



First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic  
of Ft. Lauderdale

## **Members Guidebook**

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## FOREWARD

The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic, Ft. Lauderdale, was established in Florida under the leadership of Bishop Izett Scott. A. It is currently located at 1045 NW 1st Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311

The church was relocated from 3280 North State Road 7, in Lauderdale Lakes after serving in that city for over 10 years. Prior to that address it was located in the city of Davie.

The church is a registered member of the state's corporative body of entities as a 501(c)3 entity and conducts its operation under this legal portfolio. Most importantly, the church is the Body of Christ [Ephesians 1:22 -23]. The assembled body are those called out by God and are the image bearers of Christ Jesus. The Apostolic doctrine identified in the Book of Acts, supported by the other books of the New Testament, and overshadowed by the precepts of the Old Testament history are propagated and endorsed in this manual.

The First United Church of Jesus Christ of Ft Lauderdale firmly believes that its faith must be accompanied by works (James 2:14-26). The works will give believers every opportunity to demonstrate Christ's image by lifting the fallen, visiting the sick, strengthening the weak and comforting the feeble minded. This remarkable goal is to enable and facilitate efficient ministries in the church, to impact the surrounding communities and the world at large. To this end, the love, compassion, and character of Christ, will percolate the message of the Gospel as preached by those who are divinely separated for this purpose. Additionally, The First United Church of Jesus Christ of Ft. Lauderdale emphasizes the imperativeness of believers being filled with the Holy Ghost to authenticate the work that follows the faith.

This manual does not supplant the dictates of the Holy Bible. It simply supplements its mandates to foster the oneness and family camaraderie necessary for church growth and community impact.

It is vital that every member is presented with this manual to be aware of

the peculiar mannerisms of the church to which they are affiliated. Matters herein addressed are paramount to the ethos and logos of this assembly of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is with confidence that the Board of Directors and clergy of the First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale, Inc. present this Member's guidebook for the display of uniformity and high religious pedigree among its members to fulfil the purposes of God.

We should not forget that this ministry was established for the purposes of Kingdom building under the auspices of the Holy Spirit of the Almighty God. Those who established this ministry gave much, in obedience to the word of God and in full respect to the operation hereby. The principles established herein are endorsing the fundamental principles of this first church, in the Apostolic way.

We shall always salute Bishop Izet R. Scott, Emeritus, who pioneered this vision. We are committed to uphold the truth of God's word, in honor of his work and worth.

If you, as a member, have a question, or need help to further understand these principles please feel free to contact the current church administration, led by Bishop B. Everton Walker.

## **FUNDAMENTALS OF OUR FAITH**

### **The Holy Scriptures**

We believe the Bible to be inspired of God, the infallible Word of God. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16).

### **One True God**

We believe in the one ever-living, eternal God: infinite in power, Holy in nature, attributes and purpose; and possessing absolute, indivisible Deity. This one true God is the Father, transcendent always (John 6:27; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 4:6; Phil. 2:11; 2 Peter 1:17). This one true God is Holy (Lev. 11:44-45; 1 Peter 1:15-16), and He is Spirit (John 4:24; cf. Isaiah 61:1 and Joel 2:28/Acts 2:17); He is the Holy Spirit. The term Holy Spirit refers to the Spirit that is the one true God (2 Cor. 3:17), not to a second or third divine person or a second or third God. This one true God incarnated Himself in the Son, Jesus Christ, and thus manifested Himself in flesh for our redemption (1 Tim. 3:16; Isa. 9:6; Col. 2:9; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rev. 1:7-8, 11-13, 17-18, cf. Rev. 21:5-7, esp. v. 7; and cf. Rev. 22:3, 12-13).

We believe in the first-of-all, the commandments, “Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord” (Mark 12:29; Deut. 6:4). There is “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Eph. 4:6)

### **The Name of God**

God has had mankind refer to Him by different titles, such as Elohim (God), El Shaddai (God Almighty), but the essential revealed name was Yahweh (YHVH, aka Jehovah) meaning “I AM,” or “Eternal One” or “Self-Existent One”, which was the redemptive name for God in the Old Testament.

Of the Son’s name it was prophesied: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: ... and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). This prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled when the Son of God was named,

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His People from their sins. (Matt. 1:21)

### **Repentance And Conversion**

Pardon and forgiveness of sins is obtained by genuine repentance, a confessing and forsaking of sins, along with baptism. We are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). John the Baptist preached repentance, Jesus proclaimed it, and the Apostles emphasized it to both Jews and Gentiles (Acts 2:38; 11:18; 17:30)

### **Water Baptism**

With repentance water baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Repentance and water baptism are not meritorious works whereby men earn salvation, but rather are steps of obedient faith whereby the believer is viewed by God as justified through the blood of Jesus.

