

**CONSTITUTION
OF
OCEAN CITY WORSHIP CENTER, INC.**

Revised April 2018

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place of worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and around the world; we, whose names appear upon the assembly roster under the above date, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with and a part of The General Council of the Assemblies of God; and declare that we hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this church shall be:

OCEAN CITY WORSHIP CENTER , INC.
Of the County of Worcester
State of Maryland

ARTICLE II. RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

Section 1. Right of Self-Governance. This Assemblies of God church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, to *“make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace, ...until we all reach unity in the faith in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”* (Ephesians 4:3, 13).

Section 2. Right to acquire property. In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest, or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any land, buildings or property as may be necessary to the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its constitution or as the same may be hereafter amended.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION AND RELATIONSHIP

This assembly declares itself to be voluntarily in full cooperative fellowship with all other churches affiliated with the Potomac District Council, and The General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shares in the privileges and assumes the responsibilities enjoined by this affiliation.

As a member of the General Council, this assembly agrees to:

- A. Cooperate by every possible means in extension of God's work and kingdom throughout the world.
- B. Support the missionary program agreed upon by the District and General Councils.
- C. Participate in District and General Council sessions via duly chosen delegates.
- D. Invite the counsel of the district officary in the event of church difficulty and when changing the lead pastor.
- E. Share in support of the District and General Council. (See General Council Bylaws, Article XVIII, Section 1. c. (2), and Section 2. C.)
- F. Recognize that the District Council or The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall have the right and authority to:
 - 1. Approve scriptural doctrine and conduct.
 - 2. Disapprove unscriptural doctrine and conduct, as stated in Article III, paragraph f., of the General Council constitution.
 - 3. Withdraw its certificate of membership if deemed necessary.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

This assembly accepts the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts as its tenets of faith the Statement of Fundamental Truths of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, to wit:

A. The Scriptures Inspired. The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

B. The One True God. The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 11; Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22).

C. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

1. His virgin birth (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).
2. His sinless life (Heb. 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
3. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
4. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
5. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:6, Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 15:4).
6. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1-3).

D. The Fall of Man. Man was created good and upright; for God said, "*Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.*" However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19).

E. The Salvation of Man. Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

1. **Conditions of Salvation:** Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the great anticipation of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

2. The **Evidences of Salvation.** The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).

F. **The Ordinances of the Church.**

1. **Baptism by Water.** The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Rom. 6:4).

2. **Holy Communion.** The Lord's supper, consisting of the elements – bread and the fruit of the vine – is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord, Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Cor. 11:26); is enjoined on all believers “*until He comes!*”

G. **The Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to the command of our Lord, Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Heb. 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

H. **The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other

tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:4-10, 28), but is different in purpose and use.

I. Sanctification.

1. Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Rom. 12:1-2; I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of holiness -- "*without holiness no one will see the Lord*" (Heb. 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are able to obey the command: "*Be holy, because I am holy*" (I Peter 1:15, 16).

2. Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his or her identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1-11, 13; 8:1-2, 13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12, 13; I Peter 1:5).

J. The Church and Its Mission.

1. The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven (Eph. 1:22-23; 2:22; Heb. 12:23).

2. Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16).

b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Cor. 12:13).

c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Eph. 4:11-16; I Cor. 12:28; I Cor. 14:12).

3. The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4: 29-31; Heb. 2:3-4).

b. Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God (I Cor. 2:10-16; I Cor. 12, 13, and 14).

c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the Body of Christ (Gal. 5:22-26; I Cor. 14:12; Eph. 4:11-12; I Cor. 12:28; Col. 1:29).

K. The Ministry. A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in:

1. Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20).

2. Worship of God (John 4:23-24).

3. Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Eph. 4:11-16).

L. Divine Healing. Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 8:16-17; James 5:14-16).

M. The Blessed Hope. The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (I Thess. 4:16-17; Rom. 8:23; Titus 2:13; I Cor. 15:51-52).

N. The Millennial Reign of Christ. The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zech. 14:5; Matt. 24:27, 30; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezek.

37:21-22; Zeph. 3:19-20; Rom. 11:26-27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isa. 11:6-9; Psa. 72:3-8; Micah 4:3-4).

