

New Life Community Church Bylaws

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ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 101 - Qualifications

We acknowledge that, those conditions which the Scriptures require of an individual at the occasion of his (her) entrance into the Universal Body of Christ, as outlined in Acts 2:38-42, and which are delineated in the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship (CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE VI, SECTION B), shall be the basis for local union with this Church. The Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship contains four fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith which, when professed, qualifies an individual for membership in New Life Community Church. The age of an applicant should be such that, he (she) is fully capable of understanding and fulfilling the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship.

SECTION 102 - Admission Procedure

An applicant for membership shall be required to profess, as a minimum, belief in the fundamentals of the Christian faith contained in the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship. This profession may be to the Board of Elders, to an appointed representative of that Board, or to the Church body at a conveniently appointed time. Upon the profession of faith the individual should be publicly welcomed into the fellowship at a regular service of the Church on the Lord's Day. Members are encouraged to publicly profess together the Covenant of Discipleship at this service.

SECTION 103 - Responsibility of Membership

Membership includes the responsibility for the various commitments of ARTICLE VI of the CONSTITUTION, the Covenant of Discipleship. In addition, it carries the responsibility for participating in, and voting on, all business brought before the membership.

SECTION 104 - Children of Members

Children of adult members do not automatically become voting members of New Life Community Church. Nor do they automatically gain membership upon reaching a certain age of accountability. Our concern is that each young person and voting member has a personal

relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This relationship cannot be inherited by virtue of a parent's profession and commitment.

However, it is not our intention to exclude young men and women from the life and decisions of the church. Therefore, children may enter into Membership (including the privilege of voting) provided they meet the following two criteria:

- A. They are age 12 or older and
- B. They have met with the elders and affirmatively answered the four questions, which are the Basis of our church's Covenant of Discipleship.

It is an elder's responsibility to seek out the young men or women who turn 12 years of age and inquire about their desire (or lack of desire) to meet with the elders and become a voting member.

SECTION 105 - Termination of Membership in New Life Community Church

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

A. By Death

B. By Transfer

Any member in good standing who wishes to affiliate with another church will be granted a Letter of Recommendation upon request by the church with which he (she) desires to associate. The Letter will be forwarded upon recommendation of the Board of Elders.

C. By Request

Any member who requests termination of membership for whatever reason will be granted that request. If there are unresolved problems between the requesting member and the Church, efforts will be made by the Elders to resolve any points at issue prior to the granting of the request.

D. By Disciplinary Action

Should any member of this Church be found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life, the Church reserves the right to administer Scriptural forms of church discipline, as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, through the Board of Elders. Should faithful efforts by the Elders render no promise of reform or manifest no spirit of repentance on the part of the member in question, membership may be terminated upon unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders or $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting. A member removed from fellowship by disciplinary action may be reinstated only by means of the normal admission procedure. The elders shall maintain standing operating procedures that specify the process for exercising church discipline at New Life Community Church. This document shall be available for review and use by any church member.

E. By Inactivity

If a member has not participated in any of the church worship services for a period of six months, his (her) membership may be terminated, unless the inactivity is due to health or other reasons acceptable to the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE II - OFFICERS

SECTION 201 - Elders

A. Selection and Removal

Elders shall be nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders and approved by a 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Elder may be approved to either fill a vacancy on the Board of Elders or to add an additional member to that Board. Elders may be removed from office upon their own request or by 2/3 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting. An Elder may be suspended indefinitely by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders. SECTION 301.B amplifies this provision.

B. Qualifications

Elders shall be men of intellectual and spiritual maturity, with proven Christian character and sound judgment, exemplary in their conduct, effective leaders and teachers. Elders shall be qualified in accordance with the guidelines of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and be willing, to be servants of the Church. Additionally, Elders shall be Members of the Church and shall have proven themselves before the Membership in lesser capacities of service. An Elder shall be ordained by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

C. Responsibilities

An Elder shall be responsible to:

1. Seek the Lord and find delight in Him:
 - a. Give adequate time to personal prayer and study in the Word.
 - b. Labor and strive after godliness (1 Timothy 4:6-10).
2. Be a pastor to one's own family first (1 Timothy 3:4,5):
 - a. Spend time together in prayer, spiritual conversation, and the Word (Ephesians 5 and 6).
 - b. Meet the needs of one's wife in particular, deepening their intimacy and relationship together (Ephesians 5, 1 Peter 3:7).
3. Be an example to the believers (1 Peter 5:1-3).
4. Pray for the whole church program and for individual members (Acts 6:4).
5. Be involved in the teaching of God's Word (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 4:11; Titus 1:9).
6. Meet with the other Elders of the church at stated times for the purpose of prayer, discussion, examination of potential members, making decisions related to the life of the church, and other such duties as may be part of the responsibilities of the Board of Elders as defined in SECTION 301.