### **Baptism Of the Holy Ghost**

John the Baptist, according to Matthew 3:11, said, “...He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.” Jesus, in Acts 1:5, said, “...ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” Acts 2:4, “they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues [languages], as the Spirit gave them utterance. We believe that all who receive the gift, filling, or baptism of the Holy Spirit receive the same physical, initial evidence of “speaking in tongues” as the spirit gives utterance.

### **The Second Coming of Christ**

We believe in the second coming of Christ and in His Millennial Reign.

### **The Final Judgement**

We believe in the final judgement and the creation of a new Heaven and a New Earth

### **The Resurrection of The Dead**

We believe in the resurrection of the dead, in the Rapture of the Church, and in the personal return of Jesus Christ for His Bride, the Church.

## **Divine Healing**

Christ's suffering and death purchased healing for us-physically, mentally, and spiritually. "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows...With his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:4-5). "He cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:16-17). (See also 1 Peter 2:24)

Prayer for healing, like all prayer, must be offered by faith in the name of Jesus, with proper motives, from a repentant heart, and in submission to the will of God (Acts 3:16; James 4:3; I John 3:21-22; 5:14-15). God does not always answer in the manner and time that we expect, but we must always keep our trust in Him, even when we do not understand circumstances.

# **THE BELIEVERS' CONDUCT**

## **Marriage And Divorce**

The First United Church of Jesus Christ (Apostolic), of Ft Lauderdale Inc. Inc. believes in the covenant of marriage between one man and one woman who has never been married or whose partner was separated by death. (Romans 7:2-3) Jesus spoke about divorce in Mathew 19:4-6; 5:32. The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc. does not advocate or encourage divorce but strongly believes in the process of reconciliation in any relationship that experiences brokenness. Furthermore, Malachi 2:16 declares that God said he hates the "putting away." 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:11

states "... if she departs, she must remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband." Additionally, we submit that the marriage relationship should be entered into with much prayer, counselling, and Godly advice.

## HOLINESS

The First United Church of Jesus Christ of Ft. Lauderdale Inc., believes holiness is defined as complete separation (unto God), and that holiness is defined by godly characteristics. Godly characteristics are to be exemplified in the life of the believer.

*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteous, and godly, in this present world.*

(Titus 2:11-12).

*Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.*

(Hebrews 12:14)

### The Alternative Life Style Regarding Sex and Sexuality

First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale, by the grace of God, embraces all people through Christian outreach for the purpose of soul-saving and humanitarian endeavors. We believe that Sex is a behavior reserved by God in the beginning of time mainly for procreation. *"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD (Genesis 4:1:)*

Fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, and the affiliated categories of lifestyle are not endorsed by this Church. We will provide spiritual guidance for a Godly conversion, through the application of the Word of God and the work of the Holy Ghost in the lives of individuals. *(Genesis 19:4-11; Leviticus 1:3-20; romans 1:24-27)*

### Abortion

The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft Lauderdale, Inc. believes in the sanctity of life as defined in the counsel of the Bible. Human life is created by God and is good. Since we are uniquely created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and formed by God (Genesis 2:7; Job 33:4; Psalm 139:13-16), we hold to the sanctity of all human life (Genesis 9:6; Matthew 6:26). We believe that creation begins at conception during coitus.

## **MODESTY**

Modesty is not confined to dressing alone but also in conversation and mannerism (Philippians 4:5). The apostle Peter (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 3:1-4) admonished wives about behavior and appearance.

Deuteronomy 22:5 calls for the distinction of garments appropriate for gender. The Apostle John in Revelation 1&:4 identified the harlots by her attire; 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:3 outlines the don'ts of adorning.

The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc. encourages the believers to relieve themselves of unnecessary jewelry which includes but not limited to earrings, anklets, nose-rings, chains, bracelets. Additionally, body piercing, markings, smoking, gambling, drugging, alcoholics, are strongly forbidden. We are undergirded by the bible referenced in Romans 12:1-2.

Believers in this local assembly are also encouraged to reject nail paintings, the wearing of pants, artificial eye lashes and any other attire that promotes worldly look. We emphasize that clergy members and others who intend to be the noble representative of this ministry abstain from the above-mentioned attire and appearance in order to embrace the model and vision for this ministry.

### **Head Covering**

<sup>5</sup>“But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. <sup>6</sup>For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. <sup>7</sup>For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.” (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:5-7).