O. The Final Judgment. There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire, which is the second death (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

P. The New Heavens and the New Earth. “In keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.” (2 Peter 3:13).

ARTICLE V. WORSHIP CENTER PARTNERS

Section 1. Partners. Partnership is the vehicle The Worship Center uses for individuals to express publicly their personal commitment to the congregation as a whole and to its individual congregants. They should insure the health and viability of the ministry of the church through personal prayer, service, and support. Partners are also called upon by the church leadership for council in making major decisions affecting the entire congregation, as well as selecting individuals to serve in various leadership capacities.

Section 2. Voting Responsibilities of Partners. Partners shall have the right and responsibility to vote at an Annual or Special Partnership Meeting on the following issues by majority vote of partners present.

- A. Ratification of lead pastor and elders by 75% majority vote of partners present as outlined in Article VII.
- B. Sale or purchase of land or buildings.
- C. Obtaining a loan of more than 10% of the approved annual budget.
- D. Approve the minutes for annual and special partnership minutes.
- E. Acceptance of financial reports at an annual or special partnership meeting.

Section 3. Partner’s Eligibility. All those who meet the scriptural standards for partnership as defined below shall constitute the legal voting partners of the assembly

provided their partnership has not been declared inactive or suspended according to Section 7, Inactive Partners.

1. Must be a regular attendee of The Worship Center for at least three-months.
2. Give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and show evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (the new birth) (John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:18-25).
3. Show evidence of a growing consistent Christian life through personal devotion, regularly attending weekly service, participating in a discipleship group (midweek and/or Community Group) and by serving in a ministry of the church (Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13, 14; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1, 2, 15; 1 John 1:6-7).
4. Voluntarily subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in the constitutional rules of order adopted by the assembly.
5. Agree to be governed by its constitution as herein set forth.
6. Agree to regularly attend a weekly service.
7. Willingly give back to God through regular giving, tithing, and offerings to the support of the ministries of this assembly (Lev. 27:30, 2Chron. 31:5, Mal. 3:8-12, 2 Co 8:7-9, 2 Co 9:6-11, Luke 6:38).
8. Have received, or have a willingness to receive, the ordinance of water baptism according to Article V, Section 1.
9. Complete all requirements of the Partnership Process.
10. Agree to faithfully attend annual and special business meetings.
11. Be 18 years of age or older.

Section 4. Reception of Partners. Persons desiring to become voting partners of the assembly shall complete all requirements of the partnership process during which they shall make application for partnership and be examined according to Section 3, Partner's Eligibility. The names of those who apply for partnership shall be presented to the lead

pastor and the Advisory Council who shall act upon said recommendation and render a final decision. All persons who shall have met the partnership eligibility requirements and have been approved shall be received into the assembly publicly during a Sunday service and their names inscribed on the roster.

Section 5. Distant Partners. Partners serving in the armed forces, attending college, or having seasonal residency may continue as partners while away providing they uphold a consistent Christian life, remain sound in doctrine, do not join a different church, and continues a cooperative attitude toward The Worship Center.

Section 6. Annual Revision of Partnership Roll. The Lead Pastor and Advisory Council shall be authorized to revise the partnership roll of the assembly annually, such as to remove from the list of voting partners all names of those who may have become deceased during the year, together with the names of those who may have withdrawn from the fellowship, or who may have come under discipline according to Section 7, Inactive Partners. The following scriptural rules and instructions shall be observed as the occasion requires: Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Thess. 3:6-16.

Section 7. Inactive Partners.

Partners will be moved to an Inactive Status and shall lose their voting privileges if they

- without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of two consecutive months or more,
- are out of harmony with the teachings or leadership of the assembly,
- are under charges of misconduct or sinful practices,
- cease to give regularly,
- or do not fulfill other required partners criteria as defined in Current Policies / Partnership Process. Ref: Article VI.2.9. of the Constitution.

Inactive Partners may request for their voting privileges to be restored by a meeting with the Lead Pastor and/or Advisory Council (Matt. 18:15-18; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:11; Gal. 1:8-9; Titus 3:1-15).

