

Article One – Name

The Congregation shall be known as "Surprise Christian Church"

Article Two – Purpose

The Church is formed to equip and build up disciples who relationally transform the world for Christ. Our mission is to faithfully live out the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

Article Three – Statement of Faith

Section 1 - Concerning God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is the Creator and Ruler over all things. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience.

The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

Section 2 – Concerning the Father

The Father is the Sovereign Lord over all creation. God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe and His creatures, according to the purposes of His grace. God is Father to those who become adopted children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

Matthew 6:9.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

Section 3 – Concerning the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who

was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18, 29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

Section 4 – Concerning the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of receiving Christ through Faith, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ.

He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ, guaranteeing their full inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Genesis 1:2; Psalms 51:11; 139:7; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; Philippians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 1 Peter 1:1-16; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.

Section 5 – Concerning Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

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

Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

Section 6 – Concerning the Bible

The Holy Scriptures were written by men who were carried along by the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures are "God-Breathed" and therefore infallible and inerrant. The Scriptures were faithfully transmitted throughout history, from the original documents to the modern Bible. Although, no modern English translation is a perfect match to the original, all the original readings of Scripture have been perfectly and providentially preserved in the manuscript tradition; therefore, the Scripture we have today is totally true and trustworthy.

The Holy Scriptures are the sole authority in the Church in all matters regarding Faith and practice. All Scripture testifies to Christ, who is the center of and fulfillment of all divine revelation. The church stands and falls based on the centrality of Scripture.

Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140, Isaiah 40:8, Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16, 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Section 7 – Concerning the Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ (Baptism and Communion), governed by His Word, and exercising the gifts invested in them by His Spirit, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

Section 8 – Concerning Baptism and Communion

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to Communion.

Communion is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the elements, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

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

Section 10- Concerning Marriage

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Divorce is generally forbidden in Scripture, as it distorts the image of Christ and His church. However, there are scenarios in which divorce is permissible. One of those scenarios is in the case of adultery.

There are illegitimate marriages which do not fit the Biblical standard and are not recognized by God. It is the duty of the church to protect the sanctity of marriage and recognize the establishment of a biblical, life-long covenantal marriage.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image.

A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family.

A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband by supporting him in his God-given responsibility to lead the family.

Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Section 11 – Concerning Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. This includes pre-born babies, the aged, the physical or mentally challenged, and every

other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are, therefore, called to defend, protect, and value all human life.

Leviticus 19:32; Psalm 71:18, 139:13-16; Proverbs 16:31, 23:22; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:39-45, 14:12-14; 1 Timothy 5:1-2.

Section 12 – Concerning Gender and Sexuality

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as a male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. We believe that rejection of one's biological sex/gender is a rebellion against the created order that God has established.

Genesis 1:27, 2:18; Deuteronomy 22:5; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6; Romans 1:26-27; Ephesians 5:22-33; Colossians 3:18-19.

Article Four – Membership

Section 1 – Active Membership

Active membership at Surprise Christian Church shall be open to all persons who confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, have been baptized, and affirm the doctrine listed herein.

Section 2 – Voting Privileges

Membership in this Church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Church but shall only entitle the member to vote on matters submitted to the Church membership by the Board of Elders. Voting privileges are restricted to members who have are 18 years of age or older. Membership shall not be assignable *inter vivo* by any member nor shall membership vest to any personal representative, heir, or devisee.

Section 3 – Application for Membership

All requests for membership shall be made to the Pastor, an Elder, or a Deacon. Upon making such a request, the person shall be given an application for membership, along with a copy of the Statement of Faith. A Pastor or Elder shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application. Each applicant shall give a confession of Faith in Jesus, affirm their baptism, and affirm the doctrine of the church to said Pastor or Elder in order to gain membership. Upon gaining membership, the status of the individual will be marked in the church database by the Elder or Pastor who approved the membership.

Section 4 – Denial of Membership

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Elder or Pastor determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, has not been baptized, or does not align with established church doctrine, membership shall be denied.

Section 5 – Responsibility of Members

Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of all the church body and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders. Members shall commit themselves to obedience to Christ in all areas of personal and professional life.

