

**CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BYLAWS  
OF  
NEW LIFE CHURCH  
OREGON CITY**

An Oregon Non-Profit Religious Corporation



## **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND PURPOSE**

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### **Section 1: Names**

This nonprofit religious corporation shall be known as New Life Church Oregon City. The corporation will be referred to in the constitution and bylaws as the “Church.”

### **Section 2: Purpose**

The Church exists to exalt and enjoy God and make His name known among all people (Psalm 67; 113:1-5). We carry out this purpose by assisting each member in fulfilling the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Church will also license and ordain men to the ministry of the Gospel, will share the good news of Jesus Christ with as many people as possible in our community, will educate and assist members in developing toward full Christian maturity and train them for effective ministry, will promote personal spiritual growth and discipleship through Bible teaching, and will support and maintain missionary activities throughout the world.

The Church is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including but not limited to, for such purposes: the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, building facilities, and maintaining and operating Churches.

## ARTICLE 2: DOCTRINE

### 1. Scriptures

We believe the Bible is God's absolute, objective truth for all people for all times.<sup>1</sup> It is without error in concept or detail in the original writings.<sup>2</sup> It is breathed out in its entirety by God, divinely preserved, and, therefore, trustworthy.<sup>3</sup> We believe the Holy Spirit superintended human authors so that, through their individual personalities and literary styles, they composed and recorded God's Word.<sup>4</sup> It is God's written revelation complete in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>5</sup> It is the supreme authority in all matters to which it speaks and is sufficient for life, conduct, and practice – understandable by every believer.<sup>6</sup> We believe Scripture must be understood through the literal, contextual, grammatical, and historical method of interpretation, and applied under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

### 2. God

We believe in the one personal, transcendent, immanent, living God – the creator, sustainer, and sovereign ruler of all things.<sup>8</sup> He is self-existent, immutable, and works all things according to the counsel of His will in order to bring glory to Himself.<sup>9</sup> God's foreknowledge is exhaustive and not dependent on human decisions and actions.<sup>10</sup> He eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>11</sup> They execute distinct but harmonious roles in creation, providence, redemption, and consummation.<sup>12</sup> They are equal in nature, attributes, and perfections.<sup>13</sup> The holy triune God is worthy of our worship, confidence, and obedience.<sup>14</sup>

#### 2.1 The Father

We believe in God the Father: one in essence with the Son and the Spirit.<sup>15</sup> He is an infinite, personal spirit, perfect in all His attributes.<sup>16</sup> He is the creator, sustainer, and sovereign ruler of all things through His Son Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup> We believe that He concerns Himself perfectly in the affairs of humanity.<sup>18</sup> His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with the redeemed.<sup>19</sup> Everything He does is in accordance with His perfect will,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 7:28; Psalm 25:10; 33:4; 119:160; John 17:17; Titus 1:2-3

<sup>2</sup> John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 5:18; John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21

<sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:20-21

<sup>5</sup> Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; 1 Corinthians 14:37; Galatians 1:11-12; Revelation 22:18-19

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 5:17-19; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 14:17, 37; 2 Timothy 3:15-17

<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Corinthians 3:14-16; 2 Peter 1:20

<sup>8</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4; Psalm 83:18; 139:1, 7-10; Isaiah 6:1; 33:10; 40:22; Jeremiah 10:10; Matthew 28:18-20; Hebrews 3:4; James 2:19

<sup>9</sup> Genesis 1:1; Exodus 3:14; Numbers 23:19; Psalm 19:1; 33:9-10; 102:26-27; Psalm 104; Isaiah 14:24; Malachi 3:6; Romans 8:28; Ephesians 1:11; James 1:17

<sup>10</sup> Romans 8:29-30; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-17; 147:5; John 6:64; Isaiah 40:13

<sup>11</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Philippians 2:5-6

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 1:1-2; Job 26:13; Psalm 104; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22; John 1:3; 5:17; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; Ephesians 2:18; Colossians 1:16-17

<sup>13</sup> John 10:30; 14:23; 17:5, 10; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; Phil. 2:5-6

<sup>14</sup> Isaiah 6:3; Jeremiah 2:12-13; Mark 12:30; Revelation 4:11

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 8:6

<sup>16</sup> Exodus 3:14; John 4:24; 14:7

<sup>17</sup> Genesis 1:1; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 104; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17

<sup>18</sup> Psalm 8:4-6; Matthew 5:45; 6:26-32; 10:29-31

<sup>19</sup> Matthew 6:1, 4; 10:20; John 20:17, 21; 17:1; Ephesians 1:2-3; Colossians 1:2-3

though His sovereignty does not eliminate or minimize human responsibility.<sup>20</sup> The Father adopts as His own, through Jesus Christ, all those He calls to Himself.<sup>21</sup>

