

THE MOODY CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

1635 N. LaSalle
Chicago, Illinois 60614
P: 312.327.8600
F: 312.943.9179
www.moodychurch.org

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CONSTITUTION OF THE MOODY CHURCH

Adopted on June 30, 2013

PREAMBLE

We, the members of The Moody Church, in order to reach men, women, and children for our Lord Jesus Christ in Chicago and to the ends of the earth; help believers grow in Christian maturity; and equip believers for the work of the ministry, establish this Constitution for The Moody Church to which we agree and voluntarily submit and bind ourselves.

ARTICLE 1. NAME

This organization shall be known as

The Moody Church

by which name it is incorporated as a religious corporation under the laws of the state of Illinois.

The Moody Church (hereinafter “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, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law).

ARTICLE 2. DOCTRINE, CHRISTIAN LIVING, AND OTHER MATTERS OF BIBLICAL ETHICS

As members of the Church, we voluntarily and without reservation agree to accept this Article, with the express purpose of committing ourselves to the teachings of Scripture, both for our own spiritual benefit and also as a basis for our own witness before a watching world. We believe that all spiritual experiences must be based on and nurtured by the truth of Scripture.

This Article is compiled from various sources and reflects those truths we believe beneficial for personal salvation, spiritual growth, and a life lived for God’s glory. All who teach for this Church do so under the authority of the Elders and are expected to advocate and not undermine the positions of the Church as stated in this Constitution.

As set forth in Article 5, Section B, the Elder Oversight Council (hereinafter “Elders”), as part of the responsibility assigned to them by Scripture (as defined below) and this Constitution, have the spiritual oversight of the Church, and bear the final responsibility for the Church in the interpretation of Scripture, the meaning of the content of this Article, and all other matters relating to spiritual oversight.

Section A. Doctrinal Statement

1. The Bible

We believe that God has spoken in the sixty-six books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments (hereinafter referred to as “Bible” or “Scripture”), through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged.

We believe that although God may give individual believers guidance in various ways, we reject the teaching that implies that individuals can receive “words from God” that have the same authority as Scripture. Therefore, the Bible alone is to be believed in all that it teaches; obeyed in all that it requires; and trusted in all that it promises. (Psalm 19:7–11; Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21)

2. God

We believe in one God, who directly and immediately created all things, and who is holy and infinitely perfect; in whom all things have their source, support, and end. He exists eternally in a loving tri-unity (trinity) of three equally divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 5:3–4; Hebrews 1:1–3, 8)

Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity past to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory. Since He is not limited in knowledge or power by any external forces or the will of His creatures, what He purposes will come to pass. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. (Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 32:3–4; John 17:3; Acts 17:28; Ephesians 1:3–5; 3:7–13; Revelation 4:11)

- (a) **God the Father.** Although God the Father shares the same essence with God the Son and God the Spirit, He is to be distinguished from the two other members of the Trinity. The Father is not begotten nor is He the One who was crucified. He is frequently spoken of as “the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Thanks to His choice in adopting us, He is also our Father, and we are described as His children. Hence, Jesus taught us to

pray, “Our Father who art in heaven.” The Father is the one who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing and chose us to be His from before the foundation of the world. The Father loved the world and gave His Son on our behalf. (Matthew 6:9; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:3)

Although the Fatherhood of God finds its clearest expression in the New Testament, this filial relationship was already known to the faithful in Old Testament times. For example, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah refer to the intimacy of the Father/Son relationship. (Psalm 103:13, 14; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:19)

In Christ, the Father was propitiated; that is, His anger against sin was turned away from us. Thus, both His love for us and His holy anger against sin found expression in and were fully satisfied through the work of Christ on the cross. Thus, we affirm that our God is our Redeemer.

- (b) **God the Son.** We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person with two natures. Although Jesus Christ, who is Israel’s promised Messiah, existed from eternity past, He was conceived in human flesh through the Holy Spirit and born of Mary who was a virgin. He lived a sinless life, was crucified and died under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate. (Matthew 1:23; John 1:1; Ephesians 1:15–23; 1 Timothy 2:5–6; Hebrews 1:8)

We believe that Jesus Christ honored God’s law as expressed in both the Old Testament and New Testament by His personal obedience and substitutionary death on the cross for sinners. He is the one Mediator between God and man, fully God and fully man, being the only One in whose person God and man can be reconciled. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and consummate His redemptive mission. To Him we gladly give our obedience and worship, being deeply grateful for His grace toward us while we were yet sinners. (John 14:6; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 2:5–6)

- (c) **God the Holy Spirit.** We believe that the Holy Spirit exists as a co-equal and co-eternal Person within the Trinity and as such is fully divine. We believe that He glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ and God the Father in all that He does. He convicts the unconverted of their sin and regenerates all who believe; and in Him all believers are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. By the Holy Spirit the Godhead now indwells all believers. He also illuminates, guides, equips, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service. (John 7:38–40; 16:7–11; Acts 1:8; 5:5; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 5:16–18)

We believe that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts to the church for the edification of the body of Christ. These gifts of service are intended to display both the diversity and unity of the one body in its mutual edification and ministry. We believe sign gifts (such as speaking in tongues) are not required as proof of the filling or baptizing work of the Holy Spirit. Rather, the Holy Spirit never departs from a believer and is ever present to testify of Christ, bringing about the fruit of the Spirit. His presence in the life of believers is the guarantee that God will bring us safely into heaven where we will enter fully into the inheritance that awaits us. (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13–14)

3. The Human Condition

We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image as male and female, thus the gift of two different yet complementary sexes reflects the goodness of God’s creation. However, because Adam and Eve voluntarily rebelled, as their descendants we are born under the condemnation of sin and also inherit a sin nature. Therefore, sin has affected the whole of our being, leaving us morally and spiritually “dead in [our] trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). Only through God’s saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, renewed, and reconciled to God. (Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1–3)

Since humanity is the crowning work of God’s creation, each human being is created in His image, is sacred, and is worthy of respect and Christian love. This respect must be accorded to all human life from the moment of conception until natural death. (Psalm 139:13–16; Revelation 5:9–10)

4. Salvation

We believe that salvation involves the redemption of the entire person—body, soul, and spirit—and is offered freely to all who, having been called by God, receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The moment we trust Him as Savior, we pass from death unto life, accepted by the Father according to the measure of Christ’s acceptance, and loved even as He is loved. As our representative and substitute, we believe that He shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for our salvation. We rejoice that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). (Acts 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Peter 3:18)

We believe this salvation is a gift of God’s grace, appropriated through faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. This faith is a gift of divine grace, and is not simply knowledge of Jesus Christ, but is an act of personal trust accompanied by the miracles of regeneration and justification, leading to sanctification and glorification.

We believe that *regeneration*, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby we become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart brought about by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin and is accompanied by repentance and faith in Christ, resulting in a new nature within us. (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:4–7)

We believe that *justification* is God's gracious and full acquittal of the sins of all who are regenerated. Christ's righteousness is imputed to the regenerate, and God declares them to be entirely righteous, bringing them into a relationship of peace and favor with Himself. (Romans 3:19–26; 5:1; Galatians 3:10–14)

We believe that *sanctification* is the process by which God sets believers apart for His own purposes, that they might progress toward spiritual maturity by the presence and power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 4:3)

We believe that *glorification* is the culmination of salvation and will be the final blessed and abiding state of all who have been redeemed. (Romans 8:17, 30; 2 Thessalonians 1:10)

5. Angels and Satan

We believe that all angels were created by God but that a part of their number fell into sin under the leadership of Satan, who in his original rebellion against God is the cause of sin in the universe. Satan's temptation of Adam and Eve resulted in their disobedience and fall into sin. Satan and his hosts are declared enemies of God and man, and will be eternally punished in the lake of fire. Satan, though irredeemably evil, is nevertheless subject to God and His eternal plan. (Genesis 3:15; Colossians 2:15; Revelation 20:10)

The holy angels are preserved from sinning by a divine decree and exist to serve God according to His good pleasure. They also glorify God in their obedience and service to believers, and they will eventually be used by God to judge the wicked. (1 Timothy 5:21; Hebrews 1:14; Revelation 7:1–3)

6. The Church

The church, which had its special beginning on the day of Pentecost, is comprised of all who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, of which He is the head. The true church is manifest in local churches whose membership should be comprised only of believers. (Matthew 16:18; Acts 1:8; 2:43; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:20–23)

The Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and communion, which tangibly and symbolically express the Gospel. Although these ordinances are not the means of salvation and do not confer special grace, when they are celebrated by

the church in genuine faith, they do confirm and nourish the church, the body of Christ. (Matthew 26:26–29; 28:18–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26)

In obedience to Christ's command, we urge every believer upon profession of faith to joyfully follow our Lord's instructions and be baptized "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). We encourage those who were baptized as infants to follow in believer's baptism as a testimony of their own personal faith in Christ. We desire to follow the pattern of the New Testament in which conversion was followed by baptism by immersion.

7. Christ's Return

We believe that God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring this present era to a close. According to His promise, our Lord Jesus Christ will return imminently, personally, and bodily for His church and also for the establishment of His kingdom on earth. For believers, His coming is their blessed hope and demands constant expectancy, holy living, and sacrificial service. (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Titus 2:11–14; 2 Peter 3:8–14)

When the future millennial kingdom is established, the national promises given to Abraham will be fulfilled and Israel shall be restored to the glory predicted in the Scriptures, with Christ ruling from Jerusalem. As expressed in Habakkuk 2:14, "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 2:2–5; Jeremiah 31:35–37; Zechariah 14:1–5; Luke 1:30–33; Acts 1:6–7; Romans 11:25–27; Galatians 3:9, 14, 23–29)

The Church believes and teaches that the premillennial return of Christ to establish His earthly reign is an important doctrine of eschatology. All who teach and preach in the Church are expected to do so consistent with this interpretation of end-time events. However, those with a different understanding of the coming kingdom are permitted to join our membership.

8. Eternal Destiny

We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the Gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning unbelievers to condemnation with eternal conscious punishment and believers to eternal joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, where we will forever celebrate the justice of God and His loving mercy to the praise of His glorious grace. (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 15:1–4; 20:11–15)

We believe that all believers who die are immediately conscious in the presence of the Lord, although their bodies will be resurrected at the second coming of Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:1–10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18) Unbelievers who die are conscious

in Hades and will eventually be resurrected to face the Great White Throne judgment and eternal punishment in the lake of fire. (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:11–15)

Section B. Our Lifestyle Covenant (“Christian Living”)

We believe that God’s justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor, and justice for the oppressed. With God’s Word, the Spirit’s power, and fervent prayer in Christ’s name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ’s commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed.

As an expression of our union with Christ and other believers, we whole-heartedly commit ourselves to living in a manner worthy of the Gospel. We believe that the following statements accurately express scriptural principles for living self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age according to Titus 2:11–14. Both in an effort to please Christ and in deference to the consciences of fellow believers as the Scriptures admonish, we will strive to abide by these principles in our personal lives by the grace of God. If we, as members, are found to be lacking in any of these areas, we will submit to the leadership of the Elders of this Church and, if necessary, to their discipline (see Article 8) to safeguard the spiritual health of this body and the reputation of Christ.