We are a Bible believing assembly and endorses that women ought to cover their heads in the assembly of worship unto God.

# **THE SACRAMENTS**

## **Holy Communion**

Holy Communion is a celebration of joy and thanksgiving. It is also known as the “Eucharist” (giving thanks), the “Lord’s Supper”, and the “breaking of bread”.

We believe in the worthy partaking of Holy Communion establishes our fellowship with Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is celebrated with unleavened bread (wafer) and non-alcoholic wine; both must be consecrated and dispensed by an ordained minister (Pastor, Bishop, Deacon, Elder)

Holy Communion is characterized as:

- a meal of remembrance: it commemorates the death of Jesus Christ as a unique event that is valid for all time.
- an acknowledgement of the death, resurrection, and ultimate return of Jesus Christ

Frequency Of Observance of the Holy Communion is often.

## **Water Baptismal Formula**

We believe that the baptismal formula that is to be pronounced is ‘In the Name of Jesus Christ.’ Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is Apostolic in origin and practice (Acts 2:38; 8:12-17; 10:47,48; 19:1-6.

## **Administering Baptism**

Baptism is administered to all who demonstrate genuine repentance from the heart for their sins. (Psalm 51:17) We believe that infants are not, baptized but are blessed or dedicated to the Lord as early as possible, after birth. It is the duty of the parents to present their children for dedication, thereby claiming God’s covenant promises to parents and children. The time when children and youths are capable of good judgement cannot be precisely fixed. A prudent minister will know by spiritual discernment when baptism of a child or a youth is appropriate.

## **Feet Washing**

We believe that Feet Washing is an ordinance that is as divine as any other New Testament practice. Jesus gave an example that the church should do as He had done. (John 13:4-17)

Feet Washing is practiced by the church in the days of the Apostle Paul (1Timothy5:10)

This practice is generally performed during the communion (Lord's Supper) service. The frequency of this ordinance is determined by the Pastor.

## **Financial Contribution**

Tithing is the practice of giving the first tenth of one's income to support the work of God's kingdom. The Bible mentions tithing in Leviticus 27:30, which states that "all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord". Tithing is a recognition that all blessings in life come from God.

- Tithing is a way to honor God with gratitude.
- Tithing is a cornerstone of God's plan for financing His work.

Similarly, The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc encourages members to make financial contributions to the upkeep of the ministry. (2 Corinthians 9:7: Deuteronomy 16:17; Proverbs 22:9)

An offering is a "free-will-gift" to the body of Christ, in honor to God for benefit you may have derived at His hands. Offering and tithing are separate in definition though they may be used for the same purposes.

Most offerings described throughout the Bible were personal acts of praise and thanksgiving to God. They were presented in a worship setting and were accepted and blessed by the priest. Our offerings during worship are never to be casual activities. They are rather acts of trust in God, which are expressed in tangible ways, and should be accompanied by prayer.

Additionally, believers are encouraged to volunteer time and skillsets to the benefit of the physical body.

## **CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNAMENT**

*Government* is sometimes viewed as an order that inhibits one's freedom. However, government in the church community is a necessary element to the viability of the body and to promote the vision and mission. It is agreed that Jesus is the head of the church (Col. 1:8) and has delegated His authority to be exercised through the government of the church. The system of the church government at The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc. embraces that Christ alone is Head of the church, and that He rules His church by His Word and Spirit. The registered governing board and other church officials have ministerial and declarative authority. They declare, explain, and apply Christ's will as the Spirit clarifies the scripture to their understanding.

### **THE OFFICES DEFINED**

#### **The Board of Directors**

As a nonprofit entity, the church is required to establish and maintain agreed upon bylaws. Bylaws are legal documents that are established by the church and are a requirement to maintain nonprofit status with the IRS. Of all the church board responsibilities, of which there are many, this is perhaps the most important as it not only keeps the church in compliance with the law, but it also ensures the church is financially viable and therefore continually able to work towards fulfilling its identified mission and purpose.

Additionally, the Board of Directors is expected to oversee and ensure that the church is a responsible steward of money, property, and materials. Largely, this is done by approving the budget as well as routinely and annually ensuring the integrity of spending and use of church money and resources.

Board members serve and installed according to the Bylaws governing the Board. Another major component of the Board's responsibility includes developing and maintaining operation standards of the church, within the scope of its vision and mission.

The Board of Directors oversees the Pastor, and the Pastor directly accounts to the Board of Directors.

Any church established and operated with the First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc. shall be governed by the said Board of Directors and supervised by the bishop or a designated officer.