## 2.2 The Son

We believe in God the Son: one in essence with the Father and the Spirit.<sup>22</sup> He is the one and only eternal Son of God, the preeminent revelation of God.<sup>23</sup> At the right time He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-slave.<sup>24</sup> He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary as Jesus, the Christ – fully God and fully man.<sup>25</sup> We believe in His sinless life, His voluntary submission to His Father’s will that culminated in His substitutionary death on the cross, His burial, and His bodily resurrection.<sup>26</sup> He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father.<sup>27</sup> His death on the cross atoned for our sin and satisfied the righteous demands of the holy God.<sup>28</sup> He is the Mediator between God and man.<sup>29</sup> He is Prophet, Priest, and King; the Head and Savior of His Church; the Heir of all things; the Judge of all the world; and the exact representation of God the Father.<sup>30</sup> We believe in the personal return of Christ for His Church and in the establishment of His Kingdom on earth.<sup>31</sup>

## 2.3 The Holy Spirit

We believe in God the Holy Spirit: one in essence with the Father and Son.<sup>32</sup> He was sent by God the Father and God the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment.<sup>33</sup> The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus Christ and implements Christ’s work of redemption and baptism.<sup>34</sup> He regenerates, baptizes, seals, gifts, and indwells all believers at conversion, progressively sanctifying, and securing them in Christ forever.<sup>35</sup> The Spirit fills, leads, comforts, and intercedes for believers, empowering them for godly living and service.<sup>36</sup> His presence is evident by the fruit of the Spirit and the building up of believers into the body of Christ, the Church.<sup>37</sup>

## 3. Humanity

We believe that humanity, male and female, is sacred in God’s eyes and was uniquely created by Him, in His image and for His glory, to exercise dominion over the earth and to enjoy a relationship

<sup>20</sup> Romans 1:18-20; 8:29; Colossians 1:10

<sup>21</sup> John 6:44; Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:5

<sup>22</sup> Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14

<sup>23</sup> John 1:1; 8:58; Philippians 2:5-6; Revelation 1:8

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 1:23; Philippians 2:6-7

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 1:20; 9:2; 12:8; Luke 1:35; John 1:1, 14; 8:58; 10:30; 14:7; Romans 9:5; 2 Corinthians 5:19; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:15-16; Hebrews 1:3

<sup>26</sup> Luke 19:10; Hebrews 4:15

<sup>27</sup> Acts 1:9; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3; 8:1

<sup>28</sup> Isaiah 53:4-12; Matthew 20:28; Romans 4:25; 1 Corinthians 15:1-3; Hebrews 9:13-15; 1 John 2:2; 4:10

<sup>29</sup> John 1:1-14; Hebrews 4:14; 12:24; 1 Timothy 2:5

<sup>30</sup> Psalm 2:6; Acts 3:22-23; Romans 10:9-11; Hebrews 1:3, 8; 4:14; 8:2-5

<sup>31</sup> Psalm 2:6; Zechariah 14:4, 16; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Revelation 11:15; 20:4

<sup>32</sup> John 15:26; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17

<sup>33</sup> John 16:8-11

<sup>34</sup> John 3:5; 16:14; Acts 1:5; Romans 8:2-16; 1 Corinthians 12:13

<sup>35</sup> John 3:5; 14:17; Acts 19:5-6; Romans 11:29; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; 12:4-31; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13; Hebrews 13:5; Jude 24-25

<sup>36</sup> Exodus 31:3; 1 Samuel 16:13; Joel 2:28-29; John 14:26; 16:13; Acts 2:17-18; 4:31; 6:5; 9:31; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 5:18

<sup>37</sup> Romans 5:5; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 2:22; 3:14-21; 1 John 5:4

with Him forever.<sup>38</sup> Every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life.<sup>39</sup> After sin entered the world, humans still possess the image of God, though tainted by sin.<sup>40</sup> God's will for humanity is that they love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love their neighbors as themselves.<sup>41</sup>

#### 4. Family

In God's design for humanity, life begins at fertilization.<sup>42</sup> He established the institution of family through the union of one man and one woman in a marriage covenant for life.<sup>43</sup> His design for the continuance of humanity is through the procreation and discipleship of children within the marriage union.<sup>44</sup> Marriage is to be an example of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church.<sup>45</sup>

#### 5. Sin

We believe that sin is any action, inaction, or attitude that is contrary to the nature or Word of God, which constitutes a rejection of His authority, resulting in alienation from God.<sup>46</sup> Sin entered the world when Adam, representing humanity, disobeyed God.<sup>47</sup> As a result of the one sin of Adam, his descendents – the whole human race – are separated from relationship with God, spiritually dead, and therefore in a fallen state. Being sinners by nature and choice and utterly unable to remedy their lost condition, humanity is in need of salvation.<sup>48</sup>

