

Bylaws

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Church Membership

Purpose and Goal of Membership

Membership within the Church exists to glorify God through unified fellowship, mutual edification, and faithful service in advancing the Gospel. Members are encouraged to live as genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, reflecting His love and truth in their personal and collective witness.

Candidacy

Membership in the universal Church—the Family of God—is granted through faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, publicly expressed through baptism.

Membership in this local body of believers further requires:

1. **Baptism** by Immersion: Either previously received as a believer or administered upon joining, in accordance with the historic practice of Baptist churches.
2. **Agreement**: Agree to cooperate harmoniously with the church's Faith Summary (available in the appendix of this document), seeking unity in faith and practice and refraining from speaking or acting against it.
3. **Orientation**: Completion of a prospective membership orientation class is strongly recommended to foster informed and engaged participation.

Membership may be granted through one of the following methods:

1. **Transfer** of Membership: From a church of like faith and order, by letter of transfer.
2. **Statement** of Faith: When a letter of transfer cannot be obtained—such as from a dissolved or unlocatable church—upon a credible statement of faith and baptism from a church of like faith and order.¹
3. **Declaration** of Faith: For individuals with no prior church membership or no affiliation with a church of like faith and order. In this case, membership is granted upon meeting the requirements above and, if needed, receiving baptism by immersion.

A majority vote of active members present at a regular or special business meeting (Church Conference) shall be required to approve any candidate for membership.

¹ Like Faith and Order simply refers to a church that substantively operates and believes the same as expressed in these bylaws and our faith summary and statement.

62 **Rights of Membership**

63 Membership in the church includes the following rights:

- 64 1. **Christian Accountability and Leadership:** Members are accountable to one another in
65 their Christian walk. As well as Spiritual guidance by the church's pastors and ministers.
- 66 2. **Leadership Eligibility:** Church leadership is reserved for active members.
- 67 3. **Voting Rights:** Active members, age 16 and older, will vote on significant matters,
68 including:
 - 69 ○ Annual operating budget and elected leadership.
 - 70 ○ Indebtedness for real estate purchase or construction.
 - 71 ○ Cumulative indebtedness exceeding 2% of the annual budget for other matters.²
 - 72 ○ A single purchase at or exceeding 5% of the previous fiscal year's undesignated
73 contributions.³
 - 74 ○ Amendments or restatements to the articles of incorporation, constitution, bylaws,
75 or faith summary or statement.
 - 76 ○ Disposition of substantially all church assets.
 - 77 ○ Merger or dissolution of the church.
 - 78 ○ Removal of a member following church discipline.
 - 79 ○ Confirmation or calling of pastors.
 - 80 ○ Accepting of new members
 - 81 ○ Other extraordinary actions deemed necessary by pastors or Ministry Teams.

82 **Notification:** All items requiring a vote will be communicated to the church at least 14 days in
83 advance.

84 **Voting Method:** All votes should be taken in person and are public except for Church Discipline
85 and other sensitive matters. In such cases a ballot will be used with the results reported. Unless
86 otherwise stated in the bylaws, a simple majority vote of the active members present is required
87 for passage.⁴

88 **Delegation and Authorization:** The Church delegates authority to the appropriate staff
89 members and/or Ministry Teams to make all other administrative and operational decisions not
90 specifically outlined above.

91

² The Stewardship Team is authorized with advice and consent of the pastor and trustees to enter into small-scale financial agreements on behalf of the church, such as leases for office equipment or service contracts similar in nature to cell phone or internet plans. These agreements may involve modest debt or ongoing financial commitments. While the team has discretion in such matters, the cumulative indebtedness incurred through these agreements should remain reasonable and not place undue burden on the church. The church body should be informed of any such agreements to ensure transparency and accountability.

³ In this case the idea is the expenditure of cash on hand.

⁴ The intent of this policy is twofold: (1) the results of all votes should be publicly disclosed (e.g., 60% in favor, 40% opposed), and (2) voting should ordinarily be conducted publicly, with members expressing their vote by standing, raising a hand, or speaking. However, in cases where it is necessary to confirm membership status or other sensitive matters, a ballot vote may be used.

92 Membership Expectations

93 Active membership reflects an ongoing commitment to Christ and His church. These
 94 expectations are intended to foster faithful discipleship, meaningful accountability, and effective
 95 pastoral care. They are not burdens, but ordinary expressions of Christian faith and fellowship.
 96 Individuals are considered Active Members when they regularly, within their abilities and unless
 97 good cause is given⁵, pursue the following:

- 98 1. **Attendance** of Worship Gatherings and/or Small Groups⁶
- 99 2. Volunteer **service** in some aspect of church life and/or programming
- 100 3. **Financial** contribution and support
- 101 4. Continued **harmonious cooperation** with the church's Faith Summary

103 Inactive Membership

104 Members who, over a period of six (6) months, neglect participation in at least three of the
 105 Membership Expectations and the life of the church, without good cause, may be moved to the
 106 inactive roll. This designation is not disciplinary in nature, but serves to promote responsible
 107 stewardship of church membership, clarify eligibility for participation in significant
 108 congregational decisions—including financial, doctrinal, associational, and missional matters—
 109 and support appropriate pastoral awareness and care. Inactive members may not vote and are
 110 ineligible for leadership roles. They may be restored to active status upon repentance,
 111 reaffirmation of commitment to the Membership Expectations, and renewed faithful
 112 participation.

114 Removal of Membership

115 Church membership is relinquished and the individual's name removed from the membership
 116 roll for any of the following reasons:

- 117 1. Death.
- 118 2. Request for removal by the member.
- 119 3. Transfer of membership to another church.
- 120 4. Failure to uphold Membership Expectations for more than 18 months, following gracious
 121 admonishment⁷.
- 122 5. Unrepentant sin leading to church discipline.

⁵ Situations such as the unforeseen major expenses, loss of a job, nursing homes stays, rehab, professional or military service in which the individual is physically incapable of attending, legal proceedings, highly contagious illness, family obligations or the like.

⁶ Both public worship gatherings and small groups are expected of members, however attendance is only tracked in the small groups and thus is the "attendance" standard that is considered when evaluating active status

⁷ In mind here is some sort of correspondence such as an email, letter or call from the church office.

124 Church Discipline

- 125 1. **Definition:** Church discipline addresses members who are neglectful of their Christian
 126 duties or engage in conduct dishonoring to Jesus Christ and detrimental to the church's
 127 welfare. Following the biblical instructions in Matthew 18:15–17, discipline occurs when
 128 private, gracious admonition fails.
 129
- 130 2. **Steps of Discipline:**
 - 131 ○ Private, gracious admonition — biblical correction and counsel aimed at repentance
 132 and restoration (Colossians 1:28; 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14) — by pastors,
 133 ministers, or other members.
 - 134 ○ Suspension from certain privileges (e.g., the Lord's Supper etc.) for a definite period.
 - 135 ○ Removal from leadership or office.
 - 136 ○ Removal of Membership, if necessary, will occur with a two-thirds vote of the active
 137 members present at a regular or special business meeting provided the member in
 138 question is given seven days advance notice and an opportunity to be heard at such
 139 meeting prior to the vote.
- 140 3. **Restoration:** The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded,
 141 upon request of the excluded person, and by two-thirds vote of active members present at
 142 a regular or special business meeting upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance
 143 and reformation
 144
- 145 4. **Purpose:** The purposes of church discipline are:
 - 146 ○ **Repentance and Growth:** To encourage repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual
 147 growth in the disciplined member (e.g., Proverbs 15:5, Galatians 6:1).
 - 148 ○ **Instruction for Others:** To provide a godly example and instruction in righteousness
 149 to the congregation (e.g., 1 Timothy 5:20, Titus 1:11).
 - 150 ○ **Church Spiritual Health:** To maintain the church's holiness and integrity (e.g.,
 151 Ephesians 5:27, 1 Corinthians 5:6–7).
 - 152 ○ **Witness to Non-Believers:** To uphold the church's testimony before the world (e.g.,
 153 Matthew 5:16, John 13:35).
 - 154 ○ **Glory to God:** To reflect God's holy character (e.g., Deuteronomy 5:11, 1 Peter
 155 2:12).
- 156 5. **Mediation:** Members agree to resolve disputes with the church through mediation before
 157 pursuing legal action. Mediation will:
 - 158 ○ Be conducted by a mutually agreed-upon mediator.
 - 159 ○ Follow the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation (Institute for Christian
 160 Conciliation).
 - 161 ○ Remain confidential, with outcomes not admissible in legal proceedings.

162 This provision does not apply to allegations of criminal conduct. Any suspected or known
163 criminal activity—including abuse, exploitation, or financial misconduct—shall be
164 reported promptly to the appropriate civil authorities, and the church will fully cooperate
165 with any investigation. Nothing in this provision is intended to discourage or prevent any
166 individual from reporting suspected criminal conduct to civil authorities.

167 This process reflects the biblical principle of resolving disputes within the church
168 community (1 Corinthians 6:1–7).

169 **Pastors and Staff**

170 **Pastors**

171 **Qualifications**

- 172 1. Pastors must meet the Qualifications of a Pastor. These qualifications are outlined in the
- 173 appendix to this document.
- 174 2. Each pastor must also be an active, giving, and serving member of the church.
- 175 3. Additional qualifications in the job description.

176 **Responsibilities**

177 Pastors oversee the ministry and resources of the church. Their primary focus is:

- 178 1. Prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1–6).
- 179 2. Shepherding the congregation (1 Peter 5:1–4).
- 180 3. Examining and instructing prospective members.
- 181 4. Conducting worship services and overseeing baptism and communion.
- 182 5. Equipping members for ministry and encouraging sound doctrine.
- 183 6. Administering church discipline and promoting global missions.
- 184 7. Ensuring that all who minister the Word align with the church's fundamental convictions.

185 **The Lead Pastor**

- 186 1. The Lead Pastor is recognized as particularly gifted and called to full-time ministry,
- 187 focusing on preaching, teaching, and administration of ordinances.
- 188 2. The Lead Pastor oversees the staff, administration, and ministries of the church.

189 **Lead Pastor Selection**

- 190 1. A selection team of 7–9 members, nominated by the Nominating Team and approved by
- 191 the congregation, will work to identify a candidate after seeking advice and counsel from
- 192 the Texas Baptists.
- 193 2. The new Lead Pastor will be called upon a three-fourths majority vote of the active
- 194 members present at a duly called church conference.
- 195 3. During the interim period, the Trustees will serve as the church's administrative
- 196 authority. The composition of the Trustees will not change until a new Lead Pastor is
- 197 secured, except in cases of death, incapacity, resignation, relocation, or other
- 198 extraordinary circumstances that make continued service impossible, in which case a
- 199 replacement may be elected in accordance with these bylaws.
- 200 4. The Lead Team, as defined in these bylaws, may secure one or more individuals to cover
- 201 the preaching responsibilities. However, the administrative duties of the church including
- 202 the management of the staff are to be the responsibility of the Trustees

203 **Lead Pastor Dismissal**

- 204 1. The church may vacate the Lead Pastor's position by a majority vote of the Lead Team
205 (excluding the Lead Pastor) and a three-fourths majority vote of active members at a duly
206 called church conference.
- 207 2. Notice of such action must be given at least 14 days in advance during a regular Sunday
208 service, and it must be communicated by a member of the Lead Team. During this 14-day
209 period, the Lead Pastor will be placed on administrative leave.
- 210 3. The Lead Pastor must be informed of any charges and given an opportunity to address the
211 congregation.
- 212 4. The Lead Team may release the Lead Pastor earlier than the notice period, and may
213 provide an appropriate severance not to exceed 60-days of pay and benefits as determined
214 by the Human Resources Team.

