

Milestone Church Clinton Constitution and By Laws

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PREAMBLE

The fellowship of believers at Milestone Church Clinton (or Church), having placed our faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, seek to follow Him in connecting us to Jesus, our community, and the world according to the example set forth in His Word, the Bible.

We willingly embrace the following articles:

ARTICLE I. NAME

This body shall be known as and operate under the corporate name of "Milestone Church Clinton."

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND MISSION

The purpose of Milestone Church Clinton is to equip God's people for works of service so that the Body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12-13)

Our Mission is to follow Jesus in:

The Great Command

Matthew 22:36-40 [Jesus was asked] "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

The Great Commission

Matthew 28:18-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. "

ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. The Scriptures

We believe the entire Bible is inspired by God and, therefore, is without error and is the supreme and final authority in all matters about which it speaks.

2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; John 16:13; *Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12.*

2. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all-powerful and all-knowing, and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. We owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience to Him. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

2.1 God the Father

God reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving, all just, and allwise. God is Father to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:18-19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-3, Isaiah 42:13, 46:10; Deuteronomy 14:10; Isaiah 6:1-4; Matthew 6:9; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John Chapter 8.

2.2 God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of people from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, who accomplished the reconciliation between God and people. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers in the Person of the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 18:1; Psalms 2:7; 110:1; Isaiah 7:14,53; Matthew 1:18, 24:42; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-18,29,5:22,20:17-20; Acts 1:11, 15-17; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52; Philippians 2:5-11,3:20,21; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; Hebrews 1:1-3; Romans 9:5; 1 Timothy 2:5;1 John 2:2; Revelation 20:1-3.

2.3 God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully Divine. He inspired people to write the Scriptures; through illumination, He enables people to understand truth; He exalts Christ; He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment; He calls people to the Savior, and effects regeneration and brings believers to repentance and fellowship with God and with the Body of Christ. At the moment of regeneration, He permanently places every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer until the day of final redemption. His presence in the believer is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of Christ and to Heaven someday. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church.

Isaiah 6:1-4; John 14:15-17, 6:7-10, 15:26, 16:7-15; 2 Corinthians 5:5, 1:21,22; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 2 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

3. Mankind

Mankind is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. In the beginning, man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By their free choice, Adam and Eve sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, mankind transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence, whereby his posterity inherited a sin nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as people are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring people into His holy fellowship and enable mankind to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image and in that Christ died for people; therefore, every person possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and love.

Genesis 1:26-30; Genesis Chapter 3; Psalm 1:4-6; Matthew 16:27; John 3:16; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25, 8:14-18,29,; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

4. Grace

God's grace is His unmerited favor and kindness extended to those who deserve His wrath, due solely to His love for us and Jesus' taking upon Himself the punishment deserved by us.

Romans 5:15-21; Ephesians 2:8,9; Romans 1:21-23; Colossians 1:26-28; 1 Peter 1:10-12; Revelation 22:17.

5. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole person and is offered freely to all who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer by paying the sin debt of the whole world on the cross, effective only to those who receive it by faith. In its broadest sense, salvation includes justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe the Bible teaches that God offers salvation, forgiveness, and restoration of a relationship with Him to all who in this life seek it by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By personal faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus as the Son of God who died in full and final payment for one's sin, everyone who believes (relies or trusts) in Jesus is rescued (delivered) from the penalty of his/her sins, and at that moment becomes a child of God forever. The gift of salvation is given by God and appropriated on an individual basis solely by faith in Christ because of His love and grace, wholly apart from any human effort or merit. Personal salvation is the only way of forgiveness, victory over sin, and escape from eternal judgment. Believing in Jesus is the only requirement for receiving the gift of eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12, 3:16, 5:24, 6:44, 6:47, 8:24, 10:9, 27-29, 11:25-26, 14:6, Acts 10:43, 13:37,38; Ephesians 1:7; Acts 3:19-21,4:12;13:37-39,16:31; Colossians 3:21-23; 2 Tim 1:9; Titus 3:5,6; Romans 3:20-24, 4:4-5; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 8,9; Galatians 2:16, Chapter 3; Colossians 1:26-28;1 Peter 1:10-12,18-20; 1 John 5:11-13.

5.1 Justification

Justification is the position of God's gracious and full legal acquittal, based on Christ's full payment of an individual's sin debt and the crediting (imputation) of His perfect righteousness to that person at the moment of faith in Him. Justification brings the believer forever and unchangeably into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

5.2 Sanctification (set apart)

Sanctification is the process, beginning with regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him/her. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerated person's life, but will never reach perfection on this side of Heaven.

5.3 Eternal Glorification

Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

Romans 3:21-4:5; 5:1,8:1,30;37-39; Titus 3:5,6; Hebrews 10:14-18; Colossians 1:22; Hebrews 10:10-14; Revelation 3:20,21,1,22:1-5.