Section 8. Voluntary Separation or Transfer of Partners. Partners in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with the assembly, or who may desire to be transferred to some other congregation, may apply to the church administrator for a letter of transfer, which shall be granted on the approval of the lead pastor and Advisory Council, said letter to be signed by the lead pastor.

ARTICLE VI. CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Section 1. Leadership Positions.

The Advisory Team consisting of the lead pastor, elders, and associate pastors shall constitute the Spiritual Leadership of The Worship Center as defined by the Current Policies of the church. The members of the Elders Council shall serve as the legal trustees of the legal corporation of Ocean City Worship Center, Inc. Other leaders and leadership bodies (councils, departments, ministries, discipleship electives, and committees) shall be established by the Lead Pastor and the Advisory Council as deemed necessary.

Section 2. Leadership roles, qualification, responsibilities and groups are defined in the Current Policies of the church. The Current Policies of the church are determined and revised by 2/3 majority of the Advisory Council of Ocean City Worship Center.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Section 1. Public Worship. Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the lead pastor.

Section 2. Annual and Special Partnership Meetings of the Assembly.

A. Purpose, Timing and Announcement of Annual Business Meetings. There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the annual reports shall be presented along with the ratification of elders. This meeting shall be held in the first quarter of each year. The time and place shall be announced by the lead pastor. Due notice shall be given on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting.

B. Order of Business for Annual Partnership Meeting. The order of business for the annual partnership meeting will include: reading of previous minutes, report of the treasurer, unfinished business, ratification of elders as appropriate, new business, and adjournment.

C. Purpose and Announcement of Special Partnership Meetings of the Assembly.

1. Special Meetings Called by the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council. Special partnership meetings of the assembly may be called when necessary, after proper notice has been given by the lead pastor provided the meeting has been agreed upon by the majority of the Advisory Council.

2. **Special Meetings Called by Petition.** Special meetings may also be called by petition having been signed by not less than one-third of the active partnership of the assembly, the petition to be placed in the hands of the lead pastor or an elder. Timing of the meeting will occur within 30 days at the discretion of the Elder Council and with an announcement made on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of meeting. If deemed necessary, the elders may request a mediator of their own choosing to preside over such meeting.

D. ***Quorum Requirements for Annual and Special Partnership Meetings of the Assembly.*** No record of any special or regular business meeting of the assembly shall be made unless one-third or more voting partners shall be present to constitute a quorum.

E. ***Rules of Order for All Church Business or Committee Meetings.*** In the conducting of its affairs, the church shall be governed by modified parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of Roberts' Rules of Order Newly Revised, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

ARTICLE VIII. FINANCES

Tithes, offerings, and donations shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the lead pastor and the Financial Committee, and shall be administered by the Church Treasurer and Controller (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; I Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-8). All designated offerings to the assembly are to be used as designated or they are to be returned to the contributor.

ARTICLE IX. EMPLOYEES

Section 1. Qualifications of employees. All salaried/full-time employees of the church shall be voting partner of the church, or agree to be hired with continuing employment contingent upon becoming a voting partner within six months. They must display themselves as being in concert with the tenets of faith along with the leadership and the values of the church. They are to be consistent in their Christian life, weekly service attendance, prayer, discipleship, tithe/offerings and ministry service. Hourly/contract employees need not be partners, but should be, if designated representative.

Section 2. Terms of employment. All employees serve at the discretion of the lead pastor. If the lead pastor resigns, all of the paid staff, to include associate pastors, will tender their resignations to the Elder Council. It will then become the prerogative of the

Elder Council to either accept or decline this resignation for the interim period. Once a Lead Pastor is hired it will become his prerogative to select his staff.

ARTICLE X. PROPERTY

Section 1. Purchase, Deeding, or Leasing of Church Property.

A. All property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name. All property shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the corporate name of the assembly.

B. No land or buildings of the assembly shall be sold, leased, or mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without the same having first been authorized at a regular or special meeting of the assembly that has been called for the consideration of the proposal. The lead pastor and the Elders shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by the vote of the partnership of the assembly. Such certificates shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

Section 2. Retention of Property by Partners Continuing in the Tenets. In the event defection shall occur from the Tenets of Faith (Article IV) in the Constitution of Ocean City Worship Center, any portion of the partnership subscribing to and practicing the aforesaid Tenets of Faith and Ordinances and retaining partnership with Ocean City Worship Center, Inc. shall retain possession of, and title to, all properties of said church with full rights thereto as provided in its constitution.

Section 3. Transfer of Property Upon Dissolution.

In the event Ocean City Worship Center, Inc. ceases to function as a church for the purposes declared in the Articles of this Constitution, the Elders shall within one year, after providing for the payment of its debts, revert and transfer all properties and any remaining assets to an organization or organizations in Worcester County, Maryland having purpose nearest the mission of Ocean City Worship Center and which are organized and operated exclusively for Christian religious purposes, and which have established tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to this constitution should be developed and presented by the lead pastor and Advisory Council. This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the partnership of the assembly in attendance at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting. It shall be

understood that this does not apply to Article IV Tenets of Faith, which stands regardless of majority. Amendments of the Current Policies of the church are determined and revised by 2/3 majority of the Advisory Council of Ocean City Worship Center. Regular church Partners are to be informed within sixty days of any addition to, deletion from or modification of the Current Policies.

CURRENT POLICIES OF OCEAN CITY WORSHIP CENTER

Revised April 2017

ARTICLE I: Church Leadership and Ministry Selection, Responsibilities and Structure

Pastoral Staff

Section 1. Lead pastor. The Lead Pastor is a full-time, paid partner of the assembly having received credentials from the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This individual is chief elder of the church whose primary task is to act as the shepherd of the church in feeding and caring for the assembly through preaching, teaching, prayer, and guidance. This individual will also give leadership to the church by acting as the chairman or head of the Advisory Team, the pastoral staff, the Elder Council, and the Finance Committee.

A. *Qualifications of the Lead Pastor.* The lead pastor shall meet the scriptural qualifications for his calling outlined in I Tim 3:1-7 and Tit 1:7-9 and shall be an ordained pastor in good standing with the Potomac District of the Assemblies of God and the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

B. *Selection of the Lead Pastor.* In the event a vacancy occurs in the lead pastor position, the Elder Council will act as a pulpit committee for the congregation. The Elder Council after prayer, fasting, and majority consensus will present all candidates for lead pastor to the assembly for consideration. Election by the assembly shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special meeting called for that purpose. A 75% majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election.

C. *Term of Office of the Lead Pastor.* The Lead Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period of time.

D. *Responsibilities of the Lead Pastor.* In addition to the duties defined in Article I, Section 1 of the Current Policies, General Definition of Roles, the Lead Pastor's responsibilities are further defined as follows. The lead pastor shall be considered as the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct all of its activities. As undershepherd, the pastor is given by God the responsibility for seeking Him regarding: 1) decisions, philosophy, direction, and vision, 2) the spiritual health of

the ministry, and 3) the shepherding, counseling, and scriptural instruction of the entire flock; he is further accountable to the Potomac District of the Assemblies of God and the Elder Council. He shall be the president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the Advisory Council, Deacons, and Finance Committee. The lead pastor shall be an ex officio chairman or head of all councils, committees, departments or ministries. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions, or revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without his approval.

E. ***Involuntary Removal of the Lead Pastor.*** In the event the lead pastor has serious charges preferred against him, or his ministry has ceased to be effective, and no provision has been made for the termination of his ministry, responsibility is vested in the Elder Council, who, acting in accordance with Matthew 18, and through prayer, fasting and a two-thirds majority vote, to ask for the resignation of the lead pastor at a meeting of the Elder Council. Any incumbent under charges shall have an opportunity for a further, later hearing before the Elder Council if the incumbent so requests. The lead pastor will have the right to inform the associate pastors of the requested resignation; however, if, after two weeks, this right is not exercised, the Elder Council will inform the associate pastors. If such resignation is refused, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until the action of the Elder Council has been sustained by at least 75% vote of the partnership of the assembly present at a meeting called for the purpose. Such meeting may be presided over by a mediator of the Elders choosing. When a vacancy in the pastorate shall occur, the Elder Council shall assume the spiritual authority of the church, and an interim pastor shall be arranged for by the Elder Council, until a lead pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Section B, Selection of the Lead Pastor. In the case of a lead pastor's removal from office, a report of such action shall be made to the Potomac District of the Assemblies of God.

F. ***Resignation of a Lead Pastor.*** If, after prayer and fasting, the lead pastor feels called by God to step down from the position, the lead pastor should present said resignation in writing to the Elder Council.

Section 2. Staff Pastors. – A staff pastor is a paid partner of the assembly having received credentials from The Lead Pastor is a full-time, paid partner of the assembly having received credentials from a credentialing organization approved by the elders of The Worship Center.

A. ***Qualifications of Staff Pastors.*** Staff pastors will meet the same scriptural qualifications as the senior pastor as outlined in Section 2, except that an associate pastor may have received credentials from the General Council of the Assemblies of God or other recognized Spirit-filled body of believers.

B. ***Selection of Staff Pastors.*** When deemed appropriate, the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council shall prayerfully consider the need for the selection of an associate pastor. The Advisory Council will consult with the Finance Committee who shall prayerfully consider the financial feasibility of establishing the position. After an appropriate selection process, associate pastors shall be hired by the lead pastor.

C. ***Term of Office of Staff Pastors.*** The term of associate pastors is at the discretion of the lead pastor. Newly hired associate pastors will serve a probationary time period of six months and upon satisfactory completion of this time and review by the lead pastor and Elder Council, will be given full status. If the lead pastor resigns, the associate pastors must also tender their resignations to the Elder Council. It will then become the prerogative of the Elder Council to either accept or decline this resignation for the interim period. Once a Lead Pastor is hired it will become his prerogative to select his staff.

D. ***Involuntary Removal of a Staff Pastor.*** In the event serious charges are preferred against an associate pastor, or the associate's ministry has ceased to be effective, responsibility is vested in the senior pastor, after first consulting with the Elder Council and acting in accordance with Matthew 18 and finding no resolution, to ask for the resignation of the associate pastor. Any incumbent under charges shall have an opportunity for a hearing before the Elder Council if the incumbent so requests. When a vacancy in the associate pastorate shall occur, the lead pastor shall make provisions as prescribed in Section B, Selection of Staff Pastors.

E. ***Resignation of a Staff Pastor.*** If, after prayer and fasting, an associate pastor feels called by God to step down from the position, the staff pastor should present said resignation in writing to the lead pastor and Advisory Council.

F. ***Responsibilities of Staff Pastors.*** Staff pastors act as elders of the church in assisting with the care and feeding of the assembly through preaching, teaching, prayer, and overseeing ministries pertaining to the discipleship of the people. Staff pastors sit as members on the Advisory Council giving insight and wisdom into the current state and future direction of the assembly.

Section 3. Elders - Elders hold non-paid, appointed and ratified positions in the church. An Elder's primary responsibility is to assist the Lead Pastor and Pastoral Staff by providing Biblical leadership. Elders are responsible to care for partners of the congregation by providing Godly counsel, visitation, and praying for those in need. Therefore, they will serve regularly in altar ministry when called upon and when it is deemed necessary. Elders will assist the pastoral staff and finance team in areas of accountability, policy, strategic/vision planning, conflict resolution, approval of annual budget and staff compensation. They will also act as the legal signatories for all church property and shall certify, along with the lead pastor, on any conveyance, lease or mortgage, sale of land or buildings as first authorized at a regular or special meeting of the assembly. Elders will act as the custodian of all legal documents and the corporate seal and sit as members of the Advisory Council and Elder Council.

A. ***Qualifications of Elders.*** Elders shall be Partners who have fulfilled the following:

1. Voting partner of the assembly for at least three years. Special exception may be made for former/retired pastors, deacons, or elder from a previous church with the unanimous approval of the Advisory Council.
2. Elders must be gentle, self-controlled, hospitable, and even-tempered. They must show evidence of wisdom and maturity in life (Acts 6:3) and must be self-controlled and mature (1 Tim. 3:2, cf. 3:8) in the areas of: Alcohol (1 Tim. 3:8), Money (1 Tim. 3:8), Temper (1 Tim. 3:11), and Tongue (1 Tim. 3:8; 3:11).
3. Elders must: be mature in Christ, with a firm grasp on the gospel and a deep conviction about his faith (1 Tim. 3:9), be in constant reception of the in-filling of the Spirit for the empowerment of their life in Christ (Acts 6:3), and be able to answer for the faith when called upon to do so. (1 Tim. 3:9).
4. Elders must be the husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2)
5. Elders must not be lovers of money but rather must be lovers of what is good. (1Tim. 3:3, Titus 1:8)
6. Elders must not be recent converts and must be able to impart spiritual wisdom to others.

7. Elders should voluntarily subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in the constitutional rules of order adopted by the assembly, with particular emphasis that each Elder should expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to the command of our Lord, Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 3:6, 3:2, 5:17, Titus 1:9, Acts 1:4, 8; Luke 24:49)

8. Elders must be disciplined, upright, and holy (Titus 1:8). They must be faithful to his wife (1 Tim. 3:12; cf. 3:4), and must be able to discipline children well and instruct them in the faith (1 Tim. 3:12; cf. 3:4).

9. Elders must be respected within the church (1 Tim. 3:8) and must be respected even by non-Christians (1 Tim. 3:7; cf. 3:8).

B. *Selection of Elders.* Elders will be presented for ratification by the lead pastor and majority consensus of the Advisory Council after a time of prayer and fasting. Individuals who have been a voting Partners for less than three years must receive unanimous approval of the Advisory Team. All Elders must then be ratified by a 75% majority vote at the annual partnership meeting.

C. *Term of Office of Elders.* Elders will serve renewable one-year terms.

D. *Annual Reviews.* Each year, the Lead Pastor will review Elders concerning spiritual qualifications, unity, and ministry effectiveness. At this time, it will be the Lead Pastor's prerogative to ask for the continuation or termination of the Elder's position.

E. *Involuntary Removal of an Elder.* In the event an elder has serious charges preferred against him, or he is in disagreement with the Advisory Council to the point the unity of the body is in jeopardy, or his ministry has ceased to be effective, and no provision has been made for the termination of his ministry, responsibility is vested in the Advisory Council, who after first acting in accordance with Matthew 18 and finding no resolution, and after prayer, fasting and a two-thirds vote, to ask for the resignation of the elder at a meeting of the Advisory Council. Any incumbent under charges shall have an opportunity for a further, later hearing before the Advisory Council if the incumbent so requests. If such resignation is refused, as the final step of Mathew 18, the congregation will be informed of the charges against the elder.

F. Resignation of an Elder. If, after prayer and fasting, an elder feels called by God to step down from the position, the elder should present said resignation in writing to the lead pastor and Advisory Council.

Section 4. Elder Council. The Elder Council is a leadership body comprised of the lead pastor and the elders. The purpose of this group is to give wisdom and provide accountability for the senior pastor on matters not pertaining to the Advisory Team. These matters may include such areas as the lead pastor's personal life, issues or conflicts within the pastoral staff, or the release or hiring of any pastoral staff. The Elder Council shall meet as needed. A majority present at any meeting of the Elder Council shall constitute a quorum, provided all elders have been notified to be present.

Section 5. Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is a leadership body comprised of the lead pastor, pastoral staff, and elders, with the lead pastor acting as chairman of the council. The purpose of this group is to offer spiritual insight and guidance in matters pertaining to the spiritual health of the church, the future direction of the assembly, and the effectiveness of day-to-day operations and ministries. They collectively ensure every ministry is represented at the decision-making level and act as authoritative representatives of the lead pastor at their respective levels. Each member of the Advisory Council should operate in this God-appointed office with mutual respect (to the Lord, the position, and others on the council) and with Biblical humility. Therefore, all decisions of the Advisory Council should be resolved in complete harmony as unanimous and unified. Administrative affairs of the church shall be carried out by the lead pastor and Advisory Council, except in matters affecting the entire body. In such cases, they shall present their recommendations to the church for ratification.

A. Specified responsibilities of the Advisory Council. In addition to the broad, general responsibilities defined above, the specified responsibilities of the lead pastor and Advisory Council include the following as identified elsewhere in this constitution. As deemed appropriate, the Lead pastor and Advisory Council may delegate specific administrative functions to the secretary of the assembly, Church Treasurer, Financial Controller, or Finance Committee.

1. Regarding Partnership. The lead pastor and Advisory Council will approve requests for partnership, restore voting rights of formerly inactive partners, restore suspended partners, approve requests for transfer letters, annually revise the partnership roster, and notify former partners if their name is removed from the partnership role.

2. **Regarding Selection of Church Leadership.** The Lead pastor and Advisory Council will identify needed Leadership positions, approve lists of candidates, declare offices vacant, appoint leaders for unfilled terms, unanimously ratify elders, deacons, and members of the finance team.

3. **Regarding Operations of the Assembly.** The lead pastor and the Advisory Council will administer church discipline, agree to special business meetings, establish councils, departments, committees, and ministries, provide oversight to councils, departments, committees and ministries, and provide oversight and direction to the Church Treasurer, Financial Controller, and Finance Committee.

B. *Meetings of the Advisory Council.*

1. **Frequency and Announcement.** The Advisory Council, with the lead pastor, shall meet regularly for the spiritual and practical oversight of the assembly -- time and place to be announced by the lead pastor.

2. **Quorum Requirements for Meetings of the Advisory Council.** A majority present at any meeting of the Advisory Council shall constitute a quorum, provided all the members have been notified to be present.

3. **Temporary Chairmanship of the Advisory Council.** In the event the assembly is temporarily without a lead pastor, or the lead pastor is unable to be present, the Advisory Council shall be presided over by an elder elected by the Elder Council in order to transact business for the assembly.

Section 6. Church Treasurer. The Church Treasure is an Associate Pastor or Elder appointed by the lead pastor and approved by the Advisory Council. The Church Treasure's primary responsibility is to maintain the financial integrity and transparency of the church resources. He serves as the financial office of the congregation and acts with the Elder's Council as custodian signer for all financial documents. In conjunction with the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council, he will provide financial oversight and assistance to the Financial Controller, Finance Team and the assembly.

The Church Treasure shall:

A. Assure that all funds received are appropriately recorded and disbursed.

- B. Assist the Lead Pastor, Financial Controller, and Finance Team in presenting an annual budget for the Advisory Council's approval.
- C. Make recommendations to the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council concerning annual salary compensation.
- D. Report the financial health of the church at the Annual Business Meeting.
- E. Assist in the drafting of necessary financial policies, accountability, and safe guards for the congregation.
- F. Make recommendations to the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council annually for additional members of the Finance Team.
- G. In conjunction with the Lead Pastor, provide oversight and assistant to the Financial Controller to assure that:
 - 1. All funds are deposited in a responsible bank in the name of the assembly and for the disbursing of the same by check, as authorized by the Lead Pastor, Advisory Team, and the Finance Team.
 - 2. Itemized account is kept of all receipts and disbursements.
 - 3. Bank statements and church ledgers are reconcile monthly.
 - 4. Weekly offering and attendance reports are submitted to Lead Pastor, Advisory Team, and Finance Team.
 - 5. Monthly budget reports are submitted to the department/ministry head.
 - 6. A summarized report is prepared for Church Treasure at the annual business meeting.
 - 7. Offerings are verified by two persons and a receipt signed and that sound procedures for accounting and tabulating offerings are employed.
 - 8. All church accounts receive a regular Management Compliance Review by an independent party.

Section 7. Ministry Team Leaders – Ministry Team Leaders primary focus is to provide hands-on leadership by overseeing assigned ministry portfolio/department (Eph 6). These Ministry Team Leaders shall support and enhance the heart, vision, and mission of the assembly. They should contribute to the harmony and development of the entire assembly under the general supervision of the Lead Pastor and the Advisory Council.

A. Qualifications of Ministry Team Leader. Ministry Team Leaders shall be a voting partner of the congregation for a least one year who displays a mature Christian experience and are in concert with the tenets of faith, values, and direction Ocean City Worship Center.

B. Selection of a Ministry Team Leader. Ministry Team Leaders will be selected by the Lead Pastor and Advisory Team based upon the evidence of spiritual qualifications and their ability to fulfill their designated position as identified.

C. Term of Office for Ministry Leaders. Each Ministry Team Leaders will be reviewed annually concerning spiritual qualifications, unity, and ministry effectiveness by the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council. It will be the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council prerogative to ask for the continuation or termination of the Ministry Leader and/or Ministry.

D. Responsibilities and duties of the Ministry Team Leaders.

a. Ministry Team Leaders are to model godly maturity and wisdom in character, speech, and actions. They are to maintain consistence in their Christian life, weekly service attendance, prayer, discipleship, tithes/offerings and ministry service.

b. Give continual and effective leadership to the ministry portfolio assigned.

c. Be in regular prayer for the assembly and its leadership.

d. Be accountable for maintaining the parameters of their ministry budget.

e. Attend all Ministry Team Leadership meetings, annual business meetings, and any special meetings.

f. Take responsibility as a key holder of the church and abide by all regulations associated with that responsibility.

Section 8. Finance Team. The Finance Team is the financial arm of the leadership of the church. The Finance Team consists of but not limited to six individuals: Lead Pastor, the Church Treasure, the Financial Controller, and at least three additional members of the assembly. The primary responsibility of this council is to oversee the financial aspects of the ministry and matters pertaining to the building, facilities, operations and staff compensation. This council receives direction and guidance from the Lead Pastor and Advisory Council.

A. *Qualifications of a Finance Team Members.* A candidate for the Financial Committee must have been a voting partner of the assembly for one year. The candidate must display a mature Christian experience, show evidence of wisdom and maturity in finances, and not be a lover of money or be pursuing dishonest gains. They must exhibit loyalty to the leadership and the values of the church.

B. *Selection of a Finance Team Member.* A Finance Committee Member will be selected based upon the evidence of the spiritual qualifications listed above being present in their life. This individual must also be able to fulfill their designated leadership position as identified by the lead pastor and the Advisory Council. Candidates for the Finance Committee Member shall be nominated selected by the Advisory Team.

C. *Term of Office for Finance Committee Members.* Members of the Finance Committee will be selected to a renewable one year term. Members may serve four consecutive terms before a one (1) year inactive period.

C. *Annual Reviews.* Each year, the Lead Pastor along with the Advisory Council will review each member of the Finance Committee Members concerning spiritual qualifications, unity, and ministry effectiveness. At this time, it will be the prerogative of the Lead Pastor and the Advisory Council to ask for the continuation or termination of the Finance Committee Member's position.

E. *Involuntary Removal of Finance Committee Members.* Any Finance Committee Member's office may be declared vacant by the lead pastor and the Advisory Council. Grounds for such action shall be unscriptural conduct, departure from the tenets of faith, incompetence in office, or any good and sufficient cause. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a hearing of his case before the senior pastor and the Advisory Council if so requested. Action by the lead pastor and Advisory Council is considered final.

F. ***Resignation of a Finance Committee Member.*** If, after prayer and fasting, a Finance Committee Member feels called by God to step down from the position, the Finance Committee Member should present said resignation in writing to the lead pastor.

H. ***General Responsibilities, Authority and Functioning of the Financial Review Committee.*** In addition to the duties identified in Article VII, Section 1, B-4, the Financial Review Committee will also accomplish the following:

1. Assist the Lead Pastor and Church Administrator concerning matters of church finances, annual budgeting, and staff compensation.
2. Assures sound principles and accountability of all financial management and program budgeting.
3. Assist the Church Administrator concerning sound policies and procedures for accounting and tabulating offerings, counting and depositing money, etc.

I. ***Meetings of the Finance Team***

1. **Frequency.** The Finance Committee shall receive monthly reports and will meet at least three times annually for the financial oversight of the assembly -- time and place to be announced by the lead pastor.
2. **Quorum Requirements for Meetings of the Finance Committee.** A majority present at any meeting of the Finance Committee shall constitute a quorum, provided all the members have been notified to be present.
3. **Temporary Chairmanship of the Finance Committee.** In the event the assembly is temporarily without a lead pastor, the Finance Committee shall be presided over by the Advisory Council in order to transact business for the assembly.