By God’s grace, we will yield to the power of the Holy Spirit who resides within us to produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:16–24)

By God’s grace, we will take advantage of public and private means of spiritual growth, such as: regular attendance at our Sunday services; fellowship with other believers; participation in the ordinances (baptism and communion); and the application of personal spiritual disciplines (Bible reading, fasting, prayer, etc.).

By God’s grace, we will contribute financially to the ministry of The Moody Church, giving regularly, proportionally, and generously as God has prospered us.

By God’s grace, we will witness to the world seeking to lead others to faith in Christ, and will do so with integrity and graciousness, following the leading of the Spirit.

By God’s grace, we will separate ourselves from all sinful pleasures, practices, and associations, and will refrain from all immodesty and immoderate behavior. We will seek to live in such a way as to not bring reproach upon the Lord Jesus Christ.

By God's grace, we will use our spiritual gifts as God enables us.

By God's grace, we will abstain from indulging in any and all forms of salacious behavior.

By God's grace, we will abstain from all sexual relationships outside of the marriage bond between one man and one woman as defined and taught in Scripture (see Section C.1, Human Sexuality, below).

By God's grace, we will be free from destructive habits that enslave us and compromise both our fellowship with God and our witness to the world.

By God's grace, we will be free of all alliances with secret cultic organizations or occultist affiliations, and will avoid being unequally yoked with unbelievers.

Note: Scriptural support for the above Lifestyle Covenant is found throughout the Scriptures. Some of the specific passages are as follows: Romans 1:18–32; 8:12; Galatians 5:16–25; Ephesians 4:22–24; Colossians 3:1–10; 1 Peter 1:14–16; 1 John 3:5–9.

Section C. Other Matters Pertaining to Biblical Ethics

1. Human Sexuality

We believe sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed within the marriage relationship. We believe that God has commanded abstinence from any form of sexual/intimate activity outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that participation in any activity related to fornication, pornography, homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, and/or adultery is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. We believe that God created human beings male and female; therefore we hold the distinction between the two sexes to be sacred. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to change the appearance of one's sex by hormones, surgery, or any other means. (Romans 1:18–32)

2. Family Relationships

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society and that a marriage which reflects biblical priorities and principles is the foundation of a healthy family. Children are a gift from God, and are both a blessing and a reward to their parents who are called to train them daily and diligently in God's truth. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them to God through a consistent lifestyle example, appropriate teaching, and discipline. (Deuteronomy 6:7–9; Psalm 127:3–5; Ephesians 5:22–33; 6:1–4)

We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God and both are made in God's image. God has given each sex distinct and separate spiritual roles in the home and the church. The husband is to love and serve his wife as Christ loves the church, to recognize that she is his essential helper and companion, and to live with her in a nurturing and understanding way. The wife is to submit to the headship of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ, to be her husband's loving friend, and to respect him as a matter of spiritual service. A husband's responsibility includes giving priority to spiritually leading his family and providing for his family's material needs. A wife's responsibility includes giving priority to home management and the nurture of her children. (Genesis 1:27; 2:15, 18; 3:19; 5:2; Proverbs 31:10–31; Ephesians 5:22–33; Titus 2:3–5; 1 Peter 3:1–7)

We also honor those who remain single and are committed to a life of chastity and single-minded devotion to Christ. The Apostle Paul, who himself was single, taught that such a lifestyle was not only good but has the advantage of enabling the believer to serve the Lord without distraction. (1 Corinthians 7:8, 32–34)

3. Divorce and Remarriage

We believe that God hates divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. We recognize that divorce and remarriage might be permitted under certain conditions. However, whether a person has a biblical reason to divorce or whether a divorced person has biblical grounds for remarriage is subject to the determination of the Elders, based on the teachings of Scripture. We urge those who are struggling in their marriages to seek counsel from mature believers with fervent prayer that God might bring about reconciliation and renewed commitment to the marriage vows. (Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:3–9; 1 Corinthians 7:10–13)

4. Abortion and Euthanasia

We believe that human life is a sacred gift from God and must be respected from the moment of conception (fertilization) until natural death. We believe that the intentional, willful termination of a pregnancy (“abortion”) at any time after conception constitutes the taking of unborn human life. Accordingly, abortions, including for reasons of birth defects, gender selection, birth control, population control, or even in the tragic instances of rape or incest, and acts of encouraging, facilitating, or paying for abortions, are inconsistent with Scripture and the glory of God. (Psalm 139:13–16)

We oppose active intervention with the intent to produce death (“euthanasia”), whether for the relief of suffering, economic considerations, or convenience of the person, family, or society. We do not oppose the withdrawal or failure to institute artificial means of life support in patients who are clearly and irreversibly

deteriorating, in whom death appears imminent beyond reasonable hope of recovery.

5. Love and Unity

We believe that we should demonstrate biblical love for all people, especially fellow believers, but also toward unbelievers who may oppose us, and toward those who engage in sinful actions. We must interact with all people graciously, gently, patiently, and humbly. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in them.

6. Lawsuits Among Believers

We believe that civil lawsuits among believers violate the teaching of Scripture and are a discredit to the name of Christ. Specifically, three reasons are given for this prohibition: our witness to the world is jeopardized; such lawsuits reflect the secular values of greed and an unwillingness to suffer wrong; and such lawsuits demean the leadership of a church, since the elders or appointed church leaders should be capable of resolving such disputes (1 Corinthians 6:1–8). When such disputes arise they should be brought to the attention of the church leadership for guidance, instruction, and if necessary, mediation or arbitration.

7. Church Leadership

We believe that God has ordained that the primary leadership of a church resides with male elders who meet the qualifications prescribed by Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7). We believe that pastoral and senior administrative staff must meet the same qualifications. We gladly submit to the leaders of the Church and esteem them highly for the sake of their work. (1 Thessalonians 5:12–13; Hebrews 13:17)

We believe that women may serve as administrative and/or ministry directors, Deaconesses, and in the teaching of women and children. Women may also serve in other capacities as directed by the Elders, subject to the terms of this Constitution. (Romans 16:1–5; 1 Corinthians 11:1–3; 1 Timothy 2:9–15)

ARTICLE 3. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Acquiring, Maintaining, and Terminating Membership

1. Membership Eligibility Requirements

All those who desire to unite with the Church as members shall be examined by a representative of the Leadership Council as to the basis of their salvation, their doctrinal beliefs, and their commitment to Christian living. All applicants for membership shall be required to agree in writing to the Constitution, including

Article 2, and shall be required to attend an instruction class, or its equivalent as determined by the Elders, before their acceptance into membership.

2. Youth Members

The minimum age to become a member of the Church is twelve years. Those applicants for membership who are at least twelve but less than eighteen years of age, who satisfy the above eligibility requirements (hereinafter “Youth Members”), are admitted as members to strengthen their connection and fellowship with the Church as part of the Church family. Members who have not reached eighteen years of age are not entitled to vote or serve as an Officer or Deaconess of the Church. Upon reaching eighteen years of age, Youth Members will be full Members and may vote and may serve in any office for which they are qualified.

3. Application Process

Applicants for membership shall be notified when they will be publicly received into membership if and when:

- (a) they have completed the written application for membership;
- (b) they have satisfactorily completed the instruction required by the Elders;
- (c) they have been examined as provided in Section A.1 of this Article, and found qualified based upon such examination (if relevant, input from the membership or other sources will be taken into account);
- (d) their names have been included in the list of membership candidates published in the bulletin or other similar means of general intra-Church communication for two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting of the Leadership Council in which the vote on their membership is taken; and
- (e) these names in turn have been approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Leadership Council.

When this process is completed, the new members will be presented to the congregation in a public service. Recognizing that circumstances may make it impractical for certain applicants to appear at the public reception, such applicants may be received into membership without personally appearing.

4. Newly Hired Ministry Staff

As part of the normal screening process, candidates for pastoral, senior administrative, and director-level positions, including Senior Pastor, and their spouses (if married), shall complete an application for church membership and be screened by the Elders for compliance with membership eligibility requirements set

forth in Section A.1 of this Article. Such screening will be in lieu of the processes set forth in Sections A.1 and A.3 of this Article (except that all such candidates shall agree in writing to this Constitution including Article 2 hereof). All such candidates and their spouses shall become members of the Church upon hiring and will be presented to the congregation. All pastoral, senior administrative, and director-level personnel must remain as members in good standing of the Church as a condition of their continued employment.

5. Associate Membership

Persons described in subsections (a) or (b) below may apply for associate membership. To qualify, such persons must meet the requirements for membership as set forth in Section A.1 of this Article. Persons described in subsection (a) will become associate members upon approval by the Leadership Council. Persons described in subsection (b) must follow the processes set forth in Sections A.1 and A.3 of this Article. Associate members have no voting rights nor may they hold office in the Church. Those eligible are:

- (a) Members in good standing who are leaving the local area permanently, or for at least a year. Such associate membership is a means of maintaining the fellowship bond between the Church and the believer. Upon return to the local area and application in writing to the Leadership Council, full membership may be restored.
- (b) A person desiring associate membership who is a member of a like-minded church and who is: (1) a student or military person whose permanent residence is outside of the Chicago area; (2) the spouse of a student, military person, or a church missionary whose membership is with his or her home church; or (3) anyone else in similar circumstances making associate membership desirable.

Use of the term “member” in this Constitution includes associate members, except for provisions dealing with voting rights, the holding of office in the Church, the determination of a membership meeting quorum, or where the context indicates otherwise.

6. Termination of Membership

Membership in the Church may terminate in the following ways:

- (a) **Members in Good Standing.** Members who are not under discipline or in the disciplinary process may send a request for either of the following to the church Clerk at 1635 North LaSalle, Chicago, IL 60614.
 - (1) **Transfer of Membership.** A letter of transfer to a church of like faith shall be granted upon request. The letter should include full

information as to the name and location of the church with which the applicant desires to be affiliated. Letters of transfer will be sent to the church in which the applicant is seeking membership.

- (2) **Request for Termination.** Request for termination of membership may be made in writing to the Clerk. The letter should include the reason for termination.
- (b) **Removal from Membership.** Members may be removed from membership as a result of church discipline as provided in Article 8.
- (c) **Prolonged Absence.** The Leadership Council may terminate the membership of those whose contacts with the Church are too limited and infrequent to justify continued membership. Notice of such proposed termination shall be sent, at least thirty days prior to the action, to the last mailing or electronic communication address provided by the Member.
- (d) **Automatic Termination.** Membership shall automatically terminate, without notice, if the member files a lawsuit against the Church. This subsection does not preclude the institution of mediation or arbitration pursuant to Article 10.

Section B. The Moody Church Covenant

The following is the Church Covenant of membership and is read at each reception of new members and at such other times as may be deemed appropriate:

We, the members of The Moody Church, do join together in the fellowship of the Gospel. We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together for worship and service, but will honor the Word of God and will seek to follow those who have the spiritual responsibility for us.

We covenant together, God helping us, that we will love one another, pray for one another, care for one another in sickness and distress, and seek to help one another grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will put away from us all bitterness, wrath, anger, and evil speaking; and we will be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us.

We will, relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, live a biblical lifestyle. We will be good stewards of all that God has given us, we will be just in our dealings, and we will give as God has prospered us, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver.

We will seek to win others to Christ by sharing the Gospel in word and deed. As we have the opportunity, we will do good to everyone, especially those who are of the household of faith. We will strive to carry out His commission to spread the Gospel throughout the whole world.

Section C. Membership and Church Governance

1. Privileges of Membership

The role of the membership in the governance of the Church is set forth in Section C.2 of this Article. Membership does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights. Membership is a revocable privilege subject to the procedures set forth herein.

2. Role of Membership in Church Governance

The role of the membership (excluding Associate Members and Youth Members) is as follows:

- (a) to nominate and elect three members for the Nominating Committee as provided in Article 4, Section A;
- (b) to elect Elders, Trustees, Deacons, Annually Elected Officers, and Deaconesses as provided in Section D.2 of this Article;
- (c) to choose a Senior Pastor upon recommendation of the Elders and the Leadership Council as provided in Article 5, Section C.2;
- (d) to vote upon any recommendation of the Elders and the Leadership Council that the membership approve
 - (1) a major capital project as defined in subparagraph 3 below,
 - (2) incurring debt that exceeds twenty-five percent of the Church's latest approved operating budget,
 - (3) a merger or consolidation of the Church with any other church or organization,
 - (4) the dissolution of the Church, or
 - (5) the sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church.

The vote of two-thirds of the members in attendance shall be required for the approval of any such recommendation;

- (e) to vote on other matters that may be referred to the membership by the Elders or the Leadership Council or that may be raised at a special meeting of the membership called pursuant to Section D.3 of this Article; and

- (f) to vote on an amendment to this Constitution, solely in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article 11.

3. Major Capital Project Defined

A major capital project is an expenditure of capital funds, or a building or development project, where the estimated total expenditure for the project exceeds an amount equal to fifty percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget.

Section D. Membership Meetings

1. Regular Membership Meetings

Regular meetings of the Church membership shall be held twice yearly: the Annual Meeting preferably in October, and the Semi-Annual Meeting preferably in April. The Senior Pastor shall be chairman of all regular membership meetings. When the Senior Pastor is absent, including during the pendency of a recommendation by the Elders of his dismissal that has not been acted upon by the Leadership Council, or if the office of Senior Pastor is vacant, the Chairman of the Elders, or the elder he chooses to appoint, will act as interim chairman. The chairman shall arrange the details of these meetings and make necessary preparation for their proper conduct.

2. Order of Proceeding at Annual Meeting

The order of proceeding at the Annual Meeting shall substantially be as follows:

- (a) The chairman shall call the meeting to order. The chairman shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness, providing a reasonable opportunity for an appropriate hearing on all matters to be decided. The Clerk shall be the clerk of the meeting.
- (b) The reading of the minutes of the previous Annual Meeting, the Semi-Annual Meeting, and any subsequent special meetings of the membership of the Church.
- (c) Unfinished business.
- (d) Report of the Nominating Committee.
- (e) Voting for the election of Elders, Trustees, Deacons, Annually Elected Officers, and Deaconesses shall be done by secret ballot permitting a vote by members of the Church for or against individuals nominated by the Nominating Committee. The chairman shall appoint tellers to count the

votes. A candidate must have a simple majority of the votes cast in order to be elected.

- (f) Reports reflecting the status of the ministry of the Church shall be given. These shall include an oral report of the Clerk and the Treasurer and may include other oral reports as deemed appropriate by the chairman. Reports of other subcommittees and organizations of the Church shall be made available in written form.
- (g) New business.

3. Order of Proceeding at Semi-Annual Meeting

The order of proceeding at the Semi-Annual Meeting shall substantially be as follows:

- (a) The chairman shall call the meeting to order. The chairman shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness, providing a reasonable opportunity for an appropriate hearing on all matters to be decided. The Clerk shall be the clerk of the meeting.
- (b) The reading of the minutes of any special membership meetings that may have taken place subsequent to the previous Annual Meeting.
- (c) The nomination from the floor and the election of three members for the Nominating Committee as provided in Article 4, Section A.
- (d) A report providing an update on the financial operations of the Church and any other reports that the chairman deems appropriate.
- (e) New business.

4. Special Membership Meetings

The Church membership may be called together for special business by a majority vote of the Elders, or the Leadership Council, or by a group of members (excluding Associate Members and Youth Members) of the Church equal to the number of members of the current Leadership Council. Printed notice of the time and purpose of such a meeting shall be given at the two consecutive Sunday morning church services prior to the meeting. The chairman of the meeting shall be as provided for regular membership meetings, except where the chairman is unable or unwilling to serve, the Clerk shall call the meeting to order and a chairman shall then be chosen by a majority vote of the members present.

5. Quorum

A quorum necessary to carry on any membership meeting of the Church shall be comprised solely of members qualified to vote, in a number equal to ten percent of the existing Church membership that is qualified to vote. The Clerk, and such members as he may designate to assist him, shall be responsible to conduct a count of such members who are physically present at the meeting and report the number to the Chairman of the meeting. The Chairman of the meeting shall then determine whether a quorum is present. Despite the lack of a quorum, a majority of those present and qualified to vote may adjourn the meeting to another time without further notice.

6. Voting

Only members (not Associate Members or Youth Members) in good standing who are physically present at a duly-called membership meeting shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. Except as otherwise expressly stated in this Constitution, the motion shall be carried by a majority of those present and voting.

ARTICLE 4. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Section A. Composition of Nominating Committee

The Leadership Council shall select two of its members, the Elders one of their members, and the Deaconesses one of their members to serve on the Nominating Committee. The membership at the Semi-Annual Meeting shall select three others to serve on the Nominating Committee who are not members of the existing Leadership Council or Deaconesses but who have been members of the Church in good standing for at least one year and are currently serving in a ministry of the Church. At least one of these three selected by the membership must be serving in a teaching capacity in a Church ministry. Persons who have previously served on the Nominating Committee shall be ineligible for selection until two years after the expiration of their term of service.

These seven shall constitute the Nominating Committee, of which the selected Elder shall be chairman. As chairman, the selected Elder shall determine the rules of procedure for meetings of the Nominating Committee according to his sense of fairness and common sense, providing a reasonable opportunity for an appropriate hearing on all matters to be decided. The Senior Pastor is a permanent ex-officio member of the Nominating Committee.

Section B. Nominations for Church Offices

The Nominating Committee shall select, prepare, and submit a list of scripturally-qualified candidates for the various offices to be filled at the election to be held at the ensuing Annual Meeting. All candidates for Church office must reflect humble servant leadership qualities as demonstrated by Jesus Christ, be members in good standing, have served faithfully for at least one year prior to the date of the election, and otherwise satisfy any of the specific qualifications set forth in this Constitution regarding the office in question. All candidates for office must be men, with the exception of the office of Deaconess, which will be filled by women. Members of the Church shall be encouraged to submit names to the Nominating Committee up to sixty days prior to the Annual Meeting. In nominating candidates for Trustee, the Nominating Committee will select an Elder if necessary to ensure that at least one of the members of the next Board of Trustees is also an Elder.

Offices to be filled are: (1) Elder, Trustee, Deacon, and Deaconess, where the office is vacant or the term of the incumbent is expiring, and (2) Annually Elected Officers (*i.e.*, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Director of Ushers, and Assistant Director of Ushers). Before presenting its list of candidates to the Church membership, the Nominating Committee shall carefully and thoroughly investigate the character and fitness of all its nominees and ask each prospective candidate (and, if married, his or her spouse) the following questions:

- Have you read the scriptural qualifications for the office of Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8–15) or, for Deaconess (Titus 2:3–5) or for Elder (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–4)? Do you meet these qualifications? [If married, the candidate’s spouse shall be asked: Do you believe your spouse meets these qualifications?]
- Have you read and do you agree, conscientiously and without mental reservation, with the Church’s doctrinal statement, the standards for Christian living, and the biblical ethics set forth in Article 2?
- Have you read the Constitution of the Church and are you, conscientiously and without mental reservation, in full agreement?
- Please describe your devotional life.
- Please describe your practice of personal evangelism.
- Please describe your practice of proportionate giving.
- How are you relying on the power of the Holy Spirit to live a lifestyle consistent with scriptural standards as interpreted in Article 2?

- How are you representing Christ in your home and/or workplace?
- If elected to office, will you faithfully perform the duties of your office and faithfully attend those meetings (including, when applicable, attendance at meetings of the Leadership Council) that pertain to the responsibilities of your office? [If married, the candidate’s spouse shall be asked: Will you support your spouse’s performance of these duties and his or her faithful attendance at such meetings?]

Section C. Report of Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee’s list of candidates shall be published in the bulletin or other similar means of general intra-Church communication for two consecutive Sundays preceding the date of the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE 5. CHURCH OFFICERS, BOARDS, AND COUNCILS

Section A. General Provision Regarding Church Officers

1. Church Officers Defined

The officers of the Church (hereinafter “Officers”) consist of “Elected Officers” (*i.e.*, Elders, Trustees, Deacons, and the Annually Elected Officers) and “Staff Officers” (*i.e.*, the Senior Pastor, the Executive and Assistant Pastors, and the Managing Director of Operations, or persons holding future equivalent titles).

2. General Duties as Church Officers and Deaconesses

- (a) **Servant Leadership.** All Officers and Deaconesses must perform their duties in a humble servant leadership style as demonstrated by Jesus Christ.
- (b) **Confidentiality.**
 - (1) Church Officers and Deaconesses who obtain non-public information in the course of performing their duties shall, subject to Section 2(b)(2) below, make a reasonable effort to prevent its disclosure beyond those who have a need to know such information in order to effectively carry out their Church-related responsibilities.
 - (2) Information that is confidential under subparagraph 2(b)(1) may be disclosed when necessary to:
 - (i) effectively carry out the functions of the Church;

- (ii) seek advice or counsel from persons within or outside the Church in carrying out a Church function;
 - (iii) prevent or reduce the risk of imminent danger of serious harm to any person;
 - (iv) perform Church discipline or other functions authorized by this Constitution; or
 - (v) comply with the law.
- (3) Information otherwise regarded as confidential may be disclosed if its designation as confidential is removed by the Elders and/or the Leadership Council.
- (c) **Conflict of Interest.** All Officers and Deaconesses of the Church should scrupulously avoid transactions involving the Church in which the Officer or Deaconess has a personal or material financial interest, including transactions between the Church and entities in which the Church Officer or Deaconess is an owner, officer, director, or general partner, unless full disclosure is made to the Elders and/or Leadership Council and adequate steps are taken to avoid self-dealing or prejudice to the Church or the appearance thereof. The Leadership Council shall develop and maintain an appropriate policy implementing this provision.