215 **Lead Pastor Resignation**

- 216 1. The Lead Pastor may resign at any time, providing at least 14 days' notice.
- 217 2. The Lead Team may release the Lead Pastor earlier than the notice period.

218 **Associate Pastors**

- 219 1. Additional pastors may be called as associates to assist the Lead Pastor.
- 220 2. These roles may include titles such as Executive or Associate Pastor and are tailored to
221 support the Lead Pastor's responsibilities.

222

223 **Church Staff**

224 **Tiers, Hiring and Termination**

225 The church shall operate with three distinct tiers of staff employment, in addition to that of
226 the Lead Pastor.⁸ Each tier is primarily defined by the nature and scope of responsibility and
227 authority.

228 All personnel decisions must comply with the Human Resources Policy Manual.

⁸ The church recognizes four employment tiers: **Lead Pastor, Tier One, Tier Two, and Tier Three**. These tiers are solely intended to indicate employment levels and should not be interpreted as theological or ecclesiological rankings.

229 **Tier One (Executive)**

230 This tier includes all pastoral staff and any roles with overarching, church-wide authority. This
 231 includes, but is not limited to, the Executive Pastors, Associate Pastors and other senior
 232 executive positions.

233 **Hiring:** Individuals in this tier require the recommendation of the Lead Pastor and must
 234 be approved by a majority vote of both the Human Resources Team and the active
 235 members present at a duly called Church Conference.

236 **Termination:** Termination requires the action of the Lead Pastor and the approval of the
 237 Lead Team. All terminations must follow the procedures outlined in the Human
 238 Resources Policy Manual.

239 **Tier Two (Minister/Administrator)**

240 This tier includes ministers and directors with responsibility over defined areas of ministry or
 241 administration.

242 **Hiring:** Requires the recommendation of the Lead Pastor and a majority vote of the
 243 Human Resources Team. No Church Conference vote is necessary.

244 **Termination:** May be initiated by the Lead Pastor and/or the staff member's immediate
 245 supervisor, following approval of the Human Resources Team. Terminations must adhere
 246 to the Human Resources Policy Manual.

247 **Tier Three (Professional)**

248 This tier includes support staff employed to assist church leadership. In addition to regular staff,
 249 the church may engage contract or temporary personnel such as interns, residents, or ministry
 250 trainees. These individuals serve under the direction of a supervisor with the approval of the
 251 Lead Pastor. Terms of service must align with guidelines set forth in the Human Resources
 252 Policy Manual.

253 **Hiring:** Conducted by the relevant Supervisor with the consent of the Lead Pastor
 254 following the notification of the Human Resources Team.

255 **Termination:** May occur at-will by the Supervisor and Lead Pastor, following the
 256 notification of the Human Resources Team, subject to the Human Resources Policy
 257 Manual.

258 **Qualifications**

- 259 1. All tier one and two staff must meet the Qualifications of a Pastor or Servant Leader, as
 260 defined in the appendix of these bylaws.

- 261 2. Teach and affirm the church's faith summary and statement in all private and public
 262 venues and mediums.
 263 3. Other requirements as specified by the specific job description.

264 **Responsibilities**

- 265 1. Staff responsibilities are determined by the pastor(s) or supervisor and detailed in written
 266 job descriptions.
 267 2. Staff must adhere to the Church Human Resources Policy Manual issued by the Human
 268 Resources Team.

269 **Duration of Service**

270 All church staff serve indefinitely at the discretion of the pastor(s), subject to the terms and
 271 procedures set forth in the Human Resources Policy Manual.

272 **Grounds for Termination**

273 Staff employment may be terminated for any of the following reasons:

- 274 1. Voluntary resignation.
 275 2. Dismissal due to immorality, misconduct, or failure to perform assigned duties.
 276 3. Any cause or process specifically outlined in the Human Resources Policy Manual.

277 **Staff Vacancies During a Lead Pastor Vacancy**

278 In the event of a Tier 1 or Tier 2 staff vacancy occurring during a Lead Pastor vacancy, the
 279 position may be filled on a temporary or interim basis. The Human Resources Team will
 280 determine the appropriate tier designation for the interim or temporary hire.

281 **Lay Leadership**

282 **Church Officers**

283 The designation of church officers identifies those authorized to make decisions, execute
 284 documents, manage church operations, and represent the church in legal and financial matters.
 285 This designation provides clarity, ensures accountability, defines roles and responsibilities, and
 286 establishes an orderly chain of command for effective governance and external transactions.

287
 288 Church Officers and are entrusted with leadership and administrative responsibilities essential to
 289 the ministry and governance of the church, as approved by the congregation.

290

291 **Church Officers – Ex Officio**

292 The following individuals are designated officers of the church by virtue of their calling and
 293 position.

- 294 • Lead Pastor
- 295 • Tier 1 and 2 Staff

296

297

298 **Church Officers – Elected**

299 **Qualifications and Conduct**

300

301 Church Officers must:

- 302 1. Be active and faithful members, participating in worship, service, and financial support.
- 303 2. Promote unity and avoid behavior that could be perceived as unethical or divisive.
- 304 3. Meet the qualifications of a Servant Leader, as defined in the appendix of these bylaws.

