

**THE BYLAWS OF**  
**VILLA RICA CHRISTIAN CHURCH**  
Approved September 25, 2022

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497 Villa Trace • Villa Rica, GA 30180

**ARTICLE I \* NAME**

The name of this church shall be "VILLA RICA CHRISTIAN CHURCH" (here after referred to as the Church). The Church was organized on September 1, 1971 and incorporated in the State of Georgia. The place where the principal business of said Church is to be transacted and its offices kept shall be in the County of Carroll, State of Georgia.

**ARTICLE II \* PURPOSE**

The purpose shall be to carry on, conduct, and maintain a church and religious organization for public worship under the aforesaid name; to promote, inculcate, and practice the principles of Christianity; to promote the growth and expedience of the work of the Church through missions and education; to edify and elevate the moral and spiritual condition of its members and such others as may come under its influence by the dissemination of the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the worship of Almighty God; to take and hold by purchase, gift, devise, or bequest, personal property and real estate, and to use, mortgage, and dispose thereof for the purpose for which the Church is organized; and to perform all other things authorized by law necessary or incidental to the purpose herein above set forth.

**ARTICLE III \* DOCTRINE**

**Section 1. The Bible** We believe, teach, and trust the Bible alone. We believe it is true and sufficient. We also use the doctrinal statement below as a compliment to the Scriptures to help lay out theological truths and align us with the Bible.

**Section 2. Doctrinal Statement**

**THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the 66 books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21). We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word (2 Timothy 3:16), absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture which affirms the belief that the opening chapters of Genesis present creation in six literal days (Genesis 1:31; Exodus 31:17). We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice (Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God spoke in His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21) without error in the whole or in the part (Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16).

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We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (John 7:17; 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15; 1 John 2:20). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations. Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it.

## **GOD**

We teach that there is but one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4), an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

**God the Father.** We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6). He is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11). He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

**God the Son.** We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9).

We teach that God the Father, through His Son, Jesus Christ, all things came into being and by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation the eternal Son, the second Person of the Trinity, without altering His divine nature or surrendering any of the divine attributes, made Himself of no reputation by taking on a full human nature consubstantial with our own, yet without sin (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 7:26).

We teach that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) and thus born of a woman (Galatians 4:4-5), so that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the divine and the human, were joined together in one person, without confusion, change, division, or

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separation. He is therefore very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man.

We teach that in His incarnation, Christ fully possessed His divine nature, attributes, and prerogatives (Colossians 2:9; cf. Luke 5:18-26; John 16:30; 20:28). However, in the state of His humiliation, He did not always fully express the glories of His majesty, concealing them behind the veil of His genuine humanity (Matthew 17:2; Mark 13:32; Philippians 2:5-8). According to His human nature, He acts in submission to the Father (John 4:34; 5:19, 30; 6:38) by the power of Holy Spirit (Isaiah 42:1; Matthew 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14), while, according to His divine nature, He acts by His authority and power as the eternal Son (John 1:14; cf. 2:11; 10:37-38; 14:10-11).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive (John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God (Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will return to receive the church, which is His Body, unto Himself at the rapture, and returning with His church in glory. (Acts 1:9-11)

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23):

- Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46)
- Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15)

As the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the Head of His Body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

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**God the Holy Spirit.** We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternality (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10:15-17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), and the work of salvation (John 3:5-7).

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost, when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26) to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible (2 Peter 1:19-21). Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues, prophecy (Foretelling the future), healing (a person being able to do it on command) and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers. We believe that those Apostolic age gifts are not normative within the church today. Therefore, we do not practice the use of these gifts in our corporate worship services (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 2:20; 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4; Acts 2:43, 5:12-16, 14:3, 15:12, 19:11-12).

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## THE GOSPEL

We teach the gospel is the good news of God's grace invading the darkness of this world. It is the grand narrative of creation, fall, redemption, and consummation ordained by God and orchestrated through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel. His resurrection is the power of the gospel. His ascension is the glory of the gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:1-11)

## MAN

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11).

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence, incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that, because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

We believe and teach that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16, Psalms 51:5, 139:14-16, Isa 44:24, 49:1, 5, Jer. 1:5, 20:15-18, Luke 1:44).

We teach that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, transsexuality, transvestism, pedophilia, polygamy, bigamy, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's good gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24; Genesis 19:5, 13; Genesis 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

We teach that the term "marriage" has only one legitimate meaning, and that is marriage, sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as

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delineated by Scripture. Marriage ceremonies performed in any facility owned, leased, or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their gender was determined at birth. The Prospective Bride and Groom agree to undergo marriage counseling by the Senior Pastor or designee and at least one be a member in good standing. Whenever there is a conflict between the church's position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church's statement of faith, doctrines, and biblical positions will govern (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 18:22 and 19:14; Malachi 2:14; Mark 10:6-9; Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:1a; Ephesians 5:22-23).

## SALVATION

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

**Regeneration.** We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24) when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Such a conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming (Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3).

**Election.** We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies (Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Revelation 22:17). Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive (John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8).

We teach that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part or to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially

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His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 9:11-16). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

**Justification.** We teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7) and confess Him as sovereign Lord (Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11). This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is enabled to "be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus" (Romans 3:26).

**Sanctification.** We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer positionally enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended. All claims to the eradication of sin in this life are unscriptural. Eradication of sin is not possible, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin (Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9).

**Security.** We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

**Separation.** We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

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We teach that, out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that the Christian life is a life of obedient righteousness that reflects the teaching of the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:2-12) and a continual pursuit of holiness (Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10).

## THE CHURCH

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the Body of Christ, began on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own at the rapture (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is distinct from Israel (1 Corinthians 10:32), a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor/teachers; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ (1 Timothy 5:17-22) and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), as well as the need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).



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We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations (Titus 1:5). We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well (Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12).

We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12), and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that there were two kinds of gifts given the early church: miraculous gifts of divine revelation and healing, given temporarily in the apostolic era for the purpose of confirming the authenticity of the apostles' message (Hebrews 2:3-4; 2 Corinthians 12:12); and ministering gifts, given to equip believers for edifying one another. With the New Testament revelation now complete, Scripture becomes the sole test of the authenticity of a man's message, and confirming gifts of a miraculous nature are no longer necessary to validate a man or his message (1 Corinthians 13:8-12). Miraculous gifts can even be counterfeited by Satan so as to deceive even believers (1 Corinthians 13:13-14:12; Revelation 13:13-14). The only gifts in operation today are those non-revelatory equipping gifts given for edification (Romans 12:6-8). Therefore, we do not practice the use of these gifts in our corporate worship services. We understand that some Christians may land on this issue differently. While we do not believe this issue is a salvation issue, we do believe that we must guard against disunity and confusion within the Body of Christ.

We teach that no one possesses the gift of healing (Healing on command by an individual) today, but that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith and will answer in accordance with His own perfect will for the sick, suffering, and afflicted. The Lord through prayer/petition and His perfect will does heal. (John 5:7-9; 2 Corinthians 12:6-10; James 5:13-16; 1 John 5:14-15).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: **baptism and the Lord's Supper** (Acts 2:38-42). **Christian baptism by immersion** (Acts 8:36-39) is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life (Romans 6:1-11). It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ (Acts 2:41-42).

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**Baptism does not save.** Baptism is an act of obedience and submission to the word of God. Baptism does not administer any saving grace but rather sanctifying grace. We are more conformed to the image of Christ as we obey Him in the call to be baptized. (Ephesians 2:8, 1st Peter 3:21)

**Baptism is not necessary for salvation.** Without in any way diminishing the duty and delight of baptism for a believer, we must also warn against thinking/teaching which suggests that salvation is dependent upon baptism. The gospel is one of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone. (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9, Acts 16:30-31, John 3:16, John 6:47, John 14:6)

Though other denominations and theological traditions baptize by pouring or sprinkling, we practice baptism by immersion. We do so in light of the following considerations:

1. The Greek word βαπτίζω (baptizo) literally means to plunge, submerge or immerse. Our English word baptism is a transliteration of the Greek baptizo. Baptizo was used in Greek literature to describe the act of immersing something in water or another liquid. It later became a technical term that referred specifically to the Christian ordinance of baptism. (Matthew 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11 John 3:23, Acts 8:36).

