

HIGHER GROUND CHURCH
By-laws

Adopted Monday, September 30, 2024

PREAMBLE. We, the members of Higher Ground Church, do ordain and establish the following Articles, to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE 1. CHURCH CONSTITUTION

- 1.1. Name, Incorporation, Authority, Purpose, Amendment Process, and Statement of Faith are all provisioned in the Church Constitution.

ARTICLE 2. COVENANT OF FELLOWSHIP

- 2.1. **Application for Membership:** Individuals wishing to join the Church by confessing personal faith in Jesus Christ will be examined by the Board of Elders regarding their salvation and Christian experience. Applicants must agree to the Church's Statement of Faith and By-laws and willingly commit to aspire to invest their time, talents, and treasures in accordance with biblical principles. Membership grants the right to vote on matters defined by the By-laws and those presented by the Board of Elders. Voting rights are limited to members who are 18 or older. Membership does not confer any proprietary rights in the Corporation.
- 2.2. **Admittance to Membership:** The Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff automatically become members of the Church upon beginning their pastoral role, if they are not already. This membership does not terminate automatically upon the end of their pastoral relationship. Other candidates, once examined and approved by the Board of Elders, will be admitted to the Church fellowship as determined by the Board.
- 2.3. **Associates of the Fellowship:** Temporary residents who wish to maintain membership in their home church may join this Church fellowship as described above. They will have the same rights and privileges as other members but cannot serve on governing boards.
- 2.4. **Termination of Membership:** Membership may be terminated by:
- 2.4.1. **Death:** Membership ends upon the individual's death.
- 2.4.2. **Exclusion:** Members may be excluded for moral, ethical, or doctrinal reasons by the Board of Elders. For more information see ARTICLE 11 on DISCIPLINE AND CONFLICT.
- 2.4.3. **Resignation or Transfer:** Members may resign or transfer by submitting a documented request to the Board of Elders. Termination is effective upon receipt.
- 2.4.4. **Dismissal:** Members who are absent and inactive for nine consecutive months will be notified. If they remain absent and inactive for twelve months, the Board of Elders may terminate their membership by affirmative vote.
- 2.5. **Charter Membership:** To allow for initial growth of the Church, all members who join within two years of incorporation are considered charter

members. The Board of Elders can vote to close the charter membership early if Church numerical growth justifies it.

ARTICLE 3. GOVERNMENT

The governance of the Church is a collaborative effort among the Board of Elders, the Senior Pastor, and the Congregation, guided by the Holy Spirit. All governance is conducted under Christ's headship and the authority of the Scriptures, with no other ecclesiastical body having authority over the Church.

- 3.1. **Board of Elders:** Recognized and approved by the Congregation, the Board of Elders is responsible for the oversight of the Church and must demonstrate exemplary Christian character and dedication to its spiritual well-being. The Board of Elders serves as the Church directors as defined in the Church constitution.
- 3.2. **Senior Pastor:** The Senior Pastor leads in preaching and teaching, supporting the Board of Elders in their role.
- 3.3. **Congregation:** The Congregation plays a vital role in affirming leaders and participating in Church decisions, including dismissal of the Board of Elders or the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE 4. QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

Persons serving in leadership positions in the Church should be reflective of mature Christians. Maturity as a Christian cannot be evaluated as simply age or years as a Christian. Nor should definitions of maturity be based on extra-biblical standards. As such the criteria are as follows:

- 4.1. **Length of Membership:** To ensure the person in question is known to the Church for evaluation a person must have actively attended the Church for at least two years and have been a member for at least one year. This provision is waived for charter members and the period prior to closing of charter membership. This provision is also waived for those acquiring membership as a Staff hire, where the principle of this provision is to be addressed through the interview process.
- 4.2. **Biblical Qualifications:** All leaders should meet the Qualifications for Leaders specified in scripture. These Scriptures include: 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4. The Church Scriptural Application Document, as outlined in the Constitution, provides clarification on the application of these Scriptures.
- 4.3. **Church Doctrine:** Leaders must agree with the Church Doctrinal Statement.
- 4.4. **Church Governance:** Leaders must agree to operate within the By-laws and Scriptural Application Document of the Church. Leaders may champion

changes to those documents, but they agree to operate within them until or unless they are changed.

- 4.5. **Maturity:** Leaders must be at least 18 years of age and have a professed faith in Christ for at least two years.

ARTICLE 5. BOARD OF ELDERS

5.1. Qualifications

- 5.1.1. **Leaders:** Leaders in the Church, to be eligible to serve on the Board, must meet the Qualifications for Leaders detailed in ARTICLE 4.
- 5.1.2. **Fraternal Limits:** Two immediate family members cannot serve on the Board at the same time; thus, no immediate family member (parents, children, siblings, spouses) of an existing member is considered eligible unless that family member's term is ending before the person in question would start to serve.
- 5.1.3. **Term Limits:** No one who has served on the Board for more than four years out of the last six may be considered for the Board.
- 5.1.4. **Employees of the Church:** No employee other than the Senior Pastor may serve on the Board of Elders.

- 5.2. **Number and Term:** The Board of Elders consists of three to seven members, with staggered three-year terms.

- 5.2.1. **Number:** At the time of the election, the number of open positions is based on the number of members at that time:

Number of Members	Number of Board Members
50 or fewer	3
51-149	5
150 or more	7

- 5.2.2. **Terms:** Terms are three years, with every reasonable effort made to evenly stagger the positions across the three-year interval. In cases where the number of positions has changed, or there are unscheduled vacancies, partial term positions should be used. Terms begin and end with the calendar year.

5.3. Election

- 5.3.1. **Candidacy Review:** Each June the process to elect new Board members begins with candidacy review.
- 5.3.1.1. **Committee:** A Candidacy Review Committee is formed, the committee consisting of a member of the Board of Elders, the Senior Pastor, and three congregational members - two appointed by the

Senior Pastor, one by the Board Member. Those appointed should meet the Qualifications for Leaders in ARTICLE 4. In the event that there is no Senior Pastor or no sitting Board, then that position and the position they would appoint are to be agreed to by congregational vote in a special meeting.

- 5.3.1.2. **Review:** The committee reviews the current member lists and evaluates every member for eligibility and willingness to serve on the Board. The committee then reaches out to the potential candidates and vets them according to Qualifications for Leaders in ARTICLE 4, the findings of previous committees can serve as guidance on the vetting process. All eligible and willing members are then presented as candidates to the membership. This list is to be presented by the end of August.
- 5.3.2. **Election:** Each October there is to be a congregational meeting for Board elections. Present members vote in a blind ballot. Each member may vote affirmatively for up to two times as many candidates as there are positions available.
- 5.3.3. **Election Results:** Candidates are ranked according to the number of affirmative votes received. Positions are assigned to the highest ranked candidates. The positions that are available are ranked by length. The Candidate with the highest vote count is assigned the longest term. At that point all candidates with a fraternal conflict with the assigned candidate are eliminated from the pool, to avoid multiple family members being assigned in the same election. Of the remaining candidates, the highest voted candidate receives the next position, and so forth until all positions are filled.
- 5.4. **Structure:** The Board of Elders elects a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary from its members, excluding full-time church employees from serving as Chair. A quorum for meetings requires two-thirds of the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor cannot serve in a Board office.
- 5.5. **Duties:** The Board of Elders leads, shepherds, teaches, and corrects the Church according to the Word of God (1 Peter 5:1-4). They also oversee Church operations and approve the appointment of paid employees.
- 5.6. **Termination:** Position may be terminated by:
 - 5.6.1. **Resignation:** When a Church Officer resigns, they must submit a documented resignation to the Board of Elders. The resignation will be effective on the date of the first regular meeting after receipt. No further action is required.
 - 5.6.2. **Recall:** See ARTICLE 8 on RECALL PROCEDURES.

- 5.7. **Vacancies:** In the event of midyear vacancies, the Board of Elders can appoint successors to fill vacant positions for the duration until the completion of the next election cycle. In the event that an election has been concluded but new Elders not installed, the election results are reviewed, and the lead non-winning candidate is appointed to replace the midterm appointee.

ARTICLE 6. STAFF

6.1. Senior Pastor

- 6.1.1. **Qualifications:** The Senior Pastor must meet the Qualifications for Leaders as outlined in ARTICLE 4.
- 6.1.2. **Selection:** The Board of Elders will recommend a candidate to the Church after unanimous approval. The candidate's name will be announced at least three Sundays before a special meeting for approval. Affirmative vote requires a three-quarters majority of members present, or two-thirds majority of all active members, and is conducted by blind ballot. Upon election the Senior Pastor is added to the list of members, if he or she is not already. Termination of position does not remove the pastor from membership.
- 6.1.3. **Duties:** The Senior Pastor serves as the primary preacher for the congregation, shepherd of the membership, chief of staff, and a non-voting member of the Board of Elders.
- 6.1.4. **Compensation:** The Board of Elders will annually review the Senior Pastor's role and compensation, making adjustments as deemed appropriate for cost of living, church budget, and performance.
- 6.1.5. **Termination:** Position may be terminated by:
- 6.1.5.1. **Resignation:** When a Church Officer resigns, they must submit a documented resignation to the Board of Elders. The resignation will be effective on the date of the first regular meeting after receipt. No further action is required.
- 6.1.5.2. **Recall:** See ARTICLE 8 on RECALL PROCEDURES.

6.2. Additional Pastors

- 6.2.1. **Qualifications:** The additional pastors must meet the Qualifications for Leaders as outlined in ARTICLE 4.
- 6.2.2. **Roles:** The Board of Elders, with consultation with the Senior Pastor, will define what roles for additional pastors are desirable in the church structure given the current church needs. Those roles and summary level of Duties will be maintained by the Elders and Senior Pastor and published to the membership.

- 6.2.3. **Selection:** The Board of Elders will interview candidates and approve the employment or appointment of additional pastors.
- 6.2.4. **Compensation:** The Board of Elders will annually review the additional pastors' roles and compensation, making adjustments as deemed appropriate for cost of living, church budget, and performance.
- 6.2.5. **Termination:** Pastoral position may be terminated by:
 - 6.2.5.1. **Resignation:** When a Church Officer resigns, they must submit a documented resignation to the Board of Elders. The resignation will be effective on the date of the first regular meeting after receipt. No further action is required.
 - 6.2.5.2. **Role Realignment:** The Board of Elders may determine that a role is no longer needed by the Church. This may result in the termination of the employment or appointment of an additional pastor.
 - 6.2.5.3. **Termination:** The Board of Elders may terminate the employment or appointment of an additional pastor at their discretion.

6.3. **Lay Staff**

- 6.3.1. **Qualifications:** Lay staff that serve as teachers or leaders in ministries must meet the Qualifications for Leaders as outlined in ARTICLE 4. Non-teaching staff must be held to moral standards and expectations of members but not to the full standard of ARTICLE 4.
- 6.3.2. **Roles:** The Board of Elders, in consultation with the Senior Pastor, will define what roles for lay staff are desirable in the Church structure given the current Church needs. Those roles and summary level of duties will be maintained by the Elders and Senior Pastor and published to the membership.
- 6.3.3. **Selection:** The Board of Elders will interview candidates and approve the employment or appointment of lay staff.
- 6.3.4. **Compensation:** The Board of Elders will annually review the lay staff's roles and compensation, making adjustments as deemed appropriate for cost of living, church budget, and performance.
- 6.3.5. **Termination:** Lay Staff position may be terminated by:
 - 6.3.5.1. **Resignation:** When a Lay Staff member resigns, they must submit a documented resignation to the Board of Elders. The resignation will be effective on the date of the first regular meeting after receipt. No further action is required.
 - 6.3.5.2. **Role Realignment:** The Board of Elders may determine that a role is no longer needed by the

Church. This may result in the termination of the employment of a lay staff.