3. Indemnification

- (a) **Introduction.** The Scriptures teach that all believers are members of the body of Christ, that God has gifted each individual believer differently, and that each is to exercise his or her gifts for the benefit of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12). Further, if one individual believer “suffers, all suffer together,” and if one “is honored, all rejoice together” (1 Corinthians 12:26). This Church is a local assembly of the body of Christ. When a member or other individual person who holds an office or position in the Church, or who is otherwise authorized to act on behalf of this Church, acts in good faith to further a function or activity of the Church, and that action produces the good that is sought or some other advantage, the entire Church benefits. Similarly we hold that when that action results in a claim or claims against that person, the burden and costs of defending against that claim, and any judgments, fines, or settlements to resolve that claim, should not rest upon that person alone but should be borne or provided for by the Church. Accordingly, we have adopted these provisions to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend such persons as provided below and/or to insure against such claims as provided in Section A.4 of this Article.

- (b) **Indemnify, Hold Harmless, and Defend.** The Church shall indemnify, hold harmless, and defend any natural person who was or is a party defendant to, or is threatened to be made a party defendant to, any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an Officer, employee, Deaconess, agent, or authorized volunteer of the Church, against out-of-pocket expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by such person in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding, if such person acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the Church, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding, by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not of itself create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he or she reasonably believed to be in, or not opposed to, the best interests of the Church, or, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, that the person had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.
- (c) **Determination of Conduct.** Any indemnification under subparagraph 3(b) of this Article shall be made by the Church only as authorized in the specific case, upon a determination that indemnification of the Officer, employee, Deaconess, agent, or authorized volunteer is proper in the circumstances because he or she is within the scope of this indemnity and has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in subparagraph 3(b) of this Article. Such determination shall be made by one of the following:
- (1) a majority vote of a quorum of the Leadership Council, consisting of Leadership Council members who were not parties to such action, suit, or proceeding;
 - (2) an independent legal counsel in a written opinion, as directed by a quorum of disinterested Leadership Council members; or
 - (3) by the Church membership.
- (d) **Miscellaneous.** Indemnification hereunder is conditioned upon the following:
- (1) reasonably prompt written notice directed to the Church Clerk of the existence of any claim covered by this Section A.3;
 - (2) the delivery of copies of all communications, notices, and/or any additional relevant documents requested by the Church;

- (3) control by the Church over the defense or settlement of the claim, provided that the Church shall not settle the claim without the indemnitee's prior written consent, which shall not be unreasonably withheld, conditioned, or delayed; and
- (4) non-financial assistance at the Church's request to the extent reasonably necessary for the defense of the claim.

Notwithstanding the provisions set forth above in this Section A.3, expenses incurred by any indemnitee hereunder in obtaining additional legal counsel aside from that counsel furnished by the Church shall be the sole and exclusive responsibility of the indemnitee.

The indemnification provided herein shall continue as to an indemnitee who ceases to be an Officer, employee, Deaconess, agent, or authorized volunteer of the Church (but who was in such capacity at the time the event giving rise to the claim occurred) and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of the indemnitee.

4. Insurance

The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an Officer, employee, Deaconess, agent, or authorized volunteer of the Church against any liability asserted against such person and incurred by such person in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify such person against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

Section B. The Elder Oversight Council

1. Composition

The number of Elders (excluding the Senior Pastor and any Associate Elders or Life Elders) shall be seven, and may vary from time to time up to twelve by resolution of the Elders without amendment of this Constitution, provided that the authority to determine the number of Elders shall not be used to remove Elders currently holding office. Elders shall be elected for a term of seven years, so long as they continue as members of the Church in good standing. When the term of office of an Elder expires, he shall be eligible for re-election. No employee of the Church other than the Senior Pastor may serve as an Elder.

The Executive Pastor and the Managing Director of Operations, or equivalent future titles, are eligible to be considered for appointment by the Elders to Associate Elder after a suitable waiting period. The Associate Elder position is a non-voting position on the Elder Oversight Council but a man holding that position will be considered an Elder in all other respects.

2. Selection of Officers

The Elders shall, at their first meeting after the Annual Meeting or whenever a vacancy occurs, choose their Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. The duties of such officers shall be established by resolution of the Elders.

3. Qualifications

Elders shall be chosen from among the adult male members of the Church who have served for at least two years on the Leadership Council. They shall also have the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9) and must be able to perform the duties as outlined by the Scriptures (1 Peter 5:1–4).

4. Authority/Responsibilities

The Elders shall have the authority and responsibilities set forth in this Constitution. This authority is divided between those items of governance assigned to the Elders for determination and those items to be recommended by the Elders and approved by the Leadership Council.

(a) Matters Assigned to the Elders for Determination.

- (1) Provide the spiritual oversight of the Church (1 Peter 5:1–5) in prayerful and humble reliance on Scripture and the leading of the Holy Spirit, seeking to maintain the highest spiritual welfare of the Church. Consistent with this responsibility, the Elders have the final authority for the interpretation of Scripture and this Constitution and for matters related to the spiritual health and direction of the Church.
- (2) Establish and oversee a Search Committee to identify qualified candidates for Senior Pastor, and carry out the other functions assigned to the Elders for determination in Section C.2 of this Article.
- (3) Designate a temporary replacement for the Senior Pastor in the event of his resignation, incapacity, being relieved of duty, or termination as provided in Section C.4 of this Article.
- (4) Authorize those preaching or teaching in any ministry of the Church.
- (5) Select, call, hire, oversee, and, if they find it necessary, terminate ministry staff including any Staff Officer (other than the Senior Pastor).

- (6) Develop and authorize appropriations and an annual budget for the coming fiscal year, and formulate, if deemed necessary, financial plans affecting future years. This Elder determination authority includes the authority to authorize the expenditure of unbudgeted capital funds for a capital project that does not exceed an amount equal to two percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget.
 - (7) Perform the responsibilities for discipline assigned to the Elders for determination in Article 8.
 - (8) Establish and determine the appropriate oversight of standing committees as provided in Article 6, Section A.
 - (9) Establish training requirements for new members as provided in Article 3, Section A.1.
 - (10) Grant, oversee, or rescind ordination, licensing, or commissioning for ministry as provided in Article 7.
 - (11) Review and, if appropriate, approve general policies recommended by the Trustees implementing Article 9 Use of Facilities, including charges developed by the Trustees to defray the costs of such use, and determine, where in question, whether specific proposed outside uses further the work of the ministry.
 - (12) Pray over and anoint the sick (James 5:14).
 - (13) Provide direct oversight of the Deaconesses.
 - (14) Decide other matters assigned by this Constitution only to the Elders, and other matters directly related to the spiritual health and direction of the Church not expressly assigned to the membership or the Leadership Committee by this Constitution.
- (b) **Matters Assigned to the Elders for Initial Determination Requiring Recommendation to, and Approval by, the Leadership Council.**
- (1) Recommend appropriate candidates for Senior Pastor as provided in Section C.2 of this Article.
 - (2) Recommend a candidate to fill a vacancy in the office of Elder, Trustee, Deacon, an Annually Elected Officer, or in the office of Deaconess. For a vacancy on the Trustees, the Elders shall recommend an Elder if there would otherwise be no Elder serving on the Board of Trustees. If approved by the Leadership Council, the

person selected will hold such office until the next Annual Meeting. If not approved, the process will begin again with the recommendation of another candidate.

- (3) Recommend the termination of the Senior Pastor as provided in Section C.4 of this Article.
 - (4) Recommend the termination of an Elected Officer or Deaconess as provided in Section I of this Article.
 - (5) Determine whether to recommend the expenditure of unbudgeted capital funds for a capital project that does exceed an amount equal to two percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget but which is not a major capital project as defined in Article 3.C.3.
 - (6) Determine whether to recommend incurring debt that does not exceed an amount equal to twenty-five percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget.
 - (7) Determine whether to recommend that the membership approve:
 - (i) a major capital project;
 - (ii) incurring debt that exceeds twenty-five percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget;
 - (iii) a merger or consolidation with another church or organization;
 - (iv) the dissolution of the Church; or
 - (v) the sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church.
 - (8) Decide other matters not directly related to the spiritual health and direction of the Church that may come to the Elders for initial determination.
- (c) **Report of Elders' Action to the Leadership Council**

Matters actually decided by the Elders that are subject to a request for Elder reconsideration from the Leadership Council under Section D.7 of this Article shall be promptly presented to the Leadership Council. Elder decisions regarding such matters shall not be put into effect until after they are presented to the Leadership Council.

5. Regular Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings will be held at the Church without call or notice beginning at 5:00pm on the evening of the first Monday of each month unless a different place, date, and/or time is established by a majority of the Elders present and voting at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.

The Additional Meeting Rules set forth in Section K of this Article shall apply to both regular and special meetings of the Elders.

6. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by order of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Elders, or a quorum of the members of the Elders qualified to vote. Notification giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting must be made either (1) by first-class letters mailed at least 4 days (but not more than 60 days) prior to the meeting, or (2) by electronic communication at least 48 hours (but not more than 14 days) before the meeting. Letters mailed, or electronic communication sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each Elder. Notice need not be sent to a Life Elder. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

Oral notice may be given at a Leadership Council meeting for a meeting of the Elders to take place immediately following the meeting of the Leadership Council. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

7. Life Elder

The Elders may bring a unanimous recommendation to the Leadership Council to the effect that an elder who has completed two consecutive terms of office, is now leaving or recently has left office, and who has, in their judgment, rendered valuable service to the Church, should be elected as a Life Elder. Election as a Life Elder requires a three-fourths majority of the Leadership Council present and voting at a regular meeting. The position of Life Elder is an honorary, non-voting position.

Section C. The Senior Pastor

1. Qualifications

The Senior Pastor must be qualified by Scripture to serve as an Elder (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9) and have the further qualifications necessary to perform the duties outlined in Scripture (Ephesians 4:11–13; 1 Peter 5:1–4). Moreover, he must

be, conscientiously and without mental reservation, in full agreement with the Church Constitution, including Article 2.

2. *Appointment*

- (a) **Search Committee.** When a Senior Pastor gives notification to the Elders of his intention to resign his office, or if for any reason the position of Senior Pastor becomes vacant, and there is no acceptable candidate in view, the Elders shall establish a Search Committee consisting of nine members. The Elders shall appoint four of its own members including the Chairman of the Elders who shall be the Chairman of the Search Committee. Five members shall be appointed by the Leadership Council, two of whom shall be drawn from its membership and three drawn from the Deaconesses.

Once appointed, provided they remain members of the Church in good standing, members of the Search Committee shall continue to serve until the Search Committee's responsibilities are completed or the Committee is discharged by the Elders. The Search Committee shall prepare a search plan for the approval of the Elders. Upon approval, the Search Committee shall implement the search plan to find two or more suitable candidates and refer such candidates to the Elders. The Elders may then, if supported by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting, select the candidate it desires to recommend to the Leadership Council for referral to the membership or, by majority vote, may reject all the candidates and charge the Committee to continue its search.

(b) **Selection.**

- (1) *Approval by Elders and Leadership Council.* To fill a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, if supported by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting, the Elders shall recommend a qualified candidate for the approval of the Leadership Council. Approval of this recommendation requires the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Leadership Council present and voting. Notification of the pendency of the Leadership Council vote for the calling of the Senior Pastor, giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting, must be made either by first-class letters mailed, or electronic communication sent, at least fourteen days prior to the meeting. Letters mailed, or any electronic communication sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each Leadership Council member.
- (2) *Approval by the Membership.* Upon recommendation of the Leadership Council, the Senior Pastor shall be chosen by the vote of not less than two-thirds of the members at a regular or special membership

meeting. Notice that there will be a vote on a candidate for Senior Pastor shall be given at public worship on the two Sundays preceding the membership meeting.

3. Role of Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder. Under the authority of the Elders, he shall be the spiritual leader of the Church and its chief administrative officer. In that capacity he shall have or supervise those who have the following responsibilities:

- (a) to minister to the spiritual needs of the Church by leading the body to engage in a fellowship of worship, prayer, witness, education, ministry, and application consistent with the Scripture and as led by the Holy Spirit; and to be chiefly responsible for implementing and guarding the integrity of the mission, vision, and values of the Church.
- (b) to serve as the chairman of the Leadership Council, a member of the Elders, and an ex-officio member of all church bodies including standing subcommittees.
- (c) to sign documents of the Church if approved for signing by the Elders and/or the Leadership Council, as appropriate, except in cases where signing and execution has been expressly delegated to some other Officer or agent of the Church or has been otherwise restricted by the Elders and/or the Leadership Council or this Constitution.
- (d) to carry out such other responsibilities as are set out in the Senior Pastor job description approved by the Elders.

4. Resignation or Termination

The Senior Pastor shall serve until his resignation is offered to, and accepted by, the Elders, or until his termination is recommended by a vote of two-thirds of the Elders (other than the Senior Pastor) present and voting, the recommendation is submitted to the Senior Pastor and the Leadership Council, as provided in subparagraph (a) below, and the Senior Pastor's termination is approved by the Leadership Council (other than the Senior Pastor). In the event that the Senior Pastor opposes the Elders' recommendation in a timely manner, subparagraphs (c) and (d) provide the process for the resolution of the matter.

- (a) **Elder Recommendation.** The Elders' recommendation of termination shall be provided promptly to the Senior Pastor by personal delivery, or if that is not practical, placement in the mail or transmission by electronic communication. It shall be contemporaneously transmitted to the Clerk acting for the Leadership Council.

- (b) **Immediate Action.** If the Elders have become aware of a claim, supported by two or more witnesses, of immoral conduct or other offense of the Senior Pastor requiring immediate action, the Elders may temporarily relieve the Senior Pastor from the performance of his duties (1) during the time required to conduct a further investigation of the matter to determine whether to recommend dismissal, and/or (2) during the pendency of the Leadership Council's action on a termination recommendation submitted by the Elders.
- (c) **Request for Hearing.** In the event that the Senior Pastor opposes the Elders' recommendation, he may request a hearing, provided that the request is transmitted to the Clerk and the Chairman of the Elders (or, if unavailable, the Vice Chairman) no later than five days after the transmittal of the Elders' recommendation. The Chairman of the Elders, acting as Chairman of the Leadership Council (other than the Senior Pastor), shall schedule a hearing to be held at a regular or special meeting of the Leadership Council. The Senior Pastor shall be given at least ten days notice of such hearing. At least five days prior to the hearing, the Elders will provide to the Clerk, acting for the Leadership Council, a written summary of the reasons the Elders seek the Senior Pastor's termination, which shall be promptly transmitted by the Clerk to the Senior Pastor.
- (d) **Hearing Before and Decision of the Leadership Council.** At the hearing the Elders will provide reasons for their termination recommendation and, at their discretion, evidence in support of the recommendation. The Senior Pastor shall be given an opportunity to provide reasons why the recommendation should not be approved and, if he desires, evidence in support of those reasons. The failure or refusal on the part of the Senior Pastor to appear at the hearing or to answer the charges shall not prevent the Leadership Council from hearing the evidence and rendering a finding on the proofs presented. The decision of the Leadership Council approving or disapproving the recommendation is final and not subject to review in any court or arbitration.
- (e) **Temporary Replacement.** In the event that the Senior Pastor resigns, becomes incapable of serving, is relieved of his duties, or is terminated, the Elders may designate a temporary replacement(s) until the Senior Pastor is restored to duty or a new Senior Pastor is appointed pursuant to this Article and has taken office.

Section D. The Leadership Council

1. Composition

The Leadership Council consists of the Officers of the Church as defined in Section A.1 of this Article.

2. Chairman and Secretary

The Senior Pastor shall be the chairman of the Leadership Council and the Clerk shall serve as secretary of the Leadership Council. In a situation where the Senior Pastor is absent; the Senior Pastor has been temporarily relieved of his responsibilities; a recommendation by the Elders of the Senior Pastor's dismissal has not yet been acted upon by the Leadership Council; or the office of Senior Pastor is vacant, then the Chairman of the Elders, or an Elder he chooses to appoint, will act as interim chairman.

3. Authority/Responsibilities

The Leadership Council shall have the authority and responsibilities set forth in this Constitution, including matters of Church governance that are not specifically reserved in the membership of the Church as provided in Article 3 Section C.2, or expressly assigned to the determination of the Elders as provided in Section B.4 of this Article.

The responsibilities of the Leadership Council shall include:

- (a) examining and approving candidates for membership, except for newly-hired ministry staff who are examined and approved by the Elders as part of the hiring process;
- (b) hearing and determining the validity of charges of church discipline under Article 8.C.4;
- (c) approving or disapproving (with respect to Church membership) requests for transfer or termination, determining disputed claims of membership, or deciding whether to terminate persons whose contacts with the Church are deemed too limited and infrequent to justify continued membership under Article 3, Section A.6;
- (d) selecting two of its members to serve on the Nominating Committee as provided in Article 4, Section A, and in the event that the Elders have established a Senior Pastor search committee, selecting five members of such committee as provided in Article 5, Section C.2;

- (e) determining whether to approve an Elder recommendation of the expenditure of unbudgeted capital funds or the approval of a capital project that does exceed an amount equal to two percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget but which is not a major capital project as defined in Article 3.C.3;
- (f) determining whether to approve an Elder recommendation that the Church incur debt that does not exceed an amount equal to twenty-five percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget;
- (g) determining whether to approve and submit for a vote of the membership a recommendation by the Elders to approve
 - (1) a major capital project,
 - (2) incurring debt that exceeds twenty-five percent of the Church's latest approved annual operating budget,
 - (3) a merger or consolidation with another church or organization,
 - (4) the dissolution of the Church, or
 - (5) the sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church;
- (h) delegating to the Trustees, or to a duly approved project committee, the authority to oversee the day-to-day administration of projects as provided in Section D.6 of this Article within the budget approved by the Elders and/or the Leadership Council, as appropriate;
- (i) approving or disapproving candidates recommended by the Elders to fill a vacancy under Section B.4 of this Article;
- (j) approving or disapproving a recommendation from the Elders of a candidate for Senior Pastor who, if approved, shall then be recommended to the Church membership as provided in Section C.2 of this Article;
- (k) holding a hearing and determining whether to approve or disapprove a recommendation for the termination of the Senior Pastor as provided in Section C.4 of this Article;
- (l) approving or disapproving a recommendation of the Elders for the termination of an Elected Officer or Deaconess as provided in Section I of this Article;
- (m) assisting in the administration of communion;

- (n) approving the appointment of Leadership Council members and Deaconesses to standing subcommittees as provided in Article 6.A and approving or disapproving the appointment of assisting standing committee members recommended by that committee;
- (o) requesting a decision of the Elders regarding a disputed interpretation of Scripture and/or this Constitution;
- (p) determining whether indemnity of an Officer, employee, Deaconess, agent, or authorized volunteer is proper as provided in Section A.3 of this Article; and
- (q) adopting procedures for mediation and arbitration as provided in Article 10, Sections A and F.

4. Regular Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings will be held at the Church without call or notice beginning at 8:00pm on the evening of the second Monday of each month unless a different date, time, and/or location is established by a majority of the Leadership Council present and voting at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.

To the extent stated in Section K of this Article, Additional Meeting Rules shall apply to both regular and special meetings of the Leadership Council.

5. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by order of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Elders, a quorum of the members of the Elders qualified to vote, or a quorum of the members of the Leadership Council. Notification giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting must be made either (1) by first-class letters mailed at least 4 days (but not more than 60 days) prior to the meeting, or (2) by electronic communication at least 48 hours (but not more than 20 days) before the meeting. Letters mailed, or electronic communication sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each Leadership Council member. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

6. Delegation of Authority

The Leadership Council may delegate to the Board of Trustees, or any duly approved subcommittee, powers to sign instruments and oversee the day-to-day administration of a project without advance approval of the Leadership Council, provided that such instruments and day-to-day administration are within the parameters established by the Leadership Council and the budget approved by the

Elders. During the time that any such delegation remains in effect, the Board of Trustees, or any such subcommittee, will report monthly to the Leadership Council on their actions.

7. Matters Assigned for Determination by the Elders

By majority vote, the Leadership Council may ask for reconsideration of certain matters actually decided by the Elders even though the Constitution leaves the matter to determination by the Elders. Decisions subject to a request by the Leadership Council for reconsideration by the Elders are decisions involving:

- (a) requests submitted to the Elders from the Leadership Council for a determination of the proper interpretation of Scripture and/or this Constitution;
- (b) the appointment of members, other than the Chairman of the Elders, to a Search Committee under Section C.2(a) of this Article, and the approval of a search plan;
- (c) the designation of a temporary replacement for the Senior Pastor under Section B.4(a)(3) of this Article;
- (d) the hiring of candidates for ministry staff positions under Section B.4(a)(5) of this Article;
- (e) the establishment of a budget and other Elder determinations under Section B.4(a)(6) of this Article; and
- (f) other matters not stated above where the Elders determine that a broader consensus is desirable and expressly designate their decision as subject to a request for reconsideration by the Leadership Council.

In the event that the Elders, by a three-fourths vote of the Elders present, reaffirm their prior decision, or by such a vote decide to implement that decision with modifications to address concerns expressed by the Leadership Council, the decision, or decision as modified, will be put into effect.

Section E. Board of Trustees

1. Number and Term of Office

There shall be five Trustees, one to be elected each year. The term of office shall be five years, so long as they continue as members of the Church in good standing. Trustees will be eligible for re-election when their term expires. Except during the

time necessary to fill a vacancy, at least one Trustee shall be an Elder of the Church.

2. Selection of Officers

The Board of Trustees shall, at their first meeting after the Annual Meeting or whenever a vacancy occurs, choose their Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. Except as expressly provided otherwise in this Constitution, the duties of such officers shall be established by resolution of the Trustees.

3. Qualifications

A Trustee must meet the scriptural qualifications for a Deacon and should be qualified to perform the duties of a Trustee.

4. Authority/Responsibilities

Unless otherwise determined by the Elders, the duties, authority, and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees shall be:

- (a) oversight and management of estates, lawsuits in which the Church is a party or has an interest, and other law-related matters affecting the Church;
- (b) construction, maintenance, insurance, security, and repair of Church property;
- (c) development and recommendations for approval by the Elders of general policies implementing the provisions of Article 9 regarding the use of Church facilities and proposed charges for such use;
- (d) oversight of other Church assets; and
- (e) such other responsibilities assigned by the Elders and/or Leadership Council, as appropriate. The Trustees shall not, however, be entitled to incur obligations on behalf of the Church except as approved by the Elders and/or Leadership Council, as appropriate, or pursuant to a delegation of authority from the Leadership Council as provided in Section D.6 of this Article.

5. Regular Meetings

Regularly scheduled meetings will be held at the Church without call or notice beginning at 6:00pm on the evening of the second Monday of each month unless a

different place, date, and/or time is established by a majority of the Trustees present and voting at a regularly scheduled or special meeting.

The Additional Meeting Rules set forth in Section K of this Article shall apply to both regular and special meetings of the Trustees.

6. *Special Meetings*

Special meetings may be called at any time by order of the Senior Pastor, the Chairman of the Elders, a quorum of the Elders, the Chairman of the Trustees, or a quorum of the Board of Trustees. Notification giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting must be made either (1) by first-class letters mailed at least 4 days (but not more than 60 days) prior to the meeting, or (2) by electronic communication at least 48 hours (but not more than 14 days) before the meeting. Letters mailed, or electronic communications sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each Trustee. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

Oral notice may be given at a Leadership Council meeting for a meeting of the Board of Trustees to take place immediately following the meeting of the Leadership Council. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

Section F. Deacons

There shall be a minimum of twenty-four Deacons who meet the qualifications as set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. The number of Deacons above that minimum may vary from time to time as fixed by resolution of the Leadership Council. Deacons shall be elected for a term of three years, so long as they continue as members of the Church in good standing, and will be eligible for re-election when their term expires. Approximately one-third of the deacon positions shall be up for election each year. The term of newly-elected Deacons may be varied by the Leadership Council between one and three years if necessary to satisfy the one-third requirement. Deacons shall serve on the Leadership Council and standing subcommittees as assigned by the Assignment Committee, as well as any other duties assigned to them by the Elders or the Leadership Council.

Section G. Annually Elected Officers

A Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Director of Ushers, and Assistant Director of Ushers shall be elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year, either from among those already serving as Deacons or those nominated and elected at that same meeting as Deacons. These Officers will perform their respective functions as follows:

1. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall give oversight to the Church business administrator (or other similar future title or function), who shall keep proper books of account of all Church funds, receipts, and disbursements, and who shall prepare appropriate monthly financial reports as well as a complete and comprehensive financial statement and annual report for the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall present said financial statement and annual report to the Church membership at the Annual Meeting and such monthly financial reports to the Leadership Council and shall submit the books of account for an audit in such a manner as may be prescribed and directed by the Leadership Council.

2. Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer shall, as directed, assist the Treasurer in carrying out his responsibilities, and in the event the Treasurer is absent or temporarily unable to perform the responsibilities of his office, the Assistant Treasurer shall act in his place. If the nominee for Treasurer presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting is not elected, or if the office of Treasurer otherwise becomes vacant, the Assistant Treasurer shall become interim Treasurer until such vacancy is filled as provided in this Constitution.

3. Clerk

The Clerk shall take the minutes of all meetings of the membership and the Leadership Council in which business is transacted, and shall keep and oversee the maintenance of a record of all the business transacted at such meetings. He shall see that all such records and the approved minutes and all reports, statements, certificates, and records required by law are maintained at an appropriate place on the Church premises. He shall also procure after the Annual Meeting the signature of each Church Officer and Deaconess documenting his or her full agreement with the Constitution, including Article 2, as provided in Section J of this Article.

4. Assistant Clerk

The Assistant Clerk shall, as directed, assist the Clerk in carrying out his responsibilities, and in the event the Clerk is absent or temporarily unable to perform the responsibilities of his office, the Assistant Clerk shall act in his place. If the nominee for Clerk presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting is not elected, or if the office of Clerk otherwise becomes vacant, the Assistant Clerk shall become interim Clerk until such vacancy is filled as provided in this Constitution.

5. Director of Ushers

The Director of Ushers shall, with the assistance of the Director of Ministry Services (or such equivalent future title), be responsible for the seating

arrangements at the services and meetings of the Church congregation, the receiving of all offerings at such meetings, and such other duties as may be assigned to him by the Elders or the Board of Trustees. To assist him in his work, the Director of Ushers shall choose and train ushers and other assistants.

6. Assistant Director of Ushers

The Assistant Director of Ushers shall perform all duties as may be assigned to him by the Director of Ushers, and in the event the Director of Ushers is absent or temporarily unable to perform the responsibilities of his office, the Assistant Director of Ushers shall act in his place. If the nominee for Director of Ushers presented to the membership at the Annual Meeting is not elected, or if the office of Director of Ushers otherwise becomes vacant, the Assistant Director of Ushers shall become interim Director of Ushers until such vacancy is filled as provided in this Constitution.

Section H. Deaconesses

1. Composition and Term of Office

There shall be a minimum of twelve Deaconesses who meet the qualifications as set forth in Titus 2:3–5. The number of Deaconesses above that minimum may vary from time to time as fixed by resolution of the Elders. The Director of Women’s Ministries (or equivalent future title) is appointed by the Elders (see Article 5.B.4(a)(5)) and shall be a Deaconess in addition to her other assigned responsibilities. All other Deaconesses shall be elected by the membership for a term of three years, so long as they continue as members of the Church in good standing. Deaconesses will be eligible for re-election when their term expires. Approximately one-third of the Deaconess positions shall be up for election each year. The term of newly-elected Deaconesses may be varied by the Leadership Council between one and three years if necessary to satisfy the one-third requirement.

2. Selection of Officers

The Deaconesses shall, at their first meeting after the Annual Meeting or whenever a vacancy occurs, choose their Chairwoman, Vice-Chairwoman, and Secretary. Except as expressly provided in this Constitution, the duties of such officers shall be established by resolution of the Deaconesses.

3. Responsibilities

Deaconesses shall serve on Standing Subcommittees as voting members as assigned by the Assignments Committee, and shall perform such other duties assigned to them by the Elders. The Elders shall have direct oversight of the Deaconesses.

Deaconesses shall comply with the confidentiality obligations set forth in Section A.2 of this Article.

4. Regular Meetings

The initial meeting of the Deaconesses after the Annual Meeting of the membership shall take place according to the schedule previously established. The Deaconesses shall thereafter establish the particular date, time, location, and the normal frequency of their regular meetings. Subsequent meetings will be held as scheduled without further call or notice.

The Additional Meeting Rules set forth in Section K of this Article shall apply to both regular and special meetings of the Deaconesses.

5. Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at any time by order of the Chairwoman of the Deaconesses, Senior Pastor, Chairman of the Elders, a quorum of the Elders, or a quorum of the Deaconesses. Notification giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting must be made either (1) by first-class letters mailed at least 4 days (but not more than 60 days) prior to the meeting, or (2) by electronic communication at least 48 hours (but not more than 14 days) before the meeting. Letters mailed, or electronic communication sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each Deaconess. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

Section I. Resignation or Termination from Church Offices

All Elected Officers and Deaconesses shall serve until their elected period of service has expired, their resignation is offered to and accepted by the Elders, or their termination has been recommended by the Elders and approved by the Leadership Council, based upon the determination by these bodies that (1) the Officer or Deaconess in question has failed or refused to carry out the functions of his or her office or that (2) the Officer or Deaconess does not meet the qualifications for such office set forth in this Constitution.

If the Elders' recommendation is based upon a claim of immoral conduct or other offense requiring immediate action, the Elders may temporarily relieve the Officer or Deaconess from the performance of his or her duties pending the Leadership Council's action on the termination recommendation. In the case of a claim brought against an Elder or Pastor, Scripture requires substantiation by two or more witnesses.

Notwithstanding anything stated above in this subparagraph, the Elders may, as part of its role in Church discipline under Article 8, Section C.2, temporarily relieve

an Elected Officer or Deaconess of the responsibilities of their office or may accept their voluntary resignation from office.

Section J. Affirmation of Agreement with Constitution

All Officers and Deaconesses must be members of the Church in good standing. Within thirty days of the Annual Meeting, each Officer and each Deaconess must affirm his or her agreement with this Constitution, including Article 2 (this time period may be extended in the event of extenuating circumstances). The signatures of the Officers and Deaconesses documenting their agreement shall be procured by the Clerk and kept in the records of the Church.

Section K. Additional Meeting Rules

1. Rules of Procedure

The Chairmen of the Elders, Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, various Standing Subcommittees, and the Chairwoman of the Deaconesses shall determine the rules of procedure for meetings over which each presides according to their sense of fairness and common sense, providing a reasonable opportunity for an appropriate hearing on all matters to be decided.

2. Minutes and Records

The Secretaries of the Elders, Board of Trustees, Standing Subcommittees, and Deaconesses shall see that minutes of meetings are taken and that the approved minutes, along with all reports, statements, certificates, and records required by law, are maintained at an appropriate place on Church premises.

3. Quorum

A majority of those duly elected to such office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Elders, Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, any Standing Subcommittee, and Deaconesses, provided that, despite the lack of a quorum, a majority of those present and entitled to vote may adjourn the meeting to another time without further notice.

For meetings of the Leadership Council, the Clerk shall count Leadership Council members who are physically present and report the number to the Chairman who shall determine whether a quorum is present. For meetings of the Elders, Board of Trustees, any Standing Subcommittee, and the Deaconesses, the Chairperson (or in the Chairperson's absence, the vice chairperson or secretary) shall determine whether a quorum exists including both those physically and telephonically present.

4. Voting

Except as otherwise expressly stated in this Constitution, a majority of those present and voting carries the motion. Voting on a particular matter may be oral or in writing as determined by the Chair. There shall be no voting by proxy.

5. Notice and Waiver of Notice

Notice shall be provided as set forth in the rules applicable for the specific Church body taking action requiring said notice. It is the responsibility of each Officer and each Deaconess to provide their mailing address and a working electronic communication address and to keep the Clerk advised as to their current addresses. Notice sent to the last mailing address or electronic address provided by, or by someone authorized by, the person entitled to notice shall be conclusively presumed as proper notice under this Constitution.

Notice of a special meeting of the Elders, Leadership Council, Board of Trustees, Standing Subcommittees, or Deaconesses may be waived in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to notice either before or after the date and time of the meeting. Attendance at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting.

6. Electronic Meetings

In meetings of the Elders, Board of Trustees, Standing Subcommittees, and Deaconesses, attendees may be counted as present at, and may participate electronically in, an otherwise properly scheduled meeting, through the use of conference telephone or similar communications equipment or service, as long as all those participating in such meeting can communicate with each other. Such attendance shall constitute attendance and presence in person at the meeting.

7. Action without a Meeting

Any action that may be taken at a meeting of the Elders, Board of Trustees, Standing Subcommittees, or Deaconesses may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all those entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof. The consent shall be evidenced by one or more written approvals, each of which sets forth the action taken and bears the signature or signatures of one or more of those entitled to vote. The action taken shall be effective when all those entitled to vote have approved the consent unless the consent specifies a later effective date. Any such consent shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote and may be stated as such.

ARTICLE 6. STANDING SUBCOMMITTEES

Section A. Establishment, Oversight, and Staffing

Prior to the Annual Meeting, the Elders shall determine the number of regular Standing Subcommittees deemed necessary and the function assigned to each subcommittee. This determination shall also include whether, based upon its assigned tasks, direct oversight of the subcommittee should be assigned to the Elders, Board of Trustees, or Leadership Council. The appointment of Officers and Deaconesses to subcommittees shall be recommended for Leadership Council approval by the Assignments Committee, consisting of the Senior Pastor and the three Leadership Council members who served on the current Nominating Committee. Each subcommittee may also identify and recommend for Leadership Council approval members of the Church in good standing, including women who are not Deaconesses, to assist them in their duties (“Assisting Members”). Assisting Members shall serve until the next Annual Meeting and are eligible for reappointment if again recommended by the subcommittee and approved by the Leadership Council. Deaconesses and Assisting Members will have full voting rights on the subcommittee on which they serve but shall not attend Leadership Council meetings. No subcommittee shall consist of more than twenty-five percent Assisting Members except where the Leadership Council determines that there are overriding reasons not to apply this limitation to specific Standing Committees.

Section B. Purpose of Subcommittees

The purpose of the subcommittees as formed shall be to:

- (a) carry out the decisions of the Elders, the Leadership Council, or the Board of Trustees, whichever has been assigned as the direct oversight body, with utmost expedition, and to undertake such duties as may from time to time be allotted to them by the direct oversight body;
- (b) provide direct lay involvement by providing advice and recommendations to the ministry staff responsible for the function assigned to the particular subcommittee; and,
- (c) promote the mission of the church by providing advice and recommendations to the direct oversight body.

Section C. Meetings of Subcommittees

1. Regular Meetings

The initial meeting of each Subcommittee after the Annual Meeting of the membership shall take place according to the schedule previously established by that subcommittee unless a different date is communicated to subcommittee

members by the newly-designated chairman of that subcommittee. Unless otherwise determined by the direct oversight body, each standing subcommittee shall thereafter establish the particular date, time, and location and the normal frequency of its regular meetings. Subsequent meetings will be held as scheduled without further call or notice.

2. *Special Meetings*

Special meetings of subcommittees may be called by order of the oversight body, the chairman of that subcommittee, or a quorum of that subcommittee. Notification giving the time, date, and place of such a meeting must be made either (1) by first-class letters mailed at least 4 days (but not more than 60 days) prior to the meeting, or (2) by electronic communication at least 48 hours (but not more than 14 days) before the meeting. Letters mailed, or electronic communication sent, must be to the last mailing or electronic communication address, as applicable, provided by each subcommittee member. Neither the business to be transacted nor the purpose of the meeting needs to be specified in the notice unless specifically required by this Constitution or by law.

Section D. Limitation on Subcommittee Authority

No subcommittee shall be entitled to obligate the Church either financially or in matters of policy without authorization of the Elders and/or Leadership Council, as appropriate.

Section E. Finance Subcommittee/Budgetary Compliance

The Treasurer shall be the chairman of the Finance Subcommittee and the Assistant Treasurer shall be the vice chairman. The Finance Subcommittee shall monitor budgetary compliance and shall report directly to the Leadership Council. No official of the Church shall be entitled to incur expenditure without appropriate budgetary authorization.

Section F. Selection of Subcommittee Chairmen

The chairman and vice chairman of each subcommittee, other than the Finance Subcommittee, shall be appointed by the Assignments Committee from among the members of the Leadership Council.

Section G. Regulation of Subcommittees

The direct oversight body may make and establish such rules and regulations as deemed necessary, in addition to those outlined in Sections A-F of this Article, in assigning to the various subcommittees their respective authority, duties, and responsibilities.

ARTICLE 7. ORDINATION, LICENSING, AND COMMISSIONING

Any individual seeking to be ordained, licensed, or commissioned by the Church must read and agree, conscientiously and without mental reservation, with the Church Constitution, including without limitation Article 2 and this Article. This agreement shall be affirmed by a document containing the applicant's signature.

Section A. Ordination

1. Ordination Defined

Ordination is a church's public recognition of those men who, in its opinion, are scripturally qualified and called of God to shepherd the flock, evangelize unbelievers, teach, preach, administer the ordinances, speak publicly for the faith, and equip believers to carry out the great commission. Those who are ordained must lead godly lives.

2. Ordination Process

Candidates must submit their application in writing to the Elders, complete certain ordination study requirements as set forth by the Elders, and have at least one year of acceptable public preaching or teaching experience. The call, qualifications, and completed study requirements of the candidate will be reviewed by the Elders, Senior Pastor, and other pastoral staff. If after reviewing material submitted by the candidate, and having received input from the pastoral staff and considering other available information, the candidate appears likely to meet the qualifications for ordination, the Elders may establish and convene an ordination council for the purpose of examining the candidate's credentials and determining his qualifications. Following this examination, the ordination council shall make a recommendation to the Elders as to whether the candidate is qualified. If ordination is approved by the Elders, the ordination will be reported to the Leadership Council, and such notice, including public notice, will be given as deemed appropriate by the Elders.

3. Revocation of Ordination

When the Elders, as those charged by Scripture with the spiritual oversight of the Church, in their sole discretion, are of the opinion that a person previously ordained by the Church is no longer scripturally qualified for ordination, that person's ordination may be revoked with such notice, including such public notice, that the Elders in their sole discretion deem necessary to effectively revoke the previously granted public recognition.

Section B. Licensing

A license to perform marriages and other ministerial functions may be granted to men in public recognition that the Elders are of the opinion that the candidate is

scripturally qualified and has been called by God to Christian service. If a candidate's application is approved by the Elders, it will be reported to the Leadership Council. Licensing is often a preliminary step to ordination at a later time. A license may be withdrawn, with such notice, including such public notice as is deemed necessary, at the sole discretion of the Elders, whenever in their opinion the assignment has been completed or a licensed individual is no longer scripturally qualified.

Section C. Commissioning

Commissioning is a public recognition that, in the opinion of the Elders, God has called a man or woman for a special ministry assignment. Such public recognition may be publicly withdrawn, at the sole discretion of the Elders, whenever in their opinion the assignment has been completed or a commissioned individual is no longer scripturally qualified.

Section D. Disputes

No dispute regarding granting, denying, or rescinding of ordination, licensing, or commissioning by the Elders may be brought before any court of law and no such dispute is subject to arbitration. The decision of the Elders in all such matters is final and binding. Any application or request for ordination, licensing, or commissioning shall constitute a waiver of any legal recourse and acceptance of the procedures for dispute resolution set forth herein.

ARTICLE 8. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section A. Principles of Administration

The Elders are commanded by Scripture to keep watch over themselves and those God has entrusted to their care in their role as shepherds of the flock (Acts 20:28–31). This includes providing organizational structures, teaching, and other programs to give each Church member the opportunity to develop into a productive, self-disciplined member of the body of Christ. As commanded by Scripture, this also includes corrective discipline (Matthew 18:15–20; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:12–13; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; Titus 3:10–11). Corrective discipline is administered according to the scriptural principles below.

1. Restoration

The goal of all Church discipline is that the transgressing member be brought back into fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ and to full restoration within the Church.

2. Humility

All discipline is to be undertaken in a spirit of gentleness and humility knowing that we all sin.

3. Unity and Purity

Discipline can require separation from a transgressing member whose refusal to repent, persistence in divisiveness, or other sinful behavior makes such action necessary to safeguard the unity and/or purity of the body of the church.

Section B. Reasons for Discipline

Discipline may be administered for the following offenses:

- (a) leading a lifestyle that is inconsistent with biblical standards and ethics as defined in the Church Covenant and/or Article 2;
- (b) departure from, or publicly espousing doctrines contrary to, the doctrines of the Faith as set forth in the Scriptures and/or in Article 2; or
- (c) refusal to adhere to the other requirements of the Church Constitution.

Section C. Disciplinary Procedures

1. Dealing with an Offense

Any member of the Church, having heard or otherwise having become aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders growth and testimony, should, if appropriate, go privately (unless prudence requires that a third party be present) to the person in question to seek a resolution of the matter (according to Matthew 5:23–24; 18:15–17). If the matter is unresolved because the accused denies wrongdoing or refuses to repent, the second step is to take one or two other believers to speak with the person in question so that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If the matter remains unresolved, the concerned member should ask one or two of the Elders or a member of the pastoral staff to join in the restorative process. If, in the opinion of the Elder(s) or member of the pastoral staff, the matter merits further consideration, the Elders shall then be informed of the facts.

An offense against the Church itself or a public offense may be referred to the Elders directly in lieu of the above preliminary steps.

2. Initiation of Church Discipline

The Elders may elect to deal with any disciplinary matter confidentially. The Elders may appoint a committee to ascertain the facts by interviews or other appropriate means and/or to attempt to resolve the matter. The Elders may impose any discipline appropriate to the offense except removal from membership. However, in situations that they deem appropriate, the Elders may accept the member's voluntary resignation. Examples of discipline are suspension from, or limitations upon, continued participation in any or all of the following: leadership, ministry within the Church, voting rights, participation in communion, or attendance at the Church or any function sponsored by the Church. At the end of the suspension, or period of limitation, the Elders shall determine whether the member shall be restored to good standing because of evidence of repentance and biblical lifestyle, or whether further corrective measures shall be imposed.

3. Disciplinary Charges before Leadership Council

The Elders may file disciplinary charges with the Leadership Council if: the actions taken pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 2 above have not succeeded in bringing about repentance and restoration; the accused is charged with an offense against the Church itself; or the accused is charged with a public offense (1 Corinthians 5). The accused should be notified in writing, sent to the last address he or she has provided to the Church, of the charges and the procedure of discipline.

4. Hearing before Leadership Council

The accused may choose to defend himself/herself at a meeting of the Leadership Council at some definite date and time, not less than one week following the forwarding of notice to appear. The accused, on being notified, may choose any member of the Leadership Council who would not thereby incur a conflict of interest to assist and represent him/her in the examination and hearing on the charges. The chairman of the Leadership Council shall appoint one of its members to present the charges and proofs in support thereof. Unless otherwise authorized in advance by the Chairman of the Leadership Council, personal or professional advocates outside of the Leadership Council such as attorneys shall not be present to represent the accused or the Elders.

