



THE CONSTITUTION &
BYLAWS OF EASTRIDGE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Enacted October 10, 2021

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Article I

Name

The name of the corporation is Eastridge Baptist Church, located in Kent, Washington. It is a Washington state non-profit religious corporation. This corporation will hereafter be referred to as the “Church.”

Article II

Purpose

The Church is organized for exclusively religious purposes (including charitable works consistent with church ministry as defined in Scripture). Our purpose is to glorify God through evangelizing the world, discipling the believers, worshipping the Lord, fellowshiping with the saints, and ministering to others.

Article III

Statement of Faith

Section 1: Scripture

We teach that every word of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments is inspired by God, inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and the only authoritative rule of faith and practice. (Psalm 19:7-11; Matthew 4:4; 5:18; 24:35; John 17:17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

Section 2: The Godhead

We teach there is one true and living God existing eternally in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each has precisely the same nature, attributes, and perfections, and each is equally deserving of worship and obedience. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; 4:24; 10:30; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

God the Father

We teach that the Father is the first Person of the Trinity and Creator of all. He is the absolute and omnipotent ruler of the universe, governing all things including creation and redemption according to His eternal plan. His fatherhood defines His role in the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men, but the spiritual Father only of those who believe. He is spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and truth. He is

perfect in holiness. (Genesis 1:1-31; 1 Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; 145:8-9; Isaiah 46:9-11; Romans 8:14; 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:9, 14-15; Revelation 4:11)

God the Son

We teach that Jesus Christ is the second Person of the Trinity, equal with the Father in essence and attributes. He came into the world miraculously through the virgin birth and was conceived by the Holy Spirit. He is thus fully God and fully man. (Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:21-23; John 1:1, 14; 4:24; 10:30; Romans 1:3-4; Philippians 2:5-7; Hebrews 1:3)

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive. He rose from the dead on the third day and ascended to the Father where He is the mediator between God and man. His return to earth is imminent, physical, and premillennial. (Isaiah 53:4-6; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:8-11; Hebrews 1:3; 9:24; 10:12-14; 1 John 4:10)

God the Holy Spirit

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and possesses all the attributes of deity, being equal to the Father and Son. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation, the incarnation, the written revelation, and the work of salvation. (Genesis 1:2; Matthew 1:18; 10:20; John 3:5; Philippians 1:19; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

We teach that the divine activity of the Holy Spirit is first and foremost to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. He is active in relation to the world by convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. In relation to believers He regenerates, baptizes into the body of Christ, transforms them into the image of Christ, indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, administers spiritual gifts, and seals them unto the day of redemption. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit. (John 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 2:10-13; 12:4-13; Ephesians 1:13; 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27)

We teach that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of all believers at all times. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-31; 13:8; 14:22; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12)

Section 3: Man

We teach that God created man in His image. God created man and woman as distinct biological genders and intends that distinction to remain and be recognized as His sovereign will.

We teach that although Adam was made perfect, he voluntarily transgressed God's command. As the representative head of the human race, Adam's sin condemned all men so that now all people are sinners by both nature and by choice. As a result of the fall, all men have incurred God's wrath and are incapable of saving themselves; therefore, the only hope for mankind is salvation

through Jesus Christ. (Genesis 1:26-27; 3:1-24; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deuteronomy 22:5; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:10-18, 23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3)

Section 4: Creation

We teach that God created all things out of nothing directly through His Word in six consecutive twenty-four hour days. His creation was originally without corruption, sin, and death. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11; Hebrews 11:3)

Section 5: Marriage

We teach that God's plan for marriage is to be between one biological man and one biological woman. (Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:6-9; 1 Timothy 3:2)

Section 6: Salvation

We teach that salvation is given by the grace of God and not on the basis of any work of man. All who repent of their sins and by faith confess Jesus Christ as their Lord are justified on the basis of His life, death, and resurrection. (John 3:16; Romans 10:9, 13; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 1:18-19)

A full understanding of salvation includes:

Regeneration

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given to repentant sinners. (John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:22-23; 2 Peter 1:4)

Election

We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies. We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord. (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-13; 1 Peter 1:1-2)