2. The representation of union in Christ's death and resurrection is best expressed through immersion. Whether buried below or above ground, the symbolism of burial is still that of being placed under something. Likewise, resurrection is accomplished by coming out of something (whether grave or tomb). Immersion best symbolizes this reality by actually placing the believer under the water and bringing them out. (Romans 6:4)

\*We do not reject anyone's salvation because of their mode of baptism. We believe that baptism by immersion is the model that the New Testament gives, but we are not breaking fellowship with other Christians over the issue. Salvation is not dependent on whether you have been baptized or not. We do believe that the rejection of baptism is blatant disobedience for the confessing regenerated believer. We would have a hard time understanding why a professing saved Christian would not want to be baptized. (Acts 10:47, Acts 8:36)

We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people (1 Corinthians 10:16).

## ANGELS

**Holy Angels.** We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshiped. Although they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:9).

**Fallen Angels.** We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking

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numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race by his temptation of Eve (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10); that he is the prince of this world, who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Romans 16:20); and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

## LAST THINGS

**Death.** We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness (Revelation 6:9-11), that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ (Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8), that there is a separation of soul and body (Philippians 1:21-24), and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17), When Christ returns our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever with our Lord (Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54). Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:8).

We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life (John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14), and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15).

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection (Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15), when the soul and the resurrection body will be united (John 5:28-29). They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15) and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41-46), cut off from the life of God forever (Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

**The Rapture of the Church.** We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13) to translate His church from this earth (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-5:11) and, between this event and His glorious return with His saints, to reward believers according to their works (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

**Eternity.** We teach heavenly city (New Heavens and New Earth) will come down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2) and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another (John 17:3; Revelation 21-22). Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28), that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever (1 Corinthians 15:28).

In summary, we believe that Jesus Christ is returning to the world in the future (no one knows the day or time) to judge the living and the dead. The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the glorification of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and the unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's Kingdom in the New Heaven and New Earth. In the consummation, Satan, with his hosts and all those outside of Christ, are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment (Revelation 20:7-15), but the righteous, in glorious resurrected bodies, will live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then the eager

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expectation of creation will be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God, who makes all things new (Revelation 21:1-5)

## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Being a Christian is more than identifying yourself with a particular religion or affirming a certain value system. Being a Christian means you have embraced what the Bible says about God, mankind, and salvation. Consider the following truths found in Scripture.

**God Is Sovereign Creator.** Contemporary thinking says man is the product of evolution. But the Bible says we were created by a personal God to love, serve, and enjoy endless fellowship with Him. The New Testament reveals it was Jesus Himself who created everything (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16). Therefore, He also owns and rules everything (Psalm 103:19). That means He has authority over our lives and we owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship.

**God Is Holy.** God is absolutely and perfectly holy (Isaiah 6:3), therefore He cannot commit or approve of evil (James 1:13). God requires holiness of us as well. First Peter 1:16 says, "You shall be holy, for I am holy."

**Mankind Is Sinful.** According to Scripture, everyone is guilty of sin: "There is no man who does not sin" (1 Kings 8:46). That doesn't mean we're incapable of performing acts of human kindness. But we're utterly incapable of understanding, loving, or pleasing God on our own. (Romans 3:10-12).

**Sin Demands a Penalty.** God's holiness and justice demand that all sin be punished by eternal death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23). That's why simply changing our patterns of behavior can't solve our sin problem or eliminate its consequences.