#### 6. Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift of God, received by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone.<sup>49</sup> Salvation is motivated by the love of God demonstrated through His sovereign election in Christ, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ on the cross, and received by faith apart from any human merit, works, or ritual.<sup>50</sup> Regeneration is effected through the work of the Holy Spirit in God's elect.<sup>51</sup> All who repent and believe in Jesus Christ are forgiven of all their sins, justified in God's sight by the merit of Christ's righteousness, adopted into His family, sealed by the Holy Spirit, and have equal access to God.<sup>52</sup> As a result, the progressive sanctifying work of salvation leads to a newness of life that is evidenced by righteous living, good works, and biblical social concern, or

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<sup>38</sup> Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7, 22; 5:1-2; 9:6; Psalm 100:3; 119:73; Isaiah 43:7; 45:12; Acts 17:26; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9

<sup>39</sup> Ecclesiastes 3:17; 12:14; Jeremiah 17:10; Romans 1:20; 3:19; Hebrews 4:13; 9:27; Revelation 20:11-13

<sup>40</sup> Genesis 5:1; 9:6; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10-18, 23; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9

<sup>41</sup> Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:30-31; Romans 13:8-10

<sup>42</sup> Psalm 51:5; 139:13-16; Jeremiah 1:5; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:31, 34-36, 41, 44

<sup>43</sup> Genesis 2:23-24; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Timothy 3:2

<sup>44</sup> Genesis 1:27-28; 9:1

<sup>45</sup> Ephesians 5:22-32

<sup>46</sup> Leviticus 4:27; Matthew 5:28; James 4:17

<sup>47</sup> Romans 5:12, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22

<sup>48</sup> Psalm 51:5; Romans 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:22

<sup>49</sup> Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24, 28; 1 Corinthians 3:5-7; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:5, 8

<sup>50</sup> John 6:44; Acts 13:48; Romans 4:4-5; 6:23; 8:29-30; 11:5-6; Galatians 1:15; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2:8-9;

Philippians 3:7-9; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 4:10

<sup>51</sup> John 1:13; 3:3, 5-8; Acts 11:18; Romans 5:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 7:10-11; Ephesians 2:8;

Philippians 2:13; Titus 3:5-7; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 4:7

<sup>52</sup> Acts 10:43; 13:39; Romans 1:15-17; 3:24-26; 4:23-25; 5:1-2, 9, 11, 17, 19, 21; 8:1; 10:9; 1 Corinthians 1:30-31; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 2:13-14; Titus 3:5-7

God's corrective discipline.<sup>53</sup> The consummation of salvation is that those who have accepted God's gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ shall be resurrected and glorified.<sup>54</sup> They shall receive their inheritance in the Kingdom of their Father, whom they shall see and enjoy throughout the ages.<sup>55</sup>

## 7. Church

We believe that the New Testament Church is composed of all persons who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit since the day of Pentecost following Christ's resurrection.<sup>56</sup> We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of Christ, of which He is the Head.<sup>57</sup> We believe that this body expresses itself in local assemblies in which believers are in a covenant relationship.<sup>58</sup> Biblically that relationship is expressed corporately through hearing the Word of God proclaimed, engaging in worship, practicing the two ordinances of believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper, and building up each other's faith, holding each other accountable through biblical love and discipline, and engaging in local and world evangelization.<sup>59</sup> Biblically designated officers must meet the biblical qualifications for their office and submit to the headship of Christ, emulating His servant leadership.<sup>60</sup> We believe the function of eldering is reserved for biblically qualified males.<sup>61</sup> Each local church is to choose, support, and submit to those who function as elders.<sup>62</sup>

## 8. Angels

We believe God created angels as spirit-beings possessing power and intellect, to worship and serve Him and to minister to believers.<sup>63</sup> Satan is a fallen angel who masquerades as an angel of light.<sup>64</sup> The scope of Satan's power is subject to God's will.<sup>65</sup> By subjecting Adam and Eve to temptation and sin, Satan has extended his rebellion against God, which he continues by deceit, seduction, and destruction.<sup>66</sup> While Satan and his demons are powerful, they are subject to Christ's authority and judgment.<sup>67</sup> Satan and his demons have been defeated for eternity by Jesus Christ through His death on the cross and victorious resurrection, sealing their everlasting damnation.<sup>68</sup> At the time of final judgment, they will be consigned to eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Acts 11:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 5:21; 7:1; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:26-27; Philippians 2:12-13; 3:12-16; Colossians 1:28-29; 3:5-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; Hebrews 12:7-11, 14; 2 Peter 1:3, 5-8; 3:18

