



Constitution & By-Laws

Life Community Church Alexandria
3500 Franconia Rd.
Alexandria, VA 22310

CONSTITUTION

This constitution supersedes and makes null and void any other constitution previously adopted by **Life Community Church Alexandria**, formerly known as *Sunset Hills Baptist Church*.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The legal name of the church shall be **Sunset Hills Baptist Church**. The church will do business as **Life Community Church Alexandria**.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

Our purpose is defined in the following Scriptures:

Romans 12:1 "...in view of God's mercy..."

Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..."

Ephesians 4:1-6 "...walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called...being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace..."

Ephesians 4:12-16 "...the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ...speaking the truth in love..."

Our purpose in a sentence:

In view of God's mercy, we will offer hope, truth, and love to our community and to show the world that we are Jesus Christ's disciples by our love for each other.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH COVENANT

Having first placed my faith in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and having later been baptized, and being in agreement with LCCA's statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the LCCA church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members of this church family to do the following:

1. I will protect the unity of LCCA

...By acting in love toward other members

...By refusing to gossip

...By following the leaders

Romans 14:19,
Romans 15:5,
1 Peter 1:22,
Ephesians 4:29,
Hebrews 13:17,
Matthew 18:15,
Luke 17:3..

Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

Matthew 18:19-20 Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.

Ephesians 4:1-6 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Ephesians 4:12-16 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to

the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love

Romans 14:19 So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

Romans 15:5 Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart,

Ephesians 4:29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to

2. I will share the responsibility of LCCA

...By praying for its growth and health

...By inviting the un-churched to attend

...By warmly welcoming those who visit

1 Thessalonians 1:2,
Luke 14:23,
Romans 15:7.

3. I will participate in the ministry of LCCA.

...By discovering my gifts and talents

...By being equipped to serve by my pastors

...By developing a servant's heart

1 Peter 4:10,
Ephesian 4:11-12,
Philippians 2:3,4-7..

4. I will support the testimony of LCCA

...By attending faithfully

...By living a godly life

...By giving regularly

Hebrews 10:25,
Philippians 1:27,
1 Corinthians 16:2,
Leviticus 27:30

ARTICLE IV – CELEBRATIONS

We celebrate baptism by immersion and the Lord's supper (communion) as described in the New Testament. Our understanding is that baptism comes after conversion, as it is an outward testimony of an inward reality. LCCA will not baptize infants or anyone who has not professed faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

In the event of an inability of someone to be immersed in water, the Elders shall determine another form of public testimony of faith in Jesus Christ.

**Romans 6:3-4, Acts 2:41, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25*

ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. The membership of this church will be made up of people who:

- Who have made a public profession of faith in Christ as Savior and Lord
- Who are willing to be numbered among Jesus' disciples
- Who have experienced baptism after having placed their faith in Jesus Christ
- Who are in agreement with the doctrine and practices of this church

the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

Matthew 18:15 If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Luke 17:3 Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

1 Thessalonians 1:2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers;

Luke 14:23 And the master said to the slave, 'Go out into the highways and along the hedges, and compel them to come in, so that my house may be filled.'

Section 2. Membership in the church may be acquired or terminated in accordance with the conditions prescribed in the by-laws.

ARTICLE VI – CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Section 1. The work of this church shall be done by the officers, members, ministries and such other representatives as may be authorized by the Elders.

Section 2. The officers of this church shall be Lead Elder, Elders, Trustees, Pastors, Deacons, Secretary, Treasurer, and any others that may be required to carry out the MINISTRY of the church as may be authorized by a majority of the Elders.

Section 3. The functions of this church shall be performed through the following ministries.

Teaching Ministries
Worship Ministries
Outreach Ministries
Financial Ministries
Administrative Ministries

A majority of the Elders may discontinue any ministry that they deem to be hindering the forward progress of LCCA. The Elders may also create any ministry that they deem to help the forward progress of LCCA.

Section 4. The by-laws shall define the duties of the officers and ministries and describe the manner of their selection.

ARTICLE VII – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. The church shall be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Section 2. The sale of merchandise, services, and/or any entertainment held in or on behalf of this church for the purpose of raising money shall be permitted only upon the approval of a majority of the Elders.

Section 3. This constitution may be amended at any regular or called church meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the members, provided that the proposed amendment shall have been presented to the membership in writing at least one week before action is taken upon the proposed amendment.