5.4 Adoption

As believers in Jesus, we have been adopted at the moment of faith in Jesus as God's children into His forever family.

Romans 8:16,9:8; Galatians 3:27; Titus 3:5,6; 2 Timothy 1:9; Hebrews 12:7; 1 John 3:1; Revelation 21:7.

6. Eternal Security and the Assurance of Salvation

Eternal security is the work of God, based on His promises in the Word and the finished, all-sufficient one-time payment for sin by Jesus on the cross, that the gift of eternal life, once received, is forever and can never be lost.

Assurance of Salvation is the certain knowledge that one is eternally secure in Christ. Believers in Jesus are kept eternally secure by the power of God through His promises, and it is their privilege to enjoy the certainty of salvation based solely on their faith in Jesus. Good works, if done for God's glory, may have a secondary, confirmatory value to the believer's reliance on faith in Christ for his/her assurance. A believer's assurance may falter and fail, but their Eternal Security rests in the unchanging, complete, once-for-all-finished work of Christ on the cross.

Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve and quench the Holy Spirit, bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God unto salvation. Sin in a believer's life causes a break in fellowship with God, which is restored by confession; however, a believer's relationship with God, based on their faith, God's promises in the Word, and Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, is forever and can never be lost.

John 5:24;10:27-29; Romans 8:1,39; 1 John 5:11-13; Eph 2:4-7; Ephesians 1:13,4:30; 2 Corinthians 1:22.

7. Resurrection & Judgment of Mankind

We believe in the bodily resurrection and judgment of all mankind. Those who die without believing in Jesus will be resurrected to experience God's judgment for their sin at the Great White Throne Judgement, then suffer apart from God in the Lake of Fire forever. The bodies of believers who have died will be resurrected, transformed, and reunited with the immaterial part of their being already in heaven enjoying eternal life with God.

We believe those who have placed their faith in Jesus, whose sins have already and forever been judged on Christ, will appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, where their works will be evaluated not to determine where they will spend eternity (Heaven or Hell), but for the purpose of receiving rewards for good works done with the right motives, in the body, or suffering loss of reward for failure to have faithfully obeyed, followed, and been good stewards of the resources, including financial, that God has loaned them, and so glorified Christ during their earthly life in the works He has prepared in advance for them to do.

Matthew 25:21,23; Luke 12:16-21, Ch.16; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Corinthians 8-10; Matthew 6:13; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15,4:5; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Phillipians Ch. 4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; 2 Corinthians 5:610; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2 Corinthians 8-10; Revelation 22:12.

8. The New Nature

We believe that every believer, while now possessing a new nature, still possesses a sinful old nature that cannot be eradicated in this life. God has made full provision through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit for believers to control this sinful nature and live holy lives. No one except Jesus has ever lived a perfect and sinless life. All believers are to strive to become more like Jesus. They are not to use their liberty in Christ as an occasion to sin.

Ephesians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:11-13, 8:2, 4, 12-13; Galatians 5:13, 16-23; Ephesians 4:13, 22-24; Colossians 3:1-10; 15; 2 Peter 2:16.

9. Spiritual Gifts

We believe the Holy Spirit gives one or more spiritual gifts (special or supernatural capacities or abilities) to every believer at salvation for the glory of God, the building up of the body of Christ, and for reaching those who do not believe. We encourage believers to discover and exercise the gifts with which they've been entrusted for the glory of God, and in their faithfulness to exercise them will be evaluated by God at the Judgement Seat of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-16; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11,28.

10. The Ceremonies of Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion)

Water baptism is a ceremony where the believer is immersed in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Baptism is a public demonstration of faith in Jesus and a desire to follow Him.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience in which believers in Jesus Christ remember the death of their Redeemer by partaking of the bread (representing His body broken for them) and the fruit of the vine (representing His blood shed for them).

Matthew 3:11-17; 28:19-20; Luke 3:21-22; Chapter 22; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5, 1 Corinthians 10:16-21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12-13.

Neither water baptism nor participation in the Lord's Supper are requirements for salvation or for keeping salvation, but are privileges for those who are already God's children by faith in Jesus.

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5, 1 Corinthians 10:16-21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12; 1 Corinthians 12:12.

11. Future Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the present world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised, and Christ will judge all people in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous (by faith) in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-12; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:18; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1; 22:13.

12. Stewardship

God is the owner of everything and is the source of all blessings, material, spiritual, temporal, and eternal; all that we have and all that we are we owe to Him. Believers, out of gratitude for God's grace and generosity, are privileged to serve and honor Him with their time, talents, and material possessions and

should recognize all these as temporarily entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. Christians should contribute their means, gifts, and abilities cheerfully, generously, regularly, effectively, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; 10:14; Psalm 24:1-2; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4, 19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21, 42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

13. Marriage as a picture of Christ and the church, Family, Gender, and Human Sexuality

We believe Scripture teaches that God created men and women in the image of God, each endowed with unique, but equal roles to be fulfilled within either singleness or marriage. By uniting one man with one woman, God ordained marriage as a holy covenant to reflect the relationship between Christ and the church. Those who accept and live within God's intended design for marriage, family, biological gender, and human sexuality as set forth in Scripture abide in His love in these areas.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Leviticus 18:22; Deuteronomy 22:5; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:15-17; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8, 14; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 19-20; 7:1-16.