<sup>54</sup> John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:13; 4:30; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 1 John 2:25; Revelation 20:5-6

<sup>55</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Revelation 21:6-7; 22:3-5

<sup>56</sup> Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12:27; 2 Corinthians 6:16

<sup>57</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27; Colossians 1:18

<sup>58</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:27

<sup>59</sup> Matthew 18:15-17; 28:19-20; Mark 16:16; John 3:22; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38, 41-42, 47; 8:12, 36-39; 16:32-34; 18:8; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Ephesians 4:11-13

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 20:25-28; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:7-9

<sup>61</sup> Titus 1:5-6; 1 Peter 5:1-3

<sup>62</sup> Acts 6:3-6; 15:22; Hebrews 13:17

<sup>63</sup> Deuteronomy 6:13; 10:20; Matthew 4:10

<sup>64</sup> Ezekiel 28:13-16; Luke 10:18; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 12:7-9

<sup>65</sup> Job 1:6-7, 12; John 14:30; 16:11

<sup>66</sup> Genesis 3:1-7; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:18

<sup>67</sup> Philippians 2:10; James 4:7; 1 Peter 3:22; 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 2:12-14; 5:18; Revelation 20:10

<sup>68</sup> John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Romans 16:20

<sup>69</sup> Revelation 20:10

## 9. Last Things

We believe in the sudden, visible return of the Lord Jesus Christ and in His Millennial Kingdom.<sup>70</sup> He will return with His saints from heaven with power and great glory, on a day known only to God.<sup>71</sup> We believe that those who have accepted God's gift of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, at the point of physical death, enter into God's eternal glory.<sup>72</sup> They shall be resurrected and transformed to His body of glory, and they shall receive their inheritance of glory in the Kingdom of their Father.<sup>73</sup> They shall be made fully blessed in the presence and service of God, whom they shall see and enjoy throughout the ages.<sup>74</sup> We believe that all unsaved persons, at the point of physical death, are destined for eternal damnation.<sup>75</sup> They will be resurrected, separated from the righteous, judged, and cast into an existence of eternal punishment where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever when death and Hades is cast into the Lake of Fire.<sup>76</sup> We believe it is imperative for the Church to work and wait in sober watchfulness, that it may be found ready at His coming.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Mark 13:32-37; Titus 2:13; Revelation 20:2-6

<sup>71</sup> Matthew 24:30, 36; 25:31; Mark 13:32-37; John 14:3; Titus 2:13

<sup>72</sup> John 10:28; Romans 8:38-39; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Hebrews 9:27

<sup>73</sup> Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2; John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; Revelation 20:5-6; 21:6-7

<sup>74</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:17; Hebrews 12:22-24; Revelation 22:3-5

<sup>75</sup> Hebrews 9:27

<sup>76</sup> Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:25-29; Acts 24:14-15; Revelation 14:10-11; 20:10; 21:8

<sup>77</sup> Matthew 24:42-44; 25:13; Mark 13:33-37; Hebrews 10:25

## **BAPTIST DISTINCTIVES**

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In addition to the doctrine stated above, we believe the following items which link us historically with those in a Baptist tradition and make us distinctively Baptist:

**1. The Lordship of Jesus Christ**

Christ is God. He has rights of ownership over our Church as its head and over each individual purchased with His blood.

**2. The Bible—The Standard of Faith and Practice**

We trust the Bible for doctrine, guidance, and instruction. It is the final answer in matters of authority, since it has been spoken by God.

**3. Regenerated Membership**

Only those who are born again may be members of the local church.

**4. Baptism of Believers By Immersion**

Baptism follows belief in Christ as an obedient step of identification with Him and His church. The only Biblical mode is by immersion.

**5. Progressive Sanctification**

From the time of regeneration we grow more like Christ continually as a process.

**6. Priesthood of All Believers**

Christ has won for every believer the right and privilege of direct access to God. We do not need anyone to mediate our relationship with Christ.

**7. Separation of Church and State, and Autonomy of the Local Church**

The local church makes its own decisions, apart from external organizations. We believe the government should not establish a state religion and should respect free exercise of religion.

## ARTICLE 3: CHURCH COVENANT

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### Section 1: Church Covenant

On the basis that we serve a covenant-making and covenant-keeping God, we joyfully and resolutely enter into covenant-community with one another.

We promise, by God's grace and through the indwelling presence of His Spirit:

- ❖ to live lives in keeping with the truth of the gospel (Gal. 2:14), continually repenting of our sin (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5) and walking by faith in “newness of life” (Rom. 6:1-14; Eph. 4:23-24; Col. 3:9-10);
- ❖ to care for and promote both the purposes and unity of God’s church through regular attendance (Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25), corporate and private prayer (Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:17), ministerial service (Eph. 4:11-16), financial giving (Mal. 3:8-10; 2 Cor. 8:3-9; 9:6-11) and by submitting to its spiritual authority (1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17);
- ❖ to commit ourselves, in tangible relationships and small group communities, to fulfilling the “one another” commands found throughout the New Testament (see “One Another” document);
- ❖ and to passionately participate in God’s kingdom-bringing mission by serving, influencing and evangelizing the lost people and communities around us (Matt. 9:36-38; 28:19-20; 1 Cor. 9:19-22).

### Section 2: What is a “covenant”?

While many Christians are familiar with the content of God’s covenants, what a covenant actually *is* often remains something of a mystery. In biblical terms, a *covenant* is a divinely determined and sovereignly administered bond that unites and governs God’s relationship to His people. Despite their apparent diversity, what unites nearly all of God’s covenants is the repeated promise: “I will be your God and you will be my people” (Gen. 12:1-3; 15; 17:1-21; Ex. 20; 2 Sam. 7:5-16; Jer. 31:31-33; 33:21-22; Ezek. 43:23-31; 36:24-28; Matt. 26:28; Heb. 8:6-13; Rev. 21:3). In addition, God’s covenants not only regulate His *personal* relationship with His people (Ex. 20:1-11), they also regulate His people’s *interpersonal* relationships with one another (Ex. 20:12-17).

### Section 3: How do we use our “church covenant”?

New Life’s church covenant is used in three primary ways. First, all new members are required to affirm the covenant before being accepted as members. Second, the covenant serves as the primary tool for administering and reviewing matters of church discipline. Third, all members will reaffirm their commitment to the covenant when new members are received and periodically when the Lord’s Supper—the church’s covenant meal—is administered.

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## ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

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### Section 1: Definition of Membership

Membership in the local church is a voluntary expression of a believer's desire to commit themselves to the ministry of that local body, and enjoy the commitment of the church to their spiritual growth. Local church membership is not expressed as a formality in the Scripture because a Christian unaffiliated with a local church was an unknown idea. The New Testament assumes that it is normal for every Christian to be baptized and to participate fully in a local church.

Individuals are welcome to attend the Church and participate in various ministries without pressure to become members. Membership is required for certain leadership positions and voting in business meetings.

### Section 2: Qualifications for Membership

Upon a majority vote of the elders, membership shall be extended to all who have had, and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who have been baptized by immersion as believers; who subscribe to the doctrinal statement contained herein; who enter into the Church covenant contained herein; and who desire to love God and follow Christ.

### Section 3: Procedure for Membership

- 1) The candidate makes their desire for membership known to a pastor or elder.
- 2) The candidate completes a membership orientation class.
- 3) The candidate will share a testimony of conversion, and baptism by immersion with the elders.
- 4) After discussion with the elders the candidate will sign that they affirm the doctrinal statement and covenant of the Church.
- 5) The candidate's membership in our church is confirmed by a majority vote of the elders.
- 6) If the candidate holds membership in another church, then a letter of transfer or of good standing is requested from that church.
- 7) New members will be introduced and welcomed into fellowship at the next Church business meeting.

### Section 4: Privileges of Members

1. Voting – Members, age sixteen and older, may vote on all matters of Church business including:
  - 1) The ratification of elders by written ballot only.
  - 2) The call or dismissal of the senior pastor by written ballot only.
  - 3) The purchase or sale of real estate property.
  - 4) The ratification of the Church budget.
  - 5) Matters brought by the elders to the membership.

- 6) The amendments to the articles of incorporation or Constitution and Bylaws.
- 7) The establishment of official Church relationships.
2. Procedure for initiating Church action – If a member wishes to initiate Church action, they must submit the matter in writing to the elders, who will determine whether the matter promotes the purpose and mission of the Church. If necessary, the elders will bring the matter to a Church vote at the next regular business meeting.
3. Limits – Members have no rights to real or personal property of the Church.

### **Section 5: Discipline and Restoration of Members**

#### 1. Definition:

The Scriptures emphasize the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:15-17), as well as the need to discipline sinning members of the church in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

Each member should care enough to confront others who are in repeated sin or in error. According to Matthew 18:15-17, the first confrontation should be alone. The second confrontation, if necessary, should be with two or three others as witnesses to the veracity of the concern and/or the sincerity of the repentance. If these first two approaches do not succeed in restoration of the individual, then and only then should the elders be involved. The first two steps should be commonplace and therefore are not, for the purpose of these bylaws, considered discipline.

“Discipline” in this document shall be the final stages of accountability for personal holiness after the first two confrontations have taken place.

#### 2. Purpose:

The purpose of accountability and discipline is repentance from sin and restoration with God, the church, and others affected (1 Peter 2:9).

#### 3. Grounds for discipline:

The elders shall have authority in determining when a member’s continuing offense, doctrinal error, and/or pattern of willful and unrepentant sin would warrant Church discipline.

#### 4. Process:

**Initiation** – If, after repeated unsuccessful attempts at biblical reproof (Matthew 18:15-16), a member may inform elders (as representatives of the church, Matthew 18:17) of their spiritual concern for a brother or sister. The elders will determine whether discipline should proceed. If the offense is public and/or calls for immediate action the discipline process may begin with the elders.

**Action** – The elders will contact the individual concerned to seek resolution and restoration, including repentance if necessary. The elders are responsible for making sure the accused individual fully understands the nature of the problem, expected action, and has opportunity to respond. If the matter remains unresolved and/or they refuse to listen (Matthew 18:17), the elders will take action listed below with respect to the individual's membership.

The request by the member to terminate Church membership during the discipline process will

not prevent the Church from continuing the discipline process.

5. Failed discipline:

In cases where repentance and restoration are not accomplished with the person under discipline, that person's membership shall be terminated by vote of the elders.

The church shall be informed of such termination at the next business meeting.

Ultimately, even if discipline fails, the goal of this process is to restore the individual to Christ (1 Corinthians 5:5; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15).

### **Section 6: Termination of Membership**

Membership shall be terminated as a result of:

1. Death

2. Transfer request

Letter of transfer requested from a new church.

3. Inactivity

Inactivity is considered to be the failure to attend a worship service over a period of six months without reasonable cause or declaration to the elders of intention to be absent.

4. Failed discipline

Active resistance to restoration, repentance, or reconciliation through the process of Church discipline (See Article 4, Section 5).

5. Request of member

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## ARTICLE 5: CHURCH LEADERSHIP

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### Section 1: Leadership Positions

#### 1. List

The leaders of the Church shall be the elders and the senior pastor as described below.

#### 2. General Qualifications

- 1) The leaders of the Church shall be believers in Jesus Christ and members in good standing in the Church.
- 2) They shall demonstrate gifting, aptitude and availability necessary to serve in the leadership role for which they are selected.

### Section 2: Elders

#### 1. Definition

A spiritually mature male member of the Church who is recognized by the Church to provide guidance, shepherding, wisdom, and vision (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

#### 2. Selection of Elders

- 1) Members of the Church will nominate, in writing, potential candidates for the office of elder. This will be done at a regular business meeting of the Church. In addition to the nomination by members of the Church, the elders will nominate potential candidates.
- 2) Elders will interview, examine, and approve potential candidates. Selection of new elders will be by unanimous vote of existing elders.
- 3) The Church will ratify the selection of elders by a 75% vote.

#### 3. Qualifications for Elders

- 1) Elders shall conform to the character qualities of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- 2) Elders shall ascribe to and annually affirm the doctrinal statements, teaching positions, and mission/vision statement of the Church.
- 3) Elders shall be sacrificial and proportionate givers, with tithing as a model.
- 4) Elders shall exercise love and discipline in the home, assuming the spiritual leadership of their family.
- 5) Elders shall set the highest example of moral integrity in their business and citizenship responsibilities.
- 6) Elders shall be able and willing to teach the Word of God, both publicly and privately, when called upon or when the need arises.
- 7) Elders shall demonstrate Christian hospitality to both acquaintances and strangers.

#### 4. Responsibilities of the Elders

- 1) The elders shall give themselves to the teaching of the Word and prayer (Acts 6:4).
- 2) The elders shall regularly, at least annually, review and establish strategies and objectives to accomplish the Church purpose and to regularly review and evaluate the total program of the Church to determine that those objectives are being accomplished.

- 3) The elders shall establish policies as necessary to guide, protect, and lead the Church.
- 4) The elders shall be the “Board of Directors” of the Church.
- 5) The elders shall be responsible for the total operation of the Church.
- 6) The elders shall be responsible for all Church funds and shall be assisted in their distribution by the treasurer and the stewardship ministry team.
- 7) The elders shall represent the Church in relationship with the paid staff.
- 8) The elders shall recommend to the Church any candidates for ordination, licensing, or commissioning.
- 9) The elders shall sign legal contracts consistent with the budget, constitution, Church approval, and state law. This includes authority to borrow money, and to acquire, encumber, and sell real and personal property.
- 10) The elders shall hear and respond appropriately to concerns of members of the Church.
- 11) The elders shall provide for the spiritual nurture and growth of the members of the church.
- 12) The elders shall oversee the administration of the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper.

#### **5. Terms of Elders**

- 1) Elders will serve three-year terms. No elder other than the senior pastor shall serve more than two consecutive terms without a one-year sabbatical.
- 2) Termination
  - a. Elders will hold each other accountable for personal character and priorities required by the Scripture. Any circumstance that renders an elder unable to meet the qualifications (Article 5, Section 2c) or to carry out his responsibilities (Article 5, Section 2d) may be cause for termination.
  - b. Any circumstances that requires an elder to be disciplined shall be done in accordance with Matthew 18 and 1 Timothy 5, and shall be cause for termination.

#### **6. Relationships / Organization of Elders**

- 1) The number of elders necessary shall be a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve.
- 2) The senior pastor is an elder and his term is indefinite.
- 3) Other pastoral staff members may be selected as elders in the same manner as all other elders.
- 4) Officers/Executive Committee:
  - a. The elders shall annually elect, from the elders, the following officers: a chairman, vice-chairman and secretary.
  - b. The pastoral staff cannot serve as an officer.
  - c. The chairman, vice-chairman and Senior Pastor shall constitute the executive committee.
  - d. The executive committee shall set the agenda for the elders' meetings.
- 5) Personnel Committee:

- a. The personnel committee shall oversee issues related to hiring, compensation, annual performance evaluation, approval of personnel expenses, establishment of personnel policies and administration of those policies, provide current job descriptions, develop new staff positions as necessary, and other human resources issues for associate pastors and other employed staff, excluding the senior pastor.
- b. The personnel committee shall consist of the chairman of the elders, the senior pastor, and at least one other elder.
- c. The non-staff elders shall function as the personnel committee for the senior pastor.
- 6) Moderator – The vice chairman of the elders shall serve as the moderator of the Church. He shall preside over the business and special meetings of the Church.
- 7) Treasurer – The elders shall appoint an elder or other qualified member to be the Church treasurer to administrate the stewardship responsibilities of the Church.
- 8) The elders shall be responsible for the stewardship and mission ministry teams and shall have authority to establish ad hoc or additional ministry teams as they deem necessary.
- 9) Quorum – A majority of the elders shall constitute a quorum.

### **Section 3: Senior Pastor**

#### **1. Definition**

The senior pastor is a man who meets the qualifications of an elder, listed above, but who is set aside vocationally as one who is given to teaching and direction (1 Timothy 5:17).

#### **2. Selection of Senior Pastor:**

- 1) Upon the vacancy of senior pastor, the non-staff elders shall serve as the core of a search committee, but not constitute a majority of it, and will designate additional committee members.
- 2) The search committee will seek applicants; interview; and recommend candidates to the elders for their review and approval.
- 3) The elders will unanimously recommend the call of a candidate to the Church at a special business meeting, called for that purpose.
- 4) The Church will extend a call to the senior pastor after the terms of the call have been specified and affirmed by a 75% vote of members present and voting.

#### **3. Qualifications for Senior Pastor:**

- 1) The senior pastor shall meet all the qualifications for the office of elder listed above.
- 2) He shall be an ordained minister, preferably of the Conservative Baptist denomination.
- 3) He shall be well-trained to be the leader and teacher of this local Church.
- 4) He shall be a member, or shall be qualified to become a member of the Church and will do so upon his selection.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Senior Pastor:**

- 1) He shall work with and share all responsibilities of the elders.
- 2) He shall be primarily responsible for the preaching ministry of the Church.

- 3) He shall shepherd and lead the Church in the fulfillment of the Great Commission and obedience to the Great Commandment.
- 4) He shall participate as a full member of the board of elders, but not as an officer of the elders.
- 5) He shall oversee the supervision of all other pastors and paid staff.

**5. Term of Senior Pastor:**

- 1) The senior pastor is called by the Church for an undefined period of time. The call and terms of the call shall be in writing and shall be agreed upon by the elders and the candidate before the call is extended.
- 2) Thirty (30) days written notice on the part of the Church or the senior pastor shall precede a severance of relations between the Church and the senior pastor, unless waived or adjusted by mutual consent.
- 3) The elders will accept the resignation of the senior pastor and/or will establish appropriate terms of severance.

**Section 4: Ministry Leaders and Ministry Teams**

**1. Definitions of Ministry Leader and Ministry Team:**

- 1) A ministry leader is a spiritually qualified servant who shares responsibility for a segment of the ministry of the Church (1 Timothy 3:8-13). They are represented in the New Testament by the word "deacon."
- 2) A ministry team is comprised of individuals from the Church and shall serve the Church and the external community in tangible ways.

**2. Selection of Ministry Leaders:**

- 1) Ministry leaders will usually be recognized and recommended for service by their team. Ministry leaders may be appointed by the elders if the ministry team does not select someone. They should be proven in that ministry before they take leadership of it (1 Timothy 3:10).
- 2) Ministry leaders will be ratified annually by the elders.
- 3) Ministry teams will be recruited by the ministry leader and annually presented to the elders.
- 4) A list of ministry leaders and ministry teams will be maintained and available from the church office.

**3. Qualifications for Ministry Leaders and Ministry Teams:**

- 1) Ministry leaders shall conform to the character qualities of a deacon listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3.
- 2) Ministry leaders shall be members of the church.
- 3) Each of the ministry leaders shall ascribe to and annually affirm the doctrinal statements, teaching positions, and mission/vision statement of the Church.
- 4) Ministry team members must be committed to the Church. A minimum of 50% of the ministry team shall be members of the Church.

**4. Responsibilities of Ministry Leaders and Ministry Teams:**

- 1) The ministry leader shall participate in leadership of a particular segment ministry of the Church.
- 2) Ministry teams may meet as often as necessary to accomplish their ministry.
- 3) Ministry leaders and ministry teams shall serve the Church and promote its mission in a variety of ways in accord with their job description or as may be delegated to them by the elders.
- 4) Job descriptions for each team shall be created by the teams and guided by the elders.

**5. Terms of Ministry Leaders and Ministry Teams:**

- 1) A ministry leader will serve an indefinite period, as long as they are able to effectively lead their respective ministry.
- 2) Any circumstance that renders a ministry leader unable to meet the qualifications (Article 5, Section 4c), or to carry out their responsibilities (Article 5, Section 4d), may be cause for termination.
- 3) Ministry team members will renew their ministry commitment annually.

**6. Relationships / Organization of Ministry Teams:**

- 1) The number of ministry team leaders shall be limited only by the number of qualified people and needed ministries.
- 2) The ministry team leaders may make some practical decisions that support and cooperate with the elders and ministry staff of the Church. Each ministry team's purpose is to facilitate and accomplish ministry, not to make policy decisions.
- 3) Ministry team leaders will meet together as often as necessary under the leadership of one of the elders.

## **ARTICLE 6: AUTHORITY**

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### **Section 1: Authority of Official Documents**

The organizational procedures set forth in this document are designed to be the servant of the Church, never its master. They are intended to aid the membership in managing its affairs with “decency and order”. Other documents such as a Church Policy Handbook, Church Employee Handbook, Mission Policy Statement, Children and Youth Ministry Policy statements and others may be developed to aid the Church’s ministry. These statements will be subordinate to this document. As changes in policies, procedures, and handbooks need to take place, the elders will oversee such changes.

### **Section 2: Associations**

Believing in the autonomy of the local Church under the leadership of Christ Jesus, this Church shall maintain affiliation with the Conservative Baptist Association of America and Northwest Conservative Baptist Association. This Church may enter other relationships with Churches or organizations for the purpose of furthering the kingdom of God. No financial support is to be given to a work or workers whose doctrinal position is not compatible with ours.

## **ARTICLE 7: MEETINGS**

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### **Section 1: Worship / Equipping**

The Church shall meet regularly for public worship, most likely on Sundays, unless otherwise specified by the elders. Worship/equipping meetings may be held in various locations and at various times depending on need and availability.

### **Section 2: Administration**

#### **1. Regular Business Meetings:**

- 1) Regular business meetings shall be held in January, May, August and November.
- 2) The January meeting shall include the presentation of annual reports from the preceding year.
- 3) The November meeting shall include the adoption of a budget and the ratification of leaders for the next year.

#### **2. How To Call A Business Meeting or Giving Proper Notice:**

Formal notice of all business meetings must be given to the congregation at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.

#### **3. Quorum:**

A quorum for a business meeting shall consist of thirty (30) members of the Church.

#### **4. Special Business Meetings:**

Special business meetings may be called by the elders as needed.

#### **5. Majority:**

Votes on all matters of church business will be carried by a majority of members present and voting unless a greater percent is specified in this document or in the motion itself.

### **ARTICLE 8: FISCAL YEAR**

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The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1st and end December 31st. The fiscal year of the Church shall govern the annual budget and the terms of elders.

### **ARTICLE 9: AMENDMENTS**

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This document may be revised or amended at any business meeting of the Church, by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of the members present and voting, provided that the proposed amendments are in writing and notice of the meeting has been submitted to the Church at least two weeks previous to the meeting. This document shall not be revised or amended to conflict with or void any provisions of the Articles of Incorporation.