Section 6 – Discipline of Members

The purpose of Church Discipline is to affect a return to a Biblical standard of behavior and doctrine in a member who errs (Galatians 6:1, Titus 1:9, 2:1, 1 Timothy 1:8-11, 2 Timothy 3:16, 4:2-4), to maintain purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6-7), and as a tool to bring about Godly grief in the hope of the individual turning in Repentance and Faith towards the Lord (2 Corinthians 7:10). Church discipline is a necessary act of love and is the responsibility of the churches Elders (Jude 1:17-23, 1 Corinthians 5:3-5, 2 Corinthians 2:1-11).

Members of this church who shall err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to discipline potentially resulting in dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal however, 1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring member's false doctrine, heresy, or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If said erring member does not heed this warning, then 2) the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If said erring member still refuses to heed this warning, then 3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Elders. The Elders, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the Church. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning of the Church, 4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the Church. There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision. It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the Church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid discipline. If said member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement, 5) he or she shall be publicly restored to membership.

Section 7 – Termination of Membership

The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church, or as an act of excommunication through Church Discipline as specified in Article Four, Section 6 of these Bylaws.

Section 8 – Special Meetings

Special meetings of the members may be called at any time by order of the Pastor, the Board of Elders.

Section 9 – Quorum

At all meetings of the members, whether regular or special, the members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article Five – Elders

Section 1 – Board of Elders

Lay Elders along with the Senior Pastor and Associate Pastors shall compose the Board of Elders. The authorized number of Elders for the Church shall not be less than three (3) or more than fifteen (15) until changed by amendment of the Articles of Incorporation or by amendment to these Bylaws. The Board of Elders shall elect a Vice-Chairman and Secretary/Treasurer annually.

Section 2 – Qualifications

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of this Church who has affirmed the Statement of Faith and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The clear standard given in these passages paired with the teaching of the Apostle Paul that he establishes in the created order (1 Timothy 2:12-15) establish that the position of Elder/Pastor is only to be held by men. Women can hold any other title in the church, including Deaconess.

Section 3 – Scriptural Terms for Elders

Several different terms are used in the Scriptures to refer to man serving in the role of an Elder. These terms help define the role and duties of Elders within the Church.

- A. Overseer (Greek: επίσκοπος Transliteration: Episkopas) - translated “bishop” in most Bibles, means “overseer, guardian, decision maker, or manager” (1 Peter 2:25; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-2; Acts 20:28).
- B. Elder (Greek: πρεσβύτερος Transliteration: Presbuteros) - translated “elders” it means “one who is older” or “mature” (Acts 14:23, 20:17; 1 Peter 1:1, 5:1-2).
- C. Pastor (Greek: ποιμῆν Transliteration: Poimen) - translated “pastor”, the word means “shepherd, one who cares for, protects, and leads” (Hebrews 13:20-21; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:6-9; Ephesians 4:11).

These terms describe one man in one office, that of an elder. The term elder refers to who the man is (his identity as mature in the faith), the term overseer refers to what he does (his job description), and the term pastor refers to his heart as he does the job (his character as a shepherd of God’s people).

Section 4 – Powers

Subject to the limitations of Holy Scripture, the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, all the activities and affairs of the Church shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the congregation. Without prejudice to such general powers, but subject to the same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board of Elders shall have the following powers in addition to the other powers enumerated in these Bylaws:

- A. To select and remove all the Pastors, Elders, and Deacons of the Church, prescribe such duties for them consistent with Scripture, law, or with these Bylaws, fix the terms of their offices and their compensation.
- B. To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the Church as they are required to fulfill the purposes of the Church as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, to generally conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the Church and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Holy Scriptures, law, the Articles of Incorporation, and with these Bylaws, as they deem best.
- C. To establish policies and practices for the Church consistent with the purposes of the Church.

Section 5 – Pastors

The Senior Pastor shall be an Elder and shall serve as the Chairman of the Board of Elders. He shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services of the Church and shall be responsible for general oversight of the spiritual welfare of the Church.

The Associate Pastors shall be Elders and shall assist the Senior Pastor in the performance of his duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth and assigned by the Board of Elders and the Church.