Justification

We teach that justification before God is an act of God by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins and confess Him as sovereign Lord. (Isaiah 55:6-7; Acts 3:19; Romans 8:33; 10:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:9)

Positional Sanctification

We teach that every believer is set apart unto God by justification and is declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This positional sanctification is instantaneous and has to do with the believer's permanent standing, not his present walk or condition. (1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 10:10, 14)

Progressive Sanctification

We teach that through obedience to the Word of God and empowering of the Holy Spirit, progressive sanctification is the process by which the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ. (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4)

Security

We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. (John 10: 27-30; Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24)

Separation

We teach that believers should be separated unto the Lord Jesus Christ and from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices as is commanded by God. Out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God, who is worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to Him and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17)

Section 7: The Church

We teach that all those who put their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord are immediately made members of the universal church through the work of the Holy Spirit. The universal church is made up of all true believers since the time of Christ. The universal church is further defined as the bride of Christ and is also the body of Christ, of which He is the head. Only those who are truly regenerate are members of the universal church. The local church is to be a reflection of the universal church. For that reason, membership in the local church must be limited to those who are truly regenerate. Therefore, the local church is a group of regenerate people who have united together for worship, fellowship, discipleship, prayer, the exercising of their spiritual gifts, and the observance of the ordinances of the church in obedience to the Scriptures. (1 Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:11-3:6; 5:24-25; Colossians 1:18)

We teach that the local church is to operate under the biblical office of elder authority. As head of the church, Christ is the Chief Shepherd. He has entrusted the care of the local church to elders, particular men who fulfill the role of under-shepherd by using the Scripture as the standard by which they lead the local church. The elders are to shepherd the members of the church, establish the direction of the church, and oversee the business of the church. For those reasons, we hold to the autonomy of the local church, meaning that the local church is to govern itself and is to remain free from any external authority or control. (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-5)

We teach that Christ gave two ordinances for the church to observe and practice, namely baptism and communion (also called the Lord's Supper).

Baptism

We teach that all Christians should be baptized as a step of obedience to Christ. That baptism is a public identification of one's faith in Jesus Christ. As such, baptism must follow salvation (sometimes called "believers' baptism"). We further affirm that the mode of baptism is to be by immersion for these reasons. First, the verb "baptizo" means to immerse. Second, baptism is identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and immersion fits that picture best. Third, when Jesus was baptized, He went down into the water. Fourth, the other uses of the word "baptize" imply immersion into something. (Matthew 3:16; 28:19; Mark 1:8, 10; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:35-38; Romans 6:3-4)

Communion

We teach that communion (The Lord's Supper) is to be done as a perpetual memorial of Christ's death. The elements of bread and juice represent the body and blood of Jesus and have no divine power in or with them. Christ did not tell the church how often to observe communion; therefore, the frequency is up to the elders of the church. (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34)

Section 8: Angels

We teach that God created a limited number of angels to be ministering spirits and as such are not to be worshipped. All angels were originally created as perfect beings but because of sin some angels have fallen and are unable to repent. Therefore, all angels are either holy angels or fallen angels (also known as demons). (Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:6)

Holy Angels

We teach that the holy angels are ministering spirits that exist to serve and worship God. (Luke 2:9-14; Revelation 5:11-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14)

Fallen Angels

We teach that Satan is a created angel and is the author of sin. When he rebelled against God numerous angels joined with him in rebellion. These angels are forever condemned to be demons without any hope for repentance. It was Satan's temptation of Eve that introduced sin into the human race. Satan and his demons are the sworn enemies of God and man. Satan's power was defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although Satan is still active in the earth, the day is coming when God will cast him into the lake of fire where he will be punished for eternity. (Genesis 3:1-15; Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

Section 9: Last Things

We teach that the Lord's return for His church will take place before the Tribulation and that the seven-year Tribulation will precede a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth, followed by a final judgment against His enemies and then the eternal state.

