



Bylaws

Preamble

WHEREAS, it is the express purpose of God our Heavenly Father to call out of the world a saved people who shall contribute to the Body of Christ, built and established on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the Chief Cornerstone.

WHEREAS, the members of the Body of Christ are enjoined to assemble themselves together for worship, fellowship, counsel, and instruction in the Word of God and the work of the ministry and for the exercise of those spiritual gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we recognize ourselves as a body of Christian believers working together for the common purpose of spreading the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that under the laws of the State of Texas we may exercise all the rights and privileges granted to religious bodies.

Article I. Name

The name of this corporation shall be Living Stones Church of Houston, Inc. hereinafter referred to as "the LS Church".

Article II. Purpose

The specific purpose for which the LS Church is organized is to establish and oversee places of worship, teach and preach the gospel to all people, conduct evangelistic and humanitarian outreach, license and ordain ministers of the gospel, facilitate rehabilitation through various forms of support, church planting and to also engage in activities which are necessary, suitable or convenient for the accomplishment of that purpose, or which are incidental thereto or connected therewith which are consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This LS Church is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

Article III. Statement of Faith

The human phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired nor contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full Gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all the truth in the Bible, only that it covers orthodox fundamental matters.



III.1 God Is Triune

There is one God: infinite, eternal, almighty and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the unity of the godhead, there are three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is truly Deity. One God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — is the foundation of Christian faith and life. (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

III.2 God The Father

God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the world out of nothing. Through the same word, He daily sustains all His creatures. He rules over all and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only Sovereign. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him, and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son Jesus Christ for mankind's redemption. He made all things for the praise of His glory and intends for humanity, in particular, to live in fellowship with Himself.

(Genesis 1:1, 2:7; Exodus 3:14, 6:2-3; Deuteronomy 6:6, 32:1; Psalm 19:1-3; John 4:24, 5:26, 14:6-13; 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)

III.3 Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the eternal Word made flesh, supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. He is perfect in nature, teaching and obedience. He is fully God and fully man. He was always with God and is God. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things hold together by the word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the only Savior for the sins of the world having shed His blood and died a vicarious death on Calvary's cross. By His death in our place, He revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God. Having redeemed us from sin, the third day He rose bodily from the grave, victorious over death and the powers of darkness, and for a period of 40 days appeared to over 500 witnesses performing many convincing proofs of His resurrection. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all, as we await His return. He is the Head of His body, the church, and should be adored, loved, served and obeyed by all.

(Philippians 2:9-11; Matthew 1:21; John 1:1-3; Luke 1:34-35; 1 Peter 2:22; Luke 7:1-17; John 14:1-7; John 10:17-18; Luke 22:47, 23:56; Luke 24:1-52; Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; Romans 8:34; 1 John 2:1-2; Romans 5:9; Hebrews 9:22; Revelation 1:5)

III.4 The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment and empowers and guides believers. Through the proclamation of the gospel, He persuades humanity to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By the same Spirit a person is led to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new



birth and dwells within the regenerate. The Holy Spirit has come to glorify the Son who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's word. He is to be respected, honored and worshipped as God the Third Person of the Trinity.

(John 16:8-12; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:16)

III.5 The Scriptures

We accept the Bible, including the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written, living Word of God, relevant to all ages. The Bible is an essential and authentic testimony of God's self-disclosure to humankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Being given by God, the Scriptures are both fully and verbally inspired by God and serve as the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. All believers are exhorted to study and diligently apply the Scriptures to their lives. With guidance from the Holy Spirit, the Bible is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose and with respect to its entirety.

(2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

III.6 Humanity

God made humanity — male and female — in His own image, as the crown of creation, that each person might glorify Him through enjoying fellowship with Him. Tempted by Satan, humanity rebelled against God. This resulted in estrangement from God, and apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. Man's only hope of redemption and being reunited with God is through salvation in Christ alone.

(Genesis 1:26, 2:20; Romans 5:12-21; Romans 6:20; 1 Corinthians 2:14)

III.7 The Gospel

Jesus Christ is the gospel. The good news is revealed in His birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel; His resurrection is the power of the gospel and His ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath. It also demonstrates His mysterious love and reveals His amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and humanity. There is no other name by which humans must be saved. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have of glorifying God because of what He has accomplished. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, churches and ministries to proceed from and be related to the gospel.