Pastors shall be selected by the Board of Elders and such confirmation shall be by unanimous vote of the Board of Elders. He shall remain in office an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: the Board of Elders reserve the right to dismiss a Pastor upon giving him one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss. This right may only be used by the Board of Elders in the event that a Pastor is physically incapacitated or spiritually disqualified to remain in his office.

A Pastor must give one month's written notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of a Pastor's resignation or dismissal is subject to lesser time if both the Pastor and the Board of Elders by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

Section 6 – Lay Elders

Recommendations to fill the office of Lay Elder shall be determined by the board of Elders. Any member of the Church may be added to the number of Lay Elders at the discretion of the Board of Elders. If any nominee is affirmed the newly elected Elders shall assume office immediately. Each Lay Elder shall serve a term of two-years. At the end of each two-year term, the Lay Elder may be reelected following a unanimous vote of the board of Elders.

Section 7 – Vacancies

Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Senior Pastor or Secretary of the Board of Elders, unless the notice shall specify a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. If the resignation is to take effect at some future time, a successor may be selected before that time according to Article Five, Section 6.

A vacancy or vacancies in the Board of Elders shall be deemed to exist in case of death, resignation, or removal of any Elder, or if the need exists and the specified limit is not exceeded.

No reduction of the authorized number of elders shall have the effect of removing any Elder prior to the expiration of the Elder's term in office.

Section 8 – Removal of Lay Elders

Any Lay Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually disqualified, or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Board of Elders. Upon a unanimous vote of the board of Elders, not including the Elder in question, the Lay Elder shall be removed immediately.

Section 9 – Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board of Elders shall be held without call or notice once a month on the day designated by the Board at its previous meeting.

Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called at any time by order of the Senior Pastor, Vice-Chairman, or Secretary of the Board, or by quorum of the members of the Board. Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon a twenty-four (24) hour notice given personally by telephone, email, or other similar means of communication. Any such notice shall be delivered to each Elder as it is shown upon the records of the Church or as it may have been given to the Church by the Elder for such purpose of notice.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in these Bylaws, any meeting (whether regular or special) of the Board of Elders may be held at any place within or without the State of Arizona.

Members of the Board of Elders may participate in a meeting through the use of a conference call by telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another.

Section 10 – Quorum

Unless otherwise provided herein, a majority of Elders in office shall constitute a quorum. Whenever the matter to be considered concerns calling a Pastor or staff member, dismissing a Pastor or staff member, or buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Board of Elders. Except as the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws. The act or decision done or made by the Elders present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Elders.

Section 11 – Action without Meeting

Any action requiring or permitted to be taken by the Board may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Board and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Board.

Section 12 – Rights of Inspection

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the Church of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder.

Section 13 – Decision by the Board

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.

Section 14 – Fees and Compensation

Elders as such shall not receive any stated or fixed salary for their services; however, nothing

herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Elder from serving the Church in any other capacity and receiving compensation.

Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from the Church shall not have a say in determining the nature or amount of said compensation.

Article Six – Deacons and Deaconesses

Section 1 – Deacons

The Deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be elected by the Board of Elders. The Deacons shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the saints, assist the Pastors in the general spiritual care of the Church, and perform other duties of service as assigned by the Board of Elders. A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found beyond reproach.

Section 2 – Deaconesses

The Deaconesses shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:11 and shall be elected by the Board of Elders. Assist the Pastors in the general spiritual care of the Church, shall assist in the care of the sick and needy, and perform other duties of service as assigned by the Board of Elders. A Deaconess shall be diligent, not a malicious gossip, temperate, and faithful in all things.

Section 3 – Nomination and Selection

The nomination and selection of Deacons and Deaconesses shall be done in the same manner as for Lay Elders, as set forth in Article 5, Section 6 of these Bylaws.

Article Seven – Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning

Section 1 – Ordination

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualifications to serve. Ordination shall be conferred by authority of the Church upon the candidate for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

Section 2 – Licensing

The license is issued by the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's call to that ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform ecclesiastical duties and functions of the Church. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on an annual basis.

Section 3 – Commissioning

When the local church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect.

Article Eight – Settlement of Disputes

In any dispute arising between church members pertaining to any matters in spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the

dispute shall be resolved by the Board of Elders of the Church. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself.