CONNECTION POINT CHURCH — GOVERNANCE REVIEW & AMENDMENT REPORT

Bylaws Review & Governance Recommendations

Comparative Legal & Operational Analysis for the 2026 Connection Point Church Bylaws

Comparative Framework: The Village Church | City Church Melissa | Watermark Community Church | 9Marks

Prepared for: Elder Board & Executive Leadership

1. Executive Summary & Review Scope

This governance analysis provides a rigorous review of the **Connection Point Church (CPC) 2026 Bylaws** compared against peer church governance documents and established ministry standards, including **The Village Church**, **City Church Melissa**, **Watermark Community Church**, and the **9Marks Sample Constitution**. While CPC's current bylaws establish a solid baseline for a non-profit religious corporation in Wylie, Texas, this comparative evaluation identifies crucial governance vulnerabilities, voting gridlock risks, legal exposure, and gaps in member accountability that should be addressed through formal amendments.

Key Diagnostic Findings for Connection Point Church

1. Operational Voting Gridlock: Requiring 100% unanimity for all board decisions creates severe administrative fragility.
2. Disciplinary Evasion: Lack of a explicit non-resignation clause leaves the church legally and pastorally vulnerable during active discipline.
3. Absence of Key Compliance Policies: Missing explicit Conflict of Interest, Whistleblower, and Emergency Governance protocols.
4. Legal & Property Protection Gaps: Modern dispute resolution (binding arbitration) and explicit facility usage restrictions require strengthening.

2. Comparative Governance Benchmark Matrix

Governance Domain	Connection Point Church (Current)	Peer Benchmark Models	Recommended Amendment
Elder Board Voting Thresholds	100% Unanimous vote required for ALL board actions.	City Church Melissa / Village: 4/5 or 75% supermajority for major actions; simple majority for routine items.	Adopt simple majority for routine operations; reserve 75% or 4/5 supermajority for major corporate events.
Lay Elder Governance Majority	No requirement for Lay Elders to outnumber staff elders.	City Church Melissa & 9Marks: Non-salaried Lay Elders must always constitute a voting majority.	Mandate that non-staff Lay Elders maintain a simple voting majority on the Board at all times.
Disciplinary Non-Resignation	Silent on voluntary resignation during Matthew 18 discipline.	The Village Church & Watermark: Resignation prohibited while under active discipline/restoration.	Add explicit clause blocking resignation during active church discipline until resolution.

Governance Domain	Connection Point Church (Current)	Peer Benchmark Models	Recommended Amendment
Legal Dispute Resolution	Refers to 1 Cor 6 mediation, but silent if mediation fails.	The Village Church: Mandatory binding arbitration; insurance policy alignment.	Expand to require binding Christian arbitration and insurer review for covered financial claims.
Congregational Voting Checkpoints	Members attend 2 annual meetings; zero voting or approval rights.	9Marks & Village Church: Congregational confirmation for annual budget, debt >20%, asset sales, pastor call.	Define specific member confirmation checkpoints for annual budget, major debt, and property sales.
Financial Oversight & Compliance	Internal review mentioned; no CPA audit or compliance policies.	Village Church & City Church: Annual CPA audit, Conflict of Interest, and Whistleblower protections.	Incorporate formal Conflict of Interest, Whistleblower, and mandatory annual CPA audit clauses.

3. Detailed Review & Proposed Amendments

A. Elder Board Mechanics & Decision Thresholds

Current Vulnerability: CPC's bylaws presently demand 100% unanimity for virtually all Elder Board decisions. While this fosters unity in spiritual matters, applying a 100% requirement to routine property maintenance, staff hiring, or minor administrative budgets creates high vulnerability to operational deadlocks.
Benchmarked Solution: Following *City Church Melissa* and *The Village Church*, CPC should establish a tiered voting system: routine operational matters require a simple majority, while major corporate thresholds (Lead Pastor dismissal, amending bylaws, selling real property, or incurring long-term debt) require a 75% or 4/5 supermajority. Additionally, CPC should adopt the *9Marks* recommendation requiring non-salaried Lay Elders to hold a majority over vocational staff elders to prevent conflicts of interest.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT DRAFT: TIERED VOTING THRESHOLDS & LAY ELDER RATIO

Section 4.0X — Voting Thresholds: All routine decisions of the Elder Board shall be decided by a simple majority vote of Elders present at a quorate meeting. A 75% supermajority vote of the full Elder Board shall be required for: (a) removal of the Lead Pastor; (b) amendment of these Bylaws; (c) sale, lease, or mortgage of church real estate; or (d) incurring long-term indebtedness exceeding 20% of the annual operating budget.
Section 4.0Y — Lay Elder Majority: At all times, non-salaried (Lay) Elders shall constitute a simple majority of the total voting members on the Elder Board.

B. Membership Discipline & Safeguards Against Evasion

Current Vulnerability: CPC outlines Matthew 18 corrective discipline but does not specify whether a member can voluntarily resign while under active disciplinary care.
Benchmarked Solution: Both *The Village Church* and *Watermark Community Church* maintain strict clauses prohibiting members from voluntarily withdrawing or transferring membership to escape formal disciplinary proceedings. This legal safeguard protects the congregation's pastoral responsibility, prevents bad-faith litigation over privacy, and preserves biblical restoration efforts.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT DRAFT: PROHIBITION OF RESIGNATION DURING DISCIPLINE

Section 3.0X — Non-Resignation During Disciplinary Action: If a member initiates voluntary resignation or requests a transfer of membership while subject to active formal corrective discipline under Section 3.05, the Elder Board may choose not to accept the resignation or transfer. The member shall remain subject to the discipline, care, and restorative procedures of this church until the matter is resolved according to Scripture.

C. Dispute Resolution & Legal Risk Management

Current Vulnerability: CPC references 1 Corinthians 6 mediation but lacks a complete, enforceable arbitration framework if mediation fails.
Benchmarked Solution: Modeled after *The Village Church*, CPC should explicitly mandate that all unresolved claims proceed to legally binding Christian arbitration (under Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation or AAA) rather than civil court. The bylaws should also clarify that dispute procedures coordinate with church liability insurance policies for covered monetary claims.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT DRAFT: BINDING CHRISTIAN ARBITRATION FRAMEWORK

Section 6.0X — Binding Arbitration: Members and leaders agree that any dispute, claim, or legal controversy arising out of or relating to church membership, governance, or operations that cannot be resolved through internal mediation under 1 Corinthians 6:1–8 shall be settled by legally binding Christian arbitration in accordance with the Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation. Judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered in any civil court of competent jurisdiction.

D. Financial Integrity, Conflict of Interest & Compliance

Current Vulnerability: CPC lacks explicit formal policies governing conflict of interest, whistleblower protections, and emergency succession.
Benchmarked Solution: Drawing from *The Village Church* and *City Church Melissa*, CPC should incorporate full compliance appendices: (1) **Conflict of Interest Policy:** Requiring annual written disclosure of financial interests and mandatory recusal from compensation or contract votes; (2) **Whistleblower Protection:** Protecting employees/volunteers from retaliation when reporting financial or legal irregularities; (3) **Independent CPA Financial Audit:** Replacing informal internal reviews with an annual independent financial audit or review.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT DRAFT: CONFLICT OF INTEREST & CPA AUDIT STANDARDS

Section 8.0X — Conflict of Interest Policy: Any Elder, Officer, or employee with a personal or financial interest in a contract or transaction considered by the Board shall fully disclose such interest, abstain from deliberation, and refrain from voting thereon.
Section 9.0X — Independent Financial Audit: The books and financial records of the Church shall be audited or reviewed annually by an independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) selected by the Elder Board.

E. Doctrinal Declarations & Facility Usage Safeguards

Current Vulnerability: CPC's doctrinal statement is concise and does not explicitly address property/facility usage permissions in alignment with sincere theological convictions.
Benchmarked Solution: Modeling *City Church Melissa* and *The Village Church*, add explicit protections specifying that church property, facilities, and ministers may only be used for events, ceremonies, and activities strictly consistent with the church's Statement of Faith and biblical marriage definitions.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT DRAFT: FACILITY USAGE & DOCTRINAL ALIGNMENT

Section 10.0X — Facility and Property Usage: The real and personal property of Connection Point Church is dedicated exclusively to religious worship and Christian ministry. Church facilities may only be used for purpose-aligned activities and by individuals or groups whose conduct and beliefs do not contradict the Church's Statement of Basic Beliefs and Statement on Marriage and Biological Sex.

4. Implementation Roadmap & Action Steps

To successfully implement these recommendations, the Elder Board should execute the following 4-phase roadmap:

- **Phase 1: Legal & Governance Subcommittee Review (30 Days):** Appoint a 3-member Elder subcommittee to refine the draft amendment text alongside qualified legal counsel specializing in Texas non-profit church law.
- **Phase 2: Board Review & Unanimous Adoption (15 Days):** Present the finalized Bylaws Amendment Package to the full Elder Board for formal review and supermajority/unanimous adoption under existing Article 10.
- **Phase 3: Congregational Information Window (30 Days):** Host a dedicated member informational forum (in alignment with semi-annual meetings) to explain the governance enhancements, risk mitigations, and pastoral care benefits.
- **Phase 4: Formal Registration & Implementation (15 Days):** Execute the signed amended bylaws, file required updated corporate records, and integrate the Conflict of Interest disclosure forms into annual Elder board onboarding.

Summary Recommendation

By adopting these benchmarked amendments, Connection Point Church will transition from a basic non-profit framework to a robust, legally resilient, and pastorally grounded governance structure that safeguards the congregation, empowers leadership, and ensures long-term ministry fruitfulness.