(Ephesians 1:7, 13-14; John 1:12-13; John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 1:16; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 8:14-17; Acts 26:20; 1 Peter 1:3-5)



III.8 Response to The Gospel

The proper response to the gospel is faith in the person and work of Jesus Christ, a faith that is naturally accompanied by repentance from sin. Biblical repentance is characterized by a changed life, and saving faith is evidenced by kingdom service or works. While neither repentance nor works save, unless a person is willing to deny himself, pick up his cross and follow Christ, he or she cannot become His disciple. This gospel of grace is to be sincerely preached to all people in all nations.

(Ephesians 2:8-10; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7)

III.9 Inheritance Through the Gospel

Salvation, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith alone, because of Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Anyone turning from sin in repentance and looking to Christ and His substitutionary death receives the gift of eternal life and is declared righteous by God as a free gift. The righteousness of Christ is imputed to them. They are justified and fully accepted by God. Through Christ's atonement for sin an individual is reconciled to God as Father and becomes His child. The believer is forgiven the debt of his sin and, via the miracle of regeneration, liberated from the law of sin and death into the freedom of God's Spirit.

(John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; 1 Peter 1:5; Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

III.10 Sanctification

The Holy Spirit is the active agent in our sanctification and seeks to produce His fruit in us as our minds are renewed and we are conformed to the image of Christ. Though indwelling sin remains a reality, as we are led by the Spirit, we grow in the knowledge of the Lord, freely keeping His commandments and endeavoring to so live in the world that all people may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven. All believers are exhorted to persevere in the faith knowing they will have to give an account to God for their every thought, word and deed. The spiritual disciplines, especially Bible study, prayer, worship and confession, are a vital means of grace in this regard. Nevertheless, the believer's ultimate confidence to persevere is based in the sure promise of God to preserve His people until the end, which is most certain.

(Romans 6:6; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 10:10; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20; 2 Peter 3:18)

III.11 Empowered by The Spirit

The Holy Spirit empowers believers for Christian witness and service. The promise of the Father is freely available to all who believe in Jesus Christ, thereby enabling them to exercise the powers of the age to come in ministry and mission. The Holy Spirit desires to continually fill each believer with power to witness, and imparts His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the work of ministry in the world. All the gifts of the Holy Spirit at work in the church of the first century are available today and are to be earnestly desired and practiced in an orderly manner. The gifts are essential in the mission of the Church in the world today.



(John 14:15-17, 26; Romans 8:2-6, 13, 26; Ephesians 5:18; Galatians 5:16-17, 22-23)

III.12 The Church

God, by His Word and Spirit, creates the Church, calling sinful people out of the whole human race into the fellowship of Christ's Body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves that new redeemed humanity. The church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally accepted the gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It also exists to serve Him by faithfully doing His will on the earth. This involves a commitment to see the gospel preached, churches planted, helping the sick, loving the less fortunate, and sharing the Gospel to the lost for His glory. The ultimate mission of the Church is worship and the means by which this is accomplished is the making of disciples through the preaching and embracing of the gospel. When God transforms human nature, this then becomes the chief means of society's transformation. Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. All members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. In this context, they are called to walk out the New Covenant as the people of God and demonstrate the reality of the kingdom of God. The ascended Christ has given gift ministries to the church (including prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) for the equipping of Christ's body that it might mature and grow. Through the gift ministries, all members of the church are to be nurtured and equipped for the work of the ministry. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and to the world.

(Revelation 5:9; Hebrews 3:6; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; Ephesians 1:22-23; Revelation 19:7-9; Hebrews 10:24-25; Matthew 5:13)

III.13 Marriage

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive, covenantal union, as outlined in both the Old and New Testament.

(Genesis 2:22-24; Ephesians 5:22-27; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4; Mark 10:6-9)

III.14 The Consummation

The consummation of all things includes the future, physical, visible, personal and glorious return of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead and the translation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the just and unjust, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth. In the consummation, Satan with his hosts and all those outside Christ are finally separated from the benevolent presence of God, enduring eternal punishment, but the righteous, in glorious bodies, shall live and reign with Him forever, serving Him and giving Him unending praise and glory. Then shall the eager expectation of creation be fulfilled, and the whole earth shall proclaim the glory of God who makes all things new.

(1 Thessalonians 4:12-18; 2 Corinthians 5:8-10; Revelation 20:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44; 2 Corinthians 5:6-8)



Article IV. Ordinances

IV.1 Baptism by Water

The ordinance of baptism should be observed (as commanded in the Scriptures) by all that have repented of their sins and in their hearts, have believed on Christ as their Savior and Lord. In doing so, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they have also been released to walk with Him in newness of life.

(Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:4)

IV.2 The Lord's Supper (Holy Communion)

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements, bread and fruit of the vine, is the symbol expressing our sharing in a memorial to His suffering and death, and a prophecy of His second coming, and is enjoined to all believers "until He comes".

(John 6:48,51, 53-57; Luke 22:19,20; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 Corinthians 11:25)

Article V. Membership

V.1 Process for Covenant Membership

Before being accepted as a covenant member at the LS Church, prospective members must:

1. Complete the pre-membership class (reflecting our statements, strategy and philosophy) and have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ;
2. Commit to live out the core values of the LS Church;
3. Be received into the fellowship in one of the following ways:
 - a. Baptism
 - By a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior as a candidate for baptism.
 - b. Letter
 - By letter from another church of like faith and order indicating that the candidate was a member in good standing and has been baptized.
 - c. Statement
 - By their profession of faith in Jesus Christ and have already been baptized at another church of like faith and order.



V.2 Discipline of Members

A covenant member may terminate their membership upon request by submitting a written request to the Senior Pastor. Upon request from the covenant member or another church, a letter of membership shall be granted to covenant members in good standing desiring to unite with another church and their name(s) shall be removed from the LS Church roll when the letter is granted. A covenant member's name will be removed from the Church roll upon that member's death.

Covenant members whose conduct or belief is contrary to biblical principles shall be dealt with according to the principles of discipline as set forth in Matthew 5:23-24 and Matthew 18:15-17.

1. The Senior Pastor will be the only individual that can recommend disciplinary action including the termination of a covenant member of the Church.
2. The Board of Elders will review and vote on any disciplinary action recommended by the Senior Pastor. Upon acceptance of the disciplinary action to terminate a covenant member of the LS Church, the member's name will be removed from the LS Church roll.

Restoration of terminated members shall be made according to the regular process for membership.

V.3 Voting Eligibility

All covenant members of the LS Church, sixteen (16) years or older, are eligible to vote whenever a vote by the LS Church is required. The Board of Elders will present prospective Elders to the covenant members of the LS Church for final confirmation.

Article VI. Elders

VI.1 Elders

Elders shall be selected from covenant members of the LS Church. Any Elder may nominate a covenant member of the LS Church who they believe exemplify the qualities of an Elder. The Board of Elders will assess prospective Elders and present qualified candidates to the LS Church membership for acceptance.

VI.2 Qualifications - Elders

All Elders must qualify by exemplifying the following in their lives:

1. Above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
2. If married, the spouse of one spouse (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
3. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)
4. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
5. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)



6. Hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
7. Able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
8. Not a drunkard (1 Timothy 3:3,8; Titus 1:7)
9. Not violent; not quarrelsome (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
10. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
11. Not a brawler; not contentious, not quick tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
12. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy for money (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
13. Rules their own house well; their children are faithful (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)
14. Not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
15. Well thought of, has a good reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
16. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
17. A lover of good (Titus 1:8)
18. Just, upright (Titus 1:8)
19. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
20. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

We believe that godliness is first and foremost a requirement for eldership, therefore any man or woman who possesses the qualifications of eldership, as found in Scripture, may become an elder.

(Hebrews 13:3-7; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Titus 1:5-9)

VI.3 Duties - Elders

The Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The Elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. They shall work closely with the Board of Elders to ensure a healthy spiritual atmosphere within the fellowship. The Elders shall take particular responsibility to:

1. Examine and instruct prospective members,
2. Equip the LS Church membership for the work of the ministry,
3. Encourage sound doctrine and practice,
4. Assist the Board of Elders to admonish and correct error,
5. Coordinate and promote the ministries of the LS Church, and
6. Mobilize the LS Church for local and world missions.



The Biblical responsibilities outlined for the Elders are:

1. To shepherd the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2; Acts 20:20; 1 Timothy 3:5)
2. To be an example to the flock, not lording it over those allotted to their charge (1 Peter 5:3)
3. To teach and exhort, thereby equipping the flock for ministry (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; Ephesians 4:12)
4. To refute those who contradict truth (Titus 1:9,11)
5. To manage the LS Church in their role as overseers (1 Timothy 3:5, 5:17)
6. To pray for the sick (James 5:14-15)

VI.4 Social Media Policy for Elders and Leaders

As an Elder and leader of Living Stones Church, you are held at a higher standard while using social media. You and your spouse should always be cognizant to the sensitivities of others and aware of the reflection you are making to Living Stones Church. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are powerful conveyors of your messages and thoughts, and as such, your online behavior should reflect the same, if not greater, standards of honesty, respect and consideration that you use face to face. It is appropriate (and of course a right) for Elders to express opinions or beliefs; however, please refrain from any online postings (including copies of articles and photos) that are derogatory, racial, disrespectful, biased, or that include statements that can be taken as offensive toward church members, guests or others. It's critical to our church that an Elder understand and accept positive social media responsibility and accountability.

Article VII. Government

VII.1 Board of Elders

The Board of Elders govern all aspects of the LS Church and practices and are vested with the management of the business and affairs of the LS Church. They shall be selected from among existing at-large Elders or covenant members who meet the qualifications and high standards of the Word of God prescribed for their office. An at-large Elder shall be defined as an Elder that has served at least 3 years as a voting elder, has rolled off the Elder Board and is still meeting the qualifications and high standards as defined in VI.2. The Board of Elders shall endeavor by God's grace to live and serve conforming fully to the standards found in Scripture.

VII.2 Structure of Board of Elders

The number of active Elders serving on the Board of Elders shall be determined by the Board of Elders (per paragraph VII.4.3.a) and tailored to meet the governing needs of LS Church. The



number of active Elders shall not exceed nine (9) and shall include the Senior Pastor and Board of Elders officers of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Board of Elders shall serve without compensation, although some Elders may receive financial remuneration as either ministry staff or for serving in other paid roles within the LS Church. Members of the Board of Elders shall not be related by blood or marriage.

The Officers of the Board of Elders shall be elected by a simple majority vote by the Board of Elders. The following are the offices of the Board of Elders and the Corporation.

1. The Senior Pastor shall be President of the Corporation and an ex officio member of every committee.
2. The Chair shall be chairman of the Board of Elders and Vice President of the Corporation.
3. The Vice Chair shall assist the Chair with their duties.
4. The Secretary shall be accountable for Elder communications and Secretary of the Corporation.
5. The Treasurer shall be accountable for Finance (banking, accounting, reporting) and Treasurer of the Corporation.

VII.3 Meeting Quorum

A simple majority of the current active Board of Elders members, including the Senior Pastor, at a Board of Elders meeting constitutes a quorum. Elders may participate by conference telephone or similar communication equipment, as long as all of the Elders participating in the meeting can hear one another. All Elders participating telephonically shall be deemed present at such meetings.

VII.4 Decisions by Board of Elders and LS Church Membership

Each member of the Board of Elders shall have equal voting power among all of the other members. All decisions requiring approval by the Board of Elders require a vote in favor of the motion as follows:

1. All Board of Elders decisions based on a motion from a member will require a simple majority vote of the active Board of Elders members in favor to pass except for decisions listed in 2, 3, and 4 of Article VII.4.
2. All decisions requiring a two-thirds vote to pass by the Board of Elders will require a minimum of two-thirds vote of the active Board of Elders members in favor of the motion to pass. The following decisions which require a two-thirds majority vote to pass.
 - a. Appointing or Removing an Elder from the Board of Elders plus approval by the Senior Pastor.
 - b. Adding, removing, or filling any position that will receive compensation by the LS Church (excluding the Senior Pastor).
 - c. Bylaws, Policies, or expenditure authority limits (New or amended).



- d. Salaries and Compensation (subject individual will be excluded from the discussion and voting).
 - e. Budgets (original and revised/amended).
 - f. Confirmation of successor to the Senior Pastor.
 - g. Confirmation of an Accountability Board member.
3. All decisions requiring a unanimous vote by the Board of Elders will require all active Board of Elders members (excluding the Senior Pastor) to vote in favor of the motion to pass. The following decisions must have a unanimous vote to pass.
- a. Changes to the number of Elders that comprise the Board of Elders.
 - b. Termination of ministry staff.
 - c. Acceptance of the Senior Pastor's disciplinary action recommended for a covenant member.
4. All decisions requiring approval by the covenant members of the LS Church will require a simple majority of covenant members present (50% plus 1) at the meeting except for the following which will require two-thirds vote of covenant members present (66.7%) to pass including individuals participating by conference telephone or similar communication equipment.
- a. Acceptance of covenant member as an Elder.
 - b. Authorizing the Board of Elders to incur debt on behalf of the LS Church.