SECTION 202 - Deacons

A. Selection and Removal

Deacons shall be nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders, and approved by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Deacon may be recommended and approved to either fill a vacancy on the Board of Deacons or to add an additional member to that Board. Deacons may be removed from office upon their own request, by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders, or by a 2/3 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting.

B. Qualifications

Deacons shall be men or women of spiritual discernment and members of the Church, exemplary in their Christian character and conduct, and of good reputation in the community outside of the Church. They shall be willing to be servants of the Church in accordance with the meaning of the work as outlined in Acts 6:1-6 and shall be qualified in accordance with the guidelines in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall be ordained by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

C. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of individual Deacons shall be those of the Board of Deacons as defined in SECTION 302.

D. Trustees

The Trustee Chairman shall be appointed by the Board of Elders to care for, maintain, and oversee all Church property. The Trustee Chairman shall be a Deacon, since the administration of the Church's resources was a task given to Deacons in the early Christian Church. If a Deacon cannot be found to serve as the Trustee Chairman, then the Board of Elders may temporarily appoint another member of the church until a qualified Deacon is found. The elders should seek to fill the position with a Deacon at the earliest possible moment. The Trustee Chairman shall also serve as a member of the Board of Deacons. The Trustee Chairman may be removed by a majority vote of the Board of Elders. Other persons who are members may serve as helpers (called Trustees) by appointment of the Trustee Chairman.

SECTION 203 - Treasurer

A. Election and Removal

The Treasurer shall be confirmed by the Board of Elders, and elected by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church. The Treasurer may be removed from office upon his (her) own request, by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders, or by a majority vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting.

B. Qualifications

The Treasurer shall be a member of the Church and an individual of sufficient numerical and

accounting skill so as to carry out the responsibilities of the position. Whenever possible, the Treasurer should also hold the Biblical office of Deacon, since the accounting and administration of the Church's funds was a task given to Deacons from the early Christian Church.

C. Responsibilities

The Treasurer shall be responsible for:

1. The holding in trust of all monies belonging to the Church in the appropriate checking, savings, or other type account.
2. The maintenance of appropriate records of all expenditures of the Church.
3. The Business Meeting preparation of the Year End Financial Statement and its presentation to the Membership and presentation of financial reports at each congregational budget Business Meeting.
4. Cash disbursements:
 - a. The payment from the receipts on hand of all authorized salaries and fixed expenses, and other amounts within the designated Budget of the Church, when authorized by the appropriate Board, Committee, Officer, ministry group or individual.
 - b. The payment of amounts in excess of the Church Budget when authorized by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 605.C).

All or any of the above responsibilities may be delegated to a paid bookkeeper, an accountant, or an accounting firm. The funding and choice must be approved prior to any hiring action by a majority vote of both the elders and the Members present at a Business Meeting. It will then be the responsibility of the Treasurer to work with and supervise the actions of the person or group.

D. Accountability

The Treasurer shall, in general, be accountable to the Membership and specifically to the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE III - GOVERNMENT

SECTION 301 - Board of Elders

A. Membership

The Board of Elders shall be comprised of those Elders nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders, and approved by the Membership (see SECTION 201).

B. Responsibilities

The Board of Elders is responsible for the administration of the Church under God's authority and in particular is responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the Church and its members. Collectively, the Board of Elders shall:

1. Define and interpret the overall objectives and aspirations of the Church, which will produce progress toward fulfilling the Scriptural purposes for its existence.
2. Become aware of the spiritual needs and concerns of those in the Congregation, and assist in the establishment of goals for the Church based on these concerns.
3. Oversee the development of strategies by the various Boards, committees, ministry groups, and individuals using available resources to meet the goals of the Church, including all programs, ministries, meetings, and other efforts of the Church. Individual Elders may be assigned as liaison to various boards for specific periods of time.
4. Administer Scriptural forms of Church discipline to members as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, when a member is found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life and in upholding the Covenant of Discipleship.
5. Act on termination of membership as provided for in SECTION 105 of these Bylaws.
6. Obtain nominations from the body of those willing and qualified to serve as Elders, Deacons, Treasurer, or other required administrative positions.
7. Ensure all candidates for positions of Elder, Deacon, and Treasurer are fully qualified per the bylaws. Confirmed nominees are then presented to the members for voting.
8. Suspend or remove church Officers per SECTION 201.A. (When considering the suspension of an Elder, the Elder being considered is entitled to vote against his own suspension.) If the vote is in favor of suspension or removal and the church Officer holds a staff position, the Board of Elders may also choose by majority vote to immediately dismiss that church Officer from their staff position.
9. Appoint persons to and dismiss persons from paid or unpaid administrative positions. For paid positions, appointment should occur only after budget approval by the Membership. Dismissal of persons from administrative positions requires a majority vote of the elders. However, hiring and dismissal of the Custodian shall be per SECTION 302.G.

10. Approve expenditures by Boards, Committees, Officers, and ministry groups when such expenditures are within the Budget categories previously approved by the Membership, but temporarily exceed the limitations of the Church Budget (See SECTION 605.C).
11. Review and approve the Budget prior to its submittal to the Membership.
12. Keep accurate written minutes of all meetings.

C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Elder business shall be as determined by that Board. The Chairman shall be the Pastor unless otherwise designated by that Board.

D. Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet as and when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact members of the Board and, when possible, announce such meetings on the Sunday morning prior to the meeting. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board membership.

E. Authority

On the basis of the Scriptures and ARTICLE IV of the CONSTITUTION, the administration of authority in the Church is given by the Holy Spirit to the Elders who are to administer God's authority and be responsible for His will being put into practice. The Board of Elders, therefore, shall have the authority to interpret these Constitution and Bylaws and implement actions consistent with it.

SECTION 302 - Board of Deacons

A. Membership

The Board of Deacons shall be comprised of those Deacons nominated by the Body, confirmed by the Elders, and approved by the Membership (See SECTION 202).

B. Responsibilities

Deacons do not exercise Biblical authority over the congregation. The Deacons shall assist the Board of Elders and be responsible for various temporal ministries of the Church. Specifically, the Board of Deacons shall:

1. Be an example to the Congregation in the areas of faith, prayer, spiritual growth in the home, and boldness in proclaiming the Gospel.
2. Visit the sick, the elderly, the prisoners, and others in the Church requiring contact with the Church.
3. Become aware of the physical needs of those in the Church and the community at large, and develop and implement methods of meeting those needs.

4. Distribute money from the Benevolence Fund consistent with Biblical guidelines and procedures established by the Board of Deacons.
5. Devise and implement effective Biblical methods of collecting the gifts of the Lord's people. This includes the counting and depositing of money collected in Church offerings or received by other means. (see SECTION 603.D)
6. Assist the Congregation in an understanding of Biblical financial management, stewardship, and giving. They shall also seek ways to develop in the Members the grace of liberality and Christian financial freedom.
7. Assist the Elders in ordinances and ceremonies as necessary.
8. Assign check writer(s) in accordance with Section 601.J. – that is, if this task is not being handled by a paid accountant or accounting firm.
9. Keep accurate written minutes of all meetings.

C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Deacon Business shall be as determined by that Board. A Chairman shall be selected by the Board of Deacons. The Chairman's responsibilities are to oversee meetings and to act as Spokesman for the Board to the Congregation, the Board of Elders, and others as appropriate. The Board of Deacons shall be accountable to the Board of Elders and to the Membership. If it is impossible for any reason to secure Deacons, the responsibilities of their office shall fall upon the Board of Elders.

D. Meetings

The Board of Deacons shall meet when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact members of the Board and when possible, announce such meetings on the Sunday morning prior to the meeting. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board membership.

E. Authority

The Board of Deacons shall have the authority to expend funds consistent with their responsibilities and within the limitations of the Church budget.

F. Responsibilities of the Trustee Chairman and Trustees

In general, it shall be the duty of the Trustees to hold in trust all deeds to Church property, to care for and maintain all Church property, to oversee the use of all Church property, and to attend to all legal matters related to the above. Church property, as referenced in these Bylaws, shall include land, buildings, easements, and fixed assets. This includes equipment such as computers, copy machines, sound equipment, projection equipment, and vehicles. Specifically, the Trustees shall:

1. Act on behalf of the Membership in areas involving the buying, selling, mortgaging, leasing or renting of real property.

2. Oversee the care and upkeep of all Church property including necessary utilities, improvements, repairs, minor alterations, and general maintenance, with the delegation of responsibilities as required.
3. Maintain adequate property and liability insurance coverage for all Church property and facilities.
4. Provide input to the Board of Elders relative to planning for future expenditures on property and facilities.
5. Keep accurate written minutes of all meetings.

G. Authority of the Trustees

The Trustees will have the authority to buy, sell, lease, rent, mortgage, encumber, and convey real property when authorized and approved by the Membership. The Trustee chairman will have the authority to hire and remove the custodian, a custodial service, or any other service related to the maintenance or care of the church property, provided funding (budget) has been approved. These hired positions are not considered church staff (see ARTICLE IV – STAFF).

ARTICLE IV - STAFF

SECTION 401 - PASTOR

A. Selection

1. Pastor Search Committee

a. Formation

In the event of a pastor vacancy in this Church, a Pastor Search Committee shall be established as an Ad Hoc Committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be comprised of any Elders desiring to serve on the Committee and any two Members of the Church elected by the Membership. At least two Elders must serve on the Committee. If only two Elders desire to serve an additional Member of the Church shall be elected by the Membership so that the Committee has at least five members.

b. Responsibilities

In general, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor Search Committee to review and select candidates to be presented before the Church. This shall involve:

- (1) The establishment of criteria to be considered in making initial contacts with prospective candidates.
- (2) The making of inquiries as to the availability of prospective candidates.
- (3) The review of information as to the prospective candidate's educational training, experience in Christian service, personal and spiritual reputation, doctrinal views, and conditions under which they would consider a call from the Church.
- (4) The scheduling of candidates for exposure to the Church, including speaking at services.
- (5) The consideration of candidates for formal presentation to the Church for the purpose of voting on calling the candidate.

When possible or desirable the Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to select a candidate who has received some sign or signs of approval from another evangelical church body or organization (such as examination, ordination or letters of recommendation). The Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to seek the aid of the pastors and elders of other evangelical churches in examining doctrinal and spiritual matters of a pastoral candidate.

c. Authority

The Pastor Search Committee shall have the authority to expend funds in the execution of their responsibilities with the approval of the Board of Elders.

2. Calling of Candidates

After a candidate has spoken at services of the Church and met with the Pastor Search Committee, the Committee shall meet to consider whether or not to formally present the candidate to the Church for the purpose of a Membership vote. The unanimous vote of the Pastor Search Committee is required for formal presentation to the Church whereupon a vote shall be taken by the Members at a Business Meeting. A Pastor may be called by 3/4 of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the church (See SECTION 501.C.3).

B. Term of Service

A Pastor will be called for an indefinite period of time. The Pastor's tenure of service shall terminate by his resignation, or by the procedures set forth in SECTION 201.A. In the event of the Pastor's resignation, he may give up to thirty days notice while continuing to serve as pastor. In the event that the Church votes to terminate the Pastor's services, he shall receive thirty days notice or thirty days salary in lieu of such notice.

C. Conditions of Employment

The salary of the Pastor and other compensation such as Social Security, insurance, housing allowance, and pension shall be specified in writing and made a part of the call upon which the Membership votes. Likewise, such items as vacation, attendance at meetings and conferences, moving expenses, and other agreed upon conditions shall be addressed in the call. The call shall be in the form of a written agreement. Changes in the initial conditions of employment are to be enacted by vote of the Board of Elders.

D. Qualifications

The qualifications for Pastor shall be the Biblical standards for the office of Elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). In addition, the Pastor shall be ordained by the Board of Elders through the laying on of hands and shall hold membership in this Church during his term of service. Additional qualifications shall be as determined by the Pastor Search Committee.

E. Responsibilities

The Pastor has both the collective responsibilities as a member of the Board of Elders (see SECTION 301) and the individual responsibilities of an Elder (see SECTION 201). Additionally, the Pastor shall:

1. Minister to the Congregation through the regular preaching and teaching from the Scriptures.
2. Coordinate the day-to-day operations of the Church and be available for the purpose of counseling.

3. Oversee the Church's observance of its ordinances and ceremonies.
4. Supervise paid staff. Part of this function will be to determine vacations, sick days, and other work-related leave.

F. Outside Ministries

Involvement by the Pastor in ministries, work, or other endeavors outside of the Church and its Ministries shall be reported to the Board of Elders.

G. Authority and Limitations

The authority of the Pastor to expend funds is limited to his participation as a member of the Board of Elders and the authority and limitations prescribed to the Board in SECTION 301. The Pastor shall have the authority to interpret the Scriptures to the Congregation consistent with the Doctrinal Statement of the Church.

SECTION 402 - Other Paid Staff Positions

A. Hiring

Will be hired by the Pastor, with a signed contract, after unanimous approval by the Board of Elders, provided funding (budget) has been approved.

B. Removal

Can be removed by resignation, death, majority vote of the Board of Elders (see SECTION 301.B), or by a majority vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting (see SECTION 501.C.3).

C. Supervision

Will be supervised by the Pastor.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

SECTION 501 - Regular Meetings

A. Sunday Services

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday for worship of the Triune God, for edification and discipleship through the Word of God, for fellowship among those in the Body of Christ that they may minister to spiritual needs, and as a witness to the community. The conduct of these meetings shall be the responsibility of the Pastor.

B. Home Groups

These are groups that take many forms and meet throughout the week, either in homes or at the church building, in addition to the Sunday Church gathering.

1. Structure of Home Groups

All those in the Congregation are encouraged to participate in a Home Group. The number of Home Groups, their structure, and leadership shall be determined by the Board of Elders.

2. Purpose of Home Groups

The Home Group structure is an attempt to follow the pattern of house churches or house fellowships which existed in the early Christian Church and to put into practice certain principles found in the New Testament that provide opportunities for:

- a. Knowing God and seeing His work in each of us in a more personal and meaningful way.
- b. Studying the word of God for the purpose of practically relating it to daily living (Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16).
- c. Interacting with one another by sharing, confession, and speaking the truth in love with one another (James 5:16; Ephesians 4:15,25).
- d. Bearing one another's burdens through prayer, comfort, encouragement, and the sharing of material goods (Galatians 6:2; James 5:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; Hebrews 3:13; Acts 4:32).
- e. Equipping each other for ministry and encouraging the discovery and use of spiritual gifts in ministry (Ephesians 4:12; 1 Peter 4:10,11).
- f. Witnessing to those outside the Church (Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:21).

In addition to the above general purposes, Home Groups may choose to become individually involved in special areas such as Scripture memorization, specific

community outreach endeavors, worship, etc. Different Home Groups may focus on different aspects of Christian living dependent upon the needs and interests of the Group.

3. Meetings of Home Groups

Home Groups shall normally meet once a week at a time and place determined by the individual Home Group. When possible, the times and places of Home Group meetings shall be made known to the Congregation on the prior Sunday.

C. Business Meetings

1. Calling and Notification of Meetings

All Business Meetings of the Church shall require that notice be given in written form sent to each member at least two weeks prior to the meeting, in the Church Bulletin two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting, or by announcement on at least two previous Sunday mornings. Such announcement shall state the time, the place of the meeting, and the nature of the proposed business. The requirement for a two-week notice may be waived by the unanimous vote of the Board of Elders in cases of emergency. Business Meetings are normally called by the Board of Elders. However, a group of three or more church members may also call a Business Meeting. This shall be done by notifying the Board of Elders, who are required to schedule this Business Meeting.

2. Moderator

The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall either act as Moderator or appoint another Elder to act as Moderator at all Business Meetings of the Church. In his absence, another Elder shall function in that capacity.

3. Quorum

Those Members who attend a Business Meeting shall constitute a quorum for that meeting with the exception of business addressing the following items: changes in the status of the organization, its Constitution, or its Bylaws; the buying, selling, or mortgaging, of Church real property; the call, selection, or termination of the Pastor; and the removal of Elders and Deacons. In the case of the exceptions noted above, 40% of the Church Membership must be present at the Business Meeting.

4. Transaction of Business

The transaction of business at any Business Meeting of the Church shall require a majority vote of Members present, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. Votes may be cast only by Members who are present at a Business Meeting since congregational discussion and/or amendments made to a motion may change a vote cast in absentia. The Board of Elders shall always have the authority to request the reconsideration of any vote.

5. Minutes

Official minutes of all Business Meetings shall be recorded. Minutes from the previous Business Meeting shall be read and approved at each meeting.

6. Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order is to serve as guidance relative to parliamentary rules of procedure for all Business Meetings of the Church.

7. Voting Procedures

Voting shall be limited to those members in attendance at the Business Meeting. Voting by proxy is not allowed.

ARTICLE VI - FINANCES

SECTION 601 - Financial Policies and Principles

We believe that the way an organization handles itself in the financial area is a reflection of its integrity in every area. Luke 16:11 teaches that the person who is untrustworthy in handling money cannot be trusted to handle spiritual riches either. Likewise, if we are trustworthy in the use of monetary riches, then God will be able to entrust spiritual riches and blessings to us as a church (Luke 16:10). Therefore, we have established the following financial policies and principles to guide us in proper stewardship:

- A. This church and ministry belongs to God. It is neither a monument to anyone's ego nor a legacy to anyone's memory. The ministry does not bear anyone's name. The buildings are not dedicated to anyone, but Jesus Christ. The pastor, elders and other members are merely stewards and fellow servants in the work of the Kingdom.
- B. The Lord has apparently chosen to place His mantle of approval on this ministry called New Life Community Church. Nevertheless, He gives and sometimes takes away. The church of Jesus Christ is the people of God. God's people will never cease to exist. But this particular ministry may. If He ever closes the doors to this work, we will accept His leading and yield the outcome to Him.
- C. One of the ways we can discern the Lord's will regarding the continuation of our work is through the financial support He sends (or doesn't send) from His people. Therefore, during lean times we will make our obligations known--but we will never resort to what we consider to be disrespectful and dishonorable methods of raising funds, even when the need is serious. Nor will we attempt to motivate giving from a false sense of guilt or compulsion, since this robs God's people of the opportunity to give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- D. We will view each contribution as a sacrificial gift from Christian people who love God. Our obligation, therefore, is to spend that money conservatively and wisely.
- E. We believe God wishes to use New Life Community Church as a financial channel to help needy individuals and to support other evangelical ministries. Therefore, we will not spend money upon nonessential church personnel, programs or facilities.
- F. When we make a purchase, we will pay the invoice within 30 days if possible. Overdue bills are a sorry testimony to the world. We do not intend to use the vendor's money.
- G. We will not spend more money than we receive. Careful budgeting and monitoring of our resources will permit us to reduce our expenses for programs and services before disbursements exceed income. Deficit spending is not God's will for this church.

- H. The Scriptures teach that "the borrower is a slave to the lender" (Proverbs 23:7). In order that we might be free to act, minister and to give as we are led by the Lord, it is our goal to remain financially free from debt, as much as possible. If debt is incurred we will work to repay the obligation as soon as possible.
- I. The pastor will not be the primary fundraiser.
- J. Check Writer(s)
 - 1. Satan delights in bringing disrepute to God's work through sins of greed, embezzlement, and ill-gotten gain. Therefore, we will seek to elect and confirm leadership that is free from the love of money (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Timothy 3:3).
 - 2. The church needs multiple check writers to conduct business throughout the week. In order to maintain integrity and conform to best business practices, the following is the order of preference the Board of Deacons will use when appointing check writer(s):
 - a. Full-time volunteer(s) other than the Treasurer
 - b. Paid staff (may not sign payroll checks)
 - c. Treasurer (discouraged)
- K. To summarize, we will try to remember always that Jesus Christ is our possessor and our dispossessor. He ordained and blessed the establishment of New Life Community Church. It belongs entirely to Him.

SECTION 602 - Accounts

The Financial Accounts shall be established through the Budget by the Board of Elders, approved by the membership, and maintained by the Treasurer. Accounts may be established for non-budgeted funds collected for church approved activities or events.

SECTION 603 - Offerings

A. Regular Offerings

Regular offerings shall be taken at Sunday services and other special meetings as determined by the Board of Elders. Undesignated offerings shall be applied to the Annual Budget.

B. Special Offerings

Special offerings shall be specifically identified as to their purpose and shall either be taken separate from regular offerings or provision made for the separating of special offerings from regular offerings by means of an identification procedure.

C. Designated Offerings

At the discretion of the individual, offerings or portions thereof may be designated, but only to specific budget categories in the church budget or Christian causes approved by the elders. If monthly collections toward the Church Budget are not sufficient to meet all Budget Commitments, then the Treasurer can apply designated funds towards the Church's Budget commitment with approval by the Board of Elders. This procedure does not apply to funds designated to non-budgeted accounts as specified in SECTION 602.

D. Accounting of Offerings

The amount of funds received in regular offerings shall be communicated to the Congregation by means of regular financial statements. Funds received in special offerings shall be communicated to the Congregation on the Sunday morning following the offering. Counting must be done by at least two people appointed in accordance with procedures established by the Board of Deacons. All monies (tithes, special offerings, payments for special events, etc.) should be gathered by a secure means.

SECTION 604 - Financial Statements

Financial statements shall be prepared by the Treasurer. Financial statements shall conform to best business practices. The Elders shall specify the content. Financial statements shall be made available to the Membership.

SECTION 605 - Church Budget

A. Preparation

The Church budget shall be prepared by the Board of Elders (SECTION 301.B) or a committee appointed by it as necessary. The Board of Elders or the committee will be assisted by the Treasurer. The Church Budget shall be based on God-given challenges, the previous receipt and disbursement record, growth experienced during the previous year/period and anticipated in the coming year/period, and other factors, which affect the expenditures of the Church. Input should be obtained from the various Boards, Committees, Officers, ministry groups, or individuals relative to their particular areas of ministry.

B. Submittal and Approval

A copy of this budget as prepared shall be made available to the Membership at least two weeks prior to the Budget approval meeting. Upon approval of the final Budget at this Business Meeting, copies shall be made available to the Membership.

C. Use and Implementation

The Church Budget shall serve as a guide for the expenditure funds in all areas of the Church's ministry. Expenditures in excess of the budget by Boards Committees, Officers, ministry groups or individuals require the prior approval of the Board of Elders or the Membership. The

expenditure of funds for budgeted items that exceed the Budget amount may be approved by the Board of Elders as long as these expenditures are consistent with the needs of the Church, the recent financial position of the Church, and the extent of funds on hand. Items not addressed or identified in the Budget require the approval of the Membership, regardless of amount.

D. Budget Oversight Committee

The Church finances shall be reviewed semiannually by a committee of at least three people, one of whom shall be an elder. This committee will be selected by the Board of Elders on an annual basis. This committee will review all financial records and ensure that the books are balanced, make any recommendations to the board of Elders, and make a report available to the congregation through the church bulletin. The Treasurer will provide all pertinent documents required by the committee.

ARTICLE VII - ORDINANCES AND CEREMONIES

SECTION 701 - Baptism

Water baptism is the symbol of Holy Spirit baptism, but differences in interpretation as to how it is to be practiced are acknowledged. These differences exist in practice because of man's limited knowledge and understanding of God. Consequently, each individual is encouraged to be convinced in his (her) own mind as to which interpretation to accept as his (her) own and act accordingly by faith. We are to be willing to receive another believer and act according to his (her) wishes in the matter of baptism even though his (her) position may be difficult for us to understand. However, baptism is not a requirement for salvation. Baptism is a command of our Lord (Matthew 28:19); it should be performed as an act of obedience and a public proclamation of His Lordship (Matthew 10:32).

On the basis of the above principles baptism will be practiced as indicated below.

A. Baptism of Believers

A person who has made a profession of faith in Christ, who earnestly desires to lead an obedient life, and who has never been baptized will be encouraged to be baptized. Such a person should present himself before an elder to profess his (her) faith and request baptism. The mode of baptism will be at his (her) discretion. If a person becomes a Christian who has previously been baptized, a second baptism is not required. If, however, he (she) earnestly desires a rebaptism, he (she) may present himself (herself) before the Board of Elders and/or the Congregation to profess his (her) faith and to request baptism.

B. Baptism of Infant Children of Believers

Parents who wish to baptize their children shall vow to:

1. Express their faith that although their children are born sinful and rebellious toward God, He has promised to save them through faith in Jesus Christ even as He has saved us, and acknowledge that God's means of saving their children is primarily through the Christian home; and
2. Believing these promises, promise to lead a Godly life before their children and encourage them to follow their example, pray with and for their children that God would save them, train them in the nurture and discipline of the Lord and His Word, and impress on their children the need they have of a Savior and the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

In the baptism service the Pastor or Elder shall ask the following questions to the parents:

1. "Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?"

2. "Do you claim God's covenant promises in his (her) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his (her) salvation, as you do for your own?"
3. "Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon God's grace, that you will endeavor to set before him (her) a godly example, that you will pray with and for him (her), that you will instruct him (her) in the teachings of the Christian faith, and that you will strive, by all means of God's appointment, to bring him (her) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?"

Then he shall ask the Congregation:

"Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of their child?"

After which, calling the child by name, the Pastor or Elder shall baptize the child with water and say:

"I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
(Matthew 28:19)

C. Mode of Baptism

The Bible permits latitude with respect to the mode of baptism and can support all three modes (sprinkling, pouring, and immersion). Therefore, we claim that same freedom. The only requirement is that water be used.

D. Administration of Baptism

Baptism services shall occur as and when scheduled by the Pastor. Any Elder may baptize and shall be assisted by others as required.

SECTION 702 - Child Dedication Ceremony

A. Parent's and Congregation's Commitment

Those parents who believe only in the baptism of believers but wish to make a commitment to raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord may make a public statement of this fact by vowing to:

1. Express their faith that although their children are born sinful and rebellious toward God, He has promised to save them through faith in Jesus Christ even as He has saved us, and acknowledge that God's means of saving their children is primarily through the Christian home; and
2. Believing these promises, promise to lead a Godly life before their children and encourage them to follow their example, pray with and for their children that God will save them, train them in the nurture and discipline of the Lord and His Word, and impress on their children the need they have of a Savior and the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

In the dedication service the Pastor or Elder shall ask the following questions to the parents:

1. "Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?"
2. "Do you claim God's covenant promises in his (her) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his (her) salvation, as you do for your own?"
3. "Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon God's grace, that you will endeavor to set before him (her) a godly example, that you will pray with and for him (her), that you will instruct him (her) in the teachings of the Christian faith, and that you will strive, by all means of God's appointment, to bring him (her) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?"

Then he shall ask the Congregation:

"Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of their child?"

B. Administration of the Dedication Ceremony

Dedication Ceremonies shall occur as and when scheduled by the Pastor. The Pastor is responsible for the Dedication Service.

SECTION 703 - The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is symbolic of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) and the resulting fellowship of believers (1 Corinthians 10:16,17). Participation in the Lord's Supper shall be open to all Christians who genuinely confess their sinful state and indicate their repentant spirit and dependence upon Christ as Savior and Lord (1 Corinthians 11:27-32). The Lord's Supper shall be administered as and when determined by the Board of Elders, but not less frequent than quarterly. Any Elder may administer the Lord's Supper and shall be assisted by Deacons or others as required. Due to the importance of the Lord's Supper and the tendency of Christians to misunderstand and misuse the ceremony, any time the Lord's Supper is celebrated as part of a New Life service or function it should always be celebrated under the supervision of an elder of the church.

SECTION 704 - The Ordination Ceremony

Upon confirmation by the Board of Elders and approval by the Members, the Candidate shall be ordained to Christian ministry at a public service of the Church containing exhortation from the Word of God, questions posed to the Candidate, the laying on of hands, and prayer (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:22). The Church shall take the responsibility for encouraging and assisting those whom it has ordained (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; Hebrews 13:17).

The following questions shall be asked of the Candidate by a Pastor or Elder:

1. "Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God without error in the original writings, the only rule of our faith and practice?"
2. "Do you acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer and Head of His Church and are you willing to submit to His Lordship?"
3. "Have you been motivated as far as you know your own heart to seek the office of Elder from love of God, obedience to God's call and to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ?"
4. "Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?"
5. "Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in your personal and family life, as well as in the public duties of your office, endeavoring to walk as an example before the people of God?"
6. "Are you ready now to take the responsibilities of Elder (Deacon)?"

For Elders and Pastors the following question shall be asked of the Membership, which should signify an affirmative answer by holding up their right hands:

"Are you ready to submit to the spiritual leadership of this man?"

Following affirmative answers to these questions the Board of Elders, or in the case of a Deacon Candidate the Board of Elders and Deacons, shall lay their hands upon the Candidate and prayer shall be offered. An Elder shall then say:

"I now pronounce and declare that _____ has been regularly confirmed, approved, and ordained to the office of Elder (Deacon), agreeable to the Word of God, and according to this Church's Constitution and Bylaws, and that as such he (she) is entitled to all encouragement and honor in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 801 - Procedures

These Bylaws may be amended at any Business Meeting of the Church provided:

1. That such amendments are proposed by either boards, committees, officers, ministry groups, or members of New Life Community Church;
2. That such proposed amendments have been made available to the Membership in written form on the two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting in which action on the amendments is to be taken or have been provided by mail ten days prior to that Meeting;
3. That notice of the time and place of the Meeting has been indicated in the above written notification, has been announced, or has been acknowledged in the Church Bulletin on at least two Sundays preceding the Meetings;
4. That the affirmative vote for amendment shall not be less than 3/4 of the votes cast by the Members present at a Business Meeting (See SECTION 501.C.3).

Voting shall be by secret ballot if so requested by any member.

SECTION 802 - Exclusion

No amendment to these Bylaws shall be permitted which infringes upon the Constitution of the Church.

DEFINITIONS

APPROVE - A distinction is made in these Bylaws between approving and electing Officers. Those Officers that are approved by the Members are Elders (including Pastors) and Deacons. The Officer elected by the Members is the Treasurer. The procedure of approval and election are the same (3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting), but there is a conceptual distinction, which seems to be important to preserve.

The offices of Elder and Deacon are made a part of the Church by the Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-13). On the other hand, the office of Treasurer is a man-made position set up by the Church in order that things might be done decently and in order. Secondly, according to the Scriptures, a person who undertakes the office of Elder or Deacon is first called or elected by God to that office (Acts 20:28). In this sense then, the Church Membership does not make the person an Elder or Deacon by election, but rather approves or agrees with God that the person is indeed called to an office which God Himself has already given to that individual.

BENEVOLENCE FUND - A specific fund established by the Church budget and administered by the Board of Deacons for the purpose of sharing our monetary resources with those in financial or material need.

BODY OF CHRIST - The visible Church of Jesus Christ; all Christians still living, no matter what local church or denomination they may be a part of.

CHURCH - In almost every case in these Bylaws, Church refers to this particular local church called New Life Community Church of Stafford. Where Church is used to refer to the Christian Church, the entire Body of Christ, this is made clear either by the context or use of the term "Christian Church".

CONFIRMED BY THE BOARD OF ELDERS – The Board of Elders have the responsibility to verify the qualifications of church Officer nominees per SECTION 301.B. Once verified, the elders will approve the nomination by a vote of at least 2/3 of the Board of Elders. If this is done, the nominee is “confirmed” and will be presented to the membership for voting into office.

CONGREGATION - All those who fellowship with New Life Community Church on a regular basis including both members and non-members.

MEMBERS - A member of New Life Community Church as per ARTICLE I of these Bylaws.

PASTOR – All references to “Pastor” in this document refers to the Senior Pastor of New Life Community Church.

REMOVAL – Removal from office is the permanent expulsion of an officer from his church position. In order for the person to return to office, they would need to go through the same procedure as someone who had never held that office.

SUSPENSION – The temporary removal of a church officer to include all responsibilities and privileges, until such time as they are permanently removed or reinstated. The suspension may be definite (a set period of time) or indefinite (waiting for the unrepentant offender to exhibit signs

of repentance). See *Disciplinary Guidelines* for further information.

[Last Amended by the congregation on March 3, 2006]