After a full and impartial hearing of the accessible witnesses and the ascertainable facts, if by majority vote the Leadership Council finds the charges have been sustained, the Elders shall determine the form of discipline deemed appropriate to the offense, which may include removal from membership (subject to Section C.5 below). The failure or refusal on the part of the accused to appear at the hearing or to answer the charges shall not prevent the Leadership Council from hearing the evidence and rendering a finding on the proofs presented.

5. Public Mention and/or Removal from Membership

If the Elders determine that the offense is deserving of public mention and/or notice to any person or entity, as deemed necessary in the sole discretion of the Elders, that discipline has been imposed or is under consideration and/or of the conduct believed to warrant discipline, the Church shall be informed of the matter at a regularly scheduled service and encouraged to urge the transgressing member to repent, and such information may also be communicated to others outside of the Church or made public. No member shall be removed from membership until at least four weeks after the Church has been informed. If there is no repentance, removal from membership or other discipline determined by the Elders will be applied and the Church will be notified as provided above.

6. Consent to Discipline

Any person who becomes a member of the Church or who accepts a staff position at the Church thereby agrees to comply fully with the requirements of the Constitution of the Church. If, at any time, such person becomes a subject of church discipline under this Constitution, he or she agrees to submit to the disciplinary process and to the authority exercised by the Elders and Leadership Council, and by the membership under its provisions. Any such person further understands and agrees that, once an Elder or pastoral staff member becomes involved in the disciplinary process (Section C.1 of this Article), he or she will not be permitted to voluntarily withdraw from membership until after the disciplinary process has been completed. Acceptance of membership at the Church constitutes a knowing waiver of the right that would otherwise exist to withdraw from membership prior to the resolution of the disciplinary matter, unless otherwise approved by the Elders.

Section D. Restoration

The Elders also have the right to restore disciplined members who give satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6–8). The purpose of the discipline having been accomplished, the Elders may advise the Church of the member's restoration.

Section E. Non-Member Attendees

We welcome the many non-members who attend the Church, some on a regular basis. However, the Church, acting through its authorized agents, may forcibly eject from a service or other Church activity those who are disruptive or engage in other inappropriate behavior, whether or not they are members. Concerns regarding conduct of non-members that would provide grounds for discipline of members, that remain unresolved between the parties directly involved, may be referred to the Elders. If, upon consideration of the matter, the Elders, in their sole discretion, deem that the proper functioning, unity, or purity of the Church body requires it, the offending non-member may be temporarily or permanently excluded from attendance or other participation in services or other activities of the Church, or

such attendance or participation may be made subject to compliance with conditions imposed by the Elders.

ARTICLE 9. USE OF FACILITIES

The buildings and other property owned or leased by the Church (“Church facilities”) are gifts of God, made available by the sacrificial gifts of His people over multiple generations, and are dedicated solely to doing ministry for Christ and His church. The Church shall not be involved in the business of making Church facilities available for rental to the general public. The primary use of the Church facilities is for the ministry activities of this Church. Thus Church-sponsored ministries, including approved uses by members and regular attenders, have the highest priority over any outside use.

Nevertheless, the Elders may, in their sole discretion, determine that making Church facilities available for use by outside users is in furtherance of the broader work of the ministry. This can include use by outside groups, whether religious or secular, where the Elders determine that such use will further such ministry goals as being a good neighbor to others in the Chicago area, causing outside individuals and groups to become more familiar with and more comfortable with entering the Church, or other similar ministry goals. Under no circumstances will Church facilities be made available for uses which, because of the nature of the use involved or the activities, identity, or positions taken by the potential user, are determined, in the sole discretion of the Elders, to be contrary to the convictions outlined in this Constitution or Scripture, or otherwise be inimical to the ministry or witness of the Church.

The Trustees shall develop general policies implementing these provisions with the approval of the Elders. The other funds obtained by the Church for its various ministries should not generally be used to cover the costs incurred in making Church facilities available for approved outside uses. Thus the Trustees shall develop charges to defray the costs incurred by the Church for permitted uses. Charges to an outside user must at least cover the direct out-of-pocket costs incurred by the Church unless the Elders determine that there is a ministry-related reason to impose a lesser or no charge.

ARTICLE 10. MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION

Section A. Mediation

Mediation is an informal dispute settlement process run by a third party intended to bring two parties together to clear up misunderstandings, find out concerns, and facilitate the process of having the disputing parties reach a resolution prior to arbitration. The rules and procedures for Mediation shall be as adopted by the Leadership Council and may be changed by the Leadership Council without

amendment to the Church Constitution. A good-faith attempt at mediation is required before a dispute may be submitted to arbitration.

Section B. Submission to Arbitration

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture (1 Corinthians 6:1–8), we, the members of the Church, agree to submit to binding arbitration any and all civil disputes, claims, demands, questions, or other civil disagreements which could, apart from this clause, be determined by a court of law or equity or other tribunal, including those arising under federal, state, and local statutory or common law, the law of contract, and the law of tort (hereinafter “Disputes”). We expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any such Disputes before a court of law, except as necessary to compel arbitration or otherwise aid arbitral jurisdiction; to compel the production of documents or the appearance of witnesses; or to enforce the award rendered by the arbitrator. Disputes covered by this obligation to arbitrate include: (1) those between the Church and its interns, staff members, or church members; (2) those between any intern, staff member, or church member and any other intern, staff member, or church member; (3) between any of the above and former interns, staff members, or church members that arose during the period of membership or of service as an intern or staff member; or (4) between any of the above and any person commissioned, licensed, or ordained by the Church.

Neither the removal of any member from the membership, the termination of an intern or staff member, nor the rescission or withdrawal of ordination, licensing, or commissioning, relieves such member, intern, staff member, or ordained, licensed, or commissioned person from the obligation to arbitrate Disputes subject to this arbitration clause that arose during or at the termination of the period of such membership, service as an intern or staff member, or ordination, licensing, or commissioning.

Section C. Exceptions to Prohibitions

- (a) This Constitution does not prohibit any person from filing or otherwise participating in administrative proceedings where such a prohibition would violate any federal, state, or local statute, ordinance, or regulation.
- (b) This Constitution does not prohibit or restrict participation in good faith in criminal proceedings contemplated or instituted by the authority of the local, state, or federal government.
- (c) This Constitution does not prohibit any person from seeking and obtaining a court injunction or order of protection (whether classified as a criminal or civil in nature) where reasonable grounds exist to fear abuse or other harm to that person or his or her child or other dependent.

However, persons seeking money damages or other financial relief must do so through mediation and arbitration as provided in this Article.

Section D. Notice of Arbitration

In the event of any Dispute the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. This shall include use of the mediation procedures adopted pursuant to Section A above. If the parties do not reach such solution within a period of sixty days, then upon notice by either party to the other, Disputes shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section B above, and such rules and procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section F below.

Section E. Limitations on Arbitrator's Authority

The spiritual oversight of the Church is assigned by Scripture and this Constitution to the Elders. This arbitration clause provides a dispute resolution procedure as a substitute to resolution by a court of law or equity or other tribunal and therefore does not include disputes not subject to resolution in a court of law or equity or other tribunal. Thus the arbitrator's authority is subject to the following limitations.

- (a) The Scripture places upon the Elders the responsibility for the spiritual oversight of the church (1 Peter 5:1–5). Thus, no arbitrator has authority to override the Elders' determination of the proper interpretation of Scripture, the meaning or application of any doctrine, the meaning or application of Article 2, or of the means necessary to maintain the highest spiritual welfare of the Church.
- (b) The Elders' determination as to the requirements for: Church membership; service as a pastoral staff member, Officer, or Deaconess of the Church; service within any ministry of the Church; or obtaining and maintaining ordination, licensing, or commissioning from the Church, shall be binding upon the arbitrator.
- (c) The procedures for church discipline set forth in Article 8 of this Constitution provide the opportunity for a full and impartial hearing regarding the validity of disciplinary charges and disciplinary actions taken (up to and including removal from membership), and are the sole and exclusive means of challenging the imposition of such discipline. No such determination will be subject to mediation or arbitration under this Article, or to litigation in any court or before any administrative body.

Section F. Arbitration Procedures

The rules and procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the Leadership Council and may be changed by the Leadership Council without amendment to the Church Constitution. Changes or amendments to these rules and procedures shall not apply to any arbitration instituted prior to the effective date of the change or amendment.

ARTICLE 11. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Section A. Initiation of Amendments

Potential amendments to this Constitution shall be presented to the Elders for consideration and recommendation to the Leadership Council. Only such proposed amendments to this Constitution as are recommended by a three-fourths vote of the Elders present and voting, and approved for recommendation to the membership by two-thirds of the members of the Leadership Council who are present and voting, shall be recommended to the membership for approval.

Section B. Notice and Approval

- (a) Proposed amendments shall be distributed by either or both of the following methods to those members qualified to vote:
 - (1) at least 30 days preceding the date of the meeting in which the proposed amendments are to be considered, the proposed amendments shall be mailed or transmitted by electronic communication to the last mailing or electronic communication address provided by each member; and/or
 - (2) publication of a written notice in the church bulletin or other similar means of general intra-Church communication on each of the four weeks preceding the meeting stating that amendments to the Constitution will be voted on at the upcoming membership meeting and that copies of the proposed amendments are available for distribution to members at a convenient distribution point (identified in the notice) on the premises of the Church.
- (b) The proposed amendments will then be voted upon by the membership at a regular meeting or at a special meeting called for the consideration of such proposed amendments. The vote of two-thirds of the members in attendance shall be required for their adoption, providing that a quorum (Constitution Article 3, Section D) is present.

Section C. Effective Date of, and Transition to, this Constitution

This Constitution will become effective on the immediately succeeding day following the approval of this Constitution by the membership pursuant to Articles 6 and 8, respectively, of the Bylaws and Constitution in effect at the time the membership vote is taken. This Constitution supersedes all previous Constitutions and/or Bylaws of the Church and any sub-organization of the Church. All resolutions and motions approved by the Executive Committee, the Elders, and the Trustees under the authority of preceding Constitutions and Bylaws of the Church shall remain in effect except where such resolutions and/or approvals have an effect that creates a then-present violation of the express terms of this Constitution.

Except for those made ineligible for their current office by the express terms of this Constitution, all those serving as Officers and Deaconesses of the Church immediately prior to the effective date of this Constitution shall continue in said office until the earliest of the following: the expiration of their current term of office; their removal from office under the terms of this Constitution; or in the case of Deaconesses, the next Annual Meeting. The duties of Officers and Deaconesses in office at the adoption of this Constitution will be governed by the terms of this Constitution.

The Leadership Committee shall have authority to pass resolutions or take other reasonable steps consistent with this Constitution in order to effectuate a smooth transition from the previously existing Constitution and Bylaws to this Constitution.