VII.5 Term of Office - Board of Elders

The term of office of each Elder (excluding the Senior Pastor) on the Board of Elders shall typically be three years. The number of consecutive terms that an Elder may serve on the Board of Elders is two.

These terms may be modified on a case-by-case basis if approved by a two-thirds majority Board of Elders vote and the Elder in question agrees.

Each Officer of the Board of Elders as outlined in VII.2 shall serve terms of at least one (1) year, as long as they remain a member of the Board of Elders and Officers may be re-elected to the same office or a different office.

Elders are subject to removal at any time in accordance with these Bylaws.

VII.6 Removal from the Board of Elders

A Board of Elders member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Senior Pastor. Any Board of Elders member may be removed from office in accordance with these Bylaws. However, the removal of the Senior Pastor is subject to Article X.



The following reasons are considered just cause for a Board of Elders member to be removed from the Board of Elders:

1. In absentia at three consecutive Board of Elders meetings without prior notice;
2. Violation of the mutual interest clause (Article XII), including violation of the Social Media Policy (Article VI.4);
3. Personally benefitting from one's position as an Elder;
4. Not acting in the best interests of the organization;
5. Willful nondisclosure of a conflict of interest as interpreted by a majority of the Board of Elders.

A written notice of the proposed removal of any Elder shall be given to such Elder at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which an action to effectuate such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Elder is given a reasonable opportunity to defend themselves. The Elder shall have the opportunity to answer the charges in the presence of their accusers, but shall not be present during the discussion and vote on their removal. Such removal shall take place only upon and after a passing vote of the Board of Elders. The Elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

VII.7 Committees

The Board of Elders may establish any committees or teams such as Audit, Finance, Personnel, Compensation as needed to assist in the performance of their duties.

VII.8 Other LS Church Officers

The Board of Elders may recommend any officers as needed to the LS Church for approval.

Article VIII. Meetings

VIII.1 Public Worship

Meetings for public worship shall be held at such times and places as may be provided for under the direction of the Board of Elders.

VIII.2 LS Church Members Meeting

The Senior Pastor or the Board of Elders shall have the authority to call a LS Church members meeting or special meetings as needed. The notice must be written defining the purpose and any items that may be voted on by the LS Church membership.



VIII.3 Board of Elders Meetings

The Board of Elders shall hold regular meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of transacting LS Church business. Reasonable notice of the date, time, and place of the meeting shall be provided to the Elders prior to such meeting. A Special Meeting of the Board of Elders may be called by the Chairman, Senior Pastor, or three (3) or more members of the Board of Elders.

Article IX. LS Church Staff

IX.1 Senior Pastor

1. Qualifications

The Senior Pastor shall have wisdom in handling the LS Church's affairs. He shall be of sound doctrine and good judgment.

2. Duties

The Senior Pastor shall be the leader of the LS Church as provided by the Holy Scriptures.

3. Term of Office

The term of office of the Senior Pastor shall be reviewed every three years by the Board of Elders (excluding the Senior Pastor). The number of consecutive terms that the Senior Pastor may serve is unlimited. The Board of Elders must adhere to the provisions set forth in Article X should they choose not to renew the Senior Pastor's term.

4. Succession

Should the Senior Pastor resign, retire, pass away unexpectedly, or is otherwise incapacitated, the Board of Elders shall meet as soon as practical to select an interim Senior Pastor. At the same session, the Elders shall determine a five (5) person Selection Committee of LS Church members who shall be responsible for the process of selecting a new permanent Senior Pastor. In all instances a majority vote shall be required.

5. Removal by the Accountability Board as outlined in Article X

Should the Senior Pastor be removed by the Accountability Board, the same process as described in Paragraph 4 above will be followed.

IX.2 Ministry and Other LS Church Staff

The Board of Elders may employ other pastors, ministry staff, support staff, interns, etc., as it deems in the best interest of the ministry of the LS Church once approved by vote of the Board of Elders. The duties and responsibilities for these positions will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Elders.



2. Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of these positions will be recommended and approved by the Board of Elders. The duties and responsibilities of all LS Church staff, including ministry staff, will be set forth in written job abstracts. The job abstracts will be created and maintained by the immediate supervisor (with a copy of the latest revision of each maintained by the Secretary of the Board of Elders). They will be reviewed by the Board of Elders, and will not be published but will be available upon request by any covenant member at the LS Church desiring that information.

3. Selection and Termination

The selection and termination will be the responsibility of the immediate supervisor with prior review and approval by the Board of Elders.

Article X. Accountability Board

The removal of the Senior Pastor of the LS Church shall be subject to this article. Until an Accountability Board is established, the removal of the Senior Pastor shall be accomplished by a vote of the Board of Elders (see Article VII.4 - Decisions by Board of Elders and LS Church Membership).

Once the Accountability Board is established and confirmed by a vote of the Board of Elders, the power to remove the Senior Pastor shall be placed entirely within the Accountability Board's authority. The Accountability Board shall be comprised of:

1. No less than three (3) and no more than five (5) members.
2. Individuals nominated by the Senior Pastor of the LS Church and confirmed by the Board of Elders.
3. A Chairperson who will preside over Accountability Board meetings.

(II Timothy 3:16, 17; Acts 15)

A list of the current members of the Accountability Board shall reside as Appendix I to this document and shall be revised as required when and if Accountability Board members change.

X.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Accountability Board is to:

1. Provide a spiritual covering by prayerfully giving necessary aid, instruction, guidance, protection and correction as well as counsel, wisdom and fellowship to the Senior Pastor and, (II Timothy 3:16, 17; Acts 15)



2. To hear accusations against the Senior Pastor of the LS Church brought to them by a majority vote of the official Board of Elders excluding any disqualified individuals serving on the Board of Elders and make a determination as to whether the Senior Pastor has committed any of the infractions listed below.
3. The Board of Elders may call the Accountability Board into session to conduct an investigation into the actions of the Senior Pastor for failure to exemplify the qualities of an Elder such as the following:
4. Adultery
5. Embezzlement
6. Compulsive Lying
7. Sexual Impurity
8. Conviction of a felony that is a violation of Scripture
9. Failure to act in the best interest of the LS Church
10. Failure to follow the Bylaws and Policies of the LS Church

The Accountability Board will review the accusations submitted by the Board of Elders to determine if they have merit. If the accusations have merit, the Accountability Board will determine if disciplinary action is warranted, or if it is in the best interest of the LS Church that the Senior Pastor's employment should be terminated. The Accountability Board is the only entity that has the authority to terminate/dismiss the Senior Pastor. The decision of the Accountability Board is final.

X.2 Replacement / Removal of Member

Any member of the Accountability Board may be replaced or removed at any time deemed necessary by request of the Senior Pastor and confirmation by the Board of Elders of the LS Church. The removal cannot occur once the Accountability Board has been called into session.

Future vacancies shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and confirmed by the Board of Elders.

A record of the current and past members of the Accountability Board shall be kept in a log under the custody of the official Board of Elders. The log shall clearly list the names of each member and the current chairperson.

Any successor Senior Pastor to the founding or current Senior Pastor shall keep the Accountability Board that was in existence at the time they became Senior Pastor. They may, after a six-month period, make nominations for replacements of any or all of the Accountability Board members.



X.3 Meeting Quorum

100% of the Accountability Board must be present to constitute a quorum. The Accountability Board may only meet when requested by a vote of the Board of Elders.

X.4 Determinations

Any action taken by the Accountability Board is valid by a two-thirds majority vote.

X.5 Power

The Accountability Board shall have no innate power or authority as a legal organizational entity, except that which is invested in them by these Bylaws. Their decisions, when called together in accordance with Section 1 of this Article, shall be final.

Article XI. Ecclesiastical Authority

This organization is theocratic in government. In any growing congregation, there will be people at all stages of spiritual growth and maturity. For that reason, it is not proper to submit the affairs of the LS Church to a democratic vote as the same is not God's way, for the purpose of the LS Church is not to do the will of the majority, but the will of God.

Any disputes that arise over the interpretation of these Bylaws shall be deferred to the highest authority of the LS Church. In this case, it would be the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall be responsible for the day-to-day decisions and shall run the affairs of LS Church. In *Watson v. Jones*, the court ruled that:

“Whenever the questions of discipline, or of faith, of ecclesiastical rule, custom, or law have been decided by the highest church judicatory to which the matter has been carried, the legal tribunals must accept such decisions as final, and as binding on them . . .”

Article XII. Mutual Interest

The behavior of anyone in fellowship with the LS Church is of common interest to the Board of Elders and membership. LS Church requires every Board of Elders member and Covenant member to adhere to a Lifestyle that is consistent with the doctrines of this church as taught in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, this church reserves the right to refuse service to any individual, whether member or not, that is not submitting their Lifestyle to this Scriptural mode of conduct. This refusal would include services, benefits and any use of LS Church assets.

(Galatians 6:1)



Article XIII. Review of LS Church Records

XIII.1 Requests Made by Covenant Members

To ensure the trust of the membership and to also ensure that a public interest is being served, all LS Church reports, records, documents, and financial transactions and information must always be available for a LS Church member's inspection and review. At no time may information be supplied that would violate any provision in this document including privacy and confidentiality. Personnel records will only be available for review by current Board of Elder members and immediate supervisors/managers. Any questions by any members shall be addressed to the Secretary (or Treasurer if financial in nature) either in writing or by scheduled appointment.

XIII.2 Required Provisions of the Request

The request must state the name of the member, the reason for the request and that the information shall in no way be made public or shared with any other member in a way that will jeopardize the LS Church.

XIII.3 Required Fee

The LS Church may require a reasonable per page fee for any copies that are required in order to accommodate approved records requests.

XIII.4 Confidentiality

In order to keep the records of the LS Church confidential, records shall not be released to any outside agency, person or entity unless due process has been served and a certified subpoena has been personally delivered. This includes the IRS, except under the provisions of Section 7611 which shall be limited only to information deemed to be relevant to the inquiry being made. At all times the IRS will be expected to comply with all of the provisions of Section 7611.

XIII.5 Denying a Request

The Board of Elders reserves the right to deny a request for any of the following reasons:

1. the request is considered by the Board of Elders and deemed to be frivolous;
2. the member making the request has a history of being divisive;
3. the member does not adequately provide the required information on the request as stated in this Article;
4. the person making a request is a non-member or a person whose membership was terminated.

Article XIV. Privacy



This church shall diligently watch to keep private all records concerning polity, doctrine, counseling and information on individuals in fellowship with this church. This church must not disclose any records that may compromise information about a member's attendance, membership status, giving and counseling records.

Article XV. Order

For the purpose of conducting business, the Senior Pastor and/or the Board of Elders shall, in an orderly manner, preside over all of the affairs of the LS Church.

Article XVI. General Powers

The LS Church is empowered:

1. To buy, own, sell, assign, mortgage or lease any interest in real estate and personal property and to construct, maintain and operate improvements thereon necessary or incident to the accomplishment of the purposes set forth in Article II.
2. To borrow money and issue evidence of indebtedness in furtherance of any or all of the objects to its business, and to secure the same by mortgage, pledge or other lien on the LS Church's property.
3. To adopt any policies or procedures to further the purpose(s) of the LS Church, and to update and amend the same from time to time.
4. To do and perform all acts reasonably necessary to accomplish the purposes of the LS Church.
5. To work in close cooperation with other charitable or religious organizations.

Article XVII. Finances

XVII.1 Accounting and Controls

The LS Church year shall coincide with the fiscal year beginning on October 1st and ending on September 30st.

A budget for the fiscal year shall be developed and presented by the Treasurer to the Board of Elders for review and approval. The budget shall be approved no later than September 15th prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. All individual budgets shall be submitted to the Finance Treasurer no later than September 1st.



A qualified LS Church member(s) shall complete an internal review of all financial records, transactions, contracts, and related policies and controls. The review shall be completed within 60 days after the close of the fiscal year and will ensure expenditures were properly authorized, accounting records and reports were accurately entered and accounted for, and there are proper controls in place. A summary of the review shall be submitted to the Treasurer.

Every three (3) years, the Board of Elders will ensure an internal audit of the LS Church finances and controls is conducted. An internal audit report will be submitted to the Treasurer.

XVII.2 Contracts and Loans

The Chairman shall review and approve all contracts and agreements (such as rentals, leases, loans, etc.) once the approval has been obtained per this document and the Authority for Expenditures and Expense Reimbursement policy. Contract signatories may be either a sitting Elder or a paid member of Living Stones staff for contracts valued at \$5,000 or less. Any contracts exceeding \$5,000 must be signed by the Chairman.

XVII.3 Checks, Payments and Withdrawals

The Board of Elders shall adopt an Authority for Expenditures and Expense Reimbursement Policy detailing the procedure for properly authorizing checks, payments, reimbursements, and withdrawals.

XVII.4 Salaries and Compensation

All salaries and compensations (including Contractors) shall be reviewed and approved prior to approving the fiscal year budget. Salaries and compensations of individuals shall be determined in the following manner:

1. The Board of Elders shall appoint three (3) members to a Compensation Committee. The members of the Compensation Committee shall be appointed from current members of the Board of Elders or Finance Committee due to the sensitivity of an individual's salary or compensation.
2. The Compensation Committee shall review the salary and compensation of all individuals. Salary and compensation recommendations will be developed for each individual and shall be forwarded to the Board of Elders for review.
3. The Board of Elders shall consider the recommendation of the Compensation Committee and shall vote on the package.

Only uncompensated individuals of the Board of Elders will be present during a meeting where their compensation is being discussed or voted on. The Board of Elders must approve by vote (see Article VII.4) all compensation packages.



Article XVIII. Property Rights

All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the Corporation's name.

No real or chattel property of the Corporation shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without authorization of the Board of Elders.

The Board of Elders shall certify in such conveyances, leases, or mortgages.

In the event that the Corporation ceases to exist, all assets of the Corporation/LS Church shall at the discretion of the Board of Elders be given to organizations that are exempt as described in Section 501(c)(3) and/or 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The receiving organization must be of similar purpose.

Article XIX. Indemnification and Liability

XIX.1 Liability

No LS Church Elder, officer, employee, or member acting on behalf of LS Church shall have personal liability to the LS Church or to any third party for monetary damages for breach of their fiduciary duty or responsibilities, and any such personal liability is hereby eliminated; provided, however, that the personal liability of these individuals is not eliminated or limited for intentional acts of misconduct or omissions that are in direct violation of LS Church Bylaws or Policies or are a knowing violation of the law.

XIX.2 Indemnification from Liability

The LS Church shall hold harmless and indemnify LS Church Elders, officers, employees, or members whether or not then in their position, and their respective officers, executors, administrators, and heirs from and against any and all claims, demands, expenses (including attorneys' fees), judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement, and any other costs with respect to any demand, threat, suit, or proceeding, whether civil or criminal, arising with respect to such person's previous, present, or future service as an Elder or officer of the LS Church to the maximum extent permitted by law.

XIX.3 Indemnification from Expenses

The LS Church shall pay for or reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by an Elder, officer, employee, or member of the LS Church in advance of the final disposition of the proceedings to the maximum extent permitted by law.



XIX.4 Other Rights

The indemnification provided by this Article shall not be deemed to be exclusive of any other rights to which an Elder, officer or director seeking indemnification may be entitled under the Charter of the LS Church, under any agreement, by vote of the LS Church or otherwise.

Article XX. Prohibited Acts

As long as the LS Church exists, and except with the Board of Elders prior approval, no Senior Pastor, Pastor, Elder, staff, or any covenant member, of The LS Church may:

1. Perform any act in violation of these Bylaws or approved Policies
2. Bind or obligate the LS Church without proper authority.
3. Do any act with the intention of harming the LS Church or any of its operations.
4. Do any act that would make it impossible or unnecessarily difficult to carry on the LS Church's intended or ordinary business.
5. Receive an improper personal benefit from the operations of the LS Church.
6. Use the LS Church's assets, directly or indirectly, for any purpose other than carrying on the LS Church's business.
7. Wrongfully transfer or dispose of LS Church property, including intangible property such as good will.
8. Use the LS Church's name (or any substantially similar name) or any trademark or trade name adopted by the LS Church, except on behalf of the LS Church in the ordinary course of its business.
9. Disclose any of the LS Church's business practices, trade secrets, or any other information not generally known to the business community to any person not authorized to receive it.

Article XXI. Other Considerations

Anything that has not been discussed in these Bylaws shall be discussed and decided upon at an Board of Elders meeting.



Article XXII. Amendments

Amendments to the Bylaws require approval by the Board of Elders (see Article VII.4 - Decisions by Board of Elders and LS Church Membership).

These Bylaws adopted on this day make null and void all prior addenda and these Bylaws supersede and replace all previous Bylaws voted on prior to this day.

Signed and certified, to be effective immediately.

President of Living Stones Church of Houston, Inc. []
[SEP] _____/_____/_____
Date

Secretary of Living Stones Church of Houston, Inc. _____/_____/_____
Date

Treasurer of Living Stones Church of Houston, Inc. _____/_____/_____
Date



Living Stones Church
Accountability Board Members
January 2021

Jim Leggett

Dr. Adrian Singleton

Keith Kotrla