The Rapture of the Church

We teach that Jesus Christ will come back for and remove His church from the earth. The dead in Christ will rise and all living believers will meet the Lord in the air and receive glorified bodies. (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

The Judgment Seat of Christ

We teach that immediately following the rapture of the church the saints are judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. This judgment is not about salvation but is the gain and/or loss of rewards based on the works of individual believers. (Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10)

The Tribulation

We teach that God will pour out His wrath on the earth after He has removed His church. This time of wrath, known as the Tribulation, (as well as the 70th week of Daniel), will last seven years. During the Tribulation, Satan will be extremely active empowering Antichrist and the false prophet. He will be actively deceiving the masses and seeking to destroy God's people. The two great purposes of the Tribulation are the redemption of the nation of Israel and the judgment of the wicked. (Daniel 9:24-27; Matthew 24:4-28; 2 Thessalonians 2:4-9; Revelation 13:1-8)

The Second Coming and Millennial Kingdom

We teach that the visible and physical return of Christ to the earth will take place at the end of the Tribulation. At that time, He will sit on the throne of David and establish His reign on the earth for a literal 1,000 years. At the second coming of Christ, Satan will be bound in the abyss and the enemies of Christ will be judged. The reign of Christ will be characterized by peace, plenty, longevity, and righteousness. At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be loosed from his prison for a short time in which he will deceive the nations and gather them for one final battle against the Lord and His people. Fire will come from heaven and destroy the enemies of God. Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire where he will suffer for eternity. All other enemies of God will also be judged at the Great White Throne. Finally, God will create a new heaven and a new earth and the New Jerusalem. The saved will enter the glorious eternal state with God. (Isaiah 11; 65:17-25; Ezekiel 36:33-38; 37:24-28; Daniel 7:17-22; 12:2; Matthew 25:31, 41; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 19:11-21; 20:1-15; 21-22)

Article IV

Membership

Section 1: Nature of Membership

The New Testament clearly indicates that groups of people who were followers of the Lord Jesus Christ identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body.

Therefore, Eastridge Baptist Church recognizes the need for formal membership. Membership at Eastridge Baptist Church is available to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and have visibly

demonstrated that commitment through believer's baptism and completion of the membership process. (Acts 2:41-47; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 12:27; 1 Timothy 5:9; Hebrews 10:25)

Section 2: Qualifications of Members

To qualify for membership in this Church a person must confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, have completed believer's baptism, and must be 18 years of age or older.

Section 3: Membership Process

The process for becoming a member of the Church shall be as follows:

1. Satisfactory completion of the new membership class.
2. Completion and submission of the Eastridge membership application (including the Church Covenant).
3. Completion of an interview with two members of the Board of Elders (AKA "Elders").
4. Recommendation and approval by the Elders.
5. The new member shall be identified to the congregation.

Section 4: Denial of Membership

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective Church member, the Elders determine that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, has not been baptized by immersion after confession of faith, or that there is compelling evidence of an ungodly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Elders shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court regarding that decision. Anyone denied membership may reapply after satisfactorily addressing the reasons given for denial of membership.

Section 5: Designation of Members

Active

- a. All members in good standing who regularly participate in the ministry of the Church (i.e.: attending Church services, giving, prayer, etc.).
- b. A member in good standing is defined as anyone who has completed the Eastridge Baptist Church membership process and is not currently under church discipline as outlined below in Section 8.

Inactive

- a. Inactive members are those who have not participated in the ministry of the Church for a period of three months.
- b. Inactive members forfeit the rights and privileges of active membership.
- c. Exclusions include deployment for military service, health issues, students away at school, missions ministry, those with dual residence, and others in like circumstances.
- d. Inactive members may be reinstated to active members at the discretion of the Elders after participating in the ministry of the Church for a period of four weeks.

Associate

- a. Students and others temporarily residing in the Kent, WA area that are members of a likeminded church may apply for associate membership through the normal application process. Qualifications are identical to those for full membership, except that home church membership must be retained. A letter of commendation will be sought from the applicant's home church.
- b. Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as that for active members except that they are excluded from voting and from holding Church offices.
- c. Associate membership will normally terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the Kent, WA area.

Section 6: Responsibilities and Privileges of Membership

Each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in the ministry and life of the Church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only active members are permitted to serve in leadership positions. Active members as well as associate members may be appointed to teaching positions. Non-members are permitted to serve in non-leadership positions at the discretion of the Elders.

Section 7: Voting

Membership in this Church shall not grant any member proprietary rights in the Church. Membership entitles the active member to vote at a members' meeting regarding the matters submitted by Elders to the membership for affirmation. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to active members. Members must be present to vote.

Section 8: Church Discipline

1. The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church, to edify believers by deterring sin, and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to restore to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (1 Corinthians 5:6; Galatians 6:1; 1 Timothy 5:20).
2. Members of this Church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this Church who promote doctrine contrary to the Statement of Faith in *Article III*, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15–18. Before such dismissal, however, (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this Church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then (2) the warning Church member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders. If

the Elders determine—after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15–18 and 1 Timothy 5:19—that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders shall inform the Church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the Church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the Church in its collective call to repentance, then (4) he or she shall be removed from the membership of the Church.

3. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the Church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the Church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the Church) when one or more of the following have occurred:
 - a. Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e., openly and to the offense of the whole Church (1 Cor. 5:1–5)
 - b. Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elders (Romans 16:17)
 - c. Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10–11).
4. The members of this Church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this Church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. The process of church discipline, as defined in the previous paragraphs, does not end if the one under discipline resigns from this Church. The process ends when the one under discipline repents or when the third and (if necessary) the fourth steps of Matthew 18 have been completed.
5. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Elders, then he or she may be restored to membership. Depending upon the amount of time that has passed, the Elders may require the individual to retake the membership class, resubmit a membership application, or reaffirm the Church Covenant.
6. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, anyone may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon the Church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on the Church premises.

Section 9: Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Request: A member in good standing may be removed from membership upon written request to the Elders.

2. Relocation: Members who move out of the area or begin attending a different church will be removed as members.
3. Non-Attendance: Intentional non-attendance for a period of six months will result in termination of membership. Exceptions to this would be those deployed in military service, students attending school outside of the area, prolonged illness, employment requirements, those with dual residences, and other extraordinary circumstances that prevent members from attending services.
4. Discipline: those under church discipline will have their voting privileges immediately revoked. Those who refuse to repent by the completion of the process will be removed from membership.
5. Death.

Article V

Eldership

Section 1: Nature of Eldership

The Board of Elders (“Elders”) constitutes the leadership of Eastridge Baptist Church in spiritual, business, legal, and operational matters. The Elders serve as the Board of Directors for the corporation, they act as the pulpit committee as the need arises, they oversee all Church ministries, and they are ex officio members of every council or committee within the Church. The Elders may invite non-elder members to form councils or committees or to serve in certain decision-making roles. However, the decisions of those councils and committees are subject to the final decision of the Elders and shall never supersede the decision of the Elders.

Section 2: Qualifications of Elders

Each Elder shall be an active member in good standing of this Church. He must agree to support, defend, and teach the Statement of Faith (Article III in this document). He must be a man who possesses the qualifications of elders found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; and 1 Peter 5:2-3.

- (a) In addition to meeting the other qualifications, a man must have the desire to serve as an elder as described in this document. (1 Timothy 3:1)
- (b) Above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
- (c) The husband of one wife; that is a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- (d) Temperate, sober, self-controlled (1 Timothy 3:2)
- (e) Prudent, sound-minded (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (f) Respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- (g) Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- (h) Able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- (i) Not addicted to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (j) Not pugnacious, not violent (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (k) Gentle, kind, courteous (1 Timothy 3:3)
- (l) Uncontentious, peaceable, not quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (m) Free from the love of money, not greedy (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- (n) Manages his own household well, his children are faithful (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)
- (o) Not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)

- (p) Has a good reputation with those outside the church (1 Timothy 3:7)
- (q) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- (r) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- (s) Just (Titus 1:8)
- (t) Devout, righteous, holy (Titus 1:8)
- (u) He must willingly shepherd God's flock (1 Peter 5:2-3)

Section 3: Number of Elders

As much as is possible, within the confines of qualified willing men, the number of Elders should never be less than five. The number of Elders should be proportional to the size of the Church. As long as there are qualified men in the Church, Staff-elders (those men who serve as part of the paid pastoral staff of the Church) should never serve as officers of the Board.

Section 4: Selection of Elders

Any active members may nominate qualified men. The current Elders will consider each man nominated and determine which one(s) to consider for eldership. The current Elders will interview the men under consideration in order to select approved candidates. The name(s) of approved candidates will be presented to the members in either a verbal or written announcement during a normally scheduled service. Anyone who knows why a candidate is not qualified should make it known to the current Elders within seven days.

Appointment to the Board requires unanimous approval by the current Elders and a 75% majority vote of the members voting at the annual or special meeting.

Section 5: Offices of Elders

At the first Elders meeting for the new fiscal year, the Elders will appoint, among themselves, the following offices: Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Staff-elders shall not fill any of these offices unless there are not enough men on the Board of Elders to fill the positions.

Section 6: Term of Elders

Staff-elders do not have any term limits and may not take a sabbatical from the Board without the express approval of the Elders. Lay-elders shall be elected to a three-year term. After his term is complete the Elder may choose to serve for another three-year term, pending affirmation by the rest of the Elders. After serving two back-to-back three-year terms the Elder must take a mandatory sabbatical year. Reinstatement to the Board, after a sabbatical year, will follow the normal selection of Elders as described in *Article V Section 4*.

Section 7: Responsibilities of Elders

- (a) Elders should be dedicated to growing in their walk with God. They should lead by example by practicing servant-leadership.
- (b) Elders are to care for the flock of God by continuing to grow in their understanding of God's Word, so that they may affirm sound doctrine and refute doctrinal error.
- (c) Elders oversee the spiritual aspect of the Church by maintaining doctrinal purity. They are accountable for biblically sound teaching, thoroughly vetting those in leadership positions, and maintaining a regenerate membership.
- (d) Elders determine the missionaries the Church supports as well as the missions budget. They may, at their discretion, appoint other members of the Church to take on some of these responsibilities. However, the decision of the Elders is final. No committee shall make a decision that supersedes the decisions of the Elders.
- (e) Elders are to assure that the Church regularly and publicly observes communion.
- (f) Elders are to maintain the standards for Church membership as described in *Article IV*.
- (g) Elders are to oversee the operational aspects of the Church – including, but not limited to:
 - a. Managing the church funds.
 - b. Establishing an annual operating budget.
 - c. Hiring operational staff.
 - d. Conducting business on behalf of the Church that includes banking, taking loans, and real estate ventures.
 - e. Approving expenses related to the maintenance and expansion of the facilities.
 - f. Establish policies as needed.
- (h) Elders are to shepherd the individual members and regular attendees of the Church. Shepherding the flock may include:
 - a. Praying with and for the people on their Shepherding List.
 - b. Providing biblical counseling.
 - c. Practical discipleship opportunities.
 - d. Participating in Church discipline cases.
- (i) Elders may appoint councils or committees to handle certain responsibilities. The Elders are ex officio members of all councils and committees. No council or committee shall ever make a decision that is in opposition to the decision of the Elders.

Section 8: Elder Meetings

The Elders shall meet at least once per month (unless extenuating circumstances prevent it). The specific dates and times for such meetings will be chosen by the Elders. Additional meeting(s) may be called by the Chairman of the Board or by agreement of the majority of the Elders. Meetings shall begin and end with prayer.

Decisions at Elder meetings shall be conducted in the spirit of *Robert's Rules of Orders*. Decisions are made by majority vote. However, the Elders may choose to defer a decision until there is a significant majority. Two-thirds of the Board of Elders must be present at a meeting for any official decisions to be made.

The Secretary, or in his absence another appointed Elder, will take minutes of all meetings. These minutes are to reflect the general discussions and decisions of the Elders. Discussions of

specific individuals (such as in cases of church discipline) shall have the names redacted from the minutes.

Members may be allowed to attend a portion of a regularly scheduled Elders meeting with prior approval by the Chairman of the Board.

Section 9: Removal of an Elder

Elders will be removed from the Board if they move out of the area, are no longer able to attend Church services (for health, work, or other reasons), no longer meet the biblical qualifications, feel like they can no longer serve in this capacity, no longer affirm the Statement of Faith in this document, or by death. Removal of an Elder requires a unanimous vote of the remaining Elders.

Any Elder choosing to resign his position as an Elder may do so by informing the Chairman of the Board in writing. The resigning Elder is asked to give at least a 60-day notice.

Section 10: Vacancies

In the event a vacancy occurs on the Board before an Elder's term is up, it shall be at the Elders discretion whether or not to fill that position before the Annual Meeting. If the Elders choose to fill the position before the Annual Meeting the normal selection process, as described in *Article V Section 4*, is to be followed.

Article VI

Membership Meetings

Section 1: Annual Meeting

There shall be an annual membership meeting associated with the end of each fiscal year (specified in *Article IX Section 11*), ideally on the third Sunday of the month ending the fiscal year. This meeting shall only be rescheduled if extenuating circumstances make it impossible, impractical, or unwise to meet on the normally scheduled date. If the meeting must be rescheduled, it is to be rescheduled for the next available Sunday night. The meeting shall be announced at least two weeks prior at a regularly scheduled service. The announcement shall be made through any one or a combination of the following: verbal announcement at a regularly scheduled service, printed announcement in the Church bulletin, phone calls, email, or other electronic communication system. The meeting shall be conducted along the lines of *Robert's Rules of Order* under the control of the Chairman of the Elder Board.

Section 2: Purpose of the Annual Meeting

This meeting is held so that the Elders may inform the congregation of the spiritual and financial state of the Church and that members may vote on approved Elder candidates. Selected Elders will give updates on various ministries and plans for the upcoming fiscal year.

The Treasurer shall present a proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed budget and ask for a second. This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion. A 75% majority vote in accordance with the requirements of *Article IV Section 7* is required to pass the budget. If the proposed budget is not approved, then the Church shall operate in accordance with the budget for the previous fiscal year until a new budget is approved.

Section 3: Special Meetings

The Elders may call special meetings at their discretion. Those meetings, when possible, shall be announced at least two weeks prior. Announcements shall be made as described in *Article VI Section 1*. The nature of these meetings may vary. They may be informational only or they may be seeking membership approval on some matter. The Elders shall endeavor to inform the membership as to the nature of the meeting at the time the announcement is made. A special meeting may be called when requested in writing by 20% of members in good standing.

Article VII

Pastoral Staff

Section 1: Calling a Pastor

Senior Pastor

When necessary to call a senior pastor, the Elders shall constitute a pulpit committee and may involve other members at their discretion. They will advertise the position, collect resumés, form questionnaires, evaluate applicants, hold interviews, conduct background checks, and upon unanimous agreement by the Elders, invite an elder-qualified applicant to candidate before the Church.

During the visit, the candidate will preach at least one Sunday, attend an in-person interview with the Elders and other ministry leaders invited at the Elders' discretion, and participate in other ministry activities that the Elders deem necessary, for the purpose of mutual evaluation.

The Elders shall report to the congregation at least once a month as to the progress of the search. The Elders may appoint a qualified man to serve as interim pastor during the search.

After the candidate process is complete, and with the unanimous approval of Elders, they shall call a special meeting for the purpose of confirming the candidate. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed candidate for senior pastor and ask for a second.

This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion as per *Article IV Section 7*. A 75% vote of approval is necessary in order to call such a candidate as senior pastor of the Church. Once accepted, his term shall be indefinite.

Associate Pastor

When calling an associate pastor, the Elders shall constitute a pulpit committee and may involve other members at their discretion. They will advertise the position, collect resumés, form questionnaires, evaluate applicants, hold interviews, conduct background checks, and upon unanimous agreement by the Elders will invite an elder-qualified applicant to candidate before the Church.

During the visit, candidates will take part in an in-person interview with the Elders and other ministry leaders invited at the Elders' discretion. Depending upon the position, the candidate may be called to preach at least one Sunday and may be required to participate in other ministry activities that the Elders deem necessary for the purpose of mutual evaluation.

After the candidate process is complete, and with the unanimous approval of Elders, they shall call a special meeting for the purpose of confirming the candidate. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed candidate for associate pastor and ask for a second. This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion as per *Article IV Section 7*. A 75% vote of approval is necessary in order to call such a candidate as associate pastor of the Church. Once accepted, his term shall be indefinite.

Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities of the Pastor

Senior Pastor

The senior pastor is responsible for the following:

- a. Provide vision and direction for the Church.
- b. Oversee the staff.
- c. Pray for, care for, and disciple the congregation.
- d. Administer the ordinances.
- e. Visit and counsel congregants as needed.
- f. Conduct and/or arrange for all public and regular services at the Church.
- g. General oversight of the spiritual welfare of the Church.
- h. Member of and responsible to the Board of Elders.

Associate Pastors

The Elders will prescribe the duties of the associate pastors. Specific talents and spiritual gifts will be considered as well as ministries needing to be performed.

Section 3: Resignation or Dismissal of the Pastor

Resignation

As much as possible, 60 days' written notice of resignation will be given to the Elders. Upon receipt of resignation, the Elders will inform the congregation of such action and their plans for seeking a replacement.

Dismissal

If a pastor no longer meets the qualifications of an elder or fails to fulfill his responsibilities and it becomes necessary to dismiss him, the remaining Elders, by unanimous vote, can request his resignation or, if necessary, immediately dismiss him. The Elders will inform the congregation of such action and their plans for seeking a replacement.

Article VIII

Missions

It shall be the practice of the Church to support missions and missionaries. All supported missionaries and mission organizations shall be in general agreement with the Statement of Faith in *Article III* of this document. The Elders or their designees shall determine the focus and scope of the missions program, as well as which missionaries or mission organizations may be considered for support.

Article IX

Finances

The Elders will conduct its affairs with integrity in the sight of God and man and will maintain prudent and responsible control and accountability over all funds it receives and spends. Financial statements shall be prepared monthly in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the USA.

Section 1: Collection and Distribution of Assets

The Church shall receive all monies and properties transferred to it for the purposes as stated in *Article II* of this document. The Church is not required to accept monies or property if, in the discretion of the Elders, to do so would conflict with the purposes of the Church.

Section 2: Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the Church is from June 1st to May 31st.

Section 3: Business Operations

The Elders or their designees shall act as agents or officers for the corporation when entering into contracts and business agreements.

Section 4: Purchase and Sale of Real Property

The purchase or sale of real property must be approved by unanimous decision of the Elders and then submitted to the membership for approval at a special meeting. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed purchase or sale and ask for a second. This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion as per *Article IV Section 7*. A 75% majority vote is required to approve this motion.

Section 5: Indebtedness

No note or contract exceeding 10%/year of the total annual budget of the Church shall be pledged except by unanimous recommendation of the Elders and approval by Church membership at a special meeting. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed indebtedness and ask for a second. This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion as per *Article IV Section 7*. A 75% majority vote is required to approve this motion.

Section 6: Staff Compensation

When preparing the proposed budget for a new fiscal year, pastors are recused from discussions of pastor compensation. The Church shall make no loans to Elders.

Article X

Amendments

Section 1: Typographical Changes

Typographical or clarifying changes may be made by unanimous approval of the Elders, and a new version of the constitution shall be prepared with an added date for the approved changes clearly placed on the cover sheet along with a revision letter, e.g., RevA, dd month yyyy. This version will thereafter be the approved version of the constitution for all future business of the Church.

Section 2: Substantive Changes

Amendments to the constitution may only be made by the unanimous approval of the entire Board of Elders and approval by the Church membership at a special meeting. Proposed changes must be preannounced as part of the meeting notice. At this meeting, the Elders will present the

proposed constitutional changes. The Chairman of the meeting will call for a motion to approve the proposed constitutional changes and ask for a second. This will be followed by discussion of the proposed motion. After discussion, a vote will be taken on the motion as per *Article IV Section 7*. A 75% majority vote is required to pass the proposed changes to the constitution of this Church. A new version of the constitution shall be prepared with the date of the approved version clearly placed on the cover sheet, e.g., dd month yyyy, removing the dates of the prior version and its revisions. This version will thereafter be the approved version of the constitution for all future business of the Church.

Article XI

Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Elders, after paying all debts and liabilities, shall distribute all remaining assets, at their discretion, to another church, churches, and/or ministries whose purpose is consistent with the purpose stated in *Article II* of this document and whose theology is consistent with the Statement of Faith in *Article III* of this document.