Section 4. This constitution shall become effective upon approval of the church and shall supersede and nullify any previously approved or adopted constitution, rules or regulations.

Adopted by the church 6/7/72

Amended: 4/2/80

Amended: 7/20/88

Amended: 6/30/99

Amended: 4/28/2013

Amended: 7/29/2015

Amended: 06/17/2018

Romans 15:7

Therefore, accept one another, just as Christ also accepted us to the glory of God.

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Ephesians 4:11-12 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Philippians 2:3-4, 7 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others...but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.

Hebrews 10:25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of

the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week each one of you is to put aside and save, as he may prosper, so that no collections be made when I come.

Leviticus 27:30 'Thus all the tithes of the land, of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord.

Romans 6:3-4 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Acts 2:41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls

1 Corinthians 11:24-25 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying,

"This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

BY-LAWS of Life Community Church

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Admission of Members

- a. Membership in this church may be attained as follows:
 1. By public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.
 2. By statement of faith in Jesus Christ that was followed by baptism at another bible believing church.
 3. By restoration to membership.
- b. The names of people wishing to join LCCA shall be presented to the church so that they may express their support for their decision.
- c. People wishing to join LCCA will be asked to subscribe to the LCCA Covenant as listed in the Constitution.

Section 2. Discontinuation of Membership

- a. By choice of any member wishing to transfer membership to another bible believing church. A letter will be issued acknowledging their prior membership at LCCA.
- b. By removing members who:
 1. Have not been present for a worship service and cannot be located for a period of six (6) months. Every effort will be made to restore such people to fellowship.***Heb 10:25**

Special consideration will be given to anyone on temporary assignment or leave. Special consideration and care will be extended to the chronically ill and unable to assemble for physical reasons.

2. Refuse to change their behavior after being confronted biblically with their sin.
- c. Upon request to unite with another church.
- d. By death.
- e. By resignation.

Section 3. Voting Eligibility

- a. Every member 18 years or older may vote.

Heb 10:25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near.

Matthew 18:15-17 And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, un-contentious, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?); and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-7 An Elder must be well thought of for his good life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who are not wild or rebellious. An Elder must live a blameless life because he is God's minister. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or greedy for money.

1 Timothy 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

ARTICLE II – MEETINGS

The meetings of the church shall be as follows:

- a. Worship Services
- b. Prayer Services
- c. Church Meetings – A church meeting shall be scheduled once a year to confirm new Elders or re-affirm Elders whose terms are ending, provide the annual budget, and elect the clerk and treasurer.
- d. Special Meetings – The Lead Elder may at any time call a special meeting; in the absence of the Lead Elder, an Elder selected by the Elders shall call the special meeting.
- e. Church meetings must be announced at least two weeks in advance.
- f. A quorum shall consist of at least 30% voting members present.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH OFFICERS

Section 1. Pastor/Lead Elder

***Scriptural Qualifications See 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-7,**

1 Timothy 5:19

The Pastor/Lead Elder shall be the spiritual leader of the church as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Call of a Lead Elder/Pastor shall require at least two-thirds of the votes cast at a church meeting; Notice of the time and object of which shall be given by the Elders in concert with the chairman of the Pastoral Search Team at the morning worship service at least two Sundays prior to the date action is to be taken. The call of the Pastor/Lead Elder shall be for an indefinite period. The Elders shall select a Pastoral Search team of 5 faithful members the church and two Elders shall also form part of this team. Together they will screen candidates and present one candidate at a time to the church body for consideration. No pastoral candidate will be considered that is not male.

The duties of the Lead Elder are:

He shall preach and be in charge of the worship services, administer the ordinances as commanded in the New Testament; shall examine all candidates for baptism as to their conversion; and shall instruct all new members as to their duties and privileges of membership; and perform such other duties as usually pertains to the office. The

Lead Elder shall be an ex-officio member of all boards, departments, ministries and similar bodies of the church. He and the Elders shall work in close cooperation with these organizations at all times to advance the effectiveness of the entire church program. The Lead Elder or his designees shall have administrative responsibility over all staff members of the church.

The pastoral relationship of the Pastor/Lead Elder may be terminated by resignation of the Pastor/Lead Elder or by a two thirds majority vote of the church. A majority of Elders will be required to initiate a request to the church to remove the Pastor/Lead Elder.

Section 2. Elders

***Scriptural Qualifications See 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-7,**

1 Timothy 5:19

Elders shall be selected from among the congregation and staff that meet the same requirements as the Lead Elder/Pastor. No Elder will be considered that is not male.

Elders shall serve a renewable 2 (two) year term. Their term shall be renewed after 2 (two) years by written ballot. Elders will be added when a vacancy occurs. No more than 1 (one) member of a family may serve on the Elder board at a time.

Should an elder become a liability to the unity of the Elders or the Church, it will require a majority of Elders to ask for the resignation of said Elder.

There will be no less than five Elders serving the church at any time. There will always be an uneven number of Elders to include 40% staff representation and 60% lay representation (2/5 staff and 3/5 lay or 3/7 staff and 4/7 lay). The Lead Elder is included in this number. Elders may be nominated by members without informing the person they have nominated. Men who feel called to be an Elder may also request the opportunity to be an Elder from the Elders. (**See 1 Timothy 3:1**) The Lead Elder along with a majority of Elders must approve all nominations and examine all candidates before presenting them to the church for a vote. The church shall approve by two-thirds vote each Elder through written ballot. Up to 300 members the church shall have 5 (five) Elders. Elders shall be added as the membership increases up to a total of 7 (seven).

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.

Section 3. Associate Pastors

Associate Pastors shall serve under the direction of the Lead Elder/Elders and lead the ministries entrusted to them by the Elder team. The Elders shall prayerfully select/remove associate pastors as needed. There will be a majority of Elders in accord when hiring or dismissing staff.

Section 4. Clerk

The secretary shall be elected annually at the annual church meeting to serve a one year term. The elders will screen nominees for clerk before presenting them to the church. They shall record the minutes of the special meetings of the church. They or their designee shall be custodian of the church membership rolls, send requests for church letters and issue letters of termination of membership upon request from the Elders. Some of the clerical responsibilities may be delegated to the church administrative assistants. All church records are church property and will remain at the church offices.

Section 5. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected by the church at the annual church meeting to serve a one year term. The elders will screen nominees for treasurer before presenting them to the church. They shall receive, safeguard and disburse all funds of the church, keep accurate records of all transactions, and pay all bills. The Treasurer shall make all disbursements upon request of the church official having control of the applicable budget items. They shall keep all funds received in a checking or savings account. They shall insure that all designated funds are kept in the church bank accounts until used for the purpose for which designated. They shall make a written quarterly report of all receipts and expenditures to the church. All books, records and accounts kept by the Treasurer shall be considered to be the property of the church. Should the Treasurer become a liability to LCCA they will be removed by a majority vote of the Elders.

Section 5a. Assistant Treasurer

The Assistant Treasurer shall be selected and approved by the Elders annually. They will serve under the general guidance of the Treasurer and will fulfill the duties of the Treasurer should the Treasurer be absent.

ARTICLE IV - MINISTRIES

Every member of every ministry will be in support of the goals and objectives of LCCA and will maintain a positive relationship with the leader of their ministry and the church leadership at every level. Members that become negative or gossip in any way will be asked to resign any positions they hold until they can join the goals of LCCA in unity. Our objective is complete unity in essentials and love and understanding in non-essentials.

Section 1. Ministry Coordination Council

This council will consist of the assembly of all ministry leaders to facilitate working in concert and with common goals. The Pastor/Elders shall serve as leaders of this council. All church ministry leaders will be members of the church and attend faithfully.

Section 2. Facilities Ministry

This shall be composed of members who have gifting in these areas. The ministry shall be responsible for the general upkeep and maintenance of the church property. They will be directed by the Elders.

Section 3. Finance Ministry

This ministry shall be composed of members selected by the Elders in consultation with the Treasurer. They shall be responsible for planning the financial program of the church in accordance with the principles of the unified budget. The finance ministry shall be responsible for planning and carrying into effect ways to more effectively use the church funds. The team shall submit its annual budget recommendations to the Elders for review and approval by a majority of Elders. Any changes to the church budget in the course of a year must be approved by a majority of Elders.

Section 4. Nursery Ministry

This ministry shall be responsible for recommending nursery policies to the Elder team, publicizing the policies of the nursery, considering and recommending purchase of nursery equipment and supplies, strengthening parent/worker relationships, making recommendations about cleanliness and care of rooms and equipment and shall schedule and supervise volunteer and paid nursery workers

within the limit of the funds budgeted for this purpose. The elders shall approve the leadership of this ministry.

Section 5. Fellowship Ministry

This ministry shall direct the use of the kitchen and facilities for the purpose of fellowship. They will maintain and stock the kitchen as needed to meet the goals of the church in fellowship.

Section 6. Teller Ministry

This Ministry shall be responsible for offerings received and verify the amount enclosed with the amount written on the face of the envelope, and to count, record and deposit each week all funds received by the church. This includes funds received electronically. The members of this ministry are never to speak to anyone outside of this ministry of the name of those who give or how much they give. Any teller disclosing such information will be removed immediately from the ministry. The Elders do not have access to this information. They will regularly be informed by the Teller Ministry of how many "giving units" the church has and the average amount of gifts received through all the giving units.

Section 7. Trustees

The Trustees shall consist of at least three (3) members nominated by the Elders and elected by two-thirds majority of the church for an indefinite period of time. Replacement action will be initiated based on the recommendation of the Elders. They shall function as the representatives of the church in legal matters. They shall hold legal title (and insurance policies) to all the property of the church. They shall make all legal transactions for the church in their names as trustees, in trust for the church. They shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property of the church following the specific two-thirds majority vote of the church and majority of the Elders authorizing such action.

Section 8. Deacons & Deaconesses

The Deacon Ministry of LCCA shall consist of faithful members of this church having New Testament spiritual qualifications (**1 Timothy 3:8-13**) and who have proved themselves to be earnest workers in God's Kingdom. The existing Deacons and any member shall present the names

1 Timothy 3:8-13 Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

ARTICLE VI – GENERAL PROVISIONS

Section 1. No debts obligating the church shall be incurred except those authorized by a two thirds majority of the church. The finances of the church shall be carried on in accordance with the principles of the Unified Budget. Special offerings will be approved by the Pastor/Elders.

Section 2. Unless otherwise specified the term “by vote of the church” as used herein means a two thirds majority of the membership voting at any meeting of the church.

Section 3. A two-thirds vote of the church body will be required to purchase or sell real estate and to build or replace permanent buildings.

Section 4. These by-laws may be amended at any regular or called meeting of the church by a simple majority of the members provided the proposed amendment was previously presented to the church membership in writing.

Section 5. These by-laws shall become effective upon approval of the church and shall supersede and nullify any previously approved or adopted by-laws or regulations.

Adopted by the church 6/7/72

Amended: 4/2/80

Amended: 7/20/88

Amended: 6/30/99

Amended: 4/28/2013

of candidates for the office of Deacon to the Elders for approval. Informing a person of your intent to nominate them for this ministry will immediately disqualify them. The deacons will receive a two-thirds vote of affirmation and encouragement by the church.

The Deacon ministry team shall be elected by church vote for a three (3) year renewable term. They shall maintain, a regular visitation program, especially of the sick and needy members; shall lead the church and keep the Elders informed in all matters of benevolence disbursements towards the church family and the community. (**Acts 6:1-6**)

Section 13. Usher Ministry

This ministry will seek and recruit outgoing, energetic members, who love to greet and get to know new people who visit LCCA. The members of this ministry must maintain a positive attitude about the leadership and direction of LCCA as they are the first face out guests will encounter on entering our facilities. The duties of the ushers are:

- a. Energetically greet people as they arrive/exit from the worship services
- b. Distribute bulletins/programs
- c. Collect offerings
- d. Be attentive to the needs of the people during services
- e. Help prevent interruptions and distractions during the worship service.
- f. Be aware and have a “security plan” in place to address possible threats during services and events.

The leader of the Usher Ministry will be selected by the Elders.

ARTICLE V –CELEBRATIONS

Section 1. The celebrations of this church are Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Section 2. The celebration of Baptism is observed when occasion arises, i.e., when candidates are present, and the date for this celebration shall be announced in advance.

* **Matthew 28:19-20**

Section 3. The celebration of the Lord’s Supper will be observed once each month or as scheduled by the Elders.

* **1 Corinthians 11:26**

Acts 6:1-6 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.”

Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unwor-

thy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly.