble together for the cause of fellowship and growth in Christ. God has given each local congregation all that it needs to individually and corporately mature and carry out the commands and commissions of our Lord.<sup>2</sup> The church exists for the spiritual purpose set forth in Article II of this constitution and bylaws.

## **SECTION 2: Membership Defined**

Members of this church shall be comprised of those who have:

1. Made a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior,<sup>3</sup>
2. Been scripturally baptized,<sup>4</sup>
3. Requested to be a member of this church,
4. Made a commitment to abide by the membership covenant of this church, and
5. Been received as members of the church by the elder body.

## **SECTION 3: Purpose of Church Membership**

Church membership is important in that it facilitates:

1. The defining of who belongs to our local congregation,<sup>5</sup>
2. The knowing of who should participate in the privileges and responsibilities of the church,<sup>6</sup>
3. The providing of adequate care, nurture, and protection for every individual that belongs to this church,<sup>7</sup> and
4. The exercising of authority and oversight in discipline and restoration of those members not maintaining a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Col 1:18; Eph 1:22

<sup>2</sup> Acts 2:47, 11:21; 1 Cor 1:2; Col 4:15

<sup>3</sup> Matt 10:32; Rom 10:9

<sup>4</sup> Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12; Acts 19:5

<sup>5</sup> Philm 2:2

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim 5:16; Jas 5:14

<sup>7</sup> Acts 6:1

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor 5:1-5



## **SECTION 4: Procedures for Church Membership**

### **A. Application for Church Membership**

Any person may request membership with this church by publicly presenting himself or herself to an elder for membership at any church service.

### **B. Process for Consideration of Church Membership**

Upon a person's request for membership, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The person shall meet with an elder or an elder-appointed member to discuss if he or she has truly trusted Christ as Savior.
2. An elder or an elder-appointed member of the church shall give an information packet including the Statement of Faith, and the Membership Covenant/commitment to the applicant.
3. An elder or elder-appointed member of the church shall meet with the person to discuss and answer any questions regarding the church and his or her membership commitment.
4. If, after meeting with an elder of the church, the person is found to be of kindred spirit with the church, and can and will commit to the responsibilities of membership, an elder shall present his or her request for membership to the elder body for approval or denial.
5. If a request for membership is denied, an elder of the church shall meet with the person to discuss and answer any questions regarding the decision of the elder body.
6. Upon elder body approval, the new member shall be publicly presented to the church as a fellow member of the church.
7. The new member shall be assigned to a Bible study group for care.



## **SECTION 5: Membership Covenant**

I affirm that I have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and have been scripturally baptized. I further affirm that I have read the statement of faith and doctrine of this church, and am of like faith and kindred spirit.

As part of this local fellowship, and by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit:

- Will you diligently strive to grow in holiness so that you are increasingly conformed to the image of Jesus Christ?
- Will you protect the unity of the body of Christ by walking in love and guarding against the pride that so often divides local churches?
- Will you be faithful to gather with God's people on the Lords' Day for corporate worship as you have opportunity, not forsaking the assembly of the body?
- Will you pray for your shepherds and submit to the loving rule, oversight, and authority of the elders regarding reproof, instruction, correction, and loving discipline as given in Matt 18:15–17, knowing that they will give an account to Christ for your souls?
- Will you faithfully use your God-given spiritual gift so that others are built up in their walk with the Lord?
- Will you offer your time and your resources to the Lord so that the ongoing needs of gospel-ministry are met?
- Will you seek out more mature believers to invest in your walk with Christ, and likewise pursue those whom you can invest in and encourage to be like Christlike?
- Will you be accountable to the church and willing to humbly give and receive correction and spiritual counsel regarding doctrine and conduct, being careful to flee from pride and hiddenness in your life?
- Will you continue to nurture a faithful prayer life?
- Will you strive to maintain a credible testimony of love for Jesus Christ in the community, and in front of your unsaved family and friends, praying they would see their need for Christ, patiently enduring persecution if necessary, and boldly proclaiming the gospel wherever you have opportunity?

Congregation:

- Will you openly embrace these new members of the body...rejoicing in their spiritual victories, comforting them in their afflictions, building them up in the faith, admonishing them in



weaknesses, praying for them, and encouraging them in the grace, love, and hope of the Lord Jesus Christ?

## **SECTION 6: Statement on Gender and Sexuality**

1. Cornerstone Bible Church reserves the right to interpret the Bible and to function according to the standards outlined in its Constitution, Statement of Faith, and Bylaws.
2. Any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, transgenderism, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography is a sin according to God's Word and violates the biblical description of manhood and womanhood as reflecting the image and nature of God<sup>1</sup> as stated in Article II, Section 2 of the Cornerstone Bible Church Statement of Faith.
3. Cornerstone Bible Church actively seeks to lead any person engaged in sexual immorality to confession and repentance that he or she might find justification and sanctification in Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>
4. In light of the biblical view of its sinfulness, a person who is continuing in sexual immorality is not a fit candidate for membership in or employment on the staff of Cornerstone Bible Church.
5. It is imperative that all persons employed by Cornerstone Bible Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this statement.<sup>3</sup>
6. If a member of Cornerstone Bible Church violates this statement, he or she shall be subject to the discipline of the church as outlined in Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution and Bylaws.

## **SECTION 7: Discipline of Members**

The purpose of church discipline is to effect a return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs, to maintain purity in the local church, and to deter sin.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gen 1:26–27; Matt 15:18–20; 1 Cor 6:9–10

<sup>2</sup> Acts 3:19–21; Rom 10:9–10; 1 Cor 6:9–11

<sup>3</sup> Matt 5:16; Phil 2:14–16; 1 Thess 5:22

<sup>4</sup> Matt 18:15–18; 1 Cor 5:1–5; Gal 6:1; 1 Tim 1:18–20, 5:19–20; 2 Tim 2:16–18; Jas 5:19–20





Members of this church who shall err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to dismissal according to Matt 18:15–18; Gal 6:1; 1 Cor 5:1–5; 1 Tim 1:18–20; 5:19–20; 2 Tim 2:16–18; Jas 5:19–20.

Before such dismissal, however:

1. It shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
2. If said erring member does not heed this warning, then the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
3. If said erring member still refuses to heed this additional warning, it shall be brought to the attention of the elders.
4. The elders, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church.
5. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning of the elders and the church, he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the church.
6. There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.
7. It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion even if the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process.
8. If said member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests restoration of membership, he or she shall be publicly restored to membership.

### **SECTION 8: Removal from Membership**

Members may be removed from church membership for any of the following reasons:

1. Death,
2. Transfer of membership, providing that disciplinary action is not in process for an offense under Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution and Bylaws,
3. Inactivity,
4. Disciplinary action,



5. Member request, providing that disciplinary action is not in process for an offense under Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution and Bylaws.

### **SECTION 9: Restoration of Membership**

If a member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, he or she shall be publicly restored to membership. Any such request shall be made to the elder body.<sup>1</sup>

### **SECTION 10: Membership Meetings**

#### A. Types of Meetings

1. A regular annual meeting shall be held to affirm the church's annual budget and communicate reports to the congregation from the elder body regarding the church.
2. Special meetings may be called by the pastor-teacher or the elder body to report to the church any pending decisions or decisions made by the elder body.

#### B. Notice of Meetings

Any special-called meetings shall be publicly announced and in printed form at least two weeks prior to the meeting unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical.

### **SECTION 11: Ordinances of the Church**

Scripture teaches that there are two ordinances that the church is to observe until Jesus Christ returns again:

1. Baptism (see Statement of Faith Article I. Section 2 for detailed information about Baptism).
2. The Lord's Supper (see Statement of Faith Article I. Section 2 for detailed information on the Lord's Supper).

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<sup>1</sup> Gal 6:1



## **ARTICLE IV: CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

### **SECTION 1: Purpose of Church Government**

Church government is an extremely practical and theologically significant issue. Biblical structure and function allow for the peaceful and orderly working out of the ministry of the church. The church is the family of God and its head is Jesus Christ. Just as God has given us the structure and the function of each person in a family, He has done so in regards to His church.<sup>1</sup> God's Word reveals the proper structure of the church and the function of each of its parts.

The purpose of such structure and instruction is to ensure spiritual maturity both individually and corporately as a New Testament church.<sup>2</sup>

### **SECTION 2: Structure of Church Government**

#### **A. Jesus Christ is the Head**

Scripture teaches that Jesus Christ is the Head of the church. Jesus Christ has revealed His will for us, as the church, through His Word, the Bible.<sup>3</sup>

#### **B. Elders**

Jesus Christ as the Head of the church mediates His rule over the church by calling and appointing elders (pastors) to shepherd, oversee, and lead the church. These elders are directly responsible to Jesus Christ for the governing of the church according to His Word.<sup>4</sup> (See Article V for detailed information about elders.)

#### **C. Deacons**

Deacons are recommended by the church and approved by the elders to assist the elders in the practical ministry of service to the church.<sup>5</sup> (See Article VIII for detailed information about deacons.)

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<sup>1</sup> Eph 5:23

<sup>2</sup> Eph 4:11–13

<sup>3</sup> Eph 5:23

<sup>4</sup> Acts 20:28–30; 1 Thess 5:12–14; 1 Pet 5:1–2

<sup>5</sup> Acts 6:1–6



### **SECTION 3: Councils**

To promote efficient handling of church matters, the elder body may appoint various councils from within its members, the staff, the deacons, and from the church at large. These councils shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with the powers specifically delegated by the elder body.<sup>1</sup> All elders serve as ex-officio members of all councils and may sit as such at their discretion. All councils shall exist for the period specified by the elder body.

The general functions of any council are:

1. To bring considered recommendations to the body of elders concerning church matters.
2. To provide a wider base of counsel to the elders regarding church matters.

### **SECTION 4: The Finance Council**

To promote the efficient and studied handling of the financial matters of the church, the elder body shall appoint a council of men for the purpose of making recommendations to the elders regarding the finances of the church. This group of men shall be known as the finance council. They shall aid in the compilation of the annual church budget and any other financial matters that the elders delegate to their care. The elders shall determine the number and tenure of members of the finance council.<sup>2</sup>

### **SECTION 5: The Pastoral Care Council**

Just as elders (pastors) have been given the responsibility to care for the church body, the church body has been given the responsibility for the care and honor of those who minister to the church.<sup>3</sup> It is for this reason that the elder body shall appoint a group of men to be known as the pastoral care council.

This council shall, on behalf of the church, be vigilant in the watchcare and honor of our pastors and ministry staff. They shall be

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<sup>1</sup> Prov 11:14

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet 5:2; 2 Cor 8:18–20

<sup>3</sup> Rom 10:14–15; 1 Tim 5:17–18; 1 Thess 5:12–13



responsible for initially establishing and annually reviewing salary and benefit packages. They are to lead the church in the recognition of special occasions such as anniversaries, birthdays, etc. They are also to be diligent in seeking to meet any special need that should arise regarding our pastoral staff. The elders shall determine the number and tenure of members of the pastoral care council.

## **SECTION 6: Trustees**

The elder body for the purpose of the signing of legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal document where the signatures of trustees are required shall appoint three trustees. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer property without the specific authorization of the elder body. Trustees shall serve for a period specified by the body of elders.

## **SECTION 7: Ordinations and Licensing**

### **A. Ordination**

Ordination refers to the recognition by the elders and the church of a man's call to the ministry as a pastor or a deacon.<sup>1</sup> Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man manifests the qualifications of the office to which he was ordained.

### **B. Licensing**

A man shall be licensed by the church to the gospel ministry upon the approval of the elder body.<sup>2</sup>

## **SECTION 8: Church Records and Books**

The church shall maintain current, adequate, and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of operation. An accurate account of all receipts and disbursements shall be maintained by financial staff under the direction of an administrator that is appointed by the pastor-teacher. The fiscal year of the church shall begin on January 1st, and end on December 31st of each year.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 6:6, 13:2-4, 20:28

<sup>2</sup> This allows a man to legally perform weddings



### **SECTION 9: Dissolution of the Church**

The elder body shall allow the church membership to decide by ballot vote the dissolution of the church. A 75% majority vote of all eligible members present is required for the dissolution of the church. Upon the dissolution of the church, the elder body shall cause all assets of the church to be transferred to the State of Texas, the United States, or to an educational, religious, charitable, or other similar organization that is qualified for exemption under Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code, as amended. The elder body shall allow the church membership to approve their decision on the distribution of the assets of the church. Approval shall be by a 75% majority vote of all eligible members present at a special-called meeting for that purpose.

### **SECTION 10: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws**

The Constitution and Bylaws adopted by the church in a business meeting held on February 4th, 2024, shall supersede all prior resolutions, precedents, and actions of the church not in harmony with its provisions. The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended or changed by the elder body. Changes to the Statement of Faith and Doctrine, will require a unanimous vote of the elder body. The elder body shall seek the formal affirmation of the congregation when changes or amendments to the Statement of Faith or Constitution and Bylaws are required. (See Article V, Section 2.B.1 for information about formal affirmations.)

### **SECTION 11: Statement of Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct**

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Cornerstone Bible Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our elders are Cornerstone Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.



## **ARTICLE V: ELDERS**

The New Testament Scripture is clear about those who have the responsibility of rule, oversight, and care of the church. These men are called elders, overseers, and bishops. All three different titles are used to refer to the same spiritual office of leadership in the church and are interchangeable.<sup>1</sup> We know that Christ is the head of the church and that He mediates His rule in the church through the shepherding of elders (pastors).<sup>2</sup>

### **SECTION 1: The Authority of the Elders**

#### A. Decision-Making Authority

All the decision-making authority of the church is vested in the elders (pastors) who shepherd the church. The objective of any and all decisions made shall be to do the will of God regarding the matter at hand.<sup>3</sup>

#### B. Decision-Making Process

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another before himself.

A matter receiving a unanimous yes vote is a yes decision. If there are less than four members of the body of elders, a simple majority is required to make a decision.

#### C. Statement of Unity

Any decision made after following the agreed upon decision-making process will be a unified yes or no decision. All elders agree to be unified in the final decision, yes or no, in public and in private, even though it may not agree with their personal preference.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim 3:1-7

<sup>2</sup> Acts 20:17-18, 28-31; 1 Pet 5:1-4

<sup>3</sup> Acts 15:2-6; Heb 13:7

<sup>4</sup> Acts 15:6-22



D. Special Decisions

The elder body shall seek the formal affirmation of the congregation when the following decisions are being made:<sup>1</sup>

1. The calling of or removal of the pastor-teacher.
2. The calling of or removal of pastoral or non-pastoral ministry staff.
3. The church’s annual budget.
4. Expenditures involving new property or new buildings and related indebtedness.
5. The selection of elders.
6. Any changes or amendments to the Statement of Faith Constitution and Bylaws.

E. Affirmation Options

The elder body may choose at any time and on any matter to seek the affirmation of the congregation or any leadership group within the church such as deacons, teachers, etc. These affirmations may be formal or informal.

**SECTION 2: Congregational Affirmation**

A. Purpose of Congregational Affirmations

The purpose of an affirmation from the congregation, deacons, or any other group of the church is the wisdom of seeking the godly counsel of many as taught in Scripture.<sup>2</sup> This type of counsel can be helpful to the elders in the determining of God’s will in a matter. We must remember that the purpose of an affirmation is not so that the many can make the decision.<sup>3</sup> The elders will make all final decisions.

B. Types of Affirmations

1. Formal Affirmation: A ballot vote of eligible members present at a meeting called for the specific purpose of affirming a decision being made by the elders on a particular

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<sup>1</sup> Prov 11:14

<sup>2</sup> Prov 11:14

<sup>3</sup> Heb 13:17





matter. The meeting shall be called by the elders or pastor-teacher and publicly announced at least two weeks prior to the meeting. The results of all formal affirmations will be made public.

2. Informal Affirmation: A vote taken using any method desired by the elders for the purpose of polling the counsel of the congregation or a leadership group (i.e. deacons, teachers, etc.) on any matter.

#### C. Eligible Members

A church member is eligible to cast a ballot in formal affirmations when he or she is present and has reached the age of eighteen.

#### D. Ballots

The ballots used for voting shall provide the following choices:  
After prayer on the matter at hand:

1. I believe that this is God's will for our church.
2. I do not believe that this is God's will for our church.

### **SECTION 3: Responsibilities of Elders**

#### A. To spiritually shepherd the church

1. To preach and teach God's Word<sup>1</sup>
2. To pray<sup>2</sup>
3. To maintain doctrinal purity in the church<sup>3</sup>
4. To reprove, rebuke, and exhort the church with great patience<sup>4</sup>
5. To be examples in the church<sup>5</sup>

#### B. To govern and oversee all the affairs of the church

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 6:2, 4; 1 Tim 5:17; 2 Tim 4:2

<sup>2</sup> Acts 6:4

<sup>3</sup> Gal 1:6-9; 1 Tim 1:3-7; Jude 3-4

<sup>4</sup> 2 Tim 4:2; Titus 1:9-11

<sup>5</sup> 1 Pet 5:3



1. To establish policies and practices for the church that are consistent with Scripture and the purpose of the church<sup>1</sup>
2. To direct and oversee all of the financial resources and expenditures of the church
3. To direct and oversee the maintaining of adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of the business of the church
4. To appoint officers and councils as needed to carry out the business of the church in an orderly and acceptable manner. Any officer or council appointed by the elders is directly responsible to the elders and shall serve as long as the elders see the need.<sup>2</sup>
5. To select a pastor-teacher in accordance with the selection process established in these bylaws
6. To appoint elders for the church in accordance with the selection process established in these bylaws<sup>3</sup>
7. To appoint deacons for the church in accordance with the selection process established in these bylaws<sup>4</sup>
8. To maintain open communication with the church body

#### **SECTION 4: Qualifications of Elders**

##### **A. Called by God**

An elder (pastor) must be a man who has been called by God into the gospel ministry. The evidences for such a call are as follows:

1. Confirmation of the call to the ministry by other believers.<sup>5</sup>
2. Possession of the abilities necessary to serve (giftedness).
3. A deep desire to serve.<sup>6</sup>
4. A lifestyle characterized by moral integrity.<sup>7</sup>
5. Active membership.
6. An elder must affirm and adhere to the membership covenant of this church.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim 3:4–5

<sup>2</sup> Acts 6:3

<sup>3</sup> Titus 1:5

<sup>4</sup> Acts 6:2–6

<sup>5</sup> 2 Tim 2:1–2; 3 John 1:12

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim 3:1

<sup>7</sup> Titus 1:6–9; 1 Pet 5:1–3

<sup>8</sup> Heb 10:25



B. Biblical qualifications.

An elder must possess the qualifications described in 1 Tim 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. He shall be:

1. Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach.
2. One-woman man, faithful in marriage and purity.
3. Temperate, sober, vigilant.
4. Sober-minded, prudent.
5. Given to hospitality.
6. Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching.
7. Not given to wine.
8. Not violent; not pugnacious.
9. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle.
10. Not a brawler; uncontentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered.
11. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain.
12. Rules his own household well. His children are faithful, not accused of rebellion against God.
13. Not a novice; not a new convert.
14. Has a good report or reputation with outsiders.
15. Not self-willed.
16. Loves what is good.
17. Just, fair.
18. Holy, devout.
19. Self-controlled.
20. Ordination

An elder (pastor) must be ordained to the gospel ministry by this church or a church of like faith.<sup>1</sup>

**SECTION 5: Selection of Elders**

A. Initial Selection of Elders

Inasmuch as the pastor-teacher has the responsibility of the spiritual equipping and oversight of the entire congregation, and shall be the first among equals in the elder body, he shall present to the church body the initial group of men who make up the elder body.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 14:23



## B. Elder Selection Process from within the Congregation

The process by which elders are nominated and appointed to the body of elders is as follows:

1. The elders shall set aside men that they determine have met the qualifications and calling of the office of elder. They shall be declared as being under consideration.
2. The elders shall then make it known to the church that a particular individual is being considered as a candidate for the office of elder.
3. For a period of time, not less than thirty days, the congregation will have the opportunity to prayerfully consider the individual's qualifications for the office of elder. If members for any reason feel that the person may be unqualified, they should go to him in love, with discretion, and privately discuss their concerns.<sup>1</sup> If after a discussion with the nominee, the members feel that their concern is unresolved, then they should approach the elders with their concern. During the time that a man is under consideration, there are several process options:

Option 1: The man under consideration can withdraw himself from consideration and the process will cease.

Option 2: The elders may deem the man unqualified for whatever reason and the process will cease.

Option 3: The man and the elders agree that the process should continue.

After the time of consideration, the elders shall call a special meeting for the purpose of a formal affirmation of the congregation regarding the man under consideration.

After prayerful consideration of the counsel of the congregation, the elders shall vote and make known their decision regarding the man. Upon elder body approval, the man shall immediately assume his position as an elder.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt 18:15–18; Titus 1:7



## **SECTION 6: Leadership among the Elders**

First among Equals: As demonstrated in the Scriptures, even among the leadership of the church there is a leader. Inasmuch as the pastor-teacher has the responsibility of the spiritual equipping and oversight of the entire congregation, of which each of the elders is a part, he shall be the first among equals in the elder body. As such, he shall serve as the chairman, moderator, and spokesman for the elder body to the church. He shall have but one vote in the elder body, and in that way is an equal among equals.<sup>1</sup>

## **SECTION 7: Number of Elders**

The number of elders shall be as many as are qualified and needed to carry out the ministry of elders in the church. The elder body shall determine that number.

## **SECTION 8: Term of Elders**

The term of office for an elder shall be as long as he is qualified, capable, and desirous of fulfilling the duties of an elder.

## **SECTION 9: Removal of Elders**

Any elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established by the remainder of the elder body. Any accusation or action against an elder must be presented to the elder body in accordance with Scripture.

## **SECTION 10: Elder Body Meetings**

Meetings of the elder body shall be held on a regular basis as determined by the elders. Anyone desiring to approach the elders on any matter or need may feel free to arrange to meet with them. The pastor-teacher/chairman may call special meetings of the elder body as needed.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 15:13–21



## ARTICLE VI: THE PASTOR-TEACHER

### SECTION 1: The Position of the Pastor-Teacher

The pastor-teacher is the teaching pastor of the church. He is responsible for the spiritual equipping and oversight of the entire congregation and is the first among equals in the elder body. He is the spokesman for the elder body to the congregation and is directly responsible to the elder body for the carrying out of his duties in the church.<sup>1</sup>

### SECTION 2: Duties of the Pastor-Teacher

The duties and responsibilities of the pastor-teacher in order of their priority are as follows:

1. To pray<sup>2</sup>
2. To prepare and to preach the Word<sup>3</sup>
3. To protect the church from false doctrine<sup>4</sup>
4. To see to the administration, oversight, and care of all church staff<sup>5</sup>
5. To lead in the selection of all church staff in accordance with the selection process established in these bylaws

### SECTION 3: Authority to Delegate

The pastor-teacher may, at his discretion, delegate any task pertaining to the administration and oversight of the church staff.

Delegation may be done through individuals or councils. In the event of the delegation of a task, those individuals or councils shall be directly responsible to the pastor-teacher, and the pastor-teacher shall remain responsible for the task. This provision is added with the following tasks in mind, but is not limited to this list:

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11–12; 1 Pet 5:2–4

<sup>2</sup> Acts 6:4

<sup>3</sup> Acts 6:4; 1 Tim 4:13; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:5

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim 4:16; Titus 1:9

<sup>5</sup> Acts 20:34



1. The selection of pastoral and non-pastoral ministry and support staff
2. The annual financial support review of all church staff
3. The compilation of an annual ministry church budget
4. The review of ongoing and new church program possibilities and ministries

#### **SECTION 4: The Selection of the Pastor-Teacher**

The elder body shall select the pastor-teacher as follows:

1. The elders shall serve as the pastor search council, or select the pastor search council.
2. The elders shall set guidelines and procedures for the council to follow throughout the pastor search process.
3. The council shall consist of at least five men and shall have a member of the elder body as its chairman.
4. The council shall be directly responsible to the elders and shall keep them informed on its progress.
5. Upon the recommendation of the council and the approval of a specific pastor-teacher candidate, the elder body shall make known to the congregation all pertinent information about the pastor- teacher candidate.
6. A special meeting shall be set and announced publicly at least two weeks in advance when a pastor-teacher candidate is coming in view of a call.
7. At the special-called meeting, a formal affirmation of all eligible members shall be taken concerning the candidate for pastor- teacher. The results of this affirmation will be made public.
8. After consideration of the formal affirmation of the congregation, the elder body shall make the final decision regarding the candidate for pastor-teacher. Upon approval of the elder body, the man shall become the pastor-teacher. The elder body shall announce to the church the date that the new pastor-teacher's tenure shall begin.



### **SECTION 5: Financial Support of the Pastor-Teacher**

The pastoral care council shall initially establish and continually review the pastor-teacher's financial support and benefit package.<sup>1</sup>

1. The pastor-teacher shall receive his support package information in writing before he comes to the church in view of a call.
2. The pastoral care council shall initially establish the pastor's support and benefit package and submit its proposal to the finance council.
3. The pastoral care council shall also review the pastor's support and benefit package at least annually and submit its proposal to the finance council.
4. Any change in his support and benefit package shall be given to the pastor-teacher in writing.

### **SECTION 6: Tenure and Dismissal of the Pastor-Teacher**

1. The tenure of the pastor-teacher shall be indefinite in length.
2. The elder body has the authority to dismiss the pastor-teacher if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is unanimously established by the remainder of the elder body.
3. Any accusation against the pastor-teacher must be made in accordance with Scripture.<sup>2</sup>
4. Dismissal may be immediate if so determined by the remainder of the elder body.
5. The pastor-teacher must give at least one month's written notice if he intends to resign.
6. The time limit of resignation is subject to a lesser time if mutually agreed upon in writing by the pastor-teacher and the elder body.
7. Financial support shall continue to the end of the pastor-teacher's tenure.

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<sup>1</sup> Rom 10:14–15; 1 Cor 9:3–14; Gal 6:6; 1 Thess 5:12–18; 1 Tim 5:17–18; 3 John 5–8

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim 5:19–20





## **SECTION 7: Vacancy of the Pastor-Teacher Position**

In the event that the church is without a pastor-teacher, the elder body will:

1. Choose from among themselves an interim first among equals as chairman, moderator, and spokesman for the elders to the church.
2. They shall choose an interim administrator to be over all church staff.
3. They shall be responsible for finding a preacher to fill the pulpit in the interim time.
4. They shall start the pastor search process as established in these bylaws.

## **ARTICLE VII: CHURCH STAFF**

### **SECTION 1: Paid Pastoral Staff (Elders)**

#### A. Duties and Responsibilities

The pastor-teacher shall establish the duties and responsibilities of each pastor in writing. The pastor-teacher may change these duties as the need arises. Any duties or changes in duties shall be given to each pastor in writing so that each pastor will know his duties and responsibilities to the church and the pastor-teacher.

#### B. Under Authority

Pastors shall be directly responsible to the pastor-teacher for the carrying out of their duties and responsibilities.

#### C. Selection of Pastoral Staff

The pastor-teacher shall lead in the selection of all pastoral staff. Pastoral staff selection shall be made in accordance with Constitution and Bylaws Article VI, Section 4.

#### D. Financial Support of Pastoral Staff



The pastoral care council shall initially establish and review each pastor's financial support package.

1. The pastor shall receive his financial support package information in writing before he comes to the church in view of a call.
2. The pastoral care council shall initially establish the pastor's support and benefit package and submit its proposal to the finance council.
3. The pastoral care council shall also review the pastor's support and benefit package at least annually and submit its proposal to the finance council.
4. Any change in his support package is subject to elder body approval and shall be given to each pastor in writing.

E. Tenure and Dismissal of Pastoral Staff

1. The tenure of pastoral staff shall be indefinite in length.
2. Upon the recommendation of the pastor-teacher, pastoral staff shall be dismissed if they become physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or their inability to perform their duties is established by the pastor-teacher and confirmed by the elder body.
3. Dismissal is subject to elder body approval.
4. Dismissal may be immediate if so determined by the remainder of the elder body.
5. Pastors must give at least one month's written notice if they intend to resign.
6. The time limit of resignation is subject to a lesser time if mutually agreed upon in writing by the pastor and the elder body.
7. Financial support shall continue to the end of a pastor's tenure.

**SECTION 2: Non-Paid Pastoral Staff (Elders)**

A. Duties and Responsibilities

The pastor-teacher shall establish the duties and responsibilities of each pastor in writing. The pastor-teacher may change these duties as the need arises. Any duties or changes in duties shall be given to each pastor in writing so that each pastor will know his duties and responsibilities to the church and the pastor-teacher.



B. Under Authority

Pastors shall be directly responsible to the pastor-teacher for the carrying out of their duties and responsibilities.

C. Selection of Pastoral Staff

The pastor-teacher shall lead in the selection of all pastoral staff. Pastoral staff selection shall be made in accordance with Article VI, Section 4.

D. Tenure and Dismissal of Pastoral Staff

1. The tenure of pastoral staff shall be indefinite in length.
2. Upon the recommendation of the pastor-teacher, pastoral staff shall be dismissed if they become physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or their inability to perform their duties is established by the pastor-teacher and confirmed by the elder body.
3. Dismissal may be immediate if so determined by the remainder of the elder body.
4. Pastors must give at least one month's written notice if they intend to resign.
5. The time limit of resignation is subject to a lesser time if mutually agreed upon by the pastor and the elder body in writing.

**SECTION 3: Non-Pastoral Ministry Staff**

A. Duties and Responsibilities

The pastor-teacher shall establish the duties and responsibilities of non-pastoral ministry staff in writing. He may change these duties as the need arises. Any duties or changes in duties shall be given to them in writing so that they will know their duties and responsibilities to the church and the pastor-teacher.

B. Under Authority

Non-pastoral ministry staff shall be directly responsible to the pastor-teacher or to the pastor he designates for the carrying out of their duties and responsibilities.



#### C. Selection of Non-Pastoral Ministry Staff

1. The pastor-teacher shall lead in the selection of all non-pastoral ministry staff.
2. The selection shall be subject to elder body approval.
3. Non-pastoral ministry staff selections shall go before the church for formal affirmation.

#### D. Financial Support of Non-Pastoral Ministry Staff

The pastoral care council shall establish and review the financial support package of all non-pastoral ministry staff.

1. Staff shall receive their financial support package information in writing before they come to the church in view of a call.
2. The pastoral care council shall initially establish the support and benefit package for non-pastoral ministry staff and submit its proposal to the finance council.
3. The pastoral care council shall review their financial support package on an annual basis and submit its recommendations to the finance council.
4. Any change in the support package is subject to elder body approval and shall be given to staff in writing.

#### E. Tenure and Dismissal of Non-Pastoral Ministry Staff

1. The tenure of non-pastoral ministry staff shall be indefinite in length.
2. Upon the recommendation of the pastor-teacher, they shall be dismissed if they become physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or their inability to perform their duties is established by the pastor-teacher and confirmed by the elder body.
3. Dismissal may be immediate if so determined by the elder body.
4. Non-pastoral ministry staff must give at least two weeks' notice if they intend to resign.
5. The time limit of resignation is subject to a lesser time if mutually agreed upon by the staff person and the pastorteacher.
6. Financial support shall continue to the end of the staff person's tenure.



## **SECTION 4: Support Staff**

### **A. Duties and Responsibilities**

The pastor-teacher shall establish the duties and responsibilities of all support staff in writing. He may change these duties as the need arises. Any duties or changes in duties shall be given to the staff persons in writing so that they will know their duties and responsibilities to the church and the pastor-teacher.

### **B. Under Authority**

Persons on support staff shall be directly responsible to the pastor-teacher or to the supervisor that the pastor-teacher designates for the carrying out of their duties and responsibilities.

### **C. Selection of Support Staff**

1. The pastor-teacher shall lead in the selection of all support staff.
2. Support staff selection shall be subject to elder body approval.

### **D. Financial Support of Support Staff**

The finance council shall initially establish and review the financial package of all support staff.

1. Persons on support staff shall receive their financial package information in writing before they begin their tenure.
2. The finance council shall review the support staff financial support and benefits package on an annual basis.
3. Any change in the package is subject to elder body approval and shall be given to the support staff in writing.

## **SECTION 5: Tenure and Dismissal of Support Staff**

1. The tenure of support staff shall be indefinite in length.
2. Upon the recommendation of the pastor-teacher, support staff shall be dismissed if they become physically incapacitated, or their inability to perform their duties is



established by the pastor-teacher and confirmed by the elder body.

3. Dismissal may be immediate if so determined by the elder body.
4. Support staff must give at least two weeks' notice if they intend to resign.
5. The time limit of resignation is subject to a lesser time if mutually agreed upon by the staff person and the pastorteacher.
6. Financial support shall continue to the end of the staff person's tenure.

## **ARTICLE VIII: DEACONS**

The New Testament Scripture teaches that deacons were set apart by the church as servants to minister to the needs of the Body of Christ. This ministry allowed the elders (pastors) to devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.<sup>1</sup> The office of deacon is one of a servant to the body of Christ. Any other concept does injustice to the New Testament record found in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3. It is not a position or office to give a man in order to honor him.

### **SECTION 1: Purpose of Deacons**

The purpose of deacons in the church is as follows:

1. To work and serve alongside the elders and staff to support, encourage, promote, and uphold their ministry<sup>2</sup>
2. To exemplify spiritual leadership in the fellowship of the church, and in their family, personal, and business relationships<sup>3</sup>
3. To be men of prayer and students of the Word of God<sup>4</sup>
4. To seek to lead the lost to the Lord Jesus Christ<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 6:1–7

<sup>2</sup> Acts 6:3

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim 3:8–16

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim 2:8; 2 Tim 2:14–15

<sup>5</sup> Matt 28:19-20



## **SECTION 2: Qualifications of Deacons**

### A. Active Church Membership

A man must be an active member of this church for one year prior to the time of election to the deacon body unless the elder body approves a shorter time.<sup>1</sup>

### B. Biblical Qualifications

A deacon must possess the qualifications described in Scripture. He shall be:

1. A man of good reputation.
2. A man full of the Spirit and wisdom.<sup>2</sup>
3. A man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to wine, or fond of sordid gain.<sup>3</sup>
4. A man who holds the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.<sup>4</sup>
5. A man beyond reproach.<sup>5</sup>
6. A one-woman man, faithful in marriage and purity.<sup>6</sup>
7. A man who is a good manager of his children and his own household.<sup>7</sup>
8. A man whose wife does not have a malicious tongue.<sup>8</sup>

## **SECTION 3: Deacon Selection Process**

The process by which deacons are selected is as follows:

1. The elder body shall determine if there is a need for additional deacons for the church.
2. When the elder body determines that there is a need for additional deacons, it shall direct the church to nominate from among the active membership men that it feels meet the qualifications of the office of deacon.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim 3:10

<sup>2</sup> Acts 6:3

<sup>3</sup> 1 Tim 3:8

<sup>4</sup> 1 Tim 3:9

<sup>5</sup> 1 Tim 3:10

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim 3:12

<sup>7</sup> 1 Tim 3:12

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim 3:11



3. Upon nomination by the church, the elder body shall prayerfully consider each man nominated and appoint those men that it determines are qualified for the office of deacon.
4. A special service shall be held so that the elders may present those men that they have appointed to the office of deacon and that the men may be formally ordained to the office of deacon by the laying on of hands.<sup>1</sup>

#### **SECTION 4: Leadership Among the deacons**

The deacon body shall choose from among themselves men to serve as their leader. He shall serve in this capacity unless or until he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to lead is established by the remainder of the elder body.

#### **SECTION 5: Deacon Meetings**

The deacon body shall meet as needed for the carrying out of its ministry in the church. The chairman of deacons or the elder body may call a meeting of the deacons.

#### **SECTION 6: Term of Office**

The term of office for a deacon shall be as long as he is qualified, capable, and desirous of fulfilling the office and duties of a deacon.

#### **SECTION 7: Removal of Deacons**

Any deacon may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established by the elders of the church.