305 **Terms and Rotation**

- 306 1. All elected officer roles, with the exception of Trustees, are elected to one-year terms.
- 307 2. Elected officers, with the exception of Trustees, are nominated annually by the
- 308 Nominating Team and confirmed by a majority vote of the active members present at a
- 309 duly called Church Conference.
- 310 3. The Trustee body shall consist of three (3) to five (5) members serving staggered five-
- 311 year terms.
- 312 4. Trustees are nominated by the Nominating Team and confirmed by a majority vote of the
- 313 active members present at a duly called Church Conference.
- 314 5. All elected officers must be active members of the church in good standing for at least
- 315 two (2) years prior to nomination and throughout their term of service.

316 **General Governance Rules**

- 317 1. Elected officers may be lay or staff members
- 318 2. No individual may serve in more than one elected officer position at the same time.

319 **Elected Officers**

- 320 • The Clerk
- 321 • The Treasurer
- 322 • The Trustees
- 323 • The Moderator
- 324 • Deacon Chair

325

326 **Officers Roles**

327 **Trustees**

328 **Role and Authority**

329 The Trustees serve as the legal representatives of the congregation, safeguarding church property
 330 and overseeing legal and financial matters in accordance with applicable laws, the church's
 331 governing documents, and the direction of the congregation.

332 **Responsibilities**

333 Trustees are authorized, as approved by the congregation via vote or Ministry Team action, to:

- 334 • Buy, sell, lease, or transfer real or personal property.
- 335 • Obtain mortgages or loans.
- 336 • Execute contracts and incur obligations of substantial value.
- 337 • Authorize disbursement of church funds.
- 338 • Monitor the proper handling of church assets.
- 339 • Review church policies to ensure they are current, comprehensive and aligned with the
- 340 church's mission.
- 341 • No less than two Trustees' signatures are required for all legal documents.

342 Each year the Trustees shall elect a Chairperson and a Secretary from among their members to
 343 serve one-year terms. The Chairperson convenes and guides meetings and represents the
 344 Trustees as needed, and the Secretary maintains accurate records of Trustee actions. Neither role
 345 may be held for consecutive terms.

346 **Interim Administrative Authority**

347 In the event of a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Trustees shall serve as the church's administrative⁹

⁹ This provision does not diminish the responsibilities or authority of any staff members serving during a Lead Pastor vacancy, but is intended to support them in carrying out functions typically assigned to the Lead Pastor.

348 authority until a new Lead Pastor is called, in accordance with these bylaws and congregational
349 policy.

350

351 **Treasurer**

352 **Responsibilities:**

- 353 • Receiving, preserving, and disbursing funds or things of value given to the church.
- 354 • Keeping an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.
- 355 • Presenting a report of receipts and disbursements to the church at regular intervals.
- 356 • Ensuring periodic audits of financial records by a public accountant.

357 Financial records are the property of the church and will be retained accordingly.

358 Clerical responsibilities may be delegated to a staff member to assist the elected Treasurer.

359 All church records remain the property of the church.

360

361 **Clerk**

362 **Responsibilities:**

- 363 • Maintain an accurate and current record of all official actions of the church.
- 364 • Maintain and safeguard the official membership roll, including records of admission,
365 transfer, dismissal, death, baptism, and changes in membership status.
- 366 • Record changes in membership status in coordination with the Pastors and in accordance
367 with the procedures outlined in these bylaws, ensuring proper pastoral review and
368 congregational action where required.
- 369 • Issue letters of transfer or dismissal as authorized by congregational action.
- 370 • Preserve official communications, reports, and governing documents of the church.
- 371 • Provide required notices for Church Conferences and other meetings as specified in these
372 bylaws.
- 373 • Prepare and submit the annual church letter to the association.
- 374

375 Clerical responsibilities may be delegated to a staff member to assist the elected Clerk.

376 All church records remain the property of the church.

377

378 **Moderator**

379 **Responsibilities:**

380 The Moderator will serve to guide the Church Conferences and business meetings in accordance
381 with the Rules of Procedure, as defined in the appendix of these bylaws.

382 In the absence of the Moderator, the Clerk shall open the Church Conference and oversee the
383 selection of a Moderator to preside.

384

385 **Ministry Teams**

386 **Definition**

387 For the purposes of church governance and administration, *Ministry Teams* shall be defined as
 388 the standing teams of lay leadership established to assist in guiding and supporting the mission,
 389 ministries, and operations of the church. This designation collectively includes all Ministry
 390 Teams, the Deacon Team, and the Lead Team.

391 **Purpose**

392 Ministry Teams are formed to support the vision, ministry, and operations of the church. These
 393 teams serve as advisory and administrative bodies, enabling lay leaders to partner with the
 394 pastoral staff in fulfilling the church's mission. Each team operates as a representative body of
 395 the church, entrusted with decision-making authority within a clearly defined scope of
 396 responsibility.

397 **Formation and Dissolution**

398 With the exception of the Deacon Team and Lead Team, Ministry Teams shall be established on
 399 an as-needed basis. A Ministry Team may be dissolved when its responsibilities are assumed by
 400 church staff or when its function no longer aligns with the church's mission, priorities, or
 401 operational capacity. The formation and dissolution of Ministry Teams shall be recommended by
 402 the Lead Team with a congregational vote to change these bylaws.

403 **Qualifications**

404 Members of Ministry Teams must:

- 405 1. Be active church members who meet attendance, financial contribution, and length-of-
 406 membership requirements as determined by the Nominating Team.
- 407 2. Meet the Qualifications of a Servant Leader, as defined in the appendix of these bylaws.

408 **Composition**

- 409 1. Ministry Team composition will aim to reflect the church's diversity (gender, race,
 410 generation, etc.)
- 411 2. Each team will consist of six members unless otherwise defined, plus the Lead Pastor or
 412 staff designate.¹⁰
- 413 3. In addition, one active member between the age of 16-18 may be nominated to serve as a
 414 non-voting member of each Ministry Team. Such non-voting members may be dismissed
 415 by the Chair for matters of sensitivity such as personnel matters.
- 416 4. Efforts will be made to ensure that members bring relevant skills and experiences to their
 417 respective teams.
- 418 5. Immediate family members shall not serve concurrently on the same Ministry Team.
- 419 6. Apart from the Lead Team, members may not serve on more than one Ministry Team, be
 420 employed by the church or the immediate family member of any staff member without

¹⁰ The staff delegate serves to ensure communication and continuity between staff and lay leadership, and is not present to direct, control, or act as an informant for staff.

approval by the Lead Team and a special, majority, vote of active members at a duly called church conference.

7. All Ministry Team members will be nominated by the Nominating Team and elected by a church vote. Nominees for the Nominating Team will be made by the Lead Team and elected by church vote.

Terms of Service

1. Ministry Team members will serve three-year terms, with a yearly recommitment, to ensure fresh perspectives and shared leadership opportunities.
2. Members may not serve consecutive terms without at least a one-year hiatus unless otherwise approved by the Lead Team and a special, majority, vote of active members at a duly called church conference.

Leadership and Expectations

1. Each team will annually select a Chairperson and a Secretary for a one-year term.
 - The Chair sets agendas in consultation with pastoral staff and represents the team on the Lead Team.
 - The Secretary maintains accurate minutes, submitting them to the church office and the clerk, for record-keeping and team approval.
 - Neither position may serve consecutive terms.
2. Ministry Team members are expected to:
 - Attend all regular team meetings and respond to team communication in a timely manner.
 - Promote church unity and maintain confidentiality in discussions and decisions.

Specific Teams

Stewardship Team

Purpose: To oversee the judicious management of the church's financial resources, ensuring integrity and accountability.

Responsibilities:

- Initiate and lead the annual budget process by setting preliminary allocations for each ministry/team, collaborating with them to refine amounts, and retaining overall responsibility for budget creation while ministries/teams manage approved funds within established controls.
- Present the annual budget to the congregation for approval.

- 454 • Review monthly expenditures and, in partnership with the Church Administrator¹¹,
455 enforce adherence to budgeted spending limits with grace and flexibility while ensuring
456 financial health.
- 457 • Maintain oversight of financial policies and controls.
- 458 • Work with staff on significant non-budgeted expenditures and funding allocations.
- 459 • Ensure regular third-party audits of the church's financial records.

460 **Human Resources Team**

461 **Purpose:** To assist pastors with personnel management and policy development.

462 **Responsibilities:**

- 463 • Advise and consent on staffing, tier assignments, and job descriptions and establish
464 salaries and benefits in coordination with the Stewardship Team.
- 465 • Where needed approve hirings and terminations.
- 466 • Review annual performance evaluations.
- 467 • Oversee personnel policies, ensuring compliance with legal standards.
- 468 • Assist with staff recruitment, celebrations and transitions.

469 **Buildings and Grounds Team**

470 **Purpose:** To ensure the church's physical campus remains safe, functional, and well-maintained.

471 **Responsibilities:**

- 472 • Oversee repairs, maintenance, and campus improvement projects.
- 473 • Monitor facilities budgets and work with staff to prioritize needs.
- 474 • Maintain a biennial property review and report including a personal property inventory.

475 **Nominating Team**

476 **Purpose:** To identify and present qualified candidates for all Officers, Ministry Teams and
477 Deacons.

478 **Responsibilities:**

- 479 • Develop and oversee the process for selecting candidates.¹²
- 480 • Interview and vet all nominees to ensure alignment with church values and qualifications.
- 481 • Strive for a diverse and representative pool of nominees across the whole of the ministry
482 teams and other nominated leadership roles.

483 **Missions Team**

484 **Purpose:** To coordinate the church's local and global mission efforts.

485 **Responsibilities:**

- 486 • Maintain active relationships with supported missionaries and mission organizations.

¹¹ In the absence of a Church Administrator, the Stewardship Team will carry out this responsibility in cooperation with the Lead Pastor, maintaining the same standards of accountability and alignment with church leadership.

¹² It is expected that the Nominating Team will utilize the assistance of other groups and volunteers as appropriate. In particular, the Deacon Team may assist in identifying and vetting potential deacon candidates, given the number of nominees required each year.

- 487 • Obtain and review an annual report from each mission partner.
- 488 • Invite mission partner representatives to engage with the church when feasible and
- 489 economical.
- 490 • Visit foreign mission partners on the field, when feasible and economical, and report
- 491 back to the church.
- 492 • Promote missions' awareness within the church.¹³
- 493 • Administer the distribution of mission funds, including budgeted and designated
- 494 contributions not otherwise pre-allocated.

495 **Safety Team**

496 **Purpose:** To protect the church community by implementing security measures against potential
 497 physical threats and enforcing policies that ensure the safety of children and vulnerable
 498 individuals.

499 **Responsibilities:**

- 500 • Develop and oversee a church security plan, including emergency response protocols for
- 501 active threats.
- 502 • Train and coordinate a security response team, including collaboration with local law
- 503 enforcement and first responders.
- 504 • Regularly assess and improve the church's physical security, including access control,
- 505 surveillance, and emergency exits.
- 506 • Create and enforce policies that prevent abuse of children and vulnerable individuals by
- 507 church staff or volunteers, including background checks, screening procedures, and
- 508 training.
- 509 • Ensure all volunteers and staff working with minors complete required safety training and
- 510 adhere to established child protection policies.
- 511 • Oversee compliance with all applicable legal and insurance requirements regarding
- 512 church safety and child protection.
- 513 • Conduct periodic safety drills and evaluations to improve preparedness and response.

514

515 **Deacon Team**

516 **Purpose:** To assist pastors in ministering to the congregation's practical needs, particularly the
 517 vulnerable.

518 **Composition:** Due to the reactive nature and scope of care ministry, this team will be comprised
 519 of no less than 7 but no more than 45 men or women holding an active membership.

520 **Responsibilities:**

- 521 • Provide care for widows/widowers, orphans and fostering families.
- 522 • Oversee hospital and benevolence ministries.
- 523 • Encourage and strengthen the church staff.

¹³ In mind is something like - Plan and host an annual missions partnership awareness event, coordinate mission trips and service projects (including at least one local project with ministry staff), and communicate mission opportunities and updates to the congregation.

- Support other church projects as requested by the pastors.

525

526 **Lead Team**

527 **Purpose:** To provide high-level counsel and administrative oversight in extraordinary
528 circumstances.

529 **Composition:** Comprises the Chairperson of Ministry and Deacon Teams, all pastors, and the
530 Chairperson of the Trustees.¹⁴

531 **Responsibilities:**

- 532 • Advise the Lead Pastor on major projects, and long-term strategy that is not already in the
533 purview of other ministry teams or ministers.
- 534 • Ensure alignment and resolution across Ministry Teams, Deacons, Officers, and Staff and
535 arbitrate any disagreements.¹⁵
- 536 • Nominate candidates to serve on the Nominating Team.
- 537 • Assist the Trustees in church administration in the absence of a Lead Pastor.

538

539 **Select Teams**

540 **Purpose**

541 Select Teams exist to assist in accomplishing specific events, projects, or tasks that support the
542 ministries and mission of the church. They provide flexibility and mobilize members for defined
543 objectives without establishing permanent or authoritative bodies.

544 **Formation**

545 Any minister or staff member responsible for a specific ministry area or event may form a Select
546 Team to accomplish a designated purpose. Select Teams are not standing teams and dissolve
547 automatically upon completion of their assigned task or event.

548 **Membership**

549 All Select Team members must be active members of the church. Team size and composition are
550 determined by the minister or staff member overseeing the project, who may invite participants
551 based on relevant skills, interests, and availability.

552 **Authority and Accountability**

553 Select Teams do not carry governing or policy-making authority. They operate under the
554 direction and oversight of the minister or staff member who initiated their formation. Each Select
555 Team is accountable to that individual and, by extension, to the church's pastoral leadership.

¹⁴ There is no prohibition against brining in non-team-members as needed.

¹⁵ The role of the Leadership Team is not to overstep boundaries and meddle in others business but rather serve as the location for overarching coordination, alignment, and, if needed, resolution.

Duration

A Select Team's existence is usually temporary, limited to the completion of its assigned task or event. No Select Team may continue beyond its defined purpose without reauthorization by the supervising minister or staff member.

Temporary Volunteer Appointments

The Lead Pastor may appoint individuals or ad-hoc volunteer teams, comprised of church members, to address specific needs or business functions. These teams should generally include individuals with relevant experience, education, or technical skills, and may provide advisory support, perform designated tasks, or temporarily fulfill vacant staff roles on an interim basis.

Appointments are intended for no more than twelve (12) months, unless extended by the Lead Pastor until project completion. The Lead Pastor will notify the church at a regular business conference of each appointment, including the team's purpose and the names of appointed volunteers.

570 **Church Business**

571 **Church Governance**

572 The Church recognizes itself as a Jesus-ruled, Pastor-led, minister¹⁶-served, and a
573 congregationally accountable body in accordance with New Testament principles.

574

575 **Doctrinal Alignment**

576 All pastors, ministers, and all vocational or lay leaders serving in positions of spiritual authority,
577 teaching, or governance on behalf of the church must fully affirm, support, and teach the
578 church's Faith Summary in all private and public venues and mediums.

579
580 Expectations for doctrinal alignment for other employees, contractors, and program-based staff
581 and/or volunteers shall be defined and implemented through the Church's Human Resources
582 policies and/or ministry-specific guidelines, consistent with the church's faith and mission.

583

584 **Ordinances**

585 **Baptism**

- 586 1. Baptism by immersion will be administered to those who have professed faith in Jesus
587 Christ as their Lord and Savior.
- 588 2. Baptism will be conducted as part of a regular worship service or other church gathering.
- 589 3. Baptism may be administered by any active member of the church or by an individual
590 from a church of like faith and order, with the approval of the Lead Pastor.

591 **Lord's Supper**

- 592 1. The church will celebrate the Lord's Supper no fewer than three times each year.
- 593 2. All who have professed faith in Jesus Christ and are in good standing with the church are
594 welcome to participate.
- 595 3. The Lord's Supper is reserved for church gatherings under the administration of the
596 pastors.

597

¹⁶ In this sense minister refers to those on staff as well as those that serve in lay capacities such as a ministry team, deacons, etc.

598 **Worship Gatherings**

- 599 1. Regular weekly worship gatherings will be held to glorify God, edify believers, and
600 proclaim the gospel.
- 601 2. Gatherings may include prayer, worship through music, biblical teaching, and ordinances
602 as appropriate.

603

604 **Church Programming**

605 The primary and anchoring programming of the church will consist of worship, evangelism,
606 fellowship, discipleship, ministry and missions.

607

608 **Business Meetings (Church Conferences)**

- 609 1. The church will hold at least three Church Conferences annually to update members on
610 financial status, ministry progress, and other significant matters.
- 611 2. All active members are encouraged to attend and participate in discussions and those of
612 age participate in voting.
- 613 3. Additional Church Conferences may be called to address matters of significant and
614 urgent nature, as determined by the Lead Team. These may include, but are not limited
615 to, the confirmation of Executive or Associate Pastors, or decisions regarding pressing
616 business or financial concerns. Any other requests for agenda items must be submitted to
617 the Lead Team, who will determine their appropriateness and timing for inclusion in the
618 agenda of a subsequent regular Church Conference.

619

620 **Orderly Conduct**

- 621 1. Church business meetings will follow the Rules of Procedure as specified in the appendix
622 of these bylaws to ensure clarity and fairness in discussions.
- 623 2. The Moderator will guide the meeting, ensuring respectful dialogue and adherence to
624 meeting procedures.

625

626 **Church Finances**

627 **Budget Practices**

- 628 1. The church will adopt an annual budget, presented by the Stewardship Team and
629 approved by a vote of active members at a duly called church conference.
- 630 2. The budget will reflect the church's priorities, including missions, staff, and ministries.

631 **Handling of Funds**

- 632 1. All financial contributions will be counted and recorded by at least two unrelated,
633 approved individuals, in accordance with the church's established financial-control
634 policies.
- 635 2. All expenditures must be authorized and documented according to approved financial
636 policies and standard accounting practices.

637 The Stewardship Team shall maintain financial-handling policies that require multiple
638 individuals, rotating roles, and appropriate internal controls to prevent misuse or the appearance
639 of impropriety.

640 **Fiscal Year**

641 The church's fiscal year will run from January 1 to December 31.

642

643 **Operation Manual and Policies**

- 644 1. Each Ministry Team will collaborate with staff to develop and maintain an operational
645 manual detailing their specific responsibilities and procedures.
- 646 2. These manuals will be reviewed biennially by the Trustees to ensure alignment with
647 church policies and objectives.

648

649 **Dissolution**

650 If the church ceases to exist, all remaining assets will be distributed to another Baptist body of
651 Like Faith and Order, in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas and consistent with the
652 church's Faith Summary and Statement.

653

654 **Amendments**

655 **Policies**

656 Policies developed by Ministry Teams or staff may be amended by the corresponding
657 team or employee. Amendments should be promptly submitted to the Trustees for record
658 keeping and alignment check.

659 **Bylaws**

660 Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the active, eligible members
661 present at a duly called church conference. Notice of the proposed amendment, including
662 its exact wording, must be provided in writing at least two weeks in advance.

663 **Constitution**

664 The Constitution may be amended by two separate votes of the active members present at
665 duly called church conferences. Each vote must pass by a two-thirds majority, with a
666 minimum of 30 days between the votes. Written notice of the proposed amendment,
667 including its wording, must be provided at least two weeks prior to each vote.

668 **Faith Statement**

669 The Faith Summary and/or the Statement may be amended by two separate votes of the
670 active members present at duly called church conferences. Each vote must pass by a two-
671 thirds majority, with a one-year gap between the votes. Written notice, including the
672 proposed wording, must be given at least two weeks prior to each vote.

673 **Appendices**

674 **Summary of Faith**

675
676 **God**
677 There is one and only one living and true God. He is infinite in holiness and all other perfections.
678 He eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—three persons yet one divine essence. To
679 Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

680
681 *Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1–3; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:6.*

683 **Jesus Christ**

684 Christ is the eternal Son of God and the Head of the Church. Conceived of the Holy Spirit and
685 born of the virgin Mary, He perfectly revealed God's will, lived a sinless life, died for our sins,
686 was raised the third day, ascended into heaven, and will return in power and glory to judge the
687 world and consummate His Kingdom.

688
689 *Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 16:16–18; 1 Corinthians 15:3–4; Ephesians 1:22–23; Acts 1:9–11.*

691 **The Holy Scriptures**

692 The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's Word, truth without any
693 mixture of error. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction, having God for its author, salvation
694 for its end, and Christ as its ultimate interpreter. It is the supreme standard by which all human
695 conduct, creeds, and opinions are to be tried.

696
697 *Psalms 19:7–11; Matthew 5:18; John 17:17; 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:20–21.*

699 **Salvation**

700 Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. It involves regeneration,
701 justification, sanctification, and glorification. It is offered freely to all who repent of sin and trust
702 in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

703
704 *John 3:16; Romans 3:23–24; Ephesians 2:8–9; Titus 3:5; Acts 4:12.*

706 **The Priesthood of Believers**

707 Every believer is a priest before God, having direct access to Him through Jesus Christ. All
708 believers share as equals in the responsibility to proclaim the gospel, to serve one another, and to
709 live under the Lordship of Christ.

710
711 *Exodus 19:6; 1 Peter 2:9; Hebrews 4:14–16; Revelation 1:6.*

712

Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every believer and every church to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. Because of the love of Christ, we are urgently compelled to proclaim the gospel, bearing witness to His saving grace.

Matthew 9:37–38; Matthew 28:18–20; Luke 24:46–47; Acts 1:8; Romans 10:13–15.

Human Life

Human life is sacred from conception to natural death. Every person is fearfully and wonderfully made by God in His image and is therefore endowed with dignity and worth that must be respected and protected.

Genesis 1:26–27; Psalm 139:13–16; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 12:6–7.

Gender and Humanity

God creates each person as male or female, both fully and equally bearing His image. Gender¹⁷ is a good gift of God and is to be received with gratitude and lived according to His design.

Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:18–24; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6.

Human Dignity and Love

Because all people are created by God and redeemed through Christ's sacrifice, every person possesses inestimable worth and must be treated with justice, compassion, and Christlike love.

Micah 6:8; Matthew 22:37–39; John 13:34–35; Romans 12:10.

Marriage and Family

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment before God. The marriage relationship models the union of Christ and His Church, and within it husbands and wives are called to love and serve one another in faithfulness.

Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6; Ephesians 5:22–33; Hebrews 13:4.

The Ordinances of the Church

Christ has given His church two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior.

The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's death and a pledge of His return.

Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3–5; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26.

¹⁷ We affirm that a person's gender is determined by their biological sex, which is rooted in their created, physical nature, including their chromosomal makeup.

755 The Church and Its Autonomy

756 A New Testament church is a local body of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the
757 faith and fellowship of the gospel. Each local church is autonomous and self-governing under the
758 Lordship of Christ, with the right to govern its own affairs and ordain its leaders.

759
760 *Matthew 18:15–20; Acts 6:3–6; Acts 13:1–3; Ephesians 1:22–23.*

761 **Rules of Procedure**

762 **Moderator**

- 763 1. The Moderator will preside during all Church Conferences.
- 764 2. The Moderator's responsibilities include:
 - 765 ○ Preserving order during discussions and proceedings.
 - 766 ○ Determining active membership for voting purposes.
 - 767 ○ Stating and presenting motions, facilitating discussions, and calling for votes.
 - 768 ○ Casting the deciding vote in the event of a tie.
 - 769 ○ Deciding all procedural questions, subject to a two-thirds majority reversal by the
 - 770 church.
- 771 3. The Moderator may address the matter at hand as a church member with a majority vote
- 772 of those present.

773 **Presentation of Questions**

774 All questions or issues to be considered by the church must be presented as a motion and
 775 seconded before being discussed or voted upon.

776 **Submission of Decisions**

777 All motions related to new business, resolutions, or reports must be submitted in writing at least
 778 fourteen (14) days before the scheduled meeting.

779 **Decorum**

- 780 1. Only one member may speak at a time, and preference will be given to the member first
- 781 recognized by the Moderator.
- 782 2. Discussion will alternate between members speaking in favor of and those opposing the
- 783 matter under consideration.

784 **Public Address**

- 785 1. Members wishing to speak must first be recognized by the Moderator.
- 786 2. Speakers are encouraged to use any provided amplification resources and must
- 787 respectfully address the Moderator.

788 **Speaking Limits**

- 789 1. No member may speak more than once on the same subject until all others wishing to
- 790 speak have been given the opportunity to do so.
- 791 2. Members may speak no more than twice on the same subject without the consent of
- 792 active members at the conference through a majority vote.

793 **Voting**

794 Method: All votes should be taken in person and are public except for Church Discipline and
795 other sensitive matters. In such cases a ballot will be used with the results reported. Unless
796 otherwise stated in the bylaws, a simple majority vote of the active members present is required
797 for passage.

Qualifications of a Pastor

(1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9)

A pastor or elder is called to be a spiritual leader who exemplifies Christ-like character, faithfully shepherds the church, and upholds the truth of God's Word.

Personal Character

- **Above Reproach:** A pastor must live a life of integrity, with no valid accusations against their character.
- **Faithful to his Wife:** If married, he should demonstrate devotion and faithfulness in his marriage.
- **Self-Controlled and Temperate:** He should exhibit discipline, self-mastery, and emotional stability.
- **Respectable:** His behavior should command respect and reflect Christian maturity.
- **Hospitable:** Willing to welcome and care for others, showing love to both strangers and the church family.
- **Not Given to Drunkenness:** He must avoid intoxication or impairment and demonstrate self-control in all areas of life.
- **Not Violent but Gentle:** He should demonstrate patience, kindness, and a peaceful demeanor.
- **Not Quarrelsome:** He should avoid being argumentative or divisive.
- **Not a Lover of Money:** A pastor should be free from greed and materialism, relying on God for provision.

Spiritual Life and Leadership

- **Able to Teach:** A pastor must have a solid understanding of Scripture and be able to communicate it effectively.
- **Loving What Is Good:** He should have a heart for righteousness and a passion for what aligns with God's will.
- **Upright, Holy, and Disciplined:** His lifestyle should reflect godly character and obedience to the Lord.
- **Holding Firm to Sound Doctrine:** A pastor must defend the truth of Scripture, refute false teaching, and faithfully shepherd the flock in accordance with God's Word.

Family Life

- **Manages His Own Household Well:** A pastor should lead his family with care, demonstrating the ability to nurture and guide those in his home.
- **Children Who Respect Them:** If he has children, the pastor's parenting should inspire respect and godly behavior.

836

837 Maturity and Reputation

- 838 • **Not a Recent Convert:** A pastor must be spiritually mature, with a proven track record
839 of faith and godly living.
- 840 • **Good Reputation with Outsiders:** He should be respected even by those outside the
841 church, avoiding actions that would bring disrepute to the gospel.

842 **Qualifications of a Servant Leader** 843 (1Timothy 3:8-13)

844 Personal Character

- 845 • **Dignified:** A servant leader should be worthy of respect, displaying maturity and
846 integrity.
- 847 • **Not Double-Tongued:** They should be honest and sincere, not saying one thing to one
848 person and another to someone else.
- 849 • **Not Addicted to Much Wine:** They should practice self-control and avoid excessive
850 drinking.
- 851 • **Not Greedy for Dishonest Gain:** They must handle finances and responsibilities with
852 honesty and avoid selfish motives.

853 Spiritual Life

- 854 • **Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Clear Conscience:** A servant leader should
855 have a strong, sincere faith and live in a way that aligns with biblical teaching.

856 Proven and Tested

- 857 • **Tested First:** Before serving, a servant leader should demonstrate faithfulness and
858 reliability over time.
- 859 • **Blameless:** Their life should not give cause for accusation or scandal.

860 Family Life

- 861 • **Faithful in Marriage:** A servant leader must be devoted to their spouse, showing
862 commitment and mutual, Christ-like submission and leadership in their marriage.
- 863 • **Managing Children and Household Well:** They should lead their family with care,
864 demonstrating responsibility and the ability to manage their household.

865 Promise of Blessing

- 866 • **Serving Well:** Faithful servant leaders gain good standing within the church and a strong
867 confidence in their faith in Christ.