14. Local Church

We believe the visible church is the local gathering of people who believe in Jesus for salvation and are organized to fulfill God's purposes for His people in the world.

Acts 2:41-47; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Hebrews 10:24-25; Ephesians 4:9-16; Colossians 3:15-17.

15. Universal Church

We believe the Church, in its invisible form, is universal and the true body of Christ. All believers are members of the universal Church regardless of organizational or denominational affiliation. For the Church, Jesus ordained the water baptism of believers and the regular observance of the Lord's Supper (Communion) until He returns. Obedience to Jesus in the practice of these ordinances is not a help, cause, or means of obtaining or maintaining salvation.

Romans 12:5; Acts 2:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

16. Satan

We believe Satan is a real being, a fallen angel, and the author of sin. He is the open and declared enemy of God and man and seeks to defeat God's plan for mankind. His fate was sealed when Jesus died on the cross. He is presently overcome when believers apply biblical truth and he will someday be cast into the Lake of Fire forever.

Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Colossians 2:15; Ephesians 6:10-18; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10.

ARTICLE IV. WHO WE ARE

We are a church of **real people** in **real relationships**, following the **real God**, who seek to grow in the following principles:

1. **Be loved by God.**
2. **Be love** to God, the lost, brothers and sisters in Christ, and ourselves by:
 - a. Meeting people where they are.
 - b. Creating an environment where it is okay to not be okay, but it is not okay to stay that way.
 - c. Being family, welcoming, obedient, purposeful, compassionate, selfless, on mission, loving, forgiving, gracious, patient, transparent, genuine, unified: all from being rooted in Jesus!
 - d. Manifesting Christ in response to the love we experience from God.
3. **When we fail to be love to others, we remember to be loved by God.**

ARTICLE V. AUTONOMY

Milestone Church Clinton is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs.

ARTICLE VI. GOVERNMENT, LEADERSHIP, AND ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

1. Milestone Church Clinton recognizes the Lord Jesus Christ as the eternal and sole head of the Church. (Colossians 1:18).
2. The affairs of Milestone Church Clinton shall be governed by a group of duly examined, qualified, and elected men known as the Elder Council (hereafter “the Council,” “Elder Council,” or “Elders”).
3. The Elder Council is subordinate and accountable to the Lord Jesus Christ as the head of the Church to lead in a way guided by the Holy Spirit and Scripture as interpreted and applied by the Council.
4. For the purposes of this Constitution and By Laws and accomplishing the work of the Church as stated herein, a quorum shall consist of at least 33% of the Active Church Membership.

ARTICLE VII. MEMBERSHIP

As a local Christian church, we offer our friendship and the good news of our Savior to all people. We offer fellowship in Christ to all believers in Jesus regardless of church membership or affiliation, except in specific cases involving believers who have set themselves against our teachings, practices, or any clear directive of the Word of God. In those cases, we do not offer fellowship to those whose continued involvement would, as determined by the Elder Council, be destructive or a hindrance to Milestone Church Clinton’s Mission and Purpose(s) or affect the unity of our Body.

To best relate to the world in which we live (how we govern ourselves, in the holding of property, in the receiving and distribution of offerings, qualifying those who fellowship with us for voting privileges and positions of responsibility), we shall practice formal church membership pursuant to herein. Application for Membership shall be submitted in writing to the Elder Council in a manner prescribed by the Council.

Active membership in this Church shall consist of all people who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the Official Membership Role.¹

1. Requirements for Membership

- a. Salvation by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone.
- b. Baptism by immersion after salvation as a step of obedience.
- c. Agreement with the Statement of Faith and By Laws herein.
- d. Completion of the Church's membership process as approved by the Elder Council.

2. Responsibilities of Membership

- a. A willingness to live by/support this Constitution and By Laws.
- b. To reasonably submit to the authority of the Church, its Constitution and By Laws, and its leaders. (Hebrews 13:17)
- c. To participate in and show interest in the affairs of Milestone Church Clinton.

3. Designation of Members

- a. Active Membership - Active Members are those who are 18 years old or above, meet the requirements of Article VII Sections 1 and 2 above, and have attended or shown interest in the affairs of the Church within the preceding three consecutive month period. Every effort shall be made to communicate with Active Members who are not in regular attendance. (See Article XII Membership Handbook)

4. It shall be the right of every Active Member to exercise one vote as stated in this Constitution and By Laws regarding:

- a. The adoption, modification, or amending of the Constitution and By Laws of the Church.
- b. The acquisition of real property and related indebtedness to that real property.
- c. The call or removal of Elders (see ARTICLE VIII Section 4)
- d. The Call of Deacons
- e. Approval of the annual church budget
- f. Other matters as deemed appropriate or necessary by the Elder Council.