### **The Bishop is the Pastor**

The Pastor is the under-shepherd of the body of Christ who reports to the Board of Directors, primarily, regarding the physical needs of the church. The first role of the pastor, includes but not limited to identifying, developing, and deploying pastoral gifts in others. The pastor discipled the members of the body of Christ and assist them grow in their ability to fulfill the mandates of the spiritual journey.

A healthy church values pastoral care with a shepherding heart. This leads to the people in the church becoming more mature spiritually, breaking off sin and strongholds, growing in their security and identity, and being able to feed themselves and others. Pastors guide others in their journey of spiritual formation.

Additionally, the pastor helps connect and maintain loving, godly relationships between people and makes sure that in the busyness of church life and ministry focus, people are not forgotten or overlooked.

The pastor intervenes, corrects, admonishes, rebukes, challenges or disciplines behavior and attitudes that are detrimental to the community.

The Pastor is selected to serve by the Board of Directors within the scope and recommendations provided in the Scriptures.

### **Ministers**

The First United Church of Jesus Christ Apostolic of Ft. Lauderdale Inc. endorses the recommendation for the ordination of a minister as outlined in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:1-13. All ordained ministers must be Baptized in *Jesus Name* and filled with the Holy Ghost. Transferring ministers must be baptized in *Jesus Name* and filled with the Holy Ghost. A transferring minister is required to provide documentation of good standing with the forwarding assembly, prior to serving in the same office. The pastor may

take the initiative to communicate with the forwarding assembly regarding the eligibility of the minister being transferred. If a reference is not available, the minister shall serve during probationary period of at least six months, after which the office is fully endorsed.

### **The Elder**

an Elder is a Minister with a greater leadership authority in the church. The Elder is accountable to the Pastor and stands in the pastor's place when the pastor is not available.

The bible specifies qualifications of an elder (Titus 1:6–9 and 1 Timothy 3:1–7.) In general, the Elder is defined by maturity, good reputation, and gifts for teaching, oversight, and pastoral ministry.

- A person who is above reproach or blameless
- Has a good reputation
- Faithful to his wife
- Not given to heavy drinking
- Not violent, quarrelsome, or quick-tempered
- Gentle
- One who can teach others.
- His children respect and obey him.
- He is not a new believer and has a strong belief.
- Not arrogant
- Display good stewardship and fiduciary capabilities. Not dishonest
- One who exercises discipline and self-control.

### **Who Ordains the Elder**

- Initially, it was the apostles who selected and ordained elders (Acts 14:23).
- Ordination is the traditional way that churches have recognized and appointed their leaders.
- The Pastor or Bishop is the church's spiritual authority who lay hands on the ordinand Elder, in prayer, to commission him for the work of ministry. Paul instructed Titus to "appoint"

elders in every town (2 Cor 8:9). Paul and Barnabas also “appointed” elders in Galatia and “committed” them to the Lord (Acts 14:23).

- Ultimately, the Spirit himself “appoints” an elder to the church (Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11). Yet ordination is the church’s recognition of that elder’s spiritual gifting and qualification for ministry (1 Tim 3:1-16; Titus 1:5-9).

### **Teacher**

Teaching is one of the primary functions in the Church, both in importance and necessity. In the early church, the function and calling of teaching was indistinguishable from that of Pastor. But in our age of specialization the role of teacher has come to stand alone as a distinct and primary calling in the Church. The appointment of a teacher for Christian education is a unique duty that must be carried out by the Pastor/Bishop after divine discernment, clear observation, and close follow up with the ordinand. Although interpreting the word for the development of each Christian believer depends on the Holy Ghost, the teacher will need to possess the aptitude to teach.

### **Evangelist**

An Evangelist is One of the “Gifts” in the Local Church (Eph. 4:11). The primary role of the Evangelist is to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to both saints and sinners. Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 4:5. The life of the evangelist must be pure in all things, not necessarily one with a formal education as this is not an evangelist's "qualifications."

### **Deacon**

Primarily, the Deacon assists the pastor to take care of the needs of the Church. The character of the Deacon is outlined in the Bible at 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:8-9

<sup>8</sup> Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; <sup>9</sup> Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

## **Missionary**

Specific individuals who are committed to serve with the aptitude for charitable work, helping others and spreading the love of Jesus are ordained and sent to the mission field.

Primarily a Missionary is someone who undertakes the spreading of the Gospel, everywhere there is a need. Basically, anyone who shares their faith with others is a missionary, even if they do not travel abroad. Generally, a mission trip usually involves international travel to parts of the world where social issues are most prevalent. They spread Jesus' love by making good use of their talents, training, and skills. A part of being a missionary is loving others and helping ensure their spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional needs are met. They work in line with the directives laid out in the Bible  
— (Matthew 25:40).

# **MINISTERIAL ORDERS**

## **Pastoral Installation**

At the time appointed for ordination and pastoral installation there should be a sermon or exhortation declaring the duty and office of those to be ordained as elders/installed as pastors. The sermon/counsel gives the necessary order in the church, and also how the people should esteem them in their office. Following this the chairman of the credentials and ordination committee or person designated for this cause, shall present to the official (Bishop) whosoever will assume office.

## **The order:**

1. “I present unto you these persons/this person/present to the people:  
“Beloved brethren, these are they/he/she who we propose, the Lord willing, this day to be ordained as elders/installed as pastor. After due inquiry by the committee of credentials and ordination we believe that they are/he is/she is divinely called to this office and ministry. All requirements for the office are fulfilled.

But if there is a valid cause for denial to this holy ministry let it be known now.

*(If an allegation is identified, the bishop shall postpone the ordination of that individual for further inquiry.*

*(Then an appropriate prayer shall be said to continue/dismiss the ceremony.*

(Sample Prayer for the ordained)

*“Lord, our God, in the Name of Jesus Christ, who by the Holy Ghost has instructed that elders shall be ordained in thy Church: Lord, look with mercy upon these, thy servants, being ordained, and fill them with the truth of thy word and doctrine. Clothe him/them with sincerity of purpose that by thy grace he/she/they shall fulfill the office, to your honor and glory.*

Scripture reading – Ephesians 3:7-11; John 10:1-16

*Bishop then says....*

*“Dearly beloved, you are witness to the Word of God. You have heard of the importance of this office and the dignity with which you must serve. We therefore exhort you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you conduct yourself in the manner that represents a messenger of God, a watchman for God, and a steward of the Lord. Teach and admonish; reprove and rebuke where necessary, seek for the sheep that has gone astray, so that full reconciliation to the Body of Christ may be possible by the grace and mercy that is available through the blood of Jesus Christ. Be encouraged to remember the immense nature of this charge and endeavor to value people, as His people, the Church as his body and the bride of Christ. If by reason of your inattention that a member is hurt or hindered, you shall bear the cause as an egregious injustice to your calling. Never cease to labor with diligence, employ all that is within your capabilities to develop the children of God until all have come to the stature of the Man, Christ Jesus.*

*Having considered the excellency of the office to which you are ordained, forsake, by the mercies of God, all worldly cares, and be devoted to studying the Word of God as your tool of authority to declare it unto the people.*

*It is our hope that before now, you have diligently contemplated these matters and have conceded to a full life of prayer and fasting, to undertake the rigors of this task, and to be a good example of family, faith and favor of God, by the Grace of God.*

*Response.*

*Bishop: Do you believe that God has called you to this office and that you should be ordained as an elder?*

*Ordinand: I believe*

*Bishop: Are you persuaded that the Bible is the Word of God; that in it is found all the true requirements for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ; and determined to instruct the people thereby?*

*Ordinand: I believe, and am determined, by God's help.*

*Bishop: Will you earnestly minister the doctrine of Christ, the sacraments, and the disciplines of the church and defend the Church against all doctrine contrary to God's words?*

*Ordinand: I will, by the help of God'*

*Bishop: Will you be diligent in prayer and fasting, biblical studies and to separate from all carnalities.*

*Ordinand: I will, by the help of God*

*Bishop: Will you conduct your own life's affairs, including your family according to the teaching of Jesus Christ?*

*Ordinand: I will, by the help of God*

*Bishop: Will you foster quietness, peace, and love among all saints*

*Ordinand: I will, by the help of God*

*Bishop: Will you, with reverence, obey them that are over you, observing willingly, the guidance of your leadership and submit to Godly judgments?*

*Ordinand: I will, by the help of God.*

Prayer by the Bishop and anoint with oil while accompanying Elders/Pastors lay hands.

The Bishop then presents the candidates (all standing) with a Bible.

*Bishop: Take this as an Ordained Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ and preach the word without fear or favor, seeking the honor that comes from God only, reprove, rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine; earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints – and serve the Church of God which He has purchased with His own blood.  
Amen*

## **GUIDELINES FOR RESOLVING GRIEVANCES**

The body of Christ is a place where all people exist together as imperfect but beloved and repentant children of God. We endeavor to provide a safe environment where persons are treated with honor and respect and provided with compassionate care as needed. We Ensure by God's grace that grievances and disputes are addressed promptly and resolved fairly. We endeavor as a community to grow into the likeness of Christ by the power of the Spirit by walking in daily repentance, obedience, and love.

### **Fundamental Principles**

- Love God by submitting to the Lordship of Christ and following the desires of the Holy Spirit instead of our natural (fleshly) inclinations (Gal 5:16–25), recognizing that the Holy Spirit's passion is to glorify God and to foster love and fellowship.
- Love one another by extending grace and mercy, patiently bearing with the faults and failures of one another, and choosing to honor one another (Col 3:12–17).
- Honor leaders, practice godly 'followership' in Christ. Remember that leaders are God's gift to serve your welfare (Heb13:17). By honoring your leaders, you will benefit yourself and the kingdom of God.
- Leaders should care for members with compassion, humility, and patience as examples to the flock entrusted to their care (Col 3:12; 1 Pet 5:2–3). Remember that Christ laid down his life for these sheep.
- Human beings are created in God's image and invested with dignity, yet also sinful. Christians are redeemed but not yet glorified. Consequently, we should view people through these lenses of dignity, depravity, and redemption. That is, we treat them with the dignity of image-bearers but should not be surprised when they sin. Ultimately, we view them considering

the larger story of redemption: What is God doing in this story, and how does this fit into his larger story?

- Be willing to grieve and to suffer loss as a follower of Jesus. We live in an imperfect world in which others will disappoint us and fail us in various ways. It is better to be sinned against than to commit sin against your brother or sister.
- As one led by the Holy Spirit, be quick to repent and quick to forgive. But recognize that repentance and forgiveness occur in degrees, and there may be a process of journeying more deeply and honestly in these movements.
- You, and not someone else, are responsible under God for your choices, and for all that you are and have. Others have a right and a responsibility for their actions, relationships, privileges, and possessions. Avoid expectations and demands to which you have no right. Practice healthy boundaries.

## **II. Confidentiality and Accountability**

- Information about a minor in need of protection. Reporting may be required by law. Each situation should be carefully assessed.
- Discreetly verify, when necessary, with the person in question any information about other people's actions or perceived motives.
- Submit the finding only to authorities concerned.

## **Overview Of Procedures (See Matthew 18:15–20)**

Whenever possible, the complainant should communicate grievances exclusively and privately to the offending party for the purpose of resolution. It is inappropriate to voice complaints to third parties who are unable to help in the resolution process.

If you are unable to resolve your issue with a fellow member of the church community, involve a mature leader (hereafter called “mediator”) to help in the resolution process. Such help may be requested by either the complainant or the respondent as necessary.

If your grievance is against an elder and you are unable to resolve the issue, or feel psychologically unable to approach that elder, solicit the help of another elder who will help you process the matter and support you in addressing the issue.

Where the grievance involves the alleged actions of a respondent, the respondent should have an opportunity to express their view of the incident or situation to the designated mediator.

Respondents should respect the process of mediation and should not directly approach the complainant if this is the express desire of the complainant. The complainant is accountable to the mediator for processing the grief and working toward resolution in a godly manner. The mediator is accountable to the respondent to guide the case toward resolution in a manner that respects the dignity of the respondent.

In the case that there has been a legal offence, consult the elders who will, as appropriate, submit the case to legal authorities.

When desired, the mediator may accompany the complainant in approaching the respondent.

## **Guidance For the Complainant**

We lovingly and gently communicate grievances for the purpose of inviting others to repentance and reconciliation. But note that our sense of grievance or offence may or may not be caused by someone else's sin. At times, we may be grieved by our unmet expectations without fault in the other person's actions. In such cases, the solution is not for the other to repent, but for us to relinquish those expectations and misguided grudges. The complainant should prayerfully discern the situation and, as appropriate, humbly and straightforwardly communicate the matter for resolution.

Charges of wrongdoing should be brought forth with an orientation to the future – resolving the conflict and rebuilding the relationship – rather than simply allocating blame without a way forward.

If you feel unable to approach the offender, you should approach an elder. That elder/leader may, in some circumstances, refer you to another leader to help you process your grievance.

Charges against a pastor or elder should be prayed through and brought forth in a serious and sober manner. Flippant or petty critiques should be avoided. This should be referred to officials serving above the Pastor, such as the Board of Directors.

Be prepared to forgive or to cancel the debt and choose not to bring up the issue as a weapon with which to harm the other.

### **PROGRESSION IN MINISTRY- LICENSING**

The church has a great opportunity to preach and teach to all nations, and to raise up a generation of leaders. Leaders have the privilege of shaping and developing future leaders who has been called by God.

All Ministers are encouraged to pursue deeper biblical studies and participate in community led training to be fully equipped for positional changes and deeper calling.

The individual is earmarked for progression in ministry must be observed, tried, and proven in the forwarding position. The requirements for the move to another position must be evident prior to the active duty.

Individuals who are transferred from another assembly, having the license to operate in a position as leader shall encounter the following procedure:

1. The pastor shall obtain a letter of recommendation from the forwarding assembly.
2. The individual shall answer to the criteria (by way of leadership - style interview) necessary to be qualified as a leader.

3. The individual is subjected to at least six months probationary period in the same position being carried from the forwarding church.
4. In cases where the position includes interaction primarily with children and finances the pastor shall conduct a soft-background check on the individual to satisfy the state mandates as well as integrity pursuits.
5. Upon fulfillment the individual is presented to the church as a fully functional on behalf of the Fellow of Apostolic

### **MINISTERIAL LICENSING**

The Board of Directors shall oversee ministerial licensing in order to procure the integrity of its church operation. All ordained ministers shall obtain a license to operate in the office under the authority of the church organization. The licensing procedure include:

- A brief oral interview with a panel of pastor/ elders and board members not exceeding ten persons with a minimum of eight.
- A license presentation ceremony may be held for the purpose of presenting the licensed individual to the community.
- The active licensed individual receives a clergy tag.
- The cost of the clergy tag, not exceeding an initial \$20.00 shall be at the expense to officer being licensed.
- The licensed shall be revoked if the official impugns the office in any way. Impugning the office refers to a moral or physical violation of the office he/she holds.
- A revocation shall be done after an oral interview with a panel of pastors/elders and board members not exceeding ten persons with a minimum of eight.

### **OUTLINE FOR FUNERAL SERVICE**

The Church in the community serve the needs of the community including conducting a funeral service for the saved or regular church members. It

is encouraged that a licensed minister officiates the service in order that the dignity of religious freedom be maintained.

The death of a member of the church should be reported to the pastor as soon as possible, and arrangements for the funeral should occur in consultation with him.

Funerals for the church members should be held in the sanctuary unless there are exigencies such as capacity and family reference. All efforts should be made to maintain this protocol. The casket should be placed before the altar and remains there throughout the service.

The minister shall commence the service, meeting the body or going before it shall read one or more of the following sentences.

*“I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me; though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die “(John 11:25, 26)*

*“I know that my Redeemer liveth and, that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin-worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another” (Job 19:25-27)*

*“Ye brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out. the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.”. (2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 6:7; Job 1:2)*

*“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heaven” (2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:1)*

*Hymn – may be submitted by the bereaved.*

Prayer – A spontaneous prayer may be substituted for any of the standard prayers for funeral occasions.

The following items or liturgy on the funeral program may be submitted by the bereaved or church clergy which includes but not limited to:

- Hymn or special music
- Prayer
- Tributes
- Sermon

At the graveside the while the corpse is made ready to be laid into the earth the minister shall say:

A man that is born of a woman, hath but a short time to live, and full of trouble. He cometh up, and is cut down, like a flower, he flees as it were a shadow, and never continues in one stay.

*(Other liturgical reference may be used at this point)*

“For as much as the spirit of the departed hath returned to God who gave it, we therefore commit his or her body the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ; at whose second coming in glorious majesty to judge the world; the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed, and made like unto His own glorious body; according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.”

*Then he may say:*

I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth, yes, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works follow them.”

Here the minister and the and the people may repeat together the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm.

*Then the Minister shall pray*

### **PERFORMING A WEDDING**

All participants in the ceremony shall be attired modestly. Brides are encouraged to be attired modestly. Naked body shows are not permitted.

All arrangements pertaining to the service of marriage shall be made in full consultation with the minister.

The service may begin with the prelude, anthem, solo or hymn. It may include a processional and recessional and be conclude with a postlude.

The congregation shall stand as the wedding processing begins.