**Jesus Is Lord and Savior.** The New Testament reveals it was Jesus Himself who created everything (Colossians 1:16). Therefore, He owns and rules everything (Psalm 103:19). That means He has authority over our lives and we owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship. Romans 10:9 says, "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Even though God's justice demands death for sin, His love has provided a Savior who paid the penalty and died for sinners (1 Peter 3:18). Christ's death satisfied the demands of God's justice and Christ's perfect life satisfied the demands of God's holiness (2 Corinthians 5:21), thereby enabling Him to forgive and save those who place their faith in Him (Romans 3:26).

**The Character of Saving Faith.** True faith is always accompanied by repentance from sin. Repentance is agreeing with God that you are sinful, confessing your sins to Him, and making a conscious choice to turn from sin (Luke 13:3,5; 1 Thessalonians 1:9) and pursue Christ (Matthew 11:28-30; John 17:3) and obedience to Him (1 John 2:3). It isn't enough to believe certain facts about Christ. Even Satan and his demons believe in the true God (James 2:19), but they don't love and obey Him. True saving faith always responds in obedience (Ephesians 2:10).

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**ARTICLE IV \* MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1. Member Categories.** Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, having been baptized by immersion, giving evidence of regeneration, accepting the views of faith, committed to honoring the doctrinal statement as defined in these Bylaws (ARTICLE III), regularly attending the services of the Church (Hebrews 10:25), and attempting to live a lifestyle in accord with Scripture may be received into membership through the procedures defined by the Elders. Membership is defined as:

- A. Active Members. Active Members consist of individuals who have been accepted into membership, continue to meet the requirements of membership (given above), and are 18 years of age or older. Active Members are expected to support the ministry of the Church with their prayers and gifts as God has prospered them, and actively engage in the work of the Church. They are expected to exercise their spiritual gifts humbly, prayerfully, and faithfully, for the glory of Christ. Active Members are also expected to attend all congregational meetings and have full voting privileges at those meetings. If unable to attend, Active Members are expected to submit an absentee ballot. Active Members shall notify the Church office of any changes of address. Active Members can also consist of members serving on the mission field.
- B. Non-Attending Members (Shut-ins). Non-Attending Members consist of those who for reason of physical limitations are unable to attend worship services, but retain full membership status, as noted in the Active Members section (1.A) above.
- C. Former Members. Former Members consist of those who have qualified for Removal of Membership. See Section 2.

**Section 2. Removal of Membership.** Individuals shall be removed from membership when one of the following criteria is met:

- A. When members permanently move away from the community or are unable to attend for a consecutive time frame of seven months or longer. (An exception applies to those with physical limitations. See Section 1.B.) Ideally a conversation between an elder and the departing member is to precede any official changes in membership status.
- B. When members chose, for whatever reason, to no longer attend and have absented themselves from the regular services of the Church. Ideally a conversation between an elder and the departing member is to precede any official changes in membership status.
- C. Inactivity as defined by failure to respond to formal contact from the elders seeking explanation for their absence from the church on multiple attempts.
- D. When members are not in accord with the faith and order of the Church, membership shall cease. All discipline shall be done according to Scripture as noted in ARTICLE IX.
- E. Death.

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**Section 3. Membership List.** A list shall be maintained in the Church office of all members in the categories of active, non-attending, and former.

**ARTICLE V \* GOVERNANCE/FUNCTION**

**Section 1. Authority.** This Church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its only head and receives the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, Church order, and discipline, and is amenable to no other ecclesiastical body. This Church shall remain free and independent and shall not join itself to any other denomination or synod. It shall remain its own highest authority. Under the Lordship of Christ and the direction of the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, responsibility for oversight of all Church activities is placed on various leaders whose descriptions follow. To hold a leadership position in this Church, a person must be a member in good standing for at least one year, and be seeking to live up to the Scriptural standards of irreproachable character as laid down in such passages as 1 Timothy 3:1-17 and Titus 1. In addition, he must take the position voluntarily and willingly with a promise to fulfill to the best of his ability, by the grace of God, the duties and privileges of his position.

**Section 2. Elders.** The Elders shall consist of staff Elders (pastors) and those men recognized for their ministry in the Church and for their irreproachable character, meeting the requirements for an Elder or Overseer as laid out in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1) (lay Elders). Article VIII defines the selection, resignation and dismissal process for Elders.

The Church believes all humans, women and men, are of equal importance to God. There is no distinction in the eyes of God. God saves both men and women from their sin and sees them as spotless and blameless before Him. With that said, God has assigned different leadership roles to men and women in the church structure. In 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, God has set forth that the role of an elder (pastor, shepherd, overseer) be filled by a man who meets the specified criteria. This teaching is a statement of role and structure.

The Church understands the language of 1 Timothy 3 (e.g., “if any man”, “he desires”, “the husband of one wife”, “he must manage his household” etc. ), 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 (“they (women) are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves”), 1 Timothy 2 (“I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man”) to mean that Elders are required to be men and not women. This is consistent with our Lord appointing only male apostles (Matthew 10; Mark 3; Luke 5) as well as the practice of the historic, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Church.

- A. Duties. The Elders shall be responsible for the spiritual oversight of all ministries and activities of the Church. For example: they shall cooperate with the Pastors in making decisions regarding all matters of pulpit supply and discipline. They shall act as counselors and personal workers to those who need spiritual guidance, including pastoral and support staff if necessary. They shall pray for one another, the Deacons, and the congregation. They shall be a model of humble servanthood to the congregation. They shall visit Church families, especially the sick and destitute. They shall be alert to those needing help, whether spiritual or temporal, in the congregation. They shall be actively involved in being and making disciples. The Elders shall have the oversight of the mission program of the Church. The Elders have the prerogative to be the sole authority in discipline and other spiritually sensitive matters. Every Active Member of the Church, including each individual Elder, is to be submitted to the spiritual authority vested in

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the Elders. Even so, the Elders shall exercise their collective spiritual authority with much prayer and humility, continually looking for direction from the Scriptures and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Elders shall be available to assist in the administration of the ordinances outlined in ARTICLE III. Elders also have the responsibility of maintaining the Membership List as outlined in ARTICLE IV, Section 3. The business administration of this Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in and the responsibility of the Elders. They shall have the power to conduct, manage, and control the business of the Church, and to make rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Georgia, and the Bylaws of the Church, and to perform all functions necessary to carry out the purposes of the Church.

**Section 3. Deacons.** Deacons shall be members in good standing, recognized for upstanding character as described in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, and seeking to increase Christlikeness in their daily walk. The Elders shall select from those appointed Deacons to oversee and administrate the practical ministries of the Church and other matters of administration and duties as designated. Deacons are accountable to the Elders.

## ARTICLE VI \* SENIOR PASTOR AND PASTORAL STAFF

**Section 1. Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God as directed by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:2) and shall meet the qualifications of an Elder and the Senior Pastor job description. He shall also visit, counsel, and carry on all the activities and duties proper to his position as set forth in the Scriptures and his job description. The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder after 1 year of membership. He shall be accountable to and submit to the spiritual authority of the Elders. He shall also provide oversight and direction if needed in all groups, committees and ministries. He shall oversee the pastoral staff and coordinate their ministries. It is expected that the Senior Pastor, along with his wife, shall make application for Church membership.

**Section 2. Pastoral Staff.** If the Elders determine the need, the Church may employ additional pastoral staff. Additional pastoral staff shall meet the qualifications of an Elder and their respective job description. After a thorough evaluation of the needs of the Church and the gifts of the man called, the Elders shall provide a written description of authority, duties, and responsibilities. He shall oversee and coordinate the ministries under his specialization and shall attend staff meetings called by the Senior Pastor. He shall be an Elder after 1 year of membership and it is expected that he, along with his wife, shall make application for Church membership.

## ARTICLE VII \* MEETINGS

### **Section 1. Regular Meetings.**

- A. The Church shall meet regularly for public worship each Lord's Day morning throughout the year, unless changed by mutual agreement of the Elders.
- B. The Church shall meet for regular weeknight prayer and Bible study on an evening or evenings designated by the Elders.

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**Section 2. Special Meetings.**

- A. Special devotional, missionary, evangelistic or business meetings may be held throughout the year as shall be determined by the Elders.
- B. Special congregational meetings may be held at any time. Such meetings may be called by the Elders, provided that the time and place shall first be announced by letter and in regular services at least ten (10) days prior to said meeting.

**Section 3. Affirmation Voting.** Affirmation voting is conducted among the Active Members to affirm candidates for the positions of Elders and Deacons. Affirmation voting among the Active Members is also used to affirm amendments to these Bylaws at a congregational meeting and other orders of business as deemed necessary by the Elders.

- A. Affirmation voting may be a simple show of hands, a formal secret ballot or many other methods. The method used for voting is at the discretion of the Elders for each affirmation vote.
- B. Absentee ballots will be issued through the Church office and approved by the Elders. Such ballots shall be in hand at the time of the voting.

**ARTICLE VIII \* SELECTIONS, RESIGNATIONS, DISMISSALS**

**Section 1. Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall continue in office until his ministry is terminated by death, resignation, or removal. Selection and dismissal of the Senior Pastor shall be as follows:

- A. Senior Pastor Selection. Upon the death, resignation, or removal of the Senior Pastor, the Church shall, without unnecessary delay, endeavor to secure a successor. The Elders shall appoint a committee of at least three (3) members of the congregation to investigate and recommend a single candidate to fill the position of Senior Pastor. Their search and recommendation shall consider the qualifications set forth in Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Upon receiving a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the Elders voting, he will be asked to visit the Church and speak before the congregation. During the visit, the Elders shall meet with him and examine his candidacy. There shall also be opportunities for the congregation to meet and interact with said candidate. The elders shall then determine whether the candidate is acceptable with congregational input. A representative from the Elders shall present a report to the congregation summarizing their findings regarding the candidate and an affirmation vote of at least a three fourths majority. If accepted, such call shall be for an indefinite period.
- B. Senior Pastor Dismissal. Should a grievance exist against a Pastor, a special meeting of the Elders may be called (following ARTICLE IX), and a thorough investigation shall be conducted. Upon the recommendation of the Elders, the relationship shall be dissolved if deemed necessary upon receiving a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the Elders voting.

**Section 2. Pastoral Staff.** Pastoral Staff shall continue in position until their ministries are terminated by death, resignation, or removal, or until the financial resources to sustain their position are no longer available.



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- A. Pastoral Staff Selection. The Elders shall appoint a committee of at least two (2) members of the congregation and the Senior Pastor to investigate and recommend a single candidate to fill the desired position. Their search and recommendation shall consider the qualifications set forth in Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Upon receiving a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the Elders voting, he will be asked to visit the Church and speak before the congregation. During the visit, the Elders shall meet with him and examine his candidacy. There shall also be opportunities for the congregation to meet and interact with said candidate. The elders shall then determine whether the candidate is acceptable with congregational input. A representative from the Elders shall present a report to the congregation summarizing their findings regarding the candidate and an affirmation vote of at least a three fourths majority. If accepted, such call shall be for an indefinite period.
- B. Pastoral Staff Dismissal. Should a grievance exist against a Pastor, a special meeting of the Senior Pastor and Elders may be called (following ARTICLE IX). Upon the recommendation of the Elders, the relationship shall be dissolved if deemed necessary upon receiving a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the Elders voting.

**Section 3. Elders and Deacons.** The lay leadership of the Church, comprising the Elders, and Deacons, shall continue in their position until their ministries are terminated by death, resignation, or dismissal. The process for selection and dismissal for the Church lay leadership are as follows:

- A. Lay Leadership Selection. A Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the Elders and consist of at least two (2) Elders, two (2) Deacons, and the Senior Pastor. The Nominating Committee shall receive nominations for lay leadership positions from any Active Member, and with prayerful diligence, shall review each person regarding their qualification and willingness to serve using 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Part of the review process shall be lay leadership training. Upon acceptance of the slate of candidates by the Elders, the list of candidates shall be presented to the active membership no less than 14 days prior to an affirmation vote at a congregational meeting.
- B. Active Members are asked to submit a scriptural basis to substantiate any “no” vote that is cast. The Senior Pastor will follow up on all “no” votes; if there does exist a scriptural basis precluding the candidate from serving, that candidate will not be received into the lay leadership of the Church.
- C. Lay Leadership Resignation. Any lay leader may resign by filing a written resignation with the Chairman of the Elders. A leave of absence may also be granted, when requested, for personal reasons.
- D. Lay Leadership Dismissal. After an appropriate hearing to assess any charges brought forward concerning a lay leader of the Church (following ARTICLE IX), the Elders by a three-fourths (3/4) majority, may suspend or terminate the leadership position of any member of the Elders or Deacons.

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**ARTICLE IX \* CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

**Section 1. Process.** When a member of the Church is involved in sin (Matt. 18:15- 17) or whose conduct is not in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws such that: (a) The reputation of Jesus Christ will suffer, (b) Non-Christians will be turned away from Christ, (c) Christians are being led astray, (d) The spirit of a Christian has been wounded, or (e) It hinders the ministry influence of the church in the community.

All discipline shall be done according to Scripture of which Galatians 6:1, Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15 shall be the guide. (The elders retain the right to practice church discipline on members and regularly attending non-members as the process of church restoration described in Matthew 18:15-20 applies to any “brother”.) Members can be restored to fellowship during and after the disciplinary steps if repentance and reconciliation occur.

The discipline steps of a believer based on first-hand knowledge of unrepentive sin are:

- Reprove him privately (Matt. 18:15, Luke 17:3)
- Reprove him before one or two witnesses (Matt 18:16, Deut. 19:15)
- Reprove him before the church (Matt 18:17, I Tim 5:20)
- Exclude him from the church (Matt 18:17, I Cor. 5:5, I Tim 1:20)

\*The desirable goal of any church discipline situation is repentance, restoration and reconciliation with said member.

**Section 2. Members.** All discipline shall be done according to Scripture and shall follow the Member Discipline in ARTILE IX, Section 1

**Section 3. Pastors.** All discipline shall be done according to Scripture and shall follow the Member Discipline in ARTILE IX, Section 1 and against the qualifications noted in ARTICLE VI.

**Section 4. Elders and Deacons.** All discipline shall be done according to Scripture and shall follow the Member Discipline in ARTILE IX, Section 1 and against the qualifications noted in ARTICLE V.

**ARTICLE X \* CHURCH FINANCES**

**Section 1. Definition.** This Corporation is a Church and is religious, charitable, and educational in character and is a non-profit organization.

**Section 2. Income from Giving.** The Church’s necessary expenses shall be met through voluntary gifts and contributions from individuals interested in the promotion of the purposes of the Church. The Church accepts the Bible as final authority in all matters of Church finance. This includes systematic giving of

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tithes and offerings with each one giving as he purposes in his heart. No undue pressure is to be put upon members in the matter of giving (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

**Section 3. Income from Property.** All earnings from the use of any of the corporate property shall be available for the religious, missionary, educational, and benevolent purposes of the Church.

**Section 4. Compensation.** The lay leadership of the Church shall receive no compensation for performance of their stated duties. Pastors and administrative staff shall receive such reasonable compensation as the Elders may determine.

**Section 5. Property.** The building and all other properties shall be always subject to the Elders for services and meetings pertaining to the work of the Church or for use of groups requesting them, as permission is granted for use by the Elders on a case-by-case basis.

**ARTICLE XI \* AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONAL POLICIES**

**Section 1. Amendments.** These Bylaws may be repealed or amended, or a new Bylaw may be affirmed by a three-fourths (3/4) majority, at a meeting of the members or at a special meeting called for that purpose, providing that a copy of any proposed changes or amendments of the Bylaws shall be made available to all Active Members not less than ten (10) days before the date of such special meeting.

**Section 2. Additional Policies.** Items of governance not covered in these Bylaws shall be contained in the Policies of the Church. All policies shall be governed by these bylaws.

[Approved by membership vote on August 28, 2022]