5. Members shall be removed from Church membership for the following reasons: a.

Death

- b. Transfer of membership to another church or becoming a member of another church
- c. By request of the Member

¹ Any applicant for membership under the discipline of his/her prior church shall make such circumstances known to the Council at the time of application. The Council shall review the circumstances and status of this discipline prior to making a decision regarding church membership and may contact the prior church as appropriate. If applicable, each applicant is expected to inform the church of which he/she was most recently a member of his/her decision to transfer membership to Milestone Church Clinton.

- d. Failure of the Member, after counseling, to abide by the Responsibilities of Membership as determined by the Elder Council
- e. Imposition of church discipline after following the process in Matthew 18.
- f. Expulsion: In the exercise of its Biblical authority in discipline, when the church withdraws fellowship from a person, the rights and privileges of being a member cease immediately. (Matthew 18)

6. The Council may terminate membership in any of the following ways:

- a. Resignation: Any member who desires to resign from membership may do so by a letter of resignation presented to the Council. If the resignation is related to church matters, the Council will make every effort to resolve the issues prior to accepting the resignation. If it appears to the Council that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded (c.f. Matt. 18:12-20).
- b. Removal: The Council may remove a person from the Active Membership roll when that member has failed to participate in a service or show interest in the affairs of Milestone Church Clinton for three consecutive months, as determined by the Council, and no satisfactory answer has been given for the Member's prolonged non-participation.
- c. The Council may also remove a person from Active Membership if they no longer meet the conditions of Membership.
- d. Individuals who are removed from regular membership shall be notified promptly.

7. Restoration of Membership:

- e. Any person whose Membership has been terminated may be restored upon evidence of repentance or resolution of the issues causing the termination by recommendation of the Elder Council and/or affirmative vote of the church as determined by the Elder Council.

ARTICLE VIII. THE ELDER COUNCIL AND ELDERS

We believe Scripture teaches that the local Body of Christ is to be led by and under the oversight and care of Elders and an Elder Council. Elders are given authority by God and are responsible for seeing that those in the church body are being shepherded, that the church body is being spiritually fed and physically cared for through insightful, relevant, and accurate Biblical teaching, and Congregation Care ministries, and that the life of the church is being well managed, likely with the assistance of and support of other godly leaders. Elders are to guard the church body against harmful influences, confronting those contradicting biblical truth or continuing in patterns of sinful behavior.

Elders are men who are recognized spiritual leaders and shepherds who meet, at a minimum, the qualifications for an Elder found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and any additional requirements or qualifications as determined by the Elder Council.

The Council shall determine how many Elders may serve at any time, but at least three (3) Elders are needed to constitute a complete Council, and no more than twelve (12) active Elders shall serve at one time.

The Elder Council, when necessary to resolve matters, unless otherwise identified herein, shall decide matters by a simple majority vote of Active Elder Council members.

Individual Elder positions on issues discussed and/or decided by Council vote shall not be public information.

The Council may designate corporate officers as necessary to fulfill any legal requirements related to Milestone Church Clinton's incorporation.

Section 1. Specific Responsibilities of The Council of Elders:

1. Shepherd, loving, teaching, and caring for the church body at Milestone Church Clinton towards godliness and spiritual maturity, as well as physical care, to the glory of God and the good of mankind as identified in Scripture.
2. Praying for the Body at Milestone Church Clinton
3. Guarding Milestone Church Clinton's Statement of Faith, including the interpretation and application of Scripture when needed.
4. Directing and organizing the affairs of Milestone Church Clinton in such a manner as to best fulfill God's purpose(s) for Milestone Church Clinton
5. Rendering an interpretation of any part of these By Laws when such is needed.
6. Proposing changes to this Constitution and By Laws and presentation to the Membership for final vote and approval pursuant to process(es) identified herein.
7. Holding each other accountable to live according to the high standards of life and conduct for Elders identified in Scripture and the qualifications for Eldership identified below.
8. Each Elder must be in an ongoing and rotating accountability relationship with another Elder or Elders based around the spiritual disciplines and critical elements in such a relationship, such as prayer, the Word, confession, etc.
9. Each Elder is expected to seek at least one member of the Church outside of their immediate family to enter into an ongoing accountability relationship.
10. Any Elder overseeing Church staff shall ensure that church staff are in an appropriate accountability relationship with an Elder of the same sex or another same-sex mature member of the church.
11. Each Elder is expected to share a saving Gospel message once a month outside of church events.
12. Oversight of staff.
13. Oversight of finances.
14. Oversight of Deacons (if any).
15. Oversight of leadership, including Ministry Leaders.
16. Oversight of Membership (including maintaining the Membership role) and the Membership process.

