

# Rockin' M Community Church Constitution & Bylaws

As Approved by the Leadership Team

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# Rockin' M Community Church Constitution

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## ***Preamble***

Under the guidance and leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ, we the members of Rockin' M Community Church adopt the following constitution in order to declare and preserve the principles of our faith, the freedom of our Church, and the rights and responsibilities of our individual members.

## **Article I. Name**

The name of this church is Rockin' M Community Church and is incorporated under the laws of the State of Oklahoma.

## **Article II. Purpose**

The church is organized and maintained to fulfill the following Mission Purpose Statement: The mission of Rockin' M Community Church is to provide a church home that grows disciples of Christ, equips people to love and care for one another and reach the lost and unchurched people of the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The Church will accomplish this mission by holding to these values:

Glorifying God - The church will glorify God in all that it does; worshipping God in a simple manner, exploring the depths of the gospel message, deeply engaging with the Bible, and humbly giving God our best (Colossians 3:23-24).

Power of the Gospel - The church believes in the power of the gospel for the salvation of souls, the healing of the whole person, and the living of a God-centered life.

Beliefs - The church practices traditional biblical Christianity and holds to orthodox beliefs while maintaining the supremacy of God's Word (Romans 15:4).

Equipping with Accountability - The church will strive to develop, mature, and equip every person to fulfill the purpose for which God has brought them to our body. We seek to identify and allow people to use their time, abilities, spiritual gifts, and finances for God's glory while holding them accountable for their actions and commitments (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-5).

Welcoming - The church will foster a welcoming atmosphere while lovingly sharing the truths of Scripture and rejecting what is abhorrent to God. We strive to love our neighbors as ourselves (Romans 3:9-10) so that Christ's love for all may be displayed and people drawn to Christ. We

hold God's Word as profitable for reproof, correction, and instruction (2 Timothy 3:16) and entrust God to redeem and transform every sinner, just as he did with us.

Ministries - The church will live out the Great Commission (Matthew 29:18-20) by gearing its programs, ministries, and outreach toward those God places in our path in accordance with the availability of God-given resources to effectively engage them.

Elimination of Barriers - The church will do all that it can to lower or eliminate the barriers preventing the Gospel of Jesus Christ from reaching every area that we are capable of reaching and are directed to seek out by God.

### **Article III. Doctrine**

The Church affirms the Bible as the inspired, inerrant, and infallible word of God as the authority in all matters of faith and practice. Rockin' M Community Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs and biblical understandings independent of any denominational control. However, recognizing the benefits of cooperation with other churches, we voluntarily associate with the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and the Cimarron Baptist Association.

### **Article IV. Polity and Relationship**

Jesus Christ is the head of the church; the true source of all that the church is and does, and His glory is to be the objective of every act, function, and motive of the body, both individually and corporately. It is before Him that all other leadership must bow. He communicates His will for the church through His word, the Bible. He gives additional guidance by means of the specific leading of the Holy Spirit who dwells in the heart of each believer. He calls forth leaders for the church to whom He gives responsibility for the oversight of the church body and the shepherding of its members.

The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers who compose its membership and leadership. All internal groups created and empowered by the Church shall exist to further the purpose of the Church. They will be accountable to the Church.

As an autonomous local church, this Church is not subject to the control of any ecclesiastical body. However, it relates to and cooperates with the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma (BGCO), the Cimarron Baptist Association and other entities of like faith in sharing the gospel with the whole world. If an entity this Church cooperates with ceases to agree with or support the mission of this Church, this Church reserves the right to disassociate with that entity.

### **Article V. Ordinances**

#### **Section 5.01 Baptism**

Baptism was exemplified by Jesus Christ, commanded in the Great Commission, and practiced throughout the New Testament. We believe the Bible teaches immersion baptism of individuals

as a free-will act of obedience and public demonstration of the salvation which has already been applied by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Baptism symbolizes the washing of sins by the Holy Spirit, dying to self, and being raised in new life with Jesus Christ.

## **Section 5.02 The Lord's Supper**

The Church will observe the Lord's Supper as led by the elders. The Lord's Supper is a tangible act whereby the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorializes the death of Christ, anticipates His second coming, communes with the Lord Jesus, draws together as one body, and proclaims the power of the gospel to save. This observance is open to anyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as their personal savior and is following Him as Lord.

## **Article VI. Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the active members present at a Church Conference called for that purpose or a consensus vote of the members of the Leadership Team. Amendments may be proposed by the Leadership Team or by written petition signed by 33% of the active members and duly presented to the Leadership Team.

# Rockin M Community Church

## Bylaws

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### **Article I. Membership**

#### **Section 1.01 Establishing Membership**

Membership in Rockin' M Community Church is open to anyone who has professed faith in Jesus Christ for eternal life, and may be established in the following ways:

- a) Letter – Candidates who are members in good standing of another church of like faith and practice may petition the church to acquire a letter of membership from their previous church.
- b) Statement – Candidates who have previously been members of another church of like faith and practice but are unable to obtain a letter of membership from said church, may join by affirming that they are baptized (immersed) believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, holding to the historic teachings of Christianity, agreeing to the Baptist Faith and Message and desiring membership in the church.
- c) Baptism – Candidates accepting Christ as their Savior and requesting Christian baptism by immersion will be accepted as members upon baptism.

Each potential member of Rockin' M Community Church will be given a copy of the Church Constitution and Bylaws upon their request for membership. All candidates for membership shall give a verbal testimony of their conversion, baptism, walk with Christ and acceptance of the Church's mission statement to the Pastor or designated member of Church leadership.

#### **Section 1.02 Termination of Membership**

A person's membership in Rockin' M Community Church may be terminated in one of the following ways:

- 1. Death
- 2. Transfer of Membership
- 3. Erasure – If a member requests erasure or offers proof of membership in another church, his name will be removed from the roll.
- 4. Exclusion – If a member conducts himself in a manner which brings the name of Christ and the Church into dispute, or is found to be undermining Church unity, it will be the

responsibility of the Leadership Team under the guidance of the Pastor and elders to attempt to restore the member in a spirit of love according to the guidelines set forth in Matthew 18:15-17. If the member fails to respond positively to these attempts, exclusion will require a consensus of the Leadership Team outlining the process laid out by Matthew 18:15-17 that they followed with the member. This written account will be available to members of the congregation upon request.

## **Section 1.03 Member's Rights**

Each active member present, 16 years of age and older, shall be entitled to one (1) vote on each matter submitted for a vote at any called Church conference. The right of a member to vote shall cease upon the termination of his membership in the Church. The right of a member to vote may be suspended if the member is involved in an unresolved church leadership intervention or if the member is no longer an active member. An active member is a member on the Church roll who lives in or around the Payne County area and attends the church's regular worship services at least 6 times in a 90 day period. Active members have the right to vote on the following matters: the call of the Pastor and other professional ministerial staff, the annual church budget, indebtedness associated with land acquisition and/or building improvements, cumulative indebtedness for all other aspects of church business that exceeds 10% of the annual church budget, the disposition of all or substantial church assets, the merger or dissolution of the church, and any other matter submitted by the Leadership Team to the church for a vote.

Each member of Rockin' M Community Church will be given a copy of the Church Constitution and Bylaws upon their request for membership. An active member is entitled to receive a financial report on a quarterly basis and to inspect financial reports as outlined in the Church Bylaws.

## **Article II. Ministerial Leadership**

### **Section 2.01 Pastor**

Call - Upon the Pastor's termination, a Church Conference will be called, and the Church will elect a pastor search team. This team will consist of no fewer than three and no more than seven members. This team will seek out and evaluate prospective pastoral candidates until they achieve complete consensus on a single candidate. They will then report to the Ministry Team who will set a time and date for the candidate to be received by the church. On that date, a Church Conference shall be called and after a full discussion, a vote will be taken by visual signal. An eighty-five (85%) vote of the Church membership and partnership present and voting is required to extend a call. If a call is not extended by the Church to the candidate, or if the candidate declines to accept, then the pastor search team will begin a new search and come before the Church with a second recommendation. This method will proceed until a pastor is secured.

Duties – The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the congregation. In that capacity, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit, he shall preach

and teach the word of God, lead the church in regular worship services, administer the ordinances of the church, serve as moderator at Church Conferences, provide leadership to the ministerial staff, serve as over-all administrator of the Church, work to implement the model of Church structure laid out in the constitution and generally fulfill all his pastoral duties as set forth in Scripture.

Termination – The Pastor’s duties with the Church may be terminated by resignation, death, or dismissal. A vote for dismissal must be preceded by appropriate intervention in accordance with Matthew 18 by the Leadership Team and a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the membership present and voting at a called business meeting to take place with ten days prior notice. The moderator for such a meeting will be a neutral party appointed by the Ministry Team.

## **Section 2.02 Professional Ministerial Staff**

Call – Professional ministerial staff sufficient for fulfilling the Church’s mission may be employed by the Church. Such ministerial staff will require consensus opinion by the Leadership Team.

Duties – Professional ministerial staff persons will have specific and written job descriptions as outlined by the Pastor and/or an elected Personnel Team.

Termination – The service of professional staff persons may be terminated by resignation, death, Pastor or by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the active members present and voting at a called business meeting.

## **Article III. Leadership Team**

Rockin’ M Community Church was founded by a group of like-minded people who love the Lord, committed to the growth and success of the Church. These individuals formed a core team which will comprise the Church Leadership Team. Until the Church is determined ready to be led by Elders, the Leadership Team will act in that role with the following structure, purpose and function.

### **Section 3.01 Structure**

The Leadership Team was set up with 17 people (core group) organized to carry out the necessary ministries and functions of the church such as, but not limited to:

- Pastor
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Worship Team Ministry
- Youth Ministry
- Arena Ministry

As the Church grows and matures, Elder ministries may be added to the Leadership structure. Duties of the Elder ministry will be determined prior to Elder selection. Until an Elder position is filled, a moderator will be selected from the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team will function by consensus, not majority vote. This means that the Team must arrive at decisions that can be supported by each member of the Team. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter shall be tabled.

Should a member of the Leadership Team resign, the Leadership Team will continue to function without a replacement unless the Leadership Team drops below twelve (12) members. If the number falls below twelve, and an active member is considered, the individual must meet the Scriptural qualifications and those qualifications openly discussed in a Biblical manner and with due respect of the individual's reputation. The Leadership Team should seek unity of mind concerning the individual. At the first fiscal year business meeting, each Leadership Team member will determine their inclusion on the team for the upcoming calendar year. An individual will be reconsidered after leaving the team previously, if they are able to recommit to the team's responsibilities.

### **Section 3.02 Purpose and Function**

The Leadership Team members shall:

- Have a personal, committed relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ
- Prayerfully discern the mind of God in all matters pertaining to Church business
- Be organized to carry out the ministries of the Church and personally oversee the Church
- Have specific functions and responsibilities as assigned or approved by the Pastor and/or Leadership Team
- Provide oversight of the Church's regular business affairs
- Assist in finding and providing the tangible resources necessary to effectively carry out the Church's ministries
- Meet on a regular monthly basis unless otherwise stated
- Seek input from and identify needs within the congregation
- Set goals
- Evaluate the effectiveness of current ministries
- Initiate, refocus or discontinue ministries
- Recruit, train, motivate and encourage ministry workers
- Equip God's people for spiritual growth and effective ministry through teaching and training
- Enhance the life of the Church by fostering a sense of belonging and accountability through congregational events, small groups, and personal relationships
- Support the congregation in communicating the message of the gospel and making disciples at home and abroad
- Support the congregation in caring for one another as a whole person. Caring encompasses emotional, spiritual and practical support and the integration of persons into the support structure

- Lead and support the congregation in the care, use, and maintenance of facilities and assets

The Leadership Team shall recommend a member of the Church to serve as Clerk/Treasurer. The Clerk/Treasurer shall remain in office as long as the Leadership Team desires or he/she resigns, giving thirty (30) days written notice to the Leadership Team. The Church Clerk/Treasurer must have a personal, committed relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Clerk/Treasurer shall serve as the Head of the Finance Team and as secretary, with the following duties:

- Assist the auditor(s) in every way to perform their duties
- Keep an accurate account of all monies received by the Church
- Make prompt payments of all obligations incurred by the Church
- Deposit all funds in a timely manner to the credit of the Church in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as determined by the Finance Team
- Keep a record of individual offerings
- Prepare a written report of the receipts and expenses of the Church monthly
- Prepare a written report of the receipts and expenses of the Church for the annual general meeting
- Keeps a record of baptisms, membership, funerals, weddings, meeting minutes and other Church related records

The Leadership Team may choose to divide the Clerk/Treasurer position into separate Clerk and Treasurer roles and assign appropriate duties to each role as is needed and outlined in the Bylaws.

## **Article IV. General Ministry Teams**

### **Section 4.01 Purpose and Function**

Ministry Teams shall be organized to carry out the specialized ministries of the Church. Each Ministry Team may have specific functions and responsibilities as assigned or approved by the Pastor and/or Church leadership. The Ministry Team shall provide oversight of the Church's regular business affairs and assist in finding and providing tangible resources necessary.

### **Section 4.02 Structure**

The Ministry Team will be comprised of a number (preferably between 4 and 6) of persons organized to carry out the necessary ministry and functions of the Church. The Clerk/Secretary and Trustees shall be ex-officio members of the team. The Ministry Team will function by consensus, not majority vote. This means that the team must arrive at decisions that can be supported by each member of the team. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter shall either be tabled or decided by the Pastor.

The Ministry Team shall be sub-divided into the following areas of responsibility:

- a) **Personnel and Volunteer Team** - The Personnel and Volunteer Team will be responsible to ensure that the Church has adequate support staff and volunteers to effectively carry out its ministries. They will fill staff and volunteer vacancies as needed or as directed by the Church, conduct periodic staff evaluations, make salary recommendations, and mediate Church/staff disputes. The Pastor and Personnel Team will employ and terminate other employees as necessary for the efficient conduct of the business of the Church.
- b) **Facility Team** – The Facility Team will be responsible to ensure that the Church has adequate facilities to effectively carry out its ministries. They will oversee the care, maintenance, and use of all facilities and grounds. They will also assist the Pastor with long range planning which will ensure that the Church has adequate facilities to meet future needs.
- c) **Finance Team** – The Finance Team will be responsible to ensure that the Church has financial resources to effectively carry out its ministries. The Church Treasurer shall be the leader of the Finance Team. They shall work cooperatively with the pastor and team leaders to find maximum resources for meeting each ministry need. They shall also be responsible for the preparation of the annual budget, for the oversight and accounting of all financial records, and for assisting the Pastor with long-term planning which will ensure that the Church has financial resources to meet future ministry needs. A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Team. The Finance Team, in consultation with the pastor and ministry team leaders, shall prepare and submit a budget for congregational approval prior to the beginning of each fiscal year. All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Church shall be managed by the Finance Ministry Team. At least two members of the Ministry Team (or volunteers recruited by the Ministry Team) shall count the offering and sign a form attesting to the amount collected for deposit. All funds of the Church shall be deposited in a timely manner to the credit of the Church in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as determined by the Finance Team.

### **Section 4.03 Qualifications**

Team members must be Church members, unless otherwise approved by a consensus of the Leadership Team, in good standing, love the Lord and have a desire to see His kingdom grow, have credibility with other Church members, have a passion for the mission of the team, be determined to make the team a top priority in their lives (this means that they are willing to rearrange their daily schedules or do whatever it takes to participate in team meetings and activities), and desire to use their talents and abilities to accomplish the team's mission.

## **Section 4.04 Formation of Teams**

Specific Ministry Teams may be formed as needed by the Pastor and/or Leadership Team.

## **Section 4.05 Selection and Term of Office**

Members of the Ministry Team may be appointed by the Pastor or Ministry Team subject to approval by the Leadership Team. The term of office for Ministry Team members will be one year, but members may serve multiple terms by mutual consent of the Pastor, Ministry Team, and team member involved.

## **Section 4.06 Removal**

If a team member causes conflict, fails to carry out his or her responsibility to the team, or otherwise hampers the work of the team, every effort should be made by the Pastor, Ministry Team, and elders to rectify the issue in a positive redemptive manner. However, if the problem persists, a team member may be removed by the consensus decision of the other team members or the Leadership Team.

## **Section 4.07 Meetings**

The Ministry Team will meet as often as necessary to effectively plan and coordinate the activities and events of the Church.

## **Article V. Corporate Officers**

### **Section 5.01 President**

The Senior Pastor shall serve as the president and overall administrator of the Church. He will serve as moderator at Church Conferences and be responsible for ensuring that the daily business affairs of the Church are appropriately and effectively executed.

### **Section 5.02 Trustees**

- a) Purpose and Function – The Trustees will have no decision-making authority; they will only execute the will of the Church in legal matters. Trustees shall sign the title to Church property; all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property; all notes and loan instruments; and such other legal documents that requires execution on behalf of the Church. There shall be 3 Trustees.
- b) Selection and Term of Office – The Ministry Team shall recommend members of the Church to serve as Trustees and voted on by the Church. They shall remain Trustees as long as the church shall desire, and they remain faithful active members of the Church.

### **Section 5.03 Clerk/Secretary**

Purpose and Function – The Church Clerk/Secretary shall serve as secretary to the corporation. Responsibilities of the clerk will be to keep the minutes of all Church conferences, and insure that a proper file of all members and partners is maintained, and other duties as assigned by the Pastor and/or Leadership Team and agreed to by the Clerk/Secretary.

Selection and Term of Office – The Leadership Team shall recommend a Church member to serve as Clerk/Secretary, subject to approval by the Church. The Clerk/Secretary shall remain in office as long as the church shall desire or he/she remains a faithful active member of the Church.

### **Section 5.04 Treasurer**

Purpose and Function – The Church Treasurer shall serve as treasurer to the corporation. Responsibilities of the Treasurer will be to assist the auditor(s) in every way, keep an accurate account of all monies received by the Church, make prompt payments of all obligations incurred by the Church, deposit all funds in a timely manner to the credit of the Church in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as determined by the Finance Team, keep a record of individual offerings, prepare a written report of the receipts and expenses of the Church monthly, prepare a written report of the receipts and expenses of the Church for the annual general meeting, and other duties as assigned by the Pastor and/or Leadership Team and agreed to by the Treasurer.

Selection and Term of Office – The Leadership Team shall recommend a Church member to serve as Treasurer, subject to approval by the Church. The Treasurer shall remain in office as long as the Church shall desire or he/she remains a faithful active member of the Church.

### **Section 5.05 Vacancies**

In the event a vacancy occurs in any corporate office, the Leadership Team shall appoint a successor to fill the unexpired term.

## **Article VI. Church Business**

### **Section 6.01 Finances**

- a) Fiscal Year – The fiscal year of the Church be on a calendar year basis beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31 of each year.
- b) Accounting Procedures – A system of accounting that will adequately provide for the handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Finance Team.

- c) Budget – The Finance Team, in consultation with the Pastor and Ministry Team leaders, shall prepare and submit a budget for congregational approval prior to the beginning of each fiscal year.
- d) Checks, Drafts, etc. - All checks, drafts, debit card use or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Church shall be signed by two of three people who have been designated by the Finance Team for that purpose. The Pastor, Pastor's wife, an elder or an elder's wife nor other relationships that may be a conflict of interest may serve as check signers. Credit or debit card purchases will require a tracking method whereby the transaction will be documented including the person making the request, purpose and two of the three designated Finance Team members have signed the request.
- e) Deposits – All funds of the Church shall be deposited in a timely manner to the credit of the Church in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as determined by the Finance Team.

## **Section 6.02 Church Conferences**

There will be one annual Church Conference call in January of each year to vote on the annual budget, elders and other major business. Other conferences to discuss specific purposes will be identified as Special Church Conferences.

- a) Special Church Conferences – Special Church Conferences may be called by the Pastor, Ministry Team, or by written petition of 33% of the active membership and presented to the clerk. An active member is one who has attended the Church's regular worship services at least 6 times in the 90 days preceding the circulation of the petition. The exception is a conference called to vote on the termination of the Pastor. In this case, refer to Article II, Section 2.01, C.
- b) Notices – Notices of time and place of all Church Conferences shall be given two weeks prior to the meetings by publication in the Church bulletin or by public announcement at a regular Sunday morning worship service.
- c) Place of Church Conferences – All Church Conferences shall be held on the premises of the Church unless otherwise agreed to by the Church membership in a previous conference.
- d) Quorum – The Church members and 2/3 of Leadership Team members present at any duly called Church Conference shall constitute a quorum. If 2/3 of Leadership Team is not available, the meeting will not take place.
- e) Proxies – Voting by proxy at any Church Conference shall not be allowed or recognized.
- f) Will of the Church – All Ministry Teams, officers, and organizations of the Church shall carry out the will of the Church on any given matter, duly expressed by its vote.

- g) Rules of Procedure – The order of proceedings at church conferences shall be determined by the rules and practices as outlined in Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised.
- h) Conduct of Church Business – All Church business shall be conducted in a manner that honors Christ and respects others. The Church shall strive to seek the will of God by prayerful deliberation and common consensus.

## **Article VII. Contracts**

The Trustee shall execute and deliver any contract or instrument in the name of the Church which may be authorized by the Church to be so executed and delivered. In this connection, the Church body as a whole shall be the ultimate authority for all actions taken by the Church and no other person, organization or corporate officer shall have any authority to contract or otherwise bind the Church without express authorization from the Church body.

### **Section 7.01 Books and Records**

The Church shall keep and maintain a complete and accurate record of all financial accounts, membership lists, partnership lists, and Church conference minutes at its principle office. These books and records of the Church may be inspected by any member, or his agent or attorney, for any purpose at any reasonable time.

### **Section 7.02 Prohibition Against Sharing in Corporate Earnings**

No member, partner, officer, or person connected with the Church, or any other private individual shall receive at any time any of the net earnings of pecuniary profit from the operations of the Church, provided that this shall not prevent the payment to any such person of a reasonable compensation for services rendered to or for the Church in effecting any of its purposes as shall be fixed by the Church; and no such person or persons shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the Church assets upon the dissolution of the Church. All members and partners of the Church shall be deemed to have expressly consented and agreed that upon such dissolution or winding up of the affairs of the Church, whether voluntary or involuntary, the assets of the Church, after all debts have been satisfied, then remaining in the hands of the officers of the Church shall be distributed, transferred, conveyed, delivered, and paid over, in such amounts as the Church may determine or as may be determined by a court of competent jurisdiction upon application of the Church, exclusively to charitable, religious, or educational organizations which would then qualify under the provisions of Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and its regulations as they now exist or as they may hereafter be amended.

## **Section 7.03 Exempt Activities**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these by-laws: no member, officer, or representative of the Church shall take any action or carry on any activity on behalf of the Church. Nor permitted to be taken or carried on by any organization exempt under Section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, its current regulations or as they may hereafter be amended; or by any organization contributions which are deductible under Section 170 (C) (2) of that code and current regulations or as they may hereafter be amended.

## **Article VIII. Elders**

- a) Purpose and Function - Elders shall serve to provide spiritual leadership and protection for the Church in accordance with Scripture. The elder's role is not one of day-to-day decision-making or administration/leadership of the activities of the Church. Rather, they are to provide spiritual guidance for the Church. They will provide a brotherhood of support and accountability for the Pastor, assist the ministry teams with difficult issues, serve as arbiters in matters of conflict or church discipline, and in general provide spiritual leadership, teaching, guidance, and assistance wherever and whenever needed. The elder body shall be made up of three elders plus the Pastor, who is also an elder. As the church grows, the elder body may, by consensus, choose to increase the number of elders.
- b) Duties - Elders must be committed to the Pastor and Church. Elders act as an accountability group, prayer partner, and friend for the Pastor. Elders are to meet with the Pastor on a consistent and regular basis for consultation, prayer, and fellowship. Elders are to protect the Church by praying for the Church and the people of the Church, visiting and praying for the sick, prayerfully seeking God's will for the Church, protecting the doctrine of the Church, aiding in reconciliation between Church members, and providing spiritual guidance for the Church.
- c) Qualifications – Because elders may be called on to handle the weightiest matters of the Church, they should be men above reproach who display Godly wisdom, love, humility, and gentleness, and are guided by and live their lives through the Holy Spirit. All elders must meet the Biblical qualifications set forth in 1st Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Elders must be men and Church members in good standing.
- d) Selection – When an opening is present in the elder body, the elder body will prayerfully consider candidates for the position that meet the qualifications set forth above and have displayed the ability to serve the purpose and function of an elder. If it is determined that a nominee is qualified, he will be contacted and asked to prayerfully consider the call to serve as an elder. If the elder body and the candidate believe the candidate is qualified, he will be placed before the Church for consideration. Any member of the Church may submit in writing reasons why they believe the candidate does not meet the qualifications. These responses will be pursued by the elder body to determine validity for disqualification. Two weeks after being presented to the church, a qualified candidate

will be ordained into the elder's responsibilities. However, if the elder body or nominee determine that he is not qualified or has not been called by God to fulfill the position, he will not be considered a candidate and will not be ordained into the elder's role.

- e) Multiple Appointments – An elder may serve on more than one team, including The Leadership Team. However, in order to keep the plurality and diversity of leadership as great as possible, elders serving on The Leadership Team should be kept to a minimum. This is not a prohibition to limit qualified men from serving in both areas, but guidance to not place too great a burden or responsibility on a small group of individuals. For a man to serve as both an Elder and on The Leadership Team, there must be consensus agreement from both bodies permitting the multiple appointments.
- f) Terms of Office – An elder shall serve the Church for a term of one year, but members may serve multiple terms by mutual consent of the Pastor, elder body, and the elder involved.
- g) Removal – Any member of the Church may bring a written Scriptural reason for removal of an elder. Elders may be removed from the elder body by their own decision or by consensus decision of the other elders. Removal shall be based upon being spiritually unqualified or the inability to serve the role of an elder as described.
- h) Vacancies – Elder vacancies can occur by death, resignation, or removal. When a vacancy occurs, the existing elders will commence with the selection process outlined above.
- i) Confidentiality – All discussions between the elders are strictly confidential; this includes not discussing elder issues with wives, family members, or other church members. Breaking confidentiality is grounds for removal. Elders do not meet without all the elders present if possible.

## **Article IX. Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of the members and/or consensus of the Leadership Team. Amendments may be proposed by the Pastor, Ministry Team, or by written petition signed by twelve members of the Leadership Team and presented at a regularly scheduled Church Conference or a Special Conference called for that purpose and presented to the clerk.