- 6.3.5.3. **Termination:** The Board of Elders may terminate the employment or appointment of a lay staff at their discretion

ARTICLE 7. Board of Inquiry

- 7.1. **Purpose:** A Board of Inquiry serves as a tool and process to investigate and resolve concerns and perceptions of misconduct within church leadership. Once formed a Board of Inquiry has full power to investigate action by the church leadership, including Board of Elders and pastors.
- 7.2. **Invoking:** The membership may call for the forming of a Board of Inquiry by petition or a vote in a congregational meeting. In either case the formation requires a clear mandate and scope of inquiry to be defined.
 - 7.2.1. **Mandate and Scope:** A call for a Board of Inquiry must specify the concern to be investigated to provide a mandate and limit to that board.
 - 7.2.2. **Petition:** A petition specifying a mandate and scope is considered binding when presented to the Board of Elders when signed by at least 20% of the church membership.
 - 7.2.3. **Vote:** During a congregational meeting any member may request a vote for a Board of Inquiry with specified mandate. If the request is echoed by at least one other present member, a vote will be held during that meeting. A Board is formed if the lesser of 30% of present members or 20% of all members vote for its formation.
- 7.3. **Forming**
 - 7.3.1. **Qualifications**
 - 7.3.1.1. **Leaders:** Leaders in the church, to be eligible to serve on the Board must meet the Qualifications for Leaders detailed in ARTICLE 4.
 - 7.3.1.2. **Current Leaders:** The Senior Pastor, Employees of the church, and members of the Board of Elders may not serve on the Board of Inquiry. If the period of activity under inquiry involves changes in one or more of those groups, anyone in those roles at any time during the inquiry period is also excluded.
 - 7.3.1.3. **Fraternal Limits:** No one in the immediate family of a current Board of Elders member, or the Senior Pastor, or an Employee of the church may serve on the Board of Inquiry. Further, no two people from the same immediate family may serve on the Board together.

7.3.2. **Number:** The Board of Inquiry consists of three to seven members, based on the current membership size.

Number of Members	Number of Board Members
50 or less	3
51-149	5
150 or more	7

At the time of the election, the number of open positions is based on the number of members at that time.

7.3.3. **Election**

7.3.3.1. **Candidacy Review:** Once called for, the formation of a Board of Inquiry begins with a candidacy review.

7.3.3.1.1. **Committee:** A candidacy review committee is formed consisting of three church members. One appointed by the Senior Pastor, one by the Board of Elders, and one by the author of the petition or the one who called for the vote. Those excluded from serving on the Board are excluded from being appointed to the committee. All appointments must be publicized to the congregation. Appointments must be made and publicized within four weeks of the petition or vote.

7.3.3.1.2. **Review:** The committee reviews the current member lists, evaluates every member for meeting the Qualifications for Leaders. Then reaches out to all qualified members and determines the willingness to run. All eligible and willing members are then presented as candidates to the membership. This is to be completed within eight weeks of the call for the board.

7.3.3.2. A congregational meeting must be scheduled three months from the initial vote or petition. Present members vote in a blind ballot. Each member may

vote affirmatively for up to two times as many candidates as there are positions available.

7.3.3.3. **Election Results:** The top-ranking candidates are assigned to the Board of Inquiry. In the case where an appointment disqualifies other possible appointments because of fraternal limits, the candidate with the highest vote count is selected, and immediate family members are excluded from the remaining selections.

7.3.4. **Limits and Powers**

7.3.4.1. **Scope and Mandate:** The Board of Inquiry is limited to investigate within the scope defined by the mandate provided by the membership.

7.3.4.2. **Duration:** The Board of Inquiry is formed for a period of six months, at which point it is dissolved. Prior to this expiration the Board may request a vote from the membership to extend their duration in three-month increments, requiring a majority vote for the continuation.

7.3.4.3. **Privacy:** The Board of Inquiry has full access to church records including those deemed private or sensitive. Any legal contract signed by church leadership representing the church cannot be withheld to prevent them from being disclosed to a Board of Inquiry. Such agreements are nullified. Legally protected non-contractual protections must be honored, even to restrict the Board of Inquiry.

7.3.4.4. **Records:** All meetings of a Board of Inquiry are subject to the same rules of open attendance and recording that apply to the Board of Elders.

7.3.5. **Resolution:** When the Board of Inquiry has completed its mandate, the results are to be shared with the membership in a congregational meeting. Their results include their findings, recommendations for further actions, and reasons for those recommendations. While some details of the Board's findings may be subject to privacy concerns, redactions should be as minimal as can be responsibly done. Recommendation come in the following categories:

7.3.5.1. **Prayer and Reconciliation:** A Board of Inquiry may find no evidence of misconduct and determine the best course of action is to request prayer from the congregation while the concerned parties work together for reconciliation.

- 7.3.5.2. **Rebuke of Leadership:** The Board of Inquiry may determine that one or more members of church leadership (elders, pastors, lay staff, lay appointments) have acted inappropriately but not egregiously. In these circumstances the need for rebuke is explained and the individuals involved confronted with their actions and given the opportunity to take responsibility and apologize.
- 7.3.5.3. **Recall:** The Senior Pastor and Board of Elders are appointed by the membership, and those relationships can only be severed by the membership. The Board of Inquiry can initiate the RECALL PROCESS as detailed in ARTICLE 8, to be approved or rejected by the membership.
- 7.3.5.4. **Dismissal:** Other staff and appointments are appointed by the Elders and Senior Pastor, and the Board of Inquiry can recommend that those so empowered to action can terminate an employment or appointment for the best interest of the church.
- 7.3.5.5. **Reversal of Decisions:** The Board of Inquiry may determine that an action taken by church leadership was not in accordance with the By-laws and/or church scriptural applications. In that case, the Board of Inquiry can nullify or reverse that decision.

ARTICLE 8. RECALL PROCEDURES

- 8.1. **Member Appointed Positions:** The Senior Pastor, Board of Elders, and Board of Inquiry, should one exist, are all appointed by the membership, and the termination of any of those appointments is the sole provision of the membership. Other positions are appointed by the Board of Elders, and the termination of those appointments is not covered by this article.
- 8.2. **Involuntary or Compelled Resignation:** No group or individual within the church, including leadership has the right to compel a person holding a membership appointed position to resign. If deemed appropriate, members and leaders may suggest resignation to an appointee; however, should that person disagree no punitive actions or attempts to encourage such a resignation are appropriate, the next permitted step is to attempt to initiate a recall.
- 8.3. **Initiation of a Recall**
 - 8.3.1. **Senior Pastor:** The Senior Pastor has individual authority to initiate a recall.

- 8.3.2. **Board of Elders:** By majority vote the Board of Elders may initiate a recall, the Board of Elders may not initiate a recall against a member of a Board of Inquiry.
- 8.3.3. **Board of Inquiry:** A Board of Inquiry, can as part of its findings initiate a recall.
- 8.3.4. **Membership Petition:** A signed petition by the membership, of no less than 20% of the current membership, will initiate a recall.
- 8.3.5. **Membership Vote:** During a congregational meeting a vote may be called for to initiate a recall. If the lesser of 20% of current membership, or 10% of present members vote to hold a recall, the recall is initiated.

8.4. **Processing a Recall**

- 8.4.1. **Opportunity to Resign:** When a recall is initiated, the person subject to the recall is given the opportunity to resign their position to avoid the recall process.
- 8.4.2. **Suspension:** In general, a subject of a recall is not suspended and operates with full authority during the recall process. A suspension can be initiated two different ways. In the case of a paid position the suspension period does not suspend the pay of the affected party.
 - 8.4.2.1. **Board of Inquiry:** Any recall initiated by a Board of Inquiry results in a suspension of the appointment until recall is resolved.
 - 8.4.2.2. **Elder Vote:** In response to a recall being initiated, regardless of source, the Board of Elders may vote to suspend the subject of the recall. This vote requires a unanimous agreement by the members of the Board. If the subject of the recall is a member of the board, that person is excluded from the vote. If multiple positions are subject to a recall, this vote must be held separately for each position.
- 8.4.3. **Scheduling a Recall Meeting:** Upon the initiation of a recall, a congregational meeting is to be scheduled in 4-6 weeks from the initiation of the recall. The purpose of the meeting is to resolve the recall.

8.5. **Recall Meeting**

- 8.5.1. **Opportunity to Resign:** The first agenda item of the recall meeting, is offering the person subject to the recall the opportunity to resign. If they do so, the agenda is replaced with an opportunity for those present to pray and worship towards healing.
- 8.5.2. **Presentation of Accusation:** When there is no resignation, the accusers are given an opportunity to present their evidence and reasons for the recall. All persons are called to conduct

themselves with love and kindness in the face of conflict in accordance with Christ's teachings.

- 8.5.3. **Presentation of Defense:** The accused may present their defense including evidence and alternate interpretations.
- 8.5.4. **Membership Questions:** Members are then given the opportunity to ask for clarifications and direct questions to both accusers and the accused.
- 8.5.5. **Vote:** A membership vote is held. A recall vote requires either 75% of present members, or 67% of all members for the recall to carry.
- 8.5.6. **Resolution:** If the recall carries, the recalled appointment and or employment is terminated effective immediately. Should it not carry, the appointment is unaffected, and any suspension is lifted effective immediately.

ARTICLE 9. ELDER MEETINGS

- 9.1. **Frequency:** Board of Elders meetings are to be held on a regular basis, such as monthly or quarterly, according to the administrative needs of the church. The schedule of meetings is to be published to the membership.
- 9.2. **Agenda:** The agenda is to be agreed upon prior to the meeting and shared with the membership no less than one week prior to the meeting.
- 9.3. **Records:** All Board of Elders meetings are to be recorded both in text, and directly at least including full audio, preferably including video, for church records. Membership shall be able request and receive copies of such records.
- 9.4. **Open Observation:** The Board of Elders must make reasonable efforts to facilitate the attendance, for observation, of any and all interested members including in person and virtually.
- 9.5. **Topics Restricted by Privacy:** Some agenda items, such as review of staff performance, have privacy concerns and require discretion and limited publication. These topics are to be noted as such in the meeting agenda, and as much as possible grouped together within a meeting. For the duration of discussion on such topics, membership is excluded from attending both in person and virtually. These segments shall also be recorded, but those recordings are only available to be requested by current board members, at the time of the request, the Senior Pastor, or a Board of Inquiry. At the conclusion of the discussion of private topics, the public meeting is to be resumed, and a summary of the discussion provided in the public record as much as privacy concerns allow.
- 9.6. **Discussion Outside of Meetings:** Board members are required to, during the meeting, disclose any substantive discussions they have had about each topic of the meeting, particularly with other members, that have occurred outside of recorded meetings. This is to ensure that any substantive communication of current topics is officially recorded.

ARTICLE 10. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- 10.1. **Annual Meetings:** The church's fiscal year ends on December 31. The Annual Congregational Meeting must be held by the end of January. The Board of Elders will set the time and place, announcing it at least three Sundays prior. The agenda includes presenting reports, recognizing Board Elders, confirming the budget, handling other business, and signing the Doctrinal Statement and By-laws.
- 10.2. **Special Business Meetings:** Special meetings can be called by a majority vote of the Board of Elders. Documented notice must be given at least two weeks in advance, with an oral reminder on two consecutive Sundays. The meeting's purpose must be clearly stated.
- 10.3. **Member Requested Meeting:** Members may individually or as a group request the Board of Elders initiate a congregational meeting. The Board of Elders should consider all such requests sincerely.
- 10.4. **Member Mandated Meeting:** A petition presented to the Board of Elders from the membership signed by at least 20% of the current membership is considered binding, and the Board must initiate the scheduling of the requested meeting immediately. That agenda and running of the meeting is to be shared by a member of the Board of Elders and a representative chosen by the petitioners.
- 10.5. **Quorum:** A quorum for a vote at a congregational meeting requires one-third of eligible voting members. Presence includes remote or virtual attendance. Only members who are at least 18 years or older may vote.
- 10.6. **Procedures:** The Chair of the Board of Elders presides over congregational meetings. If absent, a substitute appointed by the Board of Elders will preside.
- 10.7. **Virtual Attendance:** Congregational meetings are to be held in a fashion that facilitates virtual attendance. Virtual Attendees have the same rights to speak, vote, etc., as in-person attendees.

ARTICLE 11. DISCIPLINE AND CONFLICT

Members and regular attendees who deviate from doctrine or conduct contrary to Scripture, as upheld by the Board of Elders, are subject to discipline, including dismissal (Matthew 18:15-18), and in certain circumstances, restricted access to church premises if deemed a safety concern. Church discipline aims to: (1) glorify God by maintaining church purity (1 Corinthians 5:6); (2) edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20); (3) promote spiritual growth by guiding believers back to biblical standards (Galatians 6:1)

- 3.1. **Between Members:** Members concerned of such issues must first address them privately, then with witnesses, and finally bring them to the Board of Elders if unresolved. The Board of Elders will investigate and notify the

accused party if dismissal is warranted. If the dismissed individual shows repentance and requests reinstatement, they may be restored to full fellowship and membership.

- 3.2. **Between Members and the Board of Elders:** Members or Board Elder concerned of such issues must first address them privately, then with witnesses, and finally bring them to the Senior Pastor, if unresolved. The Senior Pastor will investigate and notify the accused party if dismissal is recommended. If the Board Elder disagrees with the recommendation, conflict will be handled through the processes outlined in ARTICLES 7 & 8.
- 3.3. **Between Members and the Senior Pastor:** Member(s) or the Senior Pastor concerned of such issues must first address them privately, then with witnesses, and finally bring them to the Board of Elders, if unresolved. The Board of Elders will investigate and notify the accused party if dismissal is recommended. If the member(s) or the Senior Pastor disagrees with the recommendation, conflict will be handled through the processes outlined in ARTICLES 7 & 8.

ARTICLE 12. FINANCES

The church relies on God's provision for its physical and spiritual needs. Each believer is encouraged to contribute through prayer and voluntary offerings (Philippians 4:19; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:7).

- 3.1. **Reporting:** Church officers will provide monthly financial reports to the congregation and a comprehensive annual report at the Annual Congregational Meeting. They will also present a proposed budget for the upcoming year for member approval at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE 13. ORDINANCES

- 3.1. **Baptism:** Believer's baptism as taught in the Scriptures shall be administered upon the approval of the candidates for baptism by the Board of Elders.
- 3.2. **The Lord's Supper:** The Lord's Supper shall be an intricate part of worship and shall be open for the participation of all born-again believers. It shall be administered at any time designated by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE 14. UNANTICIPATED CIRCUMSTANCES

In rare cases the church may find itself in a situation that is it is impossible to execute the By-laws as written, and there is no available provision for amending the By-laws. In these circumstances a special meeting is to be held, and the congregation should find and agree on a one-time work around, to be approved by the lesser of three-quarters of present members or two-thirds of all members.