Section 2. Procedures for Appointment of an Elder to the Elder Council

1. Not less than annually or as it deems appropriate, the Council shall request of the Membership, in writing, the names of men they wish to have considered as Elder candidates.
2. The Council may select one or more men from the names offered by the Membership as prospective new Elder candidates to be examined and qualified by the Council and approved by the Membership as Elders pursuant to this Constitution and By Laws and Scripture. The Council may also consider candidates outside of the names submitted by the Membership and may offer their own candidates for consideration.
3. The Council shall examine candidates pursuant to a process it deems appropriate and determine if any Elder candidate(s) is/are qualified to serve as an Elder based on the following:

- f. The Elder candidate shall be an Active Member at Milestone Church Clinton;
 - g. The Elder candidate meets the qualifications for Elder set forth in Scripture (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1);
 - h. The Elder candidate has the appropriate spiritual, mental, and emotional maturity;
 - i. The Elder candidate has the appropriate capacity (time, availability, interest, etc.);
 - j. The Elder candidate has doctrinal beliefs strongly consistent with the Bible (as articulated in this Constitution and By Laws);
 - k. The Elder candidate is in full agreement with this Constitution and By Laws as to the governing structure of the Church;
 - l. The Elder candidate is committed to, supports, and models, to the extent practicable, Milestone Church Clinton's Constitution and By Laws, purpose(s), Mission, Who We Are, and philosophy of ministry;
 - m. The Elder candidate must articulate the Gospel as they understand it to the Elder Council and same shall be fully consistent with the statement of faith herein;
 - n. The Elder candidate must share the Gospel with a non-Church member in the presence of an Elder;
 - o. The Elder candidate has demonstrated an appropriate length and level of commitment to Milestone Church Clinton as determined by the Council;
 - p. The Elder candidate is able to support and implement Council decisions that may differ from his personal views:
4. The Council may allow for input, in a manner and timing at its discretion, an opportunity for the Membership, as part of the Elder qualification process, to meet informally with prospective Elder candidates and for the Council to receive feedback from such meetings as part of the Elder qualification process. In the special case requiring discretion or the existence of personal issues involving an elder candidate, private meetings may occur, with at least two Elders present with any concerned party and the Elder candidate. The Council may use information from such private meetings as part of its deliberation process but shall not make such information public except as agreed by the Council, the Elder candidate, and any concerned party.
 5. The Council shall determine, after congregation input, which candidate(s), if any, is/are qualified to serve.
 6. At a regular church service, the Elder Council shall present qualified elder candidates and recommend them to the Congregation, subject to the approval (i.e., voting pursuant to this Constitution and By Laws) of the church Membership.
 7. At or immediately after the presentation of the Elder candidate(s) to the church in such a manner as the Council deems appropriate, the Council shall distribute and receive ballots to the Members of the church (including the opportunity for comments) to vote for or against each of the qualified Elder candidate(s) presented by the Council to the Membership. Ballots shall be returned to the Council in such a manner as the Council deems appropriate.
 8. An Elder candidate shall be approved to become a member of the Council by the church Membership if at least 75% of a quorum of Active Members vote in favor of such Elder candidate.
 9. The Council shall discuss the results of the voting with the Elder candidate, and the candidate, if approved by the congregation and desires the role, shall be installed as a member of the Council, be publicly recognized, and begin to serve in that role as soon as practicable. New Elders may be allowed

to speak at a church service during or after their candidacy process at the discretion and timing of the Elder Council.

Section 3. Term of Service as an Elder

1. Normally, once a man has been recognized and appointed as an Elder, he shall continue to be recognized as having the office of Elder for as long as he continues to be a Church Member and/or fulfills the duties and qualifications of an Elder identified herein subject to the 'reaffirmation' process in Section 7 below.
2. An Elder may resign his position by providing two weeks of written notice to the Council. The Council shall communicate with the Church Membership no later than the second Sunday following the date the Elder tendered his resignation, along with such reason(s) that the resigning Elder and the Council mutually agree to state.
3. At times, an Elder may elect to become "inactive" as an Elder. An Elder may go on "inactive status" with not less than two weeks written notice to the Council. Not less than two weeks after said notice, the Council shall communicate with the church membership that an Elder has assumed such status, along with such reason(s) as the inactive Elder and the Council mutually agree to state.
4. Inactive Elders shall not have the right to attend or participate in meetings of the Council.
5. An Elder on inactive status who desires to return to Active status shall submit his written request to the Council. An Inactive Elder may be reinstated to Active status through the following process:
 - a. The Council, after discussion and if in agreement to return the inactive Elder to Active status, shall vote to recommend the inactive Elder be returned to Active status. Upon the affirmative vote of at least 75% of the Elder Council, the "inactive" Elder shall be presented to the Membership for their input into his return to active status as below.
 - b. In such way(s) as the Council deems appropriate, the Council shall communicate with and seek feedback from the Membership regarding an inactive Elder's request to return to active status. Then, if still determined to continue with the reinstatement to Active status, distribute and receive ballots in a manner and timing it deems appropriate to the Active Members of the church to vote for or against the return of the inactive Elder to Active status, with an opportunity to comment.
 - c. To qualify for reappointment, an inactive Elder must receive at least a vote of 75% or more of a quorum of Active Membership in favor of their return to active status.

Section 4. Removal of an Active Elder

1. The Council shall have the authority to recommend to the Membership and call for a vote of the Members for an Active Elder to be removed from office pursuant to the below.
2. If the Council, after fulfilling all appropriate provisions of Matthew 18, votes by at least a 75% vote to remove an Active Elder, the Elder shall be removed from his position. The percentage of votes shall not include the Elder considered for removal.
3. If the Council votes by a simple majority to remove an Active Elder from office, the Council shall announce to the Members that it is evaluating all Elders and request pertinent information or concerns regarding all Elders from the Members using any process the Council determines is appropriate. This is done for discretion to protect the Elder being investigated for unconfirmed allegations.
4. After review of all information obtained, if desiring to proceed with the removal, the Council shall bring the matter to the Membership for a vote on removal. If at least 75% of a quorum of the Active Membership (not including the Elder being considered for removal) votes in favor of removal, the Elder shall be removed from office.

5. When there are only one or two active Elders and church discipline or removal of an active Elder appears to be the Biblical next step, an accuser and one or two witnesses may, in writing, call for a special meeting of the Active Elders and Members. The accused Elder must be invited to this “hearing” and served a two-week advance notice. Such meetings are to be moderated by a mediation ministry such as Peacemaker Ministries or a similar organization. The Peacemaker Ministries (or similar third-party organization) representative and the other Elder(s), if any, will have the opportunity to make recommendations and call for a vote of the total Active Membership who attend the hearing.

Section 5. Informal and Formal Elder Feedback

The Membership shall have the ongoing opportunity to provide informal feedback or comment on all Active Elders. Additionally, no Elder shall continue in an Active status for more than three (3) years without the Membership having the opportunity to offer formal feedback on each Elder’s service as an Elder. The results of any such feedback shall be discussed between the Council and the Elder receiving the feedback, and action, if any, decided by the Council and the Elder receiving feedback. This feedback is solely for the benefit of the subject Elder as to how the Membership is perceiving his eldership and how he might serve more effectively, if appropriate.

ARTICLE IX. CALL OF PASTOR, CALL OF ELDER TO A SPECIAL ROLE

Section 1. Call of Pastor

In the case of a candidate for a vocational role, including Pastor, who is not currently serving as an Active Elder at Milestone Church Clinton, the process below shall apply.

Any candidate must meet the qualifications of Elder as stated in Scripture and closely align with Milestone Church Clinton’s Purpose, Mission, Statement of Faith, and Who We Are under the following process:

1. The Elder Council may seek input from, and in any case, shall determine and communicate to the Membership for comment on the process to call a person to a specific vocational service and title, including Pastor, at Milestone Church Clinton.
2. Such process may, but may not be limited to, the creation of a search team consisting of a diverse group of church Members and possibly non-members or faithful (as defined by the Council) attendees, overseen by an Active Elder, to seek God’s man for a vocational role such as Pastor at Milestone Church Clinton.
3. The search team (if any) shall keep the Elder Council, Church Staff, and Membership informed of progress.
4. After appropriate due diligence, the search team shall narrow the field of prospective Pastor Candidates for Elder Council and staff examination.
5. Elder Council shall conduct interviews and other necessary processes as it deems appropriate to evaluate Pastor Candidates. Then the Elder Council, with a 75% vote of Active Elders, will select a Pastor candidate for Membership review and approval.
6. After Membership review and a Membership vote of at least 75% of a quorum approving the Pastor Candidate, the Elder Council will make an offer to call the Pastor Candidate.
7. A vocational job (full or part-time) including Pastor shall not initially include a seat on the Elder Council.
8. After an appropriate length of time as determined by the Council, a man serving as a Pastor in a vocational role at Milestone Church Clinton who is not an Active Elder at Milestone Church Clinton may be invited by the Council to be a candidate for appointment as an Elder in accordance with Section 2 above.

9. Should the Pastor be appointed as an Elder in accordance with Section 2 above, the Pastor shall not have authority in church matters above and beyond any other Elder but shall have the same authority as the other Elders in regard to overall church leadership and decision-making.
10. Any Pastor (full or part-time), prior to being appointed as an Elder (if ever) at Milestone Church Clinton, serves subordinate to and at the discretion of the Elder Council.

Section 2. Call of Elder to a Special Role

The Elder Council may call, at its discretion and timing, one or more Active Elders to serve in a special, possibly vocational capacity (hereinafter special role) in a title, including Pastor, and with job duties and compensation (if any) determined by the Council per the following:

1. He (or they) (any Elder or Elders serving in a special role or capacity) shall have the same authority as the other Elders in regard to overall church leadership and decision-making, but are Active Elders who are simply called by the Council to additionally serve in some special, and possibly vocational (financially compensated) way, and
2. Any active Elder serving in a special role does so at the discretion of the Elder Council and can be removed from the special role by a 75% or greater vote of the Elder Council at the Council's discretion and timing.
 - a. Removal of an active Elder serving in a special role does not remove that person from Active Eldership unless done so in accordance with the Elder removal process identified herein.
3. If the Council determines to call an Elder to serve in a special role, after informing the Membership, eliciting and reviewing Members' feedback as it deems appropriate, should the Council desire to proceed with the call, the Council shall recommend said candidate(s) to the Membership and call for a vote of the Membership. A candidate for a special role must receive a vote of affirmation from at least seventy-five percent (75%) of a quorum of Active Members in favor of an appointment to serve in a specific special role.

ARTICLE X. THE CALL OF DEACONS

The role of a Deacon is to serve as an assistant to the Council under the Council's leadership and direction (in keeping with the example in Acts 6). At the discretion of the Council, people may be appointed as a Deacon for a specific or general role or function, time of service, and given the title of "Deacon." Deacons must meet the qualifications for godly character stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-11, display appropriate gifting, passions, and commitment to the church body, and a desire to serve. (See Section 1.2 below for Deacon qualifications). These appointments may be but are not necessarily permanent.

Deacons serve in their role and in that Office at the discretion of the Elder Council.

Section 1. Procedure for Appointment of a Deacon

1. After seeking recommendations for Deacon candidates from the Membership and/or the Council, the Council may select the names of one or more candidates to be examined, qualified, and recommended to the Membership for the Office of Deacon.
2. The Council, by a vote of at least seventy-five percent (75%) in favor, shall examine and determine which Deacon candidate(s), if any, is/are qualified to serve as deacon(s) based on the following. The qualifications for the office of Deacon include:
 - a. Be an Active Member or in the Membership process of Milestone Church Clinton;
 - b. Meet the criteria stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-11;

- c. Have the appropriate spiritual, mental, and emotional maturity;
 - d. Have the appropriate capacity (time, availability, etc.).
 - e. Have doctrinally sound beliefs in full agreement with the Statement of Faith herein;
 - f. Be committed to Milestone Church Clinton's Purpose(s), Constitution and By Laws, Mission, Who We Are, and Philosophy of Ministry.
 - g. Exhibit a giftedness/passion for service.
 - h. Other qualifications as determined by the Elder Council.
3. Candidates who are qualified by the Council shall be recommended to the Membership for input regarding the Deacon candidate(s).
 4. The Council shall determine by a vote of 75 % or greater majority, after Membership input, which Deacon candidates shall be recommended to be voted on by the Membership.
 5. If the Deacon candidate(s) have received at least 75% approval of a quorum of Active Members, the Council shall call the candidate to the Office of Deacon as appropriate.
 6. At a regular church service, Deacon candidates who are approved by the Council and the Membership shall be presented as Deacon(s) and begin to serve in that role as soon as practicable.

Section 2. Term of Service as a Deacon

- 1) Once an individual has been qualified, approved, and installed as a Deacon, the person shall continue to be recognized as a Deacon for as long as the Council deems appropriate.
- 2) A Deacon may resign the position by providing a two-week written notice to the Council. No later than the second Sunday following the date the Deacon gave resignation, the Council shall communicate the same with the church membership, along with such reason(s) that the resigning Deacon and the Council mutually agree to state.

ARTICLE XI. PROPERTY

The real estate of this Church shall not be acquired, sold, exchanged, mortgaged, leased, or otherwise encumbered except by recommendation of the Council and at least a 75% vote of a quorum of the Membership at a duly called church business meeting.

ARTICLE XII. ADOPTION OF THIS CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS

This Constitution and By Laws shall be adopted and will become effective upon the affirmation by at least a simple majority of a vote by attendees at a duly called meeting for that purpose at or after an opportunity to review and discuss this Constitution and By Laws in draft occurs at a duly called Church meeting at which a quorum is not required to be present. Such adoption shall simultaneously affect a repeal of any previously adopted Constitution and By Laws.

ARTICLE XIII. MEMBERSHIP HANDBOOK

In addition to this Constitution and By Laws, the Elder Council intends to propose, adopt, and maintain a Membership Handbook to further identify and clarify additional processes and procedures, subordinate to and not inconsistent with this Constitution and By Laws to accomplish the work of the church,

including, but not limited to the Membership process detailed in this Constitution and By Laws. These Membership Handbook processes and procedures may be adopted by the Council, after proposal and discussion with the Membership, but shall not require a Membership vote to adopt and shall be modified and timely communicated to the Membership in writing by the Elder Council. Until such time as the Elder Council adopts such Membership Handbook procedures, the Council shall continue to determine these procedures as identified in this Constitution and By Laws. Once a process is adopted into the Membership Handbook and communicated to the Membership, the Council and Church shall operate consistent with same until/unless said process or procedure is modified by the Council pursuant to the Membership Handbook process identified herein.

