

New Prospect Baptist Church By-Laws

Adopted by the Membership on February 12, 2023

Preamble

Now therefore, we, the members of New Prospect Baptist Church (hereinafter “Church”), organizing ourselves in accord first with the Holy Bible and also as a non-profit corporation pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §§ 33-31-101 *et seq.*, do hereby adopt these By-Laws as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of Jesus Christ, to bring glory to His name, all as revealed in the Holy Bible and as also articulated in the standards set forth in the Constitution, Statement of Faith, and Covenant of this Church.

We also declare, in the manner as further set forth herein, that this Church is a congregational Church with exclusive and sole authority regarding the interpretation and application of the Holy Bible, our Constitution, By-Laws, Statement of Faith, our Church Covenant, and any matters of religious law, principle, doctrine, discipline, custom, membership, administration, and property relating to our Church.

Exercised in a manner fully consistent with the Holy Bible, the congregation shall have final authority in all matters of Church governance as set forth and described in the Constitution and these By-Laws. The final interpretation and application of the Church’s Constitution, By-Laws, Statement of Faith, and Covenant shall rest solely with the Church’s leaders, who are subject to the congregation, and shall not reside with any court or non-Church authority.

Article I – Name and Principal Office

The name of this Church is New Prospect Baptist Church and for purposes of state law shall be considered to have a principal office located at 9321 Highway 9, Inman, SC.

Article II - Foundation, Purpose, and Mission

Section 1 – Foundation

The foundation and head of this Church is Jesus Christ.¹ The Church affirms that the Holy Bible alone, both the Old and New Testaments, are the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of Almighty God, and that such shall govern absolutely and exclusively every area of life and ministry of our Church.²

Section 2 – Purpose

This Church exists by the grace of God for the glory of God and the joy of people.³ Such shall be the ultimate purpose for all its activities.

Section 3 - Mission

¹ 1 Corinthians 3:11-14; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23

² 2 Timothy 3:16; 4:1-2; Hebrews 4:12

³ Isaiah 43:3-7; Ephesians 1:3-14; 2:8-10

The mission of this Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.⁴ For both the congregation and individual members, this will require worshiping God both congregationally and individually,⁵ equipping the saints,⁶ proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all peoples,⁷ administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper,⁸ having fellowship, and caring for one another in the many ways that the Holy Bible sets forth. The Church has adopted a Constitution, Statement of Faith, and Church Covenant as part of the Church's commitment to this mission.

Article III – Membership

Section 1 – Summary⁹

Following the Holy Bible, the Church alone has the authority and responsibility for declaring who is part of its membership.

Section 2 – Qualifications and Requirements for Membership

To qualify for membership in the Church, a person must repent of his or her sin and be a believer in Jesus Christ, be (or previously have been) baptized by immersion in obedience to Christ after such person's conversion, give evidence of regeneration, and wholeheartedly believe in the Christian faith as revealed in the Holy Bible. Each such person must also affirm the tenets of the Statement of Faith, promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant, and agree to abide by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church. Such person's qualifications for membership, including their profession of faith and other evidence of salvation as may be appropriate to consider, shall be ascertained before admitting a person to the membership.

Section 3 - Admission to Membership

A person requesting membership in the Church shall be received into the membership upon pastoral recommendation and the subsequent approval by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at any Regular or Special Meeting of the members. The presentation, during a Lord's Day worship service, of a motion by a pastor of the Church to accept such person into membership shall be considered as a Special Meeting for the limited purpose of voting upon such motion only. Such presentation for membership may also be made during a Regular or Special Meeting noticed for such purpose as provided herein.

One or more requirements to facilitate the admissions process for persons seeking admission including e.g., membership classes, meetings with persons interested in membership, or otherwise may be adopted. Upon being received into the membership of

⁴ Matthew 28:19-20

⁵ Rom. 12:1-2; Heb. 10:24-25, 12:28

⁶ Ephesians 4:12; Colossians 2:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Tim. 3:17

⁷ Matthew 28:19-20; Romans 10:14; Ephesians 1:13

⁸ Matthew 28:19-20; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-27

⁹ In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised to build His Church. In various passages in the New Testament, the Bible makes clear that the Lord's Church meets in local congregations, or Churches, throughout the world (i.e., Acts 13:1; 14:23; 15:41; 18:22; Romans 16:4). Churches are made up of people who profess to believe in and follow Jesus Christ (See, e.g., Matthew 16:18-19; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41, 47; Acts 6:1; Acts 11:22; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Col. 4:16; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:14). The Bible makes clear that when a person becomes Christian, he or she becomes a member of the Lord's Church, and he or she begins meeting with, and becomes involved in, a church in the area in which he or she lives (Acts 14:23; Romans 16:23; Romans 16:1-16; Colossians 4:15-16; 1 Timothy 3:15; 1 Timothy 5).

this Church, such person shall be considered to have immediately relinquished membership in any other Church. The pastoral leadership shall ensure that the Church maintains a list of the current members of the Church (Membership List), which may not be amended to add or remove a member except as provided herein.

Section 4 - Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accordance with the teaching of the Holy Bible and the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in, and contribute to, the ministry and life of this Church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources that each has received from God. Each member shall use his or her gifts for the good of each other, be submissive to one another, be agreeable with the discipline and instruction of the Church, regularly attend the worship services of the Church, and faithfully observe and keep the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Any member that is physically able to attend Lord's Day worship at New Prospect Baptist Church yet does not attend Lord's Day worship at this Church, shall be reminded that when he/she became a member, he/she committed to regularly attend Lord's Day worship at New Prospect Baptist Church. If a member is physically unable to attend Lord's Day worship at this Church, then the member's name will be placed on either a special care or homebound list to ensure that such member receives the special care and attention that he or she may need. Such member will not be permitted to vote on any matters of New Prospect Baptist Church.

Each member has the privilege and responsibility to attend all member's meetings and to vote on the election of officers, matters regarding membership, and such other matters as may be submitted to a vote of the congregation. No member may vote by proxy on any matter for which a Church vote is taken. Except where stated otherwise herein, matters submitted to a vote of the congregation shall be decided by a majority vote by show of hands of those members present and voting. Any member that does not regularly attend Lord's Day worship at New Prospect Baptist Church, even if such member's name has not yet been removed from the membership list of this Church or has not been placed on a special care or homebound list, shall not be permitted to vote on any matters of New Prospect Baptist Church.

Only members of the Church shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of this Church. Non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the Church's leadership (pastor(s) and deacons) in matters of administration and professional consultation but shall not have authority over any members as part of such service.

No matter of membership in the Church shall be subject to interpretation or resolution by any court and no member is provided with any legal privilege or legal right that is subject to interpretation or enforcement by any court or judicial process.

No member of this Church nor any officer, shall by virtue of such membership or office, incur or be subject to personal liability to any extent for any indebtedness, obligations, acts, or omissions of the Church.

Section 5 – Termination of Church Membership

Except as set forth herein, a person's membership in the Church ends upon the death of the Church member, voluntary resignation of the Church member, the member joining another Church, or the member's dismissal as an act of Church discipline. A member of the Church who is not in regular attendance of Lord's Day Worship and whose name has not been placed on a special care or homebound list may be removed from the Church Membership List after 1) an unsuccessful effort has been made to contact such member at the last known address or phone number of such person on the Church

Membership List in order to request their regular attendance at Lord's Day Worship services and 2) the results of such unsuccessful effort and decision to remove have been communicated to the congregation in a Regular or Special meeting at least 30 days before such removal.

The decision regarding who is, and who is not, a member of the Church is a matter only for the Church with no appeal to any court or non-Church authority. The final interpretation and application of the Church's Constitution, By-Laws, Statement of Faith, and Covenant shall rest solely with the Church's leaders, who are subject to the congregation, and shall not reside with any court or non-Church authority.

Section 6 – Church Discipline¹⁰

A. Summary

Church discipline is a process by which Church members act in love for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of an unrepentant member, as well as the good of the Church, and the glory of God. As such, church discipline can include efforts to admonish the unrepentant member and can ultimately include dismissal from membership (See, e.g., Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).

B. Process

An unrepentant member shall be subject to church discipline as provided herein in accordance with the Holy Bible (See, e.g., Matthew 18:15–17; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5; and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8):

- i. A member having knowledge of another member's unrepentance should approach the unrepentant member privately, with a heart of love, repeatedly if necessary, and seek such member's repentance and reconciliation. (Matthew 18:15; Luke 17:3; Galatians 6:1).
- ii. If the unrepentant member will not listen to the member with knowledge and remains unrepentant, the member with knowledge shall privately request the presence of one or two others from the membership and go again to the erring member, repeatedly if necessary, seeking the repentance and reconciliation of the unrepentant member.
- iii. If the unrepentant member still will not listen and remains unrepentant after the efforts of two or more members as set forth above, then the matter involving the unrepentant member shall be brought to the attention of the pastoral leadership of the Church. The pastoral leadership shall review and

¹⁰ The importance and purposes of church discipline set forth in the Holy Bible, including:

- a. The repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; Hebrews 12:1–11; James 1:22).
- b. The instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole Church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25).
- c. The purity of the Church as a whole (see 1 Corinthians 5:6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2).
- d. The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10).
- e. Supremely, the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; Romans 2:24; 15:5–6; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).

investigate the matter with prayerful consideration. After deliberation and prayerful consideration, if necessary, the pastoral leadership may decide what additional steps may be taken including, but not limited to, meeting with the unrepentant member in an effort at repentance; suspending the unrepentant member from voting privileges, leadership positions, and teaching positions for a definite period of time; and bringing the matter before the Church at any Regular or Special meeting of the members.

iv. In bringing a matter before the Church at any Regular or Special meeting of the members after private admonitions and attempts to obtain repentance have failed, the Church body may publicly and corporately call the unrepentant member to repentance (Matthew 18:17). The unrepentant member's presence at such meeting is not required.

v. If the unrepentant member does not repent in response to the Church's call to repentance, then he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the membership and fellowship of the Church at any Regular or Special meeting of the members on the Lord's Day (Matthew 18:17) by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at such meeting. Ordinarily, but not necessarily, such dismissal shall be upon a recommendation from the Church's pastoral leadership. The unrepentant member's presence at such meeting is not required. No motion calling for any unrepentant member's dismissal from membership shall be voted upon until after reasonable effort has been made to inform such unrepentant member of his or her offense and of the opportunity to meet with the pastoral leadership to discuss such matters.

vi. While ordinarily removal from membership should be preceded by the steps set forth in parts i) through v) of this Section 6, in extraordinary cases the sin of an unrepentant member may already be known to the Church or may be causing divisiveness in the Church such that the Church, guided by its pastoral leadership, may proceed more directly in terminating the membership of the unrepentant member (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:10; 2 Thessalonians 3).

B. Resignation Refusal

The Church may refuse the resignation of an unrepentant member who is subject to Church discipline.

C. Sole Church Authority

The members of this Church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this Church, agree that there shall be no recourse to any court or non-Church authority because of dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation during the process of Church discipline.

D. Readmission

If, after dismissal from membership, a person heeds the Church's call to repentance by demonstrating repentance and subsequently requests to be reinstated to membership in the Church, then, upon the review and recommendation of the Church's pastoral leadership, the Church shall vote upon reinstating such person into the membership of the Church. Such reinstatement shall be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Regular or Special meeting of the members on the Lord's Day. If the person is reinstated, they shall then be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of membership in the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:6-8. The person being restored and reinstated into membership does not necessarily have to be present at the meeting at which time he or she is publicly restored.

Article IV – Meetings

Section 1 - Worship Meetings

The Church shall meet for congregational worship each Lord's Day and at other times throughout the week as the Church determines (Worship Meetings).

Section 2 - Members' Meetings

In every member's meeting, members shall act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, loving consideration, and otherwise as is appropriate within the Church, which makes up the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Aside from meetings for worship, there shall be two types of meetings of the members for purposes of conducting matters other than worship: A) Regular Meetings and B) Special Meetings.

A. Regular Meeting

A Regular Meeting of the members shall be held at least once per year, with at least one Regular Meeting being conducted annually to report and determine financial and budget affairs and any other matters. The date, time, and purpose of any Regular Meeting shall be announced at Worship Meetings on the Lord's Day for at least two weeks preceding the Regular Meeting. Subject to giving the required notice for a Regular Meeting, any matters may be presented and voted upon during a Regular Meeting.

B. Special Meeting

A Special Meeting of the members may be held for any reason provided the date, place, and time of such meeting is announced at least ten days before such meeting along with a description of any matters to be voted upon by the members at such meeting. Such notice must be communicated by announcement during at least one Worship Meeting that takes place on the Lord's Day before the Special Meeting. Such Special Meeting of the Members may be called through either of the following:

- i. By written request for a Special Meeting if such written request is presented by a majority of the voting membership and describes the matters to be presented to the members, including any matters to be voted upon by the members. In which case, a Special Meeting must be held within thirty days of such written request and announced with at least ten days of notice as previously set forth: or
- ii. By the Church's leadership (pastor(s) or deacons) if announced with at least ten days of notice as previously set forth along with a written description of any matters to be voted upon by the members at such meeting. Such written description may, for example, be placed in a Church bulletin.

Section 3 – Conduct of Meetings

A moderator selected from the Church's leadership shall preside at all member meetings of the Church. As needed, the moderator may adopt Rules of Order, e.g., Robert's Rules of Order, to regulate meetings of the members. A Church clerk, elected as set forth in Article VIII, may ordinarily take minutes and keep written records of such meetings, which may be signed by the Church clerk and the moderator of the meeting. A copy of such minutes may be maintained at the Church's offices.

Provided the notice requirement for a meeting of members has been fulfilled, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present at the meeting provided such is at least ten percent of the membership (as determined from the Church Membership List) that is entitled to a vote on the matter(s) that were noticed. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present and voting with each member having the right to cast one vote (unless a member's voting privilege has been suspended pursuant to Article III, Section 6 Church discipline).

Except where stated otherwise herein, votes shall be conducted by a show of hands. Upon a motion for written ballot approved by the congregation during a Regular or Special meeting, voting by written ballot may be conducted on any particular matter.

A conference may be scheduled before any Regular or Special meeting for purposes of receiving questions from members relating to the motion(s) to be presented during the Regular or Special meeting. The time and place of any such conference shall be included with the notice of the Regular or Special meeting, which should include a description of the motion(s) to be voted upon.

Non-members may not vote during meetings of the members. Non-members may be allowed to attend meetings of the members. Upon a vote of the majority of the members in attendance at the meeting or upon a recommendation of the Church's leadership, the presence of members only at a Regular or Special meeting may be required.

Article V – Committees of the Church

Section 1 – Finance Committee

The Church shall have a Finance Committee comprised of six (6) members elected by the Church during a Regular Meeting. Nominations of members to serve on the Finance Committee shall be made annually by the Church's pastoral leadership and/or the Church's deacons. The Finance Committee shall operate on a rotation of terms with two members rotating off each year. The Finance Committee shall have a Chairperson, who shall not be the Senior Pastor or an Associate Pastor. At least one of the six members on the Finance Committee shall be a deacon.

The Finance Committee shall meet at least monthly, and its duties shall include assisting Church leadership in preparing an annual budget categorized by ministries and/or use, monitoring expenses relative to budgets during the year, providing for an annual audit of all financial records of the Church, and such other duties as may be approved by the congregation from time to time. The Finance Committee shall prepare a written report including the annual budget, which shall be presented annually during a Regular or Special Meeting.

Section 2 – Nominating Committee

The Church shall have a Nominating Committee comprised of three (3) members elected by the Church during a Regular Meeting. Nominations of members to serve on the Nominating Committee shall be made annually by the Church's pastoral leadership and/or the Church's deacons. The Nominating Committee shall operate on a rotation of terms with one member rotating off each year. The Nominating Committee shall have a Chairperson, who shall not be the Senior Pastor or an Associate Pastor. At least one of the three members on the Nominating Committee shall be a deacon.

The Nominating Committee's duties shall include nominating members to serve in the ministries of the Church and such other duties as may be approved by the congregation from time to time. The Nominating Committee and the Church's pastoral leadership shall jointly endeavor to identify members in regular attendance of Lord's Day worship services who are qualified and willing to serve in such positions and ministries. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a written report of its nominations, which will be presented annually during a Regular or Special Meeting.

Section 3 – Special Purpose Committee

As may be needed in the life of the Church, the Church's leadership may recommend other committees for approval by the congregation. The specific purpose, finite term, and number of members of any such special purpose committee will be presented in writing to the church as part of the notice of a Special Meeting called for purposes of voting on the approval of such committee. Where needed, a budget for such committee may also be recommended for approval by the congregation. The Church's leadership may request the assistance of the Nominating Committee in nominating members for a special purpose committee or may solicit nominations from the congregation during a Special or Regular Meeting. A special purpose committee will work with the Church's leadership in accomplishing its purposes and shall, as appropriate, report on its progress to the Church's leadership and congregation.

Article VI – Officers of the Church

Section 1 – Summary¹¹

As set forth in the Holy Bible, the offices of the Church are pastors and deacons.

Section 2 – Pastors¹²

A. Qualifications

The Church receives pastors as a gift of Christ to His Church and sets them apart to fulfill the Church's pastoral leadership needs (Ephesians 4:7-12). A pastor shall be a man that meets the qualifications for the office especially as set forth in passages such as 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

B. Duties

Subject to the congregation and in a manner that exhibits their love for Jesus Christ, a pastor shall serve the Church by providing leadership and shepherding in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Bible.¹³ As set forth in 1 Peter 5:1-4, such leadership and shepherding is to be by example, not by lording over the members. Following the prototypical examples provided in Acts 6:1-6 and the instructions of Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, pastoral responsibilities shall include:

- i. diligently studying and ministering of the Word, including teaching, and encouraging sound doctrine based on the Holy Bible;
- ii. discipling and shepherding of the church;
- iii. leading as the Church's interpretive authority on the Holy

¹¹ Jesus Christ is the head of His Church, and therefore, He is the head of this Church. Under his headship, Jesus Christ uses officers to lead and serve His Church. According to the teaching of the Bible, the biblical offices of the Church are those of pastor (elder/overseer/bishop/leader/shepherd/them that rule) and deacon. See Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:12; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5, 7; Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24 in various translations to see the use of the previously noted words. In light of the above, it is the duty of this Church to seek qualified men to serve in pastoral leadership.

¹² Various translations of the Holy Bible may use the words "elder," "bishop," "overseer," "oversight," "rule," "ruler," "leader," "pastor," "shepherd," and "care" for referencing either the office or duties of pastoral leadership. See Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 20:28; 21:18; Ephesians 4:11; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5, 7; James 5:14; Hebrews 13:17, 24; 1 Peter 5:1-3 in various versions for examples of the above.

¹³ While the Holy Bible does not place leadership, oversight, or shepherding responsibilities on the congregation, the Holy Bible does call upon the congregation to submit to one another, to submit to Church leadership, and, at the same time, to reject any teaching that does not teach that salvation is through faith in Jesus Christ (See, e.g., Ephesians 5:21; Hebrews 13:17; Galatians 1:6-9).

Bible's meaning and application as it pertains to Church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline;¹⁴

- iii. administering the Church ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- iv. attending to the conduct and content of worship services;
- v. serving to equip the Church's members for the ministries of the Church and the coordination of those ministries;
- vi. admonishing and correcting doctrinal error in the Church with the love of Christ.
- vii. directing the process of Church discipline;
- viii. helping with the formation of policies, practices, and discipling by others in the church;
- ix. ensuring that all who teach and minister the Word (including both members and outside speakers) shall share the fundamental beliefs of the Church in the teachings of the Holy Bible and further identified in the Church's Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant;
- x. proposing the creation of teaching roles, administrative positions, and/or committees to assist the pastors in fulfilling their responsibilities.

C. Senior Pastor¹⁵

The senior pastor shall meet the qualifications and undertake the duties identified above while being primarily responsible for preaching and teaching during Church services, administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and such other duties as typically pertain to that office. The senior pastor shall be recognized by the Church as gifted for pastoral ministry and called to the ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to term limitations. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for providing overall leadership, direction, and accountability for Associate Pastor(s).

In the absence or incapacity of the senior pastor, others within the pastoral leadership of the Church shall assume responsibility of his duties. If there are no others in the pastoral leadership of the Church, the deacons will work to have someone assume responsibility of the senior pastor's duties for an interim period.

The Church shall call a senior pastor in accordance with the provisions for elections laid out in Article VII.

D. Associate Pastors

With the approval of the congregation, the Church may call other pastors whose relationship to the senior pastor shall be that of associate. An associate pastor shall meet the qualifications explained in Section B above, and he shall perform the duties of described in Section 2, C above including following the overall leadership and direction of the Senior Pastor. An associate pastor may be recognized by the Church as particularly gifted for pastoral ministry though not called mainly to preaching ministry. His call shall not be subject to term limitations.

An associate pastor shall assist the senior pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor or as may be

¹⁴ Galatians 1; Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3

¹⁵ The Holy Bible provides for what may be called the senior pastor or lead pastor (1 Timothy 5:17-18). The Holy Bible also allows for what may be called associate pastors (1 Timothy 5:17-18). The Holy Bible teaches that it is permissible, and that it is encouraged, to compensate some pastors (1 Corinthians 9:1-18; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).

specifically assigned to him. In the absence of the senior pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), one or more associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the direction and oversight of other pastors of the Church and with the support of the congregation.

The Church shall call associate pastors in accordance with the provisions for elections laid out in Article VII.

E. Appointment into Pastoral Ministry

Any male member of the Church that aspires, and gives evidence that he is called to the biblical office set forth 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and meets the qualifications set forth therein and in Section A, after proper training and examination and upon the recommendation of the Church's pastoral leadership and with the affirmation of the Church, may be appointed to such office by the Church as set forth in Article VII. Such affirmation must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a special meeting called for such purpose.

F. Discipline of a Pastor

A pastor is also subject to the process of Church discipline set forth in Article III, Section 6 provided such process is also subject to the additional requirements of 1 Timothy 5:19-20 requiring that no charge shall be brought against a pastor except on the evidence of at least two witnesses.

G. Resignation or Removal of a Pastor

Any pastor's service in the Church may be terminated by resignation, dismissal, or removal.

Any two members with reason to believe that a pastor should be dismissed should express such concern to the other men in pastoral leadership of the Church first and, if need be, then to the congregation. If there are no other men in the pastoral leadership of the Church, then the two members should express such concern to the Church's deacons.

Any pastor may be removed from his office by a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation present and voting at a special meeting of the members specifically called for such purpose with at least ten days of notice having been provided.

Section 3 – Deacons¹⁶

A. Qualifications and Composition

The Lord has given instructions to his Church for the important ministry of deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13) including providing leadership in caring for specifically identified needs (physical, temporal, and benevolence) that the Church may have from time to time. Deacons shall be men who meet the qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and as described in Acts 6:1-6. Before taking office, deacons shall be members of this Church in good standing for at least one year.

B. Duties

Deacons in this Church shall be appointed to serve in any way that cares for the many important physical, temporal, and benevolent needs of the members of the Church to assist the pastoral leadership in the ministry of the Word and prayer, all of which will help promote

¹⁶ The Holy Bible indicates the need for deacons within every Church (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13). In accordance with the description in Acts 6:1-6 and apostolic instructions in 1 Timothy 3:1-12, and in accordance with the meaning of the word "deacon," the office of deacon is one of service in the Church to care for important physical, temporal, and benevolence needs in order to assist the pastoral leadership in their ministry of the word and prayer.

and protect the unity and growth of the Church (See the description given in Acts 6:1-7). The deacons may involve other members of the Church to assist them in discharging their duties as needed. The Church's deacons and pastoral leadership shall meet together in order to help maintain unity, accountability, and camaraderie among the Church's officers and to help ensure that all matters in the life of the Church are cared for in a way that is pleasing unto the Lord.

C. Appointment of Deacons

Any male member of the Church that gives evidence that he meets the qualifications for biblical office set forth 1 Timothy 3:8-12, after proper training and examination and upon the recommendation of the Church's pastoral leadership and deacons, and with the affirmation of the Church, may be appointed to such office by the Church as set forth herein. Such affirmation must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Special Meeting called for such purpose.

D. Term of Service for Deacons

There shall be at least eight deacons provided enough men who meet the qualifications for deacons and are willing to serve are available. Each deacon shall be elected to a three-year term, such terms overlapping and rotating. A deacon will normally take a one-year break from deacon ministry after serving a three-year term; however, a deacon may be reelected by the congregation and serve subsequent terms upon recommendation.

E. Resignation or Removal of a Deacon

Any deacon's service in the Church may be terminated by resignation, dismissal, or removal.

Any two members with reason to believe that a deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the pastoral leadership of the Church first and, if need be, then to the congregation. If there is no pastoral leadership of the Church at the time of expressing such concern, then the two members should express such concern to the Church's deacons.

By a majority vote of the pastoral leadership and deacons, the pastoral leadership and deacons may require the resignation of a deacon from his office. A deacon may also be removed from his office by a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation at a meeting of the members present and voting specifically called for such purpose with at least one week notice having been provided. A deacon is subject to the process of Church discipline provide in Article III, Section 6.

Section 4 – Administrative Positions / Positions Required by State Law

The Church may choose to elect annual administrative positions¹⁷ when necessary. To the extent a president or secretary is required by governing law, a member may be appointed,¹⁸ subject to approval by the congregation, to one or both of these roles for a specific time period not to exceed three years. Such elections shall be conducted as provided in Article VII.

With the exception of the senior pastor and any associate pastor(s), all Church officers and those elected to administrative positions must be members of the Church for at least one year prior to being elected and serving in their responsibilities.

¹⁷ Administrative positions include e.g., a trustee, Church clerk, and/or parliamentarian.

¹⁸ As provided under the laws of the State of South Carolina, the Church is a non-profit corporation with the pastoral leadership and deacons considered a board of directors, subject to the congregation, who may exercise corporate authority to the extent such is required by state law including the appointment of corporate officers

Article VII – Elections

Section 1 – Summary

All elections for Church offices and elected positions should be undertaken after the members have been given notice of the candidates and have, both individually and corporately, devoted prayer to such elections. All candidates should be given the love, respect, and kindness due to fellow members of the Body of Christ.

Section 2 – Election of Officers (Pastors and Deacons)

Names of men to serve in leadership for the office of pastor or deacon shall be presented to the Church at a meeting of the members that occurs at least five (5) weeks before any meeting at which an election is to occur.

Recommendations shall be received from the membership in the nomination process. Any member believing a nominee is not biblically qualified for office shall communicate such belief to the pastoral leadership. If there is no pastoral leadership at the time of communicating such belief, the member shall communicate such belief to the deacons. Any member intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection as far in advance as reasonably possible before the meeting of members at which the relevant election will be held.

Elections shall occur at a Regular or Special meeting of the members by written ballot or in a manner otherwise as determined. The meeting shall proceed as directed by the moderator. Votes shall be counted by the pastoral leadership and/or deacons or a group appointed by vote of the congregation to count the votes. For the office of pastor, the moderator shall declare the man as elected upon receiving two-thirds majority of all votes cast. For the office of deacon, the moderator shall declare the man as elected upon receiving a two-thirds majority of all votes cast. Upon request by a member, the moderator may publish the actual vote count.

Men elected shall assume office upon election unless another date is specifically designated.

Section 3 – Election of Administrative Positions

A. Church Clerk

A Church clerk will be elected on an annual basis to serve as set forth in Article IV, Section 3. Such clerk must be a Church member and cannot serve more than three consecutive years.

B. Church Trustees

The Church will elect two or more trustees on an annual basis. Such trustees shall have authority to sign burial plot licenses for the Church cemetery as provided by any policy adopted therewith. Such trustees may also be provided by the congregation, as recommended by Church leadership, with authority to sign other documents on behalf of the Church as such need may arise.

C. Other Administrative Positions

The Church may also choose to elect members to other administrative positions¹⁹ such as treasurer or parliamentarian in addition to the Church clerk and trustees when necessary.

Names of nominee(s) to serve in an administrative position shall be presented to the Church at a Regular or Special meeting of the members that occurs at least five (5) weeks before any meeting at which an election to such administrative positions is to occur.

Recommendations shall be received from the membership in the nomination process. Any member believing a nominee is not biblically qualified for office shall communicate such belief to the pastoral leadership. If there is no pastoral leadership at the time of communicating such belief, the member shall communicate such belief to the deacons. Any member intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection as far in advance as reasonably possible before the meeting of the members at which the relevant election will be held.

Elections shall occur at a Regular or Special meeting of the members by written ballot or in a manner otherwise as determined. The meeting shall proceed as directed by the moderator. Votes shall be counted by the pastoral leadership and/or deacons or a group appointed to count the votes. The moderator shall declare as elected any nominee(s) receiving a two-thirds majority of all votes cast. Upon request by a member, the moderator may publish the actual vote count.

A nominee(s) shall assume office or their administrative position upon election unless another date is specifically designated.

Section 4 – Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of a man to this position, the process outlined in Article VII, Section 2 must be followed. However, the Church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching ability of any potential candidate for Senior Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from Church leadership that due diligence has been conducted, in order to ensure that the man wholeheartedly assents to the Holy Bible, the Statement of Faith, and the Church Covenant.

Notice of nomination of the candidate for Senior Pastor shall not be given until after at least one meeting where members have been given an opportunity to meet with the candidate and present questions to him. Thereafter, notice of nomination of the candidate to both membership in the Church and as Senior Pastor must be given during at least two Sunday morning services prior to the vote at a Special Meeting of the members. If the candidate is married, such nomination shall include receiving his wife into the Church membership.

Section 5 – Calling of an Associate Pastor

In the calling of a man to this position, the process outlined in Article VII, Section 2 must be followed. However, the Church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching ability of any potential candidate for Associate Pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance that due diligence has been conducted, in order to ensure that the man wholeheartedly assents to the Holy Bible, the Statement of Faith, and the Church Covenant.

¹⁹ As used here, “administrative positions” does not include e.g., an employee providing clerical support in the Church office.

Notice of nomination of the candidate for Associate Pastor shall not be given until after at least one meeting where members have been given an opportunity to meet with the candidate and present questions to him. Thereafter, notice of nomination of the candidate to both membership in the Church and as Associate Pastor must be given during at least two Sunday morning services prior to the vote at a Special Meeting of the members. If the candidate is married, such nomination shall include receiving his wife into the Church membership.

Article VIII - Personnel

Personnel matters may be cared for jointly among the Church's pastoral leadership and deacons. Personnel matters and problems will be cared for and resolved using the principles in the Holy Bible, Constitution, and By-laws to ensure that the Lord of the Church is pleased. Non-pastoral personnel in the employ of the church are employees at will, who may be removed from employment solely at the discretion of the Church's leadership. Non-pastoral personnel in the employ of the church must be in full agreement with the Holy Bible, Constitution, By-Laws, and Statement of Faith of the Church, which shall be a condition of their employment at all times.

Article IX – Indemnification

Section 1 – Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a member because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the Church, the Church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if it is determined that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the Church, and (d) the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2 – Procedure

If a majority of the Church's pastoral leadership are seeking indemnification against the same or related claims or allegations, the requisite determination for indemnification may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

Article X – Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Holy Bible commands our members to make every effort to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18: 15–20; I Corinthians 6: 1–8), members shall resolve conflict among themselves or with the Church according to biblically based principles without resort to secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

Article XI – Amendments

These By-Laws, the Statement of Faith, and the Church Covenant may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a Regular or Special meeting of the members, provided the amendment shall have been provided in writing a previous Regular or Special meeting of the members, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at Church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. These By-Laws replace all previous by-laws and manuals of operation.