



# **STRONG TOWER**

## **AT WASHINGTON PARK**

Statement Of Faith

And Bylaws

## **Strong Tower at Washington Park Statement of Faith**

### **The Scriptures**

We accept the Bible, consisting of the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament, as the written Word of God. The Bible is the essential and infallible record of God's self-disclosure to mankind. It leads us to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. Being given by God, the Scriptures are both fully and verbally inspired by God. Therefore, as originally given, the Bible is free of error in all it teaches and describes. Each book is to be interpreted according to its context and purpose and in reverent obedience to the Lord who speaks through it in living power. All believers are exhorted to study the Scriptures and diligently apply them to their lives. The Scriptures are the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice and doctrine. They are totally sufficient and must not be added to, superseded or changed by later tradition, extra-biblical revelation or worldly wisdom. Every doctrinal formulation, whether of creed, confession or theology, must be put to the test of the full counsel of God in Holy Scripture.

### **God Is Triune**

There is only one living and true God: infinite, eternal, almighty and perfect in holiness, truth and love. In the unity of the godhead, there are three Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, co-existent, co-equal, and co-eternal. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit, yet each is truly Deity. One God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — is the foundation of Christian faith and life. He is worthy of all praise, and will not share His glory with any other.

### **God The Father**

God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace. As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. God the Father is the Creator of heaven and earth. By His word and for His glory, He freely and supernaturally created the world out of nothing in six days, resting on the seventh. Through the same word He daily sustains all His creatures. He rules over all and, together with the Son and the Spirit, is the only sovereign Lord. His plans and purposes cannot be thwarted. He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own; He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own. He is faithful to every promise, works all things together for good to those who love Him and in His unfathomable grace gave His Son Jesus Christ for mankind's redemption. In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin, nor does He

abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures. He made all things for the praise of His glory and intends for man, in particular, to live in fellowship with Himself.

## **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the eternal Word made flesh, who dwelt among us, supernaturally conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. In the incarnation, the second Person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes. The purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, to leave us an example to follow that we might walk in His steps, and rule over God's kingdom. He is perfect in nature, teaching and obedience. He is fully God and is fully man. Through Him all things came into being and were created. He was before all things and in Him all things hold together by the word of His power. He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born over all creation and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. He is the only Savior for the sins of the world having shed His blood and died a vicarious death on Calvary's cross. By His death in our place, He revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God. Having redeemed us from sin, the third day He rose bodily from the grave, victorious over death and the powers of darkness and for a period of 40 days appeared to over 500 witnesses performing many convincing proofs of His resurrection. He ascended into heaven where, at God's right hand, He intercedes for His people and rules as Lord over all, awaiting His return. He is the Head of His body, the church, and should be adored, loved, served and obeyed by all.

## **The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit, as God the Third Person of the Trinity, the Lord and Giver of life is a divine Person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including, intellect, emotions, will, eternity, omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, and truthfulness. In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. Through the proclamation of the gospel, He persuades men to repent of their sins and confess Jesus as Lord. By Him, a person is enabled to trust in divine mercy. The Holy Spirit unites believers to Jesus Christ in faith, brings about the new birth and dwells within the regenerate. He has come to glorify the Son who in turn came to glorify the Father. He will lead the church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God's Word. He is to be respected, honored and worshipped. The Holy Spirit empowers believers for Christian witness and service. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation. He desires to continually fill each believer with power, and imparts His supernatural gifts for the edification of the Body and the work of ministry in the world.

## **Humanity**

God created human beings, male and female, in his own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God himself declared to be very good, serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative and biblical pattern of sexual relations for men and women. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her own husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. Tempted by Satan, man rebelled against God. Being estranged from his Maker, yet responsible to Him, he became subject to divine wrath, inwardly depraved and apart from a special work of grace, utterly incapable of returning to God. This depravity is radical and pervasive. It extends to his mind, will and affections. Unregenerate man lives under the dominion of sin and Satan. He is at enmity with God, hostile toward God, and hateful of God. Fallen, sinful people, whatever their character or attainments, are lost and without hope apart from salvation in Christ alone.