ARTICLE XIV. REVISIONS TO THIS CONSTITUTION AND BY LAWS

No part of this Constitution and By Laws shall be revised in such a way as to modify or hinder accomplishment of its original purpose.

Section 1. Substantive Revisions to this Constitution and By Laws

Substantive revisions shall be defined as revisions that do not meet the criteria for minor revisions identified in Section 3 below. Substantive revisions to this Constitution and By Laws shall be recommended by a 75% or greater vote of the Council for Membership vote. Such recommendation(s) shall be made in writing and presented for discussion at a duly called and noticed meeting of the Active Members, a meeting at which a quorum shall not be required. Adoption of substantive revisions shall require approval by a vote of at least 75% of 40% or more of the total Active Membership. This vote may be taken without another meeting in a manner and at the presentation meeting at the discretion of the Elder Council.

Section 2. Minor modification to This Constitution and By Laws

As they become necessary, minor, ministerial, limited procedural (such as taking a vote by show of hands or electronically instead of via paper ballot) as defined by at least a 75% majority of the Council) limited to defined sections of this Constitution and By Laws that do not alter, conflict with, or contradict the current Constitution and By Laws may be adopted for clarification and simplicity/efficiency of conducting Church business. The Council may, at its discretion, seek congregational input. Substantive changes to these By Laws, especially in the Statement of Faith or voting processes or quantity of votes needed to pass/fail actions, etc. are not to be considered minor modifications and shall be accomplished pursuant to Section 2 above. In any case, if/when the Council decides to adopt what it defines as minor modifications to this Constitution and By Laws, within five (5) days of Council approval, such minor modifications to this Constitution and By Laws shall be communicated to the Church Membership in a manner approved by the Council.

Section 3. Church Name Change

Within 12 months of the adoption of this Constitution and By Laws, the name of Milestone Church Clinton may be changed in accordance with the below:

1. The Elder Council may elicit from the Membership proposed names for the Church. The Elder Council will, by a process at their discretion, seek the will of the Membership in regard to the name of the Church. At a duly called meeting, or meetings of the Membership, after discussion, will vote to adopt a name change. The name of the Church will be changed upon a simple majority of a quorum of Members voting for the proposed name change.

ARTICLE XV. CHURCH MINISTRIES

Recognized and promoted ministries of the Church shall be consistent with the herein Statement of Faith and this Constitution and By Laws. The ministries are to be under the supervision of a Ministry Leader reporting to the Church leadership. In order for a ministry to be considered as a ministry of the church it must be recognized by the Church to ensure appropriate accountability, doctrine, integrity, and management of such ministries.

Organic ministries prompted by the Holy Spirit consistent with the purposes of the church initiated by members are not discouraged insofar as they do not detract from or conflict with the recognized ministries of the Church.

Section 1. Finance Team

1. The Finance Team (FT) shall consist of up to 6 people appointed by the Elder Council. Vacancies that occur in the FT for any reason shall be selected by the Elders and affirmed by the currently serving FT members. Members desiring to terminate their service should provide reasonable notice to the Elders and FT members. Reasonable notice is a minimum of 2 weeks.
2. The duties of the FT are, but not limited to:
 - a. Act in an advisory position to the Elder Council in determining the staffing level, benefits, and other compensations provided to church staff.
 - b. Continuously review the financial affairs of the church to provide a level of stewardship and financial accountability for the Church. Such review shall include, but not be limited to review of financial statements, to examination of prior approved disbursements for propriety, to consider the accounting and financial systems of the church to measure actual financial operations to budgeted amounts, and to review and recommend the proposed budget to the Council for the next Church fiscal year.
 - c. Maintain, per Section 2 below, adequate, current, and correct books and records of accounts.
 - d. Other duties and/or tasks as needed and assigned by the Elder Council.

Section 2. Records and Reports

1. The Church shall maintain, or require to be maintained, at a minimum, the following records and reports:
 - a. Adequate, current, correct financial and other books and records of accounts including an annual financial report.
 - b. Contribution statements for contributors.

ARTICLE XVI. DISSOLUTION

This corporation may be dissolved by a 75% or greater recommendation of the Council and a SeventyFive (75) % or greater vote of the Active Membership.

If Milestone Church Clinton should dissolve as a corporation, after meeting all responsibilities and paying all just obligations, none of its remaining assets shall inure to the benefit of any individual member of the corporation. In the event of its dissolution, all such assets shall, by recommendation of the Council and a simple majority vote of a quorum of the membership, be turned over to one or more organizations that are in harmony with the Purpose, Mission, and Statement of Faith of this corporation. Such organizations must also be recognized by the United States Treasury Department as non-profit and exempt under

section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) and are engaged in activities substantially similar to those of Milestone Clinton Church, to be accomplished pursuant to a plan adopted by the Elder Council. Any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the church is then located for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine.