



Constitution and Bylaws

Of

New Life Family Worship Center Benson

Adopted 23 May 2012

Revised 22 January 2024

***Our lives are not on a journey ending with a destination,
but on a journey beginning with a transformation...Rom. 12:2***

Table of Contents
Constitution and Bylaws
of
New Life Family Worship Center
Pomerene, Arizona

Introduction	i
History	i
PREAMBLE	1
ARTICLE I	1
NAME, VISION, AND MISSION	1
SECTION 1: NAME.....	1
SECTION 2: VISION STATEMENT	1
SECTION 3: MISSION STATEMENT	1
SECTION 4: 180 STUDENT MINISTRY	1
4.1 – VISION STATEMENT	2
4.2 – MISSION STATEMENT	2
4.3 – STRATEGY STATEMENT	2
ARTICLE II	2
POLICY AND AFFILIATIONS	2
ARTICLE III	2
OFFICERS (SENIOR PASTOR, PASTORAL STAFF,	2
ELDERS, DEACONS, TRUSTEES)	2
SECTION 1: OFFICERS.....	2
General Qualifications of All Church Leaders	3
SECTION 2: PASTOR	3
2.1 - Qualification of the Pastor.....	3
2.2 - Responsibilities of the Pastor	3
2.2.1 - Preaching/Teaching and Prayer Ministry	3
2.2.1.1 - Preaching/Teaching	3
2.2.1.2 - Prayer.....	4
2.2.2 Shepherding and Oversight of the Congregation.....	4
2.2.2.1 - Shepherding.....	4
2.2.2.2 - Dealing with sin.....	4
2.2.2.3 - Example and Leadership.	4

2.3 - The Calling of a Senior Pastor.....	4
2.4 - The Departure or Dismissal of a Senior Pastor`	5
2.4.1 - Departure of a Pastor.	5
2.4.2 - Dismissal of a Pastor.	5
2.4.3 - In the Absence of a Pastor.	5
SECTION 3: THE PASTORAL STAFF	5
3.1 - The Calling of a Staff Member.....	6
3.2 - The Responsibilities of Pastoral Staff Member	6
3.3 - Pastoral Staff Compensation	6
3.3.1 - The Principle of Compensation.	6
3.3.2 - The Right to Receive Compensation.	6
3.4 - Dismissal of a Pastoral Staff Member	6
3.5 - Church Support Staff.....	7
SECTION 4: THE ELDERS.....	7
4.1 - Qualifications of Elders	7
4.2 - Responsibilities of Elders	7
4.2.1 - The Ministry of the Word and Prayer.....	7
4.2.2 - Pastoral Ministry.....	8
4.2.3 - Leadership Ministry.....	8
4.3 - Trustees.....	8
4.4 - Initial Selection and Appointments of Elders.....	8
4.4.1 - Basis of Selection.	8
4.4.2 - Appointment to Office.....	8
4.5 - General Council of Elders	9
4.5.1 - Chairman of the GCE.	9
4.5.2 - Additional Elders.....	9
4.5.3 - Dismissal of an Elder.....	9
4.5.4 - Ministry Councils.	9
4.5.5 - Meetings.	10
4.5.6 - Accountability.	10
4.5.7 - Tenure of Service.....	10
SECTION 5: THE DEACONS.....	10
5.1 - Qualifications of Deacons.	10
5.2 - Responsibilities of Deacons.....	10

5.3 - Tenure of Service.....	11
5.4 - Selection of Deacons	11
5.5 - Dismissal of Deacons	11
ARTICLE IV.....	11
CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE	11
SECTION 1 - MEMBERSHIP	11
1.1 - Candidacy	12
1.1.1 - By Profession of Faith and for Baptism	12
1.1.2 - By Letter	12
1.1.3 - By Baptism from Another Denomination:	12
1.1.4 - By Statement:	12
1.1.5 - Presentation for Membership:	12
1.2 - Conditions of Membership	13
1.2.1 - Application for Church Membership.....	13
1.2.2 - Interview with an Elder or Member of Membership Council.	13
1.2.3 - Completion of New Member Orientation.....	13
1.2.4 - Presentation by the General Council of Elders.....	13
1.3 - Duties of Members	14
1.3.1 - Regular.....	14
1.3.2 - Financial Support.....	14
1.3.3 - Prayer.....	14
1.3.5 - Support of and Cooperation with the Senior Pastor and Elders	14
1.3.6 - Participating in Matters Presented to the Congregation for	14
1.4 - Privileges of Members.....	14
1.4.1 - Every Member of the Church in Good Standing Is Entitled to	14
1.4.3 - Every Member of the Church in Good Standing May Participate	14
1.4.4 - The Privileges of Church Membership Should Be Taken Seriously.....	14
1.5 - Dismissal from the Membership.....	15
1.5.1 - Transfer of Letter.....	15
1.5.2 - Physical Death.....	15
1.5.3 - Disciplinary Removal from membership	15
1.5.4 - Erasure.....	15
1.5.5 - Non-Resident Members.....	15
SECTION 2 - CHURCH DISCIPLINE.....	15

3.3.2 - Calling of the Senior Pastor and Full-Time Pastoral Staff	22
3.3.3 - Selection of Elders and Deacons	22
3.3.4 - Church Discipline	22
3.3.5 - Purchase and/or Sale of Church Land and/or Buildings.....	22
3.3.6 - Indebtedness	22
3.3.7 - Change of Denominational Affiliation.....	22
3.3.8 - Any Change or Amendment to this Constitution and Bylaws.....	22
3.3.9 - Dissolution of the Church.....	22
SECTION 4: MINISTRY COUNCILS	22
ARTICLE VII.....	22
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECEIPT OF FUNDS.....	22
SECTION 1: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY.....	23
1.1 - Responsibility for Financial Accountability.....	23
1.2 - Reports.....	23
SECTION 2: RECEIPT OF FUNDS	23
ARTICLE VIII.....	23
PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSOLUTION	23
SECTION 1: PROPERTY RIGHTS.....	23
SECTION 2: DISSOLUTION	24
ARTICLE IX.....	24
AMENDMENTS	24
ARTICLE X	24
INDEMNIFICATION.....	24
SECTION 1: ACTION	24
SECTION 2: AVAILABILITY.....	25

Introduction

New Life Family Worship Center is a new non-denominational church desiring to return to the precepts exhibited by the first century New Testament Church. We covet a Bible-centered ministry emphasizing the saving grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, which transforms our lives and reflects His lordship in all we do.

History

On March 24, 2011, Steve and Nicki Medeiros, Mike and Renee Cox, and Ted and Sylvia Huddleston, met to pray seeking the Lord's will as to where they would worship. Should they look for a different place, or should they begin a new work? On May 19, 2011, Don and Arlene Rush joined them.

Steve Medeiros began writing "What We Believe" and a "Statement of Faith". During the weekly prayer time, they studied and discussed these papers. When the two documents were completed, they began working on the Covenant.

After several weeks of prayer, the group of eight believed the Lord was leading them to begin a new work. They selected the name "New Life Family Worship Center" and began praying for a suitable place to meet. The Lord led them to Cochise RV Park. This RV Park, though temporary, provided enough space for sanctuary use, office space for Steve, and a space for the children.

Under the leadership of Steve Medeiros, the first Bible study and worship meeting of New Life Family Worship Center was held June 12, 2011.

Knowing they had to vacate Cochise RV Park by October 2011, the congregation began praying for a more permanent place for worship. God provided the perfect location in Pomerene, Arizona. It was an old church building that had also been used as a school, and although the building was sound, much cleaning, painting, and repairing was needed. Praising the Lord for this wonderful gift, work began, and the old building was joyfully made ready for use.

The first meeting at 542 E. Pomerene Road, Pomerene, AZ 85627, was February 26, 2012.

This document is not intended to be the end of our church documents but the beginning of our church life. As such, we hope and intend that it be a living document with changes made as the Spirit moves us. May we be worthy of our calling as His children.

***Constitution and Bylaws
of
New Life Family Worship Center
Pomerene, Arizona***

PREAMBLE

The real constitution of this church is God's Holy Word, and that all matters of the faith and practice of this church are finally subject to the headship of Jesus Christ our Lord and His infallible Word, the Bible.

However, as required by law, the following constitutional articles and bylaws are declared and established to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body of believers in an orderly manner. These articles and bylaws are always subject to reconsideration as to their full and indisputable agreement with God's Word. As such, we, the members of New Life Family Worship Center Benson, Pomerene, Arizona, do establish and ordain the following articles and bylaws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

**ARTICLE I
NAME, VISION, AND MISSION**

SECTION 1: NAME

The name of this assembly of believers shall be the New Life Family Worship Center Benson, 642 E. Pomerene Rd., Pomerene, Arizona 85627

SECTION 2: VISION STATEMENT

New Life Family Worship Center desires to be a thoroughly biblical church that seeks God's presence and leadership. To that end, we are committed to proclaiming God's perfect law and His glorious gospel of grace in Jesus Christ throughout the world, and to "...contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31).

SECTION 3: MISSION STATEMENT

In response to God's grace and love toward us, the mission of this congregation is to glorify the God of the Scriptures by promoting His worship, sharing His Word evangelistically, belonging to a God-centered fellowship which encourages us to grow spiritually while serving Him, and acting with love and compassion toward those in need (Matt. 22:37-40; 28:16-20).

SECTION 4: 180 STUDENT MINISTRY

To reach the 7th- 12th grade students in Pomerene and the surrounding areas New Life Family Worship has created 180 Student Ministry. We desire to see students be transformed by God for God, echoing our church's key passage, Romans 12:1-2. When students encounter Christ and surrender their lives to Him, they turn 180 degrees, no longer living according to the world but for Christ. 180 Student Ministry will meet on a weekly basis, at a predetermined time, at New Life Family Worship Center's location in Pomerene, Arizona.

4.1 – VISION STATEMENT

The Student Ministry of New Life Family Worship Center seeks to be a thoroughly Biblical student ministry under the presence and leadership of God. We are committed to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God's perfect law to students and defending the faith entrusted to them. In everything we act, say, and do, all is done to the glory of God.

4.2 – MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of New Life Family Worship Center's Student Ministry is to glorify God by developing students that have a relationship with Jesus Christ, who share His Word evangelistically, who belong to a God centered fellowship that encourages them to grow spiritually, who serve Him, and act with love and compassion to those in need.

4.3 – STRATEGY STATEMENT

New Life Family Worship Center Student Ministry's strategy is based on Jesus' command in Matthew 28. We seek to reach out to students, build them up through discipleship, and send them out fully equipped and able to reproduce themselves in others.

ARTICLE II POLICY AND AFFILIATIONS

This is an autonomous non-denominational church operating under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Christ is the Head of His body, the church, and has placed the responsibility of the government of His church in the hands of a godly plurality of elders. The elders (including the teacher/preacher) are those whom God appoints, and the church affirms, as men chosen to lead the fellowship. The elders of the church are the Lord's undershepherds and are commanded in Scripture to shepherd the flock and to serve as overseers (1 Pet. 5:2). By virtue of their offices, the elders are charged with being the spiritual leaders and governing administrators of the church in all its decisions.

This church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but it does recognize and sustain the importance of cooperation which is common among evangelical churches which are in alignment with our own vision and mission statements.

ARTICLE III OFFICERS (SENIOR PASTOR, PASTORAL STAFF, ELDERS, DEACONS, TRUSTEES)

SECTION 1: OFFICERS

God has provided a program of leadership for His churches as described in Church Government Document, Section II. The leadership of the church is committed to a plurality of godly elders. Among their number will be at least one teacher/preacher, also referred to as the

Pastor (Eph. 4:11), who has the primary responsibility of laboring in the word and doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17). Therefore, the spiritual officers of the church are the elders (including the pastor-teacher) and deacons. The elders are equals in their leadership authority. The deacons are servants of the church and are assistants to the elders in their labor of love and work of the ministry.

General Qualifications of All Church Leaders

As God's stewards and servants, these leaders shall be persons who meet the qualifications of Scripture for their respective positions (Acts 6:3-6; 1 Tim. 3:1-15; 5:19-25; 2 Tim. 2:24-25; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). They shall adhere to the doctrinal statement of this church (See Statement of Faith) and will be persons whose soundness in faith and ability to serve has been examined and approved by the church. Therefore, our church leaders are to be assisted, obeyed and respected as they carry out their duties (Heb. 13:7, 17).

SECTION 2: PASTOR

The Pastor will serve the church as its primary teaching/preaching elder and by virtue of his office he will have authority over all paid staff members (professional and support).

2.1 - Qualification of the Pastor

The qualifications of the pastor are those given in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. He must be spiritually and educationally qualified to lead the church as an undershepherd of God. He shall be an able preacher of the gospel, a competent teacher of the truth and a leader capable of carrying out the spirit and letter of the New Testament and this Constitution and Bylaws. Upon acceptance of a call to pastor he must become a member of the church. (The qualifications of elders are more fully documented in Church Government, Sec.t 4 & Sec. 6)

2.2 - Responsibilities of the Pastor

The Pastor will be a thorough-going Bible man with a thorough-going Bible ministry (2 Tim. 3: 10-4:5). In Acts 20:28, the Apostle Paul exhorted the elders at Ephesus to "take heed to themselves." Before a pastor can "take heed" unto the church, he must first "take heed" to himself. There are several obvious responsibilities of the teaching/preaching elder/pastor outlined in the Bible.

2.2.1 - Preaching/Teaching and Prayer Ministry

2.2.1.1 - Preaching/Teaching. The teacher/preacher/elder Pastor's first and foremost responsibility is to feed the people of God, the Word of God. The pastor can deliver publicly only what he has received privately from the Lord. Study of the Word and teaching/preaching the Word is the primary concern of the pastor and the greatest need of the church. Realizing that the church can never mature beyond the pastor's feeding from the pulpit, ample time should be given by the church, and taken by the pastor, to prepare to teach/preach (Acts 6:4; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:9; 1 Pet. 5:2).

2.2.1.2 - Prayer. The teacher/preacher/elder Pastor should be a man of prayer. His personal life should be committed to God in prayer and his public ministry should be undergirded by prayer. The church body should be taught to pray, encouraged to pray, and be given time to pray, under the leadership and example of the pastor (Acts 2:42; 6:4; James 5:14-16).

2.2.2 Shepherding and Oversight of the Congregation

2.2.2.1 - Shepherding. The word *pastor* means to “shepherd” the people of God (see Article IV). This means more than just feeding the sheep; it also means providing loving protection and leadership. The pastor must guard the people of God. He is to protect the flock as a good shepherd would if an enemy attacked the sheep. He must be constantly vigilant and aware of the reality of the spiritual warfare faced by the church. He should teach God’s saints to put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6), and privately and publicly protect the church from those who would destroy the flock. This will require great diligence in warning the church about false teachers and teachings (Acts 20:27-32; Rom. 16:17-20; Eph. 4:14; 1 Tim. 4; 2 Tim. 3: 1-9; 4:3; Titus 1:9).

2.2.2.2 - Dealing with sin. The pastor must deal lovingly and boldly with sinfulness in the church. Not only must the pastor guard the souls of the members from satanic attack from the outside, but he must also warn the body of wrongdoing or wrong thinking from within. The pastor must understand the pattern for the biblical discipline of disobedient saints and warn the church when error is detected. He must exhort and admonish the body when jealousies, gossip, and/or carnality would threaten the spiritual life of the fellowship, and destroy the church’s testimony for Christ, or disrupt the unity of the spirit within the church (Eph. 4:3; Col. 1:28; 1 Thess. 5:12; 2 Tim. 4:1-2; Heb. 13:7, 17). In this process, it is to be remembered that restoration of erring church members is the goal. The pastor is to lead the way in expressing forgiveness and encouragement to repentant believers (See Article IV; Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; Gal. 6:1).

2.2.2.3 - Example and Leadership. The pastor is to lead the people of God by setting the right example and giving direction to the overall ministry of the church. This means that he, the elders, and pastoral staff, are to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (Eph. 4:12). As a pastor he is called of God to be the shepherd, a servant leader and not a hireling who is merely a director of activities. The Bible commands respect for the office of senior pastor, and thus, he should be held in esteem as an undershepherd of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 5:3).

2.3 - The Calling of a Senior Pastor

In the event the pastorate of this church becomes vacant, and after prayerful consideration, it will be the duty of the General Council of Elders (from this point on, General Council of Elders will be entered as GCE) to provide for the filling of the pulpit on an interim basis, and to recommend for the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor, a man who possesses the requirements set forth in these Articles. During the process, the elders will communicate their progress regularly to the congregation. The senior pastor will be called upon unanimous

recommendation of the elders and by at least three-fourths majority affirmation of the members of the church present at any regular or called meeting. The membership will be notified at least two weeks in advance of such a meeting. (The GCE, through the Finance Ministry Council, shall establish the senior pastor's annual income).

2.4 - The Departure or Dismissal of a Senior Pastor`

2.4.1 - Departure of a Pastor. In the event the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor feels led to another church field, he is to meet with the elders to discuss the arrangement of his departure, which should be worked out for the spiritual benefit of both the pastor and the church's ministry.

2.4.2 - Dismissal of a Pastor. In an unfortunate situation of proven immorality, or infidelity to the Word of God (handled within the confines of 1 Timothy 5: 19-20), which necessitates that the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor be dismissed, efforts should be made by the elders to restore the senior pastor to fellowship with God and the church. If restoration is achieved, the elders and the senior pastor should meet to determine how his dismissal can best be accomplished to protect the ministry of both the church and the pastor. If restoration is not possible, the elders and the pastor should meet to determine how his dismissal can best be accomplished to protect the ministry of the church and personal dignity of the pastor. Due to the nature of such terminations, it is in the best interest of the ministry of New Life Family Worship Center and the spirit of Christian fellowship that the congregation does not deal with this. Therefore, the elders will carry out such actions. The GCE, by unanimous decision, will make necessary special arrangements, such as severance pay, vacations, and benefits.

2.4.3 - In the Absence of a Pastor. In the absence of a teacher/preacher/elder pastor the GCE will be authorized to put interim pastors and/or staff member in positions, as the need arises.

SECTION 3: THE PASTORAL STAFF

The pastoral staff will serve as a vital resource with the GCE in the advancement of the ministry of New Life Family Worship Center. By virtue of their positions, they assist the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor in the shepherding of the church and in carrying forth the church's overall vision. They are extensions of the pastor's ministry and therefore, to reject them, resent them, criticize them, or fail to respect them, is to do the same to the pastor. They will not necessarily become elders because of their staff positions. Some of the factors related to whether staff members become an elder are their respective spiritual gifts, spiritual maturity, the length of time they have served on the church staff, their understanding of this church's operational procedure and the need for additional elders. If pastoral staff members are not elders, it is not because their gifts and ministry are less important than those of the pastor or elders.

3.1 - The Calling of a Staff Member

Under the leadership of the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor, the church may call additional pastoral staff as needed to serve in the ministries of the church. The pastor will make recommendations to the GCE for approval. The elders may appoint a search committee if they deem necessary. The chairman will present any recommended full-time pastoral staff to the congregation for a three-fourth majority affirmation.

3.2 - The Responsibilities of Pastoral Staff Member

Pastoral staff members will be responsible for fulfilling their calling to a specific ministry as approved by the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor, and in conjunction with both the particular ministry council they serve and the GCE. The elders will approve the job description which will be included in the church's operational policy manual. Other technical information related to employment will be included in the church's operational policy manual.

3.3 - Pastoral Staff Compensation

3.3.1 - The Principle of Compensation. Scripture indicates that a laborer is worth of his hire (Luke 10:7). The word "hire" is *misthos*, which is equivalent to wages or pay. It is the payment made for services rendered. In 1 Corinthians 9:14, Paul sates, "Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel." The general teaching is that a preacher or gospel worker is worthy of receiving compensation for his services. Titus 1:7 warns that a "bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God...not greedy for money." This shows that it is possible to have the wrong attitude toward compensation as a minister of the gospel. No one should preach or serve the Lord simply for the sake of pay, but should perform his ministry because of the high calling of God and the need for ministry.

3.3.2 - The Right to Receive Compensation. Those giving their time to perform special services have the right to compensation as determined by the Finance Ministry Council, but no one has the right to be compensated simply because of filling the office of elder or deacon, or by serving on a committee or ministry council. All guidelines concerning compensation to members of the church staff are the responsibility of the GCE and shall be determined by them through the Finance Ministry Council. The pastor will make annual recommendations to the Elder on Finance for the staff.

3.4 - Dismissal of a Pastoral Staff Member

Termination of a staff member will occur at the recommendation of the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor and approval of the GCE. After prayerful consideration, the elders will determine separation procedures and benefits, keeping in mind the need to act with grace in all things. Under normal circumstances, full-time pastoral staff should receive at least three months' severance pay, unless the issue of their termination is related to misconduct (immorality

or infidelity to the Scriptures). Should a pastoral staff member be called to another field of service, reasonable notice is expected.

3.5 - Church Support Staff

Under the leadership of the senior pastor, the GCE, through the Finance Ministry Council, may establish support staff positions such as, but not limited to, secretaries, custodians, and nursery and kitchen workers, as are needed for the church.

SECTION 4: THE ELDERS

The church will be governed by a group of godly men called elders. These will be men in whose lives the working of the Holy Spirit is evident, who have given a worthy witness of the authority of Christ in their lives, and who have met the qualifications given in the Scripture. Authority for the day-to-day ministry matters will reside in the hands of the elders, whether in full-time compensated service or otherwise.

4.1 - Qualifications of Elders

The qualifications of elders are clearly delineated in Scripture. Article III, Section 1, gives the general qualifications for church leadership and lists the Scripture verses for the

specific qualifications of elders. For a detailed explanation of these qualifications see Church Government, page 7.

4.2 - Responsibilities of Elders

In general, the elders will be responsible for providing spiritual leadership to the congregation and exercising a general superintendence over the church (Acts 20:28; John 21:15-17). They accomplish this in three main areas: the ministry of the Word and prayer, pastoral ministries, and leadership ministries. The elders will be responsible for demonstrating a consistent study of the Word of God (1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9); and being good managers or stewards over their God-given ministry (Titus 1:7).

4.2.1 - The Ministry of the Word and Prayer. The elders will be devoted to the study of the Word and prayer (Acts 6:3-6). They will sustain a caring ministry for the flock, which involves serving as partners with the pastor(s) in developing the spiritual maturity of the congregation, and in praying for the corporate needs of the church and individual member needs in particular (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17-18; James 5:14-16). The elders will be able to teach and exhort, as well as refute, those who contradict the truth. It will be their responsibility to see that all leaders and teachers within the church are properly qualified and that their ministries maintain fidelity to the Word of God and the doctrinal position of this church. They are also to assure that guest preachers and teachers are men of sound doctrine and true faith. This includes the responsibility for dealing with any false teachers and/or teachings which might arise in the church (Acts 20:17-31) Titus 1:5,6,9). As a result of these duties, it becomes their responsibility to administer church discipline (Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-14).

4.2.2 - Pastoral Ministry. The elders are responsible for seeing that a comprehensive plan of pastoral ministry is conducted to meet the needs of the congregation. They are to exercise pastoral care (1 Thess. 5:14-15; James 5:14) and be an example of hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8). They are to direct the benevolence efforts of the church, helping those in need (Gal. 6:10; 1 Thess. 5:14-22). Obviously, elders cannot meet every single practical need within the fellowship; thus, elders are called upon to develop the spiritual gifts of the entire congregation, teaching and exhorting the members to minister to one another (Rom. 12:1-15; Eph. 4:11-13; Phil. 2:1-4).

4.2.3 - Leadership Ministry. The Bible says that elders are God's stewards; literally "household managers" who have official responsibility for the property, servants, and finances of another. The elders will give diligent labor, caring leadership, and guided counsel, according to the Word, to the congregation (1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:4-5; 5:17; Heb. 13:7,17). As such, they are to oversee, or supervise and manage, the affair of the local church.

4.3 - Trustees

Legally, the elders will serve as the Officers of the Corporation (not to include those elders who receive compensation for their vocational ministry to the church). The officers of the corporation will serve as trustees. These trustees will have charge of the property, will make, and execute all contracts, deeds, bonds, notes, negotiable instruments, mortgages, trust, and all other instruments of indebtedness or conveyances. The GCE may appoint others to serve as trustees if they so desire.

4.4 - Initial Selection and Appointments of Elders

4.4.1 - Basis of Selection. The initial selection of elders will be made on the basis of scriptural qualifications. Since the church is a new body of believers, the present teacher/preacher/elder/pastor is hereby authorized to select and submit to the congregation, names of members of the congregation for the office of elder (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). These names will be presented to the congregation for approval which requires a three-fourth majority.

4.4.2 - Appointment to Office. The men initially selected and approved by the congregation will be ordained as elders to serve in this local body. This appointment will follow the teaching of Scripture concerning the visible "laying on of the hands of the presbytery" which consists of the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor and all other ordained men in the church.

4.5 - General Council of Elders

All approved and ordained elders will constitute the GCE, who are commissioned to rule the church under the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 5:4). The GCE will prayerfully seek unanimous agreement in all matters since we believe the Holy Spirit guides with oneness of mind (Acts 15:1-29; Phil. 2:1-2). (In matters of compensation or discipline of an elder, the elder in question will abstain.)

4.5.1 - Chairman of the GCE. The teacher/preacher/elder/pastor acts as the chairman of the GCE. In case of his inability to attend or to execute his duty as chairman, he will appoint a substitute from among the GCE.

4.5.2 - Additional Elders. After the initial establishment of government by multiple elders, and in the case of a need for new elders, or for the substitution of existing elders, the chairman of the GCE will appoint three elders to serve with the chairman as an Elder Nominations Council. If there are less than three elders, all elders will serve. This Council may receive names of prospective nominees from any church member. If the Nominations Council deems it appropriate to proceed, nominees will be interviewed regarding their desire to serve and their qualifications. This Council will then submit the names of those they deem qualified to the GCE. With the approval of the GCE, and upon completion of elder training by the prospective nominee, his name will be presented to the congregation for a three-fourths majority affirmation.

4.5.3 - Dismissal of an Elder. In the unfortunate situation of proven immorality or infidelity to the Word of God on the part of an elder (handled within the confines of 1 Timothy 5:19-20) which necessitates that he be dismissed, efforts should be made by the GCE to restore the erring elder to fellowship with God and the church. If restoration is achieved, the GCE and the elder in question should meet to determine how his dismissal from the elder body can best be accomplished to protect the ministry of both the church and the elder. If restoration is not possible, the GCE and the elder in question should meet to determine how his dismissal can best be accomplished to protect the ministry of the church and the personal dignity of the elder. Due to the nature of such terminations, it is in the best interest of the ministry of New Life Family Worship Center, and the spirit of Christian fellowship, that the congregation not deal with this.

4.5.4 - Ministry Councils. The GCE will oversee the various ministries of the church through Ministry Councils. (For example: Membership, Deacons, Finance, Benevolence, Long Range Planning, Facilities, Youth, Singles, Women, Men, as needed). Each ministry council will be led by an elder appointed by the GCE. Unanimity is stressed on all matters in the ministry councils. In rare cases where unanimity cannot be reached, the matter shall be brought before the GCE for resolution. Any deacon or church member in good standing may serve on a ministry council upon approval by the GCE. The GCE shall establish such ministry councils as are deemed necessary for the fulfillment of the stated purposes and functions of the church, and all shall operate within the doctrinal positions stated in this document.

4.5.5 - Meetings. The GCE will meet as often as necessary to carry on their particular duties.

4.5.6 - Accountability. The GCE is a self-disciplining body with members accountable to one another (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Tim. 5:19-20). Each elder is under the oversight of the GCE and subject to both formative and corrective discipline, as are all members of the church. Any member of the church having a grievance against an elder, including the pastor, may be granted a hearing with the other elders if the GCE deems the charges appropriate, and that they are brought in the spirit of the New Testament instruction regarding church discipline, the elder accused will be present to hear the allegations and give his defense and remarks. This same procedure will be in effect for the teacher/preacher/elder/pastor (1 Tim. 5:19-20) (see Article IV). The GCE will report to the congregation on the ministries of the church at least once a year.

4.5.7 - Tenure of Service. No limit is placed on the time any elder may serve. The emphasis is that each one serve and not just attend meetings. To remain an elder each must be active in the ministry of this local church. Biblically, there is no such things as an “inactive” or “nonresident” elder. Elders who drop out of church, or otherwise fail to serve, will have their ordination revoked and will be removed from the GCE. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the GCE. A temporary leave of absence may be granted for health or other reasons, if deemed appropriate by the GCE. Elders who have served honorably may retire from active service if health prevents them from actively serving.

SECTION 5: THE DEACONS

The New Testament gives us a clear indication of both elders and deacons in the local church. Deacons were those who rendered service *diakonos* in the local church. As distinct officers in the local church, they are referred to in the plural *diakonoi*, (Philippians 1:1) and are mentioned in addition to elders in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The government of the local church rests upon the elders, while the deacons give needed assistance in the various ministries of the local body of believers.

5.1 - Qualifications of Deacons.

The qualifications of the deacons are detailed in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. (For an explanation of these qualifications see Church Government Document, Sec. 4.)

5.2 - Responsibilities of Deacons

In the New Testament there was never an organized group of deacons constituting a body for leadership; that being taken care of by the elders. The deacons will serve as assistants to the elders in the work of the ministry by serving on the various ministry councils and as servants for the general needs of the church. Each deacon, in addition to serving on ministry councils, will also be assigned to assist the elders in the Flock Ministry (or Deacon Family Ministry). He will receive a list of church members, including widows and shut-ins, whom he is to serve as a deacon family minister. Deacons will report to the elders on the spiritual conditions and needs of “their”

families. In addition to assigned families, the deacons will assist in visiting hospitals, nursing homes, and in the outreach program.

5.3 - Tenure of Service

No limit is placed upon the time a deacon may serve. Biblically, there is no such thing as an “inactive” or “nonresident” deacon. Deacons who drop out of church, or otherwise fail to serve, will have their ordination revoked and will be removed from the deacon body. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the GCE. A temporary leave of absence may be granted for health or other reasons, if deemed appropriate by the GCE. Deacons who have served honorably may retire from active service if health prevents them from actively serving.

5.4 - Selection of Deacons

In the case of a need for new deacons, or for the substitution of existing deacons, the chairman of the GCE will appoint three elders (including the elder over deacon ministries) to serve with the chairman as a Deacon Nominations Council (deacons may also be appointed to this council). If there are less than three elders, all elders will serve. This council shall receive names of prospective nominees from any church member. If the Nominations Council deems it appropriate to proceed, nominees will be interviewed regarding their desire to serve and their qualifications. This Council will then submit the names of those deemed qualified to the GCE. On approval by the GCE, they will be presented to the congregation and appointed as deacons. All nominees should have been members of New Life Family Worship Center for a period of at least 12 months, except those initially appointed at the beginning of the church.

5.5 - Dismissal of Deacons

In an unfortunate situation of proven misconduct on the part of a deacon which necessitates that he be dismissed, efforts should be made by the GCE to restore the erring deacon to fellowship with God and the church. If restoration is not possible, the deacon may meet with the GCE to determine how his dismissal can best be accomplished to protect the ministry of the church and provide an avenue for the future restoration of the deacon. Such circumstances as these require the utmost diligence in following the New Testament principles of church discipline (see Article IV, Sec. 1, 1.5). Due to the nature of such situations, it is in the best interest of the ministry of New Life Family Worship Center and the spirit of Christian fellowship, that the congregation not deal with this. Therefore, it will be carried out by the GCE. Under such circumstance, a deacon who refuses to meet with the GCE will give the GCE the right to handle the situation as they see fit, under God’s leadership.

ARTICLE IV

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP AND DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1 - MEMBERSHIP

Scripture is clear that the membership of the local church is to be regenerate (born again). Because of the autonomy of this church, it reserves the right to determine who will be members, and the conditions of such membership. The general oversight of all membership matters will be the responsibility of the Membership Council, under the direction of the GCE.

1.1 - Candidacy

Persons may present themselves as candidates for membership in this church during the invitation time of any regular church service, including revivals and Bible conferences. They may present themselves as a candidate for membership in any of the following ways.

1.1.1 - By Profession of Faith and for Baptism: Those who can testify to having received Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord, who are willing to obediently follow Him, and who will submit to believer's baptism (by immersion), will be received as candidates for membership.

1.1.2 - By Letter: Those coming from a Bible believing New Testament church of like order wishing to transfer their membership, may be received as candidates for membership upon a letter of recommendation from any New Testament church of which they are currently a member, provided they can testify to a personal conversion experience and scriptural believer's baptism.

1.1.3 - By Baptism from Another Denomination: Those who desire to join from another denomination which does not practice scriptural believer's baptism, and who can testify to a personal conversion experience, may be received as members following believer's baptism.

1.1.4 - By Statement: In the event that a church letter is not obtainable, a person may be received as a candidate for membership by statement of prior conversion and believer's baptism in a New Testament Church.

1.1.5 - Presentation for Membership: Those presenting themselves as candidates for membership under the preceding headings may be accepted under the *watch care** (see below) of the church by a simple majority of those members present at any worship service. Exceptions may be made to the requirement to present themselves during the invitation if physical inability or obvious circumstance prevents attendance. In such cases, the Membership Council will determine the necessary provisions for membership acceptance, subject to the approval of the GCE. If approved, such candidates will be presented by name to the congregation during the invitation of a regular church service.

***Watch care membership** means that the person is under the watchful care of the church until the conditions of full membership have been met. Such people are encouraged to participate fully in the life of the church, but do not attain full membership privileges until they have met and completed the conditions for membership.

1.2 - Conditions of Membership

Full membership and all of its rights and privileges may not be bestowed until the following conditions have been met.

1.2.1 - Application for Church Membership. This must be completed and signed by the candidate. The application will include a statement whereby the new member will state his or her agreement with and intent to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws and church Covenant, and their willingness to submit to church discipline (which will be carried out according to the Bible, as interpreted by the church elders). This information will be covered in detail in the new member's class, and the prospective members may sign the application after completion of the class.

1.2.2 - Interview with an Elder or Member of Membership Council. A candidate for membership in this local church will be welcomed in their decision. However, it will be necessary, before they are approved for full membership and granted all the privileges and responsibilities of this local body of believers, that they give a verbal testimony of their conversion and walk with Christ before an elder or member of the Membership Council. There are four main issues to be considered when a candidate is presented for membership in the church. The interviewing elder or Membership Council member should question the candidate in the following areas:

First - have they been saved (have they had a genuine conversion experience whereby they received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior)?

Second - have they been scripturally baptized (by immersion in church of like faith and order, subsequent to their salvation experience)?

Third - are they convinced that the Spirit of God is leading them to become a member of the church?

Fourth - do they give evidence of transformed life (Rom. 12:1-2)? On this point, it should be remembered that new believers are just beginning that newly transformed life, so the initial evidence may be limited.

(Interviews with candidates aged 17 and under shall be conducted in the presence of at least one parent or guardian.)

1.2.3 - Completion of New Member Orientation. The specific requirements of the New Member Orientation will be designed and determined by the Membership Council.

1.2.4 - Presentation by the General Council of Elders. All candidates for membership, upon completion of the condition for membership, will be presented to the congregation for approval at a Sunday morning service.

1.3 - Duties of Members

Every member is expected to be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life outlined in the Church Covenant (see Statement Of Faith & Church Covenant Document), and including the following responsibilities:

1.3.1 - Regular Attendance in Sunday Bible Study, Praise and Worship Services, and other church wide events and activities, unless providentially hindered (see Article IV, 2.2).

1.3.2 - Financial Support of the church through tithes and offerings.

1.3.3 - Prayer Support of the church through involvement in personal public prayer opportunities.

1.3.4 - Participation in Outreach and visitation programs.

1.3.5 - Support of and Cooperation with the Senior Pastor and Elders in the direction they are leading the church, to include submission to the authority of the elders and the church in the matter of church discipline.

1.3.6 - Participating in Matters Presented to the Congregation for Affirmation or ratification by the GCE.

1.4 - Privileges of Members

1.4.1 - Every Member of the Church in Good Standing Is Entitled to Vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present. The intent for questions submitted to the congregation is to achieve a oneness of mind and purpose under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

1.4.2 - Every Member of the Church in Good Standing Is Eligible for Positions of service and teaching in the church, based upon maturity, spiritual gifts, and agreement with the Statement of Faith.

1.4.3 - Every Member of the Church in Good Standing May Participate in the ordinance of the church as administered by the church.

1.4.4 - The Privileges of Church Membership Should Be Taken Seriously. If the GCE has ruled that a member is not in good standing because of disciplinary reason, that member will have his or her privileges revoked. Every effort will be made to restore the individual to the full fellowship of the church.

1.5 - Dismissal from the Membership

All dismissal from the membership will be made after due consideration and/or counsel by the elders. Dismissal or removal from the membership roll may be made for the following reasons:

1.5.1 - Transfer of Letter. Any member in good standing may request that a letter of recommendation for transfer of membership be forwarded to another fellowship of like faith. No letter will be granted to a member who seeks to transfer to a church which, based on the judgment of the elders, is not loyal to “the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Letters will not be granted to other churches for members where fellowship has been withdrawn or the member is not in good standing.

1.5.2 - Physical Death. When a member dies, his or her name(s) will be removed from the membership roll.

1.5.3 - Disciplinary Removal from membership. A person may be removed from the membership roll for inactivity or inappropriate absenteeism, continuous sinful conduct, and/or erroneous teaching (see Article IV, Section 2).

1.5.4 - Erasure. A person may request in writing to the elders to be removed from the membership. After counsel, the elders may recommend erasure to the congregation. The church must approve all such terminations of membership.

1.5.5 - Non-Resident Members. Members who have moved out of town and have not joined another church will be removed from the membership after one year, except under special circumstances approved by the elders, such as, military services, missionary tours, extended illness, and attendance of college.

SECTION 2 - CHURCH DISCIPLINE

2.1 Formative Discipline

Every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ is to fall under the discipline of the Lord Jesus and His Word (His instruction, direction, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness, 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Mutual submission to one another in the reverence of Christ (Eph. 5:21) is part of that discipline. Along with that, God has called the church to submission and obedience to the elders, as they are in submission to Christ as directed by the Scripture. “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘*God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble*’” (1 Pet. 5:5). “Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17). This formative discipline is part of the holy walk He has commanded for each true believer, and for the church as a whole. God readily supplies His grace to those who are submissive and obedient to Him and His Word in both formative and corrective discipline within His church.

2.1.1. Method of Formative Discipline. Formative discipline is the training of the membership to discern good from evil (Heb. 5:11-14) and to discern the will of the Lord (Rom. 12:1-2). Formative discipline takes place through the preaching of the Word, small group study and discipleship (such as AWANA, Sunday school, and Discipleship Training classes), and individual disciplining and counseling. Initial formative discipline will include participation in a new members' class, which will include instruction in the basic responsibilities of church membership, taught under the guidance of the elders.

2.2 Corrective Discipline

When a member of this church, or any other professing Christian who regularly attends or fellowships with this church, fails in an area of formative discipline, it may be necessary for the elders and this congregation to apply corrective discipline as instructed by God in His Word. All corrective discipline will be carried out by the GCE, and this council will determine whether a matter is to be brought before the church body for action. Members in the early churches were subject to confrontation for reason such as: (1) unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended brother (Matt. 18:15-17); (2) unwillingness to engage in work (2 Thess. 3:6-15); (3) divisiveness in the church (Rom. 16: 17-18; Titus 3:9-11); (4) sexual immorality or habitual covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, or swindling (1 Cor. 5: 1-13); (5) false teaching (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 2:17-18); (6) general sinful conduct (Gal. 6:1). Members of the church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with biblical standards of holiness as they grow to become more like Christ.

2.2.1 - The Steps of Church Discipline. When a member, or any other professing Christian who regularly attends or fellowships with this church, knowingly ignores the direct commands and prohibitions of Scripture, he/she will be dealt with according to the principles of discipline and restoration found in such passages as Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-2; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Cor. 5: 1-13; Matt. 7:1-5. A person may be removed from the membership roll for inactivity or inappropriate absenteeism, continuous sinful conduct, and/or erroneous teaching. Those who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture (as determined by the GCE), will be subject to church discipline. Before dismissal from the church, the steps of church discipline must be carried out. Steps One, Two and/or Three may be omitted if the GCE determines the sin is obvious to the public or is of a particularly heinous nature.

2.2.1.1 - Step One: Private Reproof, One-on-One. It is the duty of each church member, who is aware of clearly established facts concerning an erring individual's sinful conduct and/or erroneous teaching, to admonish and correct such individuals in private, seeking their repentance and restoration. Paul admonishes us to be gentle in our dealing with those in sin, yet we must be truthful and straightforward. If the erring individual does not heed the warning given, then Step Two should be initiated.

2.2.1.2 - Step Two: Private Meeting, With Witnesses. The admonishing member will again go to the erring individual to seek his or her repentance and restoration, but this time accompanied by one or two other individuals who will

confirm the facts, determine that the sin was committed, or is continuing to occur, and that the erring individual has been properly confronted and refuses to repent. If the erring individual remains defiant and refuses to heed this warning, then Step Three should be initiated.

2.2.1.3 - Step Three: Public Exposure Before the Church. When the erring individual refuses to acknowledge his or her sinful conduct and repent, then more significant measures must be taken. The sin should be exposed to the congregation. The word “tell” in Matthew 18:17 means to declare or report the facts. The believers are one body and are responsible to care for one another (1 Cor. 12:14-20, 25). Erring individuals who refuse to repent should be brought to the attention of the GCE. If, after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by Scripture (as in Matt. 18:15-18, 1 Tim. 5:10, and Titus 3:10), the elders determine that there is corroborating evidence that Steps One and Two have been taken without success, then the elders will inform the congregation at a regularly-scheduled worship service so that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the individual does not repent in response to the church in its corporate call to repentance, then Step Four should be initiated.

2.2.1.4 - Step Four: Public Expulsion from the Church. The erring individual will be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service (see Section 2.2.3). If, after such dismissal, the erring individual heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the elders, then he/she will be publicly restored to all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

2.2.2 - Inactivity or Inappropriate Absenteeism

2.2.2.1 - Responsibility of the Member. As a part of a local body of believers, each member has the responsibility to be faithful in attendance and participation in the meetings and ministries of the congregation, unless hindered by illness or other providential circumstance. Indifference toward faithful participation may indicate the need for admonition and correction. The Scripture says, “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sin,…” (Hebrews 10:24-26 NKJV).

2.2.2.2 - Responsibilities of the Elders. It is the responsibility of the Elder on Membership and his Ministry Council to oversee the regularity of participation of the membership and to examine the possible reasons for inactivity. As such, this council will establish standards of attendance accountability and communicate those standards to the congregation. The Ministry Council on Membership, led

by the appropriate elder, will make efforts to reclaim to this fellowship those who are consistently inactive without adequate reason. Efforts toward restoration must be exercised by this church. If the individual makes no appropriate response, then the Ministry Council on Membership may recommend to the GCE the withdrawal of fellowship from that person, and he will forfeit all membership privileges. In seeking to restore a member, reasonable efforts must be made to resolve any conflict, correct any error, or remove any offense. This will be done through biblical counsel and admonition, and with loving concern.

2.2.3 - Withdrawal of Fellowship

2.2.3.1 - The Process of Withdrawing Fellowship. When a member continues to knowingly ignore the commands or prohibitions of Scripture in daily walk or teaching so that his or her life, and/or erroneous teaching, continues to hinder the peace of the church or adversely affect its testimony, the elders will follow the biblical directions for church discipline. They may withdraw church privileges (See Article IV, Section 1.4). It is to be remembered that the goal of any corrective discipline is the repentance of the erring member and his or her full restoration to the fellowship. In serious cases where the initial steps of church discipline have not achieved restoration of full fellowship, the elders may then recommend withdrawal of fellowship, which in effect terminates membership of the offending member. This will be done following the guidelines given in Matt. 18:18; 1 Cor. 5:3-5, 13; and 2 Thess. 3:6-15.

2.2.3.2 - Actions Toward a Member from Whom Fellowship Has Been Withdrawn. One thus cut from the fellowship of the church will be treated as a non-member until he/she gives evidence of true repentance. This response to the offending member includes loving admonition, prayer, and a call to repentance and obedience. When a member's actions lead to the regrettable obligation of terminating that person's membership, the action will be based on the unanimous agreement of the GCE. The matter will then be brought before the congregation for their approval.

2.3 Restoration of Church Fellowship/Membership

The goal of all discipline is a holy walk under the lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word. The right to exclude a person, or the withdrawal of fellowship, is in harmony with the teachings of the Word of God (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 4; 2 Thess. 3:6) and is balanced by the call to restore such persons who have given satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Cor. 2:7-8). When a person gives such evidence, the GCE will recommend to the church that the person be restored to full fellowship in this church. The one being restored will come before the church to receive the right hand of Christian fellowship from the church body.

2.4 Legal Action Against the Church and/or Its Leaders

The member of this church will not pursue legal action against the pastor(s), elders, deacons, church staff or other church member(s) in connection with the performance of their official duties. Scripture is clear on the matter of lawsuits between Christian. This church believes that Christians should not take legal action against one another, and certainly that they have no biblical right to bring legal action against the church (1 Cor. 6).

ARTICLE V THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

SECTION 1: IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

The important place and service of women in the New Testament is evident as one reviews the Gospel records (Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; Luke 1:26-56; 2:36-38; 8:2-3); the account of the early church (Acts 1:14; 5:14; 6:1; 9:36; 12:12; 16:14; 17:34; 18:2); and the epistles to the believers (Rom. 16:1, 3, 13, 15; 1 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 4:2-3). Clearly, women played an important and active role in the work and life of each congregation.

SECTION 2: EQUALITY VERSUS ROLES

According to God's Word, men and women are equal before the Lord. No one should question the fact that Jesus significantly upgraded the place, contribution, and respect of women in His actions and teachings. The Bible plainly states that in Christ Jesus men and women are one (Gal. 3:27-28). Balanced with this understanding is that there remains a clear distinction in the roles of men and women in the ministries of the local church. The equality of men and women before the Lord does not contradict the biblical instruction that women are not to teach or be in authority over men in the local church (1 Cor. 11:3-16; 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:9-15). There should be no question that in the marriage relationship, with the two becoming one body, the man is to be the head. Therefore, the teaching is that a wife should not behave in a way that shows superiority over her husband. This does not mean that a woman cannot know more than a man or be a leader in certain areas, but in the church, she should not do anything nor assume any role which may adversely affect the husband-wife relationship.

SECTION 3: BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION REGARDING THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Some interpret the word for woman, *gune*, to mean "wife" (1 Tim. 2:9-15). However, a careful study of the Greek reveals that the word in this context means "woman," making the teaching clear that women are not to teach men or hold positions of authority over them in the local church. Scripture makes a fundamental assertion of the intrinsic worth of human personality, whether male or female. The mutual dependence of men and women and their common origin in God teaches that the male has no exclusive place "in the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:11-12; Gal. 3:28). Therefore, in this church, women will be allowed to serve in any capacity for which the Lord has enabled them and to which the Scripture directs. This opens up many avenues of service; however, it is important to understand that God has given specific roles to

men and women within the context of the local church. Scripture teaches that the roles of elders and deacons are reserved for men (1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6) Additionally, Scripture is clear that women should not teach men or hold positions of authority over them. Therefore, in this church, only men will serve as elders and deacons and fulfill the teaching and leadership responsibilities over other men.

SECTION 4: MINISTRY OF WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

The roles given to women complement and enhance the total ministry of the local church. Scripture gives specific instructions for the ministries to be accomplished by women. The older women are to teach by example in their reverent behavior. They are to specifically instruct younger women to love their husbands and children, to behave properly, and to be good homemakers (Titus 2:3-5). Women are reported to have been servants of the church, showing hospitality and assisting in meeting the needs of those less fortunate (Rom. 16). They are to learn the Word, set an example of modesty, bring up children, relieve the afflicted, lodge strangers, and follow every good work (1 Tim. 2:9-10; 5:9-10). The Bible also tells us that women were involved in prayer ministries (Acts 1:14; 16:13-15). Never does the Word of God seek to hamper the fulfilling of the ministry roles of women. The work of women within the church is designed to promote holiness in daily life, fruitfulness in service, unity in the body of Christ, and harmony in the home (Eph. 4-5; Col. 3; 1 Pet. 3:1-6).

SECTION 5: THE POSITION OF WIDOWS

Scripture gives a regular role to widows, many of whom had provision made for them by the church, which reveals the importance of these widows and their ministries within the local church (1 Tim. 5:3-16; Acts 6:1; 9:36-43). This describes the kind of care and concern that widows and others in need are to receive from the church.

ARTICLE VI MEETINGS AND MINISTRY COUNCILS

SECTION 1: MEETING FOR WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the GCE, the church will meet each Sunday at the appointed hours for public worship and the proclamation of the gospel. Except under special circumstances, approved by the elders, the church will have both morning and evening services each Sunday. The church will also maintain a midweek service of Bible study and prayer, and other such special meetings as deemed necessary and appropriate by the elders. The church will have a regular Bible Study for all ages, each Sunday. A program of discipleship training for all members will be conducted, as well as training and instruction in the Bible for children and young people. Bible conferences, revivals, mission conferences, and other such special meetings for worship and instruction will be held as the senior pastor and elders deem beneficial.

SECTION 2: MEETING FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

The GCE as needed will schedule and conduct an annual business meeting of the church to report to the congregation the state of the ministry and finances of the church, and to receive comments and address questions concerning them. Additionally at the discretion of the GCE a quarterly report of the church's financial position will be made available to the church by the Elder on Finance.

2.1 Special Business Meetings

As occasion requires, the elders may call a business meeting of the church for the purpose of considering matters pertaining to the temporal or spiritual welfare of the church (or as provided in Section 3.3 following). Unless circumstances warrant, business meetings will be held on Sunday evenings and the congregation will be given one week's notice of such meeting at a regular church service.

2.2 Business Meeting Participation

Only members in good standing with the church will be permitted to participate in church business meetings. The GCE will determine the criteria for "good standing status."

SECTION 3: DECISION MAKING

3.1 General Council of Elders Decisions

All church decisions and policies, except decisions which are reserved for congregational approval and those decisions which may be made by the staff, are to be made by the elders.

3.2 Staff Decisions

All day-to-day decisions affecting the routine operation of the church and falling within budget constraints, may be made by the senior pastor and those to whom he has delegated such responsibility. If questions arise regarding what is routine operation, the elders will make the final determination.

3.3 Congregational (Church) Decisions

The following decisions are to be presented by the elders to the congregation for affirmation. Approval by the congregation is necessary to proceed in certain cases, as listed below, and in other places within these bylaws. In order for an item of business to be presented to the congregation, it must first be approved by the GCE. Any member of the church in good standing wishing to present an item of business to the elders for consideration, will be granted a hearing with the elders who may decide the matter themselves, or, if required by the bylaws, present the item to the congregation. Unless stated otherwise in these bylaws, any item presented will gain congregational approval if a three-fourths majority (or more) of the members present and voting are in favor.

3.3.1 - Adoption of a New Budget. A ministry budget will be presented annually to the congregation for approval. The budget will be prepared by the Elder on Finance and the Finance Ministry Council. The process will include opportunity for written input and request to the budget by the staff and ministry councils.

3.3.2 - Calling of the Senior Pastor and Full-Time Pastoral Staff. This will be handled as provided in Article III, Sections 2.3 and 3.1.

3.3.3 - Selection of Elders and Deacons. This will be handled as provided for in Article III, Sections 4.4; 4.5.2; and 5.4.

3.3.4 - Church Discipline. This will be handled as provided for in Article IV, Section 2.

3.3.5 - Purchase and/or Sale of Church Land and/or Buildings. Such transactions must be recommended by the elders and presented to the congregation for approval.

3.3.6 - Indebtedness. It is the stated purpose of the church to remain debt free. Any indebtedness incurred by the church that exceeds an annual total of over 5% of the annual budget must be recommended by the elders and approved by the congregation.

3.3.7 - Change of Denominational Affiliation. Any change of the church's denominational affiliations must be recommended by the elders and approved by the congregation.

3.3.8 - Any Change or Amendment to this Constitution and Bylaws. See Article IX.

3.3.9 - Dissolution of the Church. See Article VIII, Section 2.

SECTION 4: MINISTRY COUNCILS

The GCE will oversee the various ministries of the church through Ministry Councils. (For example: Membership, Deacons, Finance, Benevolence, Long Range Planning, Facilities, Youth, Singles, Women, Men, as needed). Each Ministry Council will be led by an elder appointed by the GCE. Unanimity is stressed on all matters in the ministry councils. In rare cases where unanimity cannot be reached, the matter shall be brought before the GCE for resolution. Any deacon or church member in good standing may serve on a ministry council upon approval by the GCE who will establish such ministry councils as necessary for the fulfillment of the stated purposes and functions of the church. All will operate within the doctrinal positions stated in this document.

ARTICLE VII

FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND RECEIPT OF FUNDS

SECTION 1: FINANCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY

1.1 - Responsibility for Financial Accountability

The primary responsibility for financial accountability rests with the GCE. The Elder on Finance and his ministry council will be responsible for the financial operations of the church. Expenditures which exceed a total of 15% over a budgeted item, or in excess of 1% of the total budget, must receive the approval of the GCE, who will be authorized to make any adjustments necessary to the budget during the year, subject to the provisions of Article VIII, Section 3. Day-to-day financial operations of the church will be the responsibility of the senior pastor and his staff. The GCE, on recommendation of the Finance Ministry Council, may incur a total annual indebtedness to the church which is less than 5% of the annual budget. (See Article VI, Section 3.3.6.).

1.2 - Reports

The Elder on Finance will: (1) give a quarterly report of the financial condition of the church to the congregation, (2) prepare a year-end financial report for the congregation, (3) prepare the annual budget for the approval of the elders and the congregation, and (4) maintain the financial books, accounts, and records of contributions. The fiscal year of the church will be January 1 through December 31.

SECTION 2: RECEIPT OF FUNDS

Receipt of funds or donations, offerings, and/or gifts to the church will be received by the church and become the property of the church once received. Even though every reasonable effort will be made by the church to honor designated donations or gifts, the church reserves the right to utilize the donations or gifts given in any manner consistent with the purpose of this church as provided for in these bylaws. “This church is a qualified 501(c)(3) organization. All tithes, offerings, or donations of any kind are deductible under **IRC section 170 (c)(2)**. Unless otherwise noted and in accordance with IRS regulation, you as a donor agree to relinquish control of the donated funds to the discretion of the church.

Donors who restrict their unsolicited donation(s) to a specific use or person do not relinquish control of the donated funds and thus the donation is considered a restricted donation and as such, is not a tax-deductible contribution.”

ARTICLE VIII PROPERTY RIGHTS AND DISSOLUTION

SECTION 1: PROPERTY RIGHTS

No member of the GCE, or trustee, or deacon, or any other church member, has any individual right to the whole or any part of the property of the church. On the other hand, no member of the church or any administrative council may be held individually responsible for the corporate obligations of the church.

SECTION 2: DISSOLUTION

Upon the unanimous recommendation of the elders, notice of any intention to dissolve the church must be: (1) made publicly from the pulpit in a regular meeting of the church and (2) be announced in the Sunday church bulletin at least four weeks prior to the date set for a consensus of at least three-fourths majority affirmation of the congregation. At the meeting, and upon recommendation of the elders, the church will determine the disposition of the properties and assets of the church. In case of dissolution of the church organization, the property and all assets will be sold through either private or public sale or be given to a Christian organization. From the proceeds, all current and long-term obligations of the church will be paid. Then, all remaining funds will be directed to one or more Christian organizations or endeavors such as the elders recommend and the congregation approves. The church shall be considered dissolved if so decided by the congregation. In case of division of the church caused by conflict (from which we pray God by His mercy to preserve us), all property and assets of the church will belong to those who abide by its Constitution.

ARTICLE IX AMENDMENTS

The elders will unanimously recommend any and all changes or amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws. No bylaw in violation of Scripture will be considered valid. Notice of any proposed change and/or amendment must be made publicly from the pulpit in a regular meeting of the church and put in writing in the Sunday church bulletin at least four weeks prior to the date set for a consensus of at least three-fourths majority affirmation of the congregation. During that period any member may express, in writing, his or her conviction on the proposal to the chairman of the GCE.

ARTICLE X INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 1: ACTION

This church will indemnify and hold harmless any and all officers, directors, elders, minister, pastors, staff, deacons and business administrators for any expenses actually and necessarily incurred in connection with any legal action or proceeding against the aforementioned officers. Indemnification will require receipt of a two-part promise of the aforementioned officers to: (1) repay the amount advanced if it is proved by clear and convincing evidence in court that the conduct of the aforementioned officers involved a deliberate intent to injure the Corporation's best interests; and, (2) reasonably cooperate with the Corporation in connection with the action, suit or proceeding. This indemnification will include costs for attorney fees and will occur as expenses are incurred and in advance of the final disposition of the legal action or proceeding.

SECTION 2: AVAILABILITY

This indemnification will be available to any officer, director, elder, minister, pastor, staff member, deacon and/or business administrator who becomes a party to any legal action or proceeding because of the person's relationship (past or present) with the Corporation. Any of the aforementioned persons who, at the time of being made a party, or threatened with being made a party to any legal action or proceeding, will be allowed indemnification. Indemnification will be available in criminal actions only if it is found that the aforementioned person(s) had no reasonable cause to believe that the acts in question were unlawful.

Books of the Bible

Abbreviations

The Old Testament

Genesis.....Gen.	2 Chronicles.....2 Chr.	Daniel.....Dan.
Exodus.....Ex.	Ezra.....Ezra	Hosea.....Hos.
Leviticus.....Lev.	Nehemiah.....Neh.	Joel.....Joel
Numbers.....Num.	Esther.....Esth.	Amos.....Amos
Deuteronomy.....Deut.	Job.....Job	Obadiah.....Obad.
Joshua.....Josh.	Psalms.....Ps.	Jonah.....Jon.
Judges.....Judg.	Proverbs.....Prov.	Micah.....Mic.
Ruth.....Ruth	Ecclesiastes.....Eccl.	Nahum.....Nah.
1 Samuel.....1 Sam.	Song of Solomon.....Song.	Habakkuk.....Hab.
2 Samuel.....2 Sam.	Isaiah.....Is.	Zephaniah.....Zeph.
1 Kings.....1 Kin.	Jeremiah.....Jer.	Haggai.....Hag.
2 Kings.....2 Kin.	Lamentations.....Lam.	Zechariah.....Zech.
1 Chronicles.....1 Chr.	Ezekiel.....Ezek.	Malachi.....Mal.

The New Testament

Matthew.....Matt.	Ephesians.....Eph.	Hebrews.....Heb.
Mark.....Mark	Philippians.....Phil.	James.....James
Luke.....Luke	Colossians.....Col.	1 Peter.....1 Pet.
John.....John	1 Thessalonians.....1 Thess.	2 Peter.....2 Pet.
Acts.....Acts	2 Thessalonians.....2 Thess.	1 John.....1 John
Romans.....Rom.	1 Timothy.....1 Tim.	2 John.....2 John
1 Corinthians.....1 Cor.	2 Timothy.....2 Tim.	3 John.....3 John
2 Corinthians.....2 Cor.	Titus.....Titus	Jude.....Jude
Galatians.....Gal.	Philemon.....Philem.	
	Revelation.....Rev.	