(The persons to be married must be qualified according to the laws of the state and the stands of the church; standing together facing the minister, the man at the minster's left hand and the woman at the right-hand positions, the minister shall say:

*“Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God. And in the presence of these witnesses, to join this man and this woman in the bonds of holy matrimony; which is an honorable estate, instituted by God, and signifying unto as the mystical union which exists between Christ and His church; which hold estate Christ adorned and beautified with His presence in Cana of Galilee. It is therefore not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God. Into this holy estate these two persons came now to be joined. If any man can show cause why they may not be lawfully joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.’*

#### **Exchange of Vows:**

**Officiant asks the man,** *“(his name), do you take this woman to*

*be your wife, to live together in (holy) matrimony, to love her, to honor her, to comfort her, and to keep her in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, for as long as you both shall live?"*

**Bridegroom answers:** *"I do."*

**Officiant asks Bride,** *"(her name), do you take this man to be your husband, to live together in (holy) matrimony, to love him, to honor him, to comfort him, and to keep him in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, for as long as you both shall live?"*

**Bride answers:** *"I do".*

**Officiant states:** *"Repeat after me." To the man: "I, (his name), take you (her name), to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part."*

**To the Bride:** *"I, (her name), take you (his name), to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part."*

**Officiant says:** *"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"*

**Father of the Bride (competent respondent) answers:** *"I Do."*

**The officiant receives the hand of the bride from her father (competent respondent) and cause the bridegroom with his right hand to take the bride by her right hand and say after him:**

*"I take (name) to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, form this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith."*

***The woman with her right hand takes the man by his right hand and say after the officiant:***

*“I take (name) to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God’s holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith.”*

***Exchange of Rings Notary: Officiant asks the bridegroom to place the ring on the bride’s finger and to repeat the following,***

*"I give you this ring as a token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love." (repeat the same for the bride).*

*(The couple may repeat their individual commitment to each other)*

### **Pronouncement**

*Officiant says: "By virtue of the authority vested in me under the laws of the State of Florida, I now pronounce you husband and wife." To the man: "You may kiss the bride."*

## **THE ANCILLIARY FUNCTIONS**

*Ancillary groups are supportive services that complement the church’s efforts to provide a holistic approach to the gospel outreach Ministry. Furthermore, they exist to harness and develop the talents and gifts of each believer as the church unifies its efforts for fulfilling its mission. These main groups are as follows:*

**Sunday School** – The pastor shall appoint a superintendent and an assistant. The superintendent and the assistant shall work to develop the believers through Christian education.

**Brotherhood Department** – a president appointed by the majority and approved by the pastor shall direct the brotherhood department. The

department shall exist with a recording secretary and a treasurer and other sub-committees to fulfil its goals.

**The Women's Department** - a president appointed by the majority and approved by the pastor shall direct the women's department. The department shall exist with a recording secretary and a treasurer and other sub-committees to fulfil its goals.

**Youth Department** - a president appointed by the majority and approved by the pastor shall direct the Youths' department. The department shall exist with a recording secretary and a treasurer and other sub-committees to fulfil its goals.

**Choir-** The pastor chooses the Choir Director. Choir members are recommended by the Choir Director and approved by the Pastor. Choir members must completely satisfy the beliefs of the church and biblical ordinances. Members must attend all services at best Members who remain rebellious to the church's mandates are relieved of membership until conformity is observed.

**Ushering** - The Pastor identifies an individual who possess hospitality with diplomacy to lead the team of Ushers. Ushers are those whose responsibilities include greeting and directing members and visitors, assisting with seating, collecting offerings, providing assistance to those in need, providing information about the church and upcoming events (when necessary), maintaining order during the service, preparing the sanctuary before and after the service, and participating in any other duties assigned by the pastor or church leadership Members must attend all services at best Members who remain rebellious to the church's mandates are relieved of membership until conformity is observed.

## **MAIN ANNUAL CHURCH ACTIVITIES**

- Sunday School and Divine Worship
- Bible Study
- Fasting Service
- Prayer Service
- Youth Meeting
- Objective Conferences
- Convocation
- Men's Fellowship
- Women Ministry

Choir Ministry Other meetings are authorized at the discretion of the pastor.

## **STANDARD ORDER OF SUNDAY SERVICE**

- Praise and Worship
- Commencement of Divine Service
- Congregational song
- Opening prayer
- Scripture reading
- Intercessory Prayer
- Official welcome
- Ministry of the Word
- Alter ministry.
- Presentation of tithes and offering
- Announcements, benediction, and dismissal

## **OTHER ARTICLES**

### **Purchasing Property**

If at any time the local assembly decides to purchase property, the pastor and the church board shall look after the business matters and present

their views to the assembly. When the majority decides upon the purchase of a site the Board shall lead the financial aspect of the property acquisition.

The title of the property shall be in the name of the church at the town where the assembly is located and shall be held in trust by the elected trustees until a successor is identified.

If this assembly ceases to function as a church, all assets shall be assigned to another religious non-profit organization.

### **Business Meetings**

A business meeting of the church must be announced publicly.

The majority vote of the members present and voting at any business session shall be the deciding factor.

The minimum age of a member voting shall be eighteen (18) years.

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