## **The Gospel**

Jesus Christ is the gospel. The good news is revealed in His birth, life, death, resurrection ascension, and reign. Christ's crucifixion is the heart of the gospel; His resurrection is the power of the gospel and His ascension is the glory of the gospel. Christ's death is a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice to God for our sins. It satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath. It also demonstrates His mysterious love and reveals His amazing grace. Jesus Christ is the only mediator between God and man. There is no other name by which men must be saved. At the heart of all sound doctrine is the cross of Jesus Christ and the infinite privilege that redeemed sinners have of glorifying God because of what He has accomplished. Therefore, we want all that takes place in our hearts, churches and ministries to proceed from and be related to the gospel.

## Salvation

Salvation is wholly of God, by grace, based on the redemption of Jesus Christ, never human merit or works. God elected individuals from all nations, who would be delivered from bondage to sin and brought to repentance and saving faith, which was determined before the world began. The elect are regenerated by in a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit which enables the repentant sinner to respond in faith to the divine provision of salvation, thus giving true life. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as shown in righteous attitudes and conduct, known in the scriptures as good works. Sinners are justified before God by a free act of God by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins and confess Him as sovereign Lord. It involves the placing of our sins on Christ and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us. By this means, God is enabled to "*be just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus*" (Romans 3:26). Every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God, resulting in his declaration as holy and identification as a saint. The believer can live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, progressively becoming more like the Lord Jesus Christ and displaying the communicable attributes of God. Yet, the new creation in Christ does battle against the flesh. The struggle stays with the believer throughout this earthly life and is never completely ended before Christ's return. All the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. It is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the internal witness of the Holy Spirit and the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality.

## The Church

God by His Word and Spirit creates the Church, calling sinful men out of both Jews and Gentiles into the fellowship of Christ's Body. By the same Word and Spirit, He guides and preserves His church. The church is not a religious institution or denomination. Rather, the Church universal is made up of those who have become genuine followers of Jesus Christ and have personally appropriated the gospel. The Church exists to worship and glorify God with our lives, to make disciples from all nations through evangelism and training, and to edify the saints for the work of the ministry. Upon conversion, newly redeemed men and women are added to a local church in which they devote themselves to teaching, fellowship, the Lord's Supper and prayer. All members of the Church universal are to be a vital and committed part of a local church. In the context of the local church, God's people receive pastoral care and leadership and the opportunity to employ their God-given gifts in His service in relation to one another and to the world.

## **Church Leadership**

The one supreme authority for the church is Christ. Church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and leading the assembly are a group of men called elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor teachers); who must meet biblical qualifications. These leaders lead as servants of Christ and have His authority in leading the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership, unless led into sin or false doctrine. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.

## **Church Ordinances**

Believer's baptism is only intended for the individual who has received the saving benefits of Christ's atoning work and become His disciple. Therefore, in obedience to Christ's command and as a testimony to God, the church, oneself and the world, a believer should be immersed in water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Believer's baptism is a visual and symbolic demonstration of a person's union with Christ in the likeness of His death and resurrection. It signifies that his former way of life has been put to death and vividly depicts a person's release from the mastery of sin. The Lord's Supper is to be observed only by those who have become genuine followers of Christ. This ordinance symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body and the shedding of His blood on our behalf, and is to be observed repeatedly throughout the Christian life as a sign of continued participation in the atoning benefits of Christ's death. As we partake of the Lord's Supper with an attitude of faith and self-examination, we remember and proclaim the death of Christ, receive spiritual nourishment for our souls, and signify our unity with other members of Christ's body.

## **Spiritual Gifts**

At the moment of salvation through faith in Christ the believer is baptized with the Holy Spirit and becomes a functioning member of the body of Christ. As a result of this baptism, the Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts. We believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Bible. These gifts always operate in harmony with the Scriptures and should never be used in violation of biblical parameters. God is sovereign in the bestowing of spiritual gifts. It is, however, the believer's duty and responsibility to desire spiritual gifts, and to minister according to the gift(s) and grace of God that is given to him, so that the Body of Christ will be built up. As a body, we neither recognize any one gift as the sole evidence of the indwelling Holy Spirit, nor as proof of the presence of the Holy Spirit, nor as an indication of deep spiritual experience. However, we also do not

advocate that God has "ceased" to give certain gifts. God continues to work supernaturally among His people. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accordance with His own will, for the sick and afflicted. Love is more important than the most spectacular gifts, and without love all exercise of the spiritual gifts is compromised.

## **The Last Things**

There is a literal heaven and a literal hell. Physical death is a temporary cessation of bodily (mortal) life and a separation of the soul (or spirit) from the body. This separation involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness. The soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the conscious presence of Christ, and the soul of the unredeemed passes immediately into eternal conscious punishment. We believe in the future, imminent, personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness glorified forever in the presence of Him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that Great day of Christ's return the people of God will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness, in all spheres the triune God will reign forever and ever, and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace.

## **Strong Tower at Washington Park Bylaws**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Name**

The name of this church shall be Strong Tower At Washington Park. It is an Alabama nonprofit religious Corporation with the principal offices in Montgomery, AL.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Purpose**

The specific purpose for which the corporation is initially organized is to establish and oversee places of worship, conduct the work of evangelism, created departments necessary to support missionary activities, to license, ordain and oversee ministers of the gospel and to also engage in activities which are necessary, suitable or convenient for the accomplishment of that purpose, or which are incidental thereto or connected therewith which are consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Statement of Faith**

The statement of this Corporation is that which is incorporated in its Articles of Incorporation as filed in the Office of the Secretary of State of the State of Alabama.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **Corporate Membership**

##### **Section 1. Corporate Members**

The Corporation shall have no members. Any action, which would otherwise require approval by a majority of all members, shall only require approval of the Board of Elders. All rights that would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Board of Elders.

##### **Section 2. Members of the Fellowship**

Nothing contained in Section 1 of this Article shall be construed to limit the rights of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the Corporation as "members" even though such persons are not corporate members, and no such reference in or outside of these Bylaws shall constitute anyone being a member, within the meaning of Section 5056 of the California Nonprofit Corporation Law. The Corporation may confer by amendment of its Articles of or these Bylaws some or all of the rights of a member, set forth in the California Nonprofit Corporation Law, upon any person or persons who do

not have the right to vote for the election of officers or on a disposition of substantially all of the assets of the Corporation or on a merger or on a dissolution or on changes of the Corporation's Articles or Bylaws, but no such person shall be a member within the meaning of said Section 5056.

## **ARTICLE V**

### Church Membership

#### **Section 1. Purpose of the Fellowship**

The congregation of the Christian believers who have applied for membership and have been duly accepted shall constitute a spiritual body, united for the spiritual purposes set forth in the Statement of Faith and Articles II of the Bylaws.

#### **Section 2. Active Membership**

Active membership in the church shall be open to all persons who confess Christ as their Lord and Savior and who have been baptized and are actively willing to pursue spiritual growth.

#### **Section 3. Voting Privileges**

Membership in this church shall not vest in any member or proprietary rights in Corporation but shall only entitle the member to vote at meetings of the members on those matters that the Board of Elders chooses to submit to the church membership for affirmation and approval. In such cases voting privileges are restricted to active members who are in good standing, who are not under disciplinary actions, and who have reached their sixteenth (16) birthday. Membership shall not be assignable inter vivos by any member nor shall membership vest to any personal representative, heir or devisee.

#### **Section 4. Applications for membership**

All requests for membership shall be made to a Pastor, an Elder, or a Deacon. Upon making such a request, the person shall be given an application for membership, along with a copy of the Statement of Faith contained within the Articles Of Incorporation and a copy of the Bylaws. A Pastor, Elder or Deacon shall meet with the applicant following receipt of the application. Each applicant shall assent to the Statement of Faith, subscribe to the Bylaws and shall testify publicly before a dually appointed committee of the Board, per Article VI, Section 17 of these Bylaws at a regularly held meeting for prospective members.

#### **Section 5. Denial of Membership**

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective member, the Board of Elders determines that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from this decision.

#### **Section 6. Admission of Applications**

Applicants admitted to membership shall, if possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Pastor-Teacher and Board of Elders, at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their Membership Commitment and be publicly acknowledged as members.

### **Section 7. Responsibilities of Members**

Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefits of all the church body and shall submit to the loving rule of the Elders in keeping with biblical principles of leadership and the promotion of the purpose of the church.

### **Section 8. Discipline of Members**

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him/her to return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine (Galatians 6:1).

Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend with this church who shall err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however; (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring members' heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If said erring member does not heed this warning, then (2) the warning member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his/her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then (3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders (or a dually appointed committee of the Board, per Article VI Section 17 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board). If the Board of Elders (or a dually appointed committee of the Board, per Article VI Section 17 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board) determines - after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scriptures including Matthew 18:15-18, I Timothy 5:19, and Titus 3:10 - that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly schedule worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church and its collective call to repentance, then (4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or the membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and request reinstatement before the Board of Elders (or a dually appointed committee of the Board, per Article VI Section 17 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board), then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the

rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities, of fellowship and/or membership.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly-scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) when on or more of the following have occurred;

- A) Where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church;
- B) Where the first and second stages of church discipline have effectively occurred concurrently;
- C) Where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elders (Romans 16:17); or
- D) Where the disciplined party has been warned once by the Elders, or a duly constituted committee thereof, to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10-11).

The members of this Church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraph, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.

Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders (or a duly constituted committee thereof), the Church Administrator or the Director of Church Security may inform a member, a regular attender, or other individual that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may but need not be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

### **Section 9. Removal from Roll**

Any member of this church who shall willfully, without plausible reason or excuse, absent himself or herself from the services of this church for a period of one (1) year shall be subject to removal from the church roster at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 10. Regular Meetings**

A regular annual meeting of the church members shall be held at the principal office of

the church (as the same shall be from time to time designated in the minutes of the Board) in January of each year. At such regular annual meeting, the members shall consider reports of the affairs of the corporation, and transact such other business as the Elders determine shall be brought before the meeting, including but not limited to affirmation of the appointments made by the Elders of those who shall serve as Elders for the ensuing year and the election of those qualified in the offices Deacons, Deaconesses, Ushers and other church officers.

### **Section 11. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the members may be called at anytime by order of the Pastor-Teacher, the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Board of Elders, or by a quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 12. Notice of Meetings**

The Pastor shall give notice of regular meetings from the pulpit for two successive Sundays prior to the meeting. In addition thereto, notice shall be published in the regular church bulletin for two successive Sundays prior to such meeting. Notice of special meetings shall be given from the pulpit at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and shall also be published in the regular church bulletin on the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.

### **Section 13. Quorum**

At all meetings of the members, whether regular, special or adjourned, the members present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

### **Section 14. Voting Rights**

Only persons, whose names stand on the membership records of the church on the day of any meeting of the church members, shall be entitled to vote at such a meeting on matters submitted to the church membership by the Board of Elders. These matters shall include but are not limited to approval of Lead Pastor, Board of Elders, and financial endeavors exceeding \$5000. Every church member age 16 and over shall be entitled to one vote.

Those admitted to the church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members in the Corporation and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Corporation, or rights to vote on its disposal. All property of Strong Tower Of Washington Park is irrevocably dedicated to religious and charitable purposes and upon the liquidation or disillusion solution of said property will inure to the benefit of a private person, only to a fund, foundation, or corporation of religious or charitable purposes in keeping with the purposes of the church.

### **Section 15. Right of Inspection**

Every member shall have the right at any reasonable time to request inspection of this Corporation with the approval, supervision and assistance of at least two (2) Elders (per Article VI Section 15 of these Bylaws).

## **ARTICLE VI**

### Elders

#### **Section 1. Authority**

Subject to the limitations of the Articles and these Bylaws and pertinent restrictions of the Corporation Code of the State of Alabama, all the activities and affairs of the Corporation shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for shepherding and having oversight of the flock. Without prejudice to such general authority, but subject to these same limitations, it is hereby expressly declared that the Board shall have the following authority in addition to the other responsibilities enumerated by these Bylaws:

A) To nominate and remove all the officers, agents, Pastors, staff and employees of the corporation; prescribe such duties for them consistent with the Scriptures, with law, with the Articles of Incorporation, with Article V Section 14, or with these Bylaws; and fix terms of their offices and their compensation.

B) To make such disbursements from the funds and properties of the corporation as are required to fulfill the purposes of this corporation as are more fully set out in the Articles of Incorporation, thereof and generally to conduct, manage, and control the activities and affairs of the incorporation and to make such rules and regulations consistent with the Scriptures with law, with Articles of Incorporation, with Article V Section 14, or with these Bylaws as they may deem best.

C) To adopt, make and use corporate seal, and to alter the form of such a seal from time to time as they may deem best.

D) To establish policies and practices for the church consistent with the purposes of this corporation.

E) To administer the ordinances of Baptism and Communion.

F) To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purposes of the corporation and to cause to be executed and delivered, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, or evidences of debt and securities in accordance with Article V Section 14.

G) To carry on a business and apply any such profit that results from business activity in which it may legally engage.

#### **Section 2. Number of Elders**

The authorized number of directors of the Corporation shall not be less than (5) until changed by an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation or by an amendment to these Bylaws.

### **Section 3. Nomination, Selection, and Tenure of Office**

Recommendations to fill the office of Elder shall be requested once a year from all members of the Elder Board. The Board of Elders shall review all nominations and determine each nominee's qualifications. The Board shall then approve, disapprove, or add to the list of nominees. The secretary shall publicly post the nominees approved by the Elders in alphabetical order at least three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting of the church members. At this meeting, the slate of nominees shall be presented to the members to affirm the decision of the Elders. If the slate of nominees is affirmed, the newly elected Elders shall assume office immediately. Each elder shall serve for 3 years at which time he will rotate off the Elder Board for one full year. At the completion of one year off, the elder may be pre-nominated and reassigned to the Elder Board. Paid pastors/elders shall serve on the elder board as long as he is on staff with this Corporation.

### **Section 4. Qualifications**

Each member of the Board of Elders must be an active member of this church and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He must be:

- A) Blameless as a steward of God; above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).
- B) Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6).
- C) Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2).
- D) Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- E) Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2).
- F) Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8).
- G) Apt to teach; able to teach; he can exhort believers and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- H) Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- I) Not violent; not quarrelsome (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- J) Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3).
- K) Not a brawler, not contentious, not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).
- L) Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy of base gain (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).

M) Rules his own household well, his children are faithful; not accused of rebellion to God (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:7).

N) Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6).

O) Has a good reputation or report with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7).

P) Not self-willed (Titus 1:7).

Q) A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8).

R) Just, fair (Titus 1:8).

S) Holy, devout (Titus 1:8).

T) Self-controlled (Titus 1:8).

### **Section 5. Vacancies**

Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman of the Board or the Secretary of the Board, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation. If the resignation is to take effect at some future time, a successor may be selected before that time.

A vacancy or vacancies in the Board shall be deemed to exist in case of the death, resignation, or removal of any Elder, or if a need exists and the specified limit is not exceeded.

No reduction of the authorized number of Elders shall have the effect of removing any Elder prior to the expiration of the Elder's term of office.

### **Section 6. Removal of Elders**

Any Elder may be removed from office at any regular or special meeting of the Board if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually unqualified (according to pertinent Scripture, including I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9), after thorough corroborating investigation by the Elders (or a dually appointed committee of the Board, per Article VI Section 17 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board), in accord with the procedure with pertinent Scripture, Matthew 18:15-18 and I Timothy 5:19. When an Elder is removed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, the removal shall be accompanied by a public rebuke, and notice shall be made before the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service as prescribed in I Timothy 5:20.

### **Section 7. Place of Meetings**

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary provided in these Bylaws, any meeting (whether regular, special, or adjourned) of the Board of Elders of the Corporation may be held at any place within or without the State of Alabama.

### **Section 8. Regular Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at a specified time and place agreed upon by the Elders. Regular meetings shall be open to church members.

### **Section 9. Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called at any time by order of the President or Director or the Secretary of the Board of Elders or by the quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 10. Notice of Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the Board shall be held upon four days notice by first-class mail or a forty-eight-hour notice given personally or by telephone or other similar means of communication. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each Elder or at such Elder's address as it is shown upon the records of the Corporation or as may have been given to the Corporation by the Elder for such purpose of notice.

### **Section 11. Quorum**

Except as otherwise provided herein, a majority of the Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum except when a vacancy or vacancies prevents such majority, whereupon a majority of the Elders in office shall constitute a quorum, provided such majority shall constitute one-third of the authorized number of Elders or at least two Elders, whichever is larger, or unless the authorized number Elders is only one.

A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any meeting to another time and place. Whenever the matter to be considered concerns calling or dismissing a pastor, or buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the members of the Board. Whenever the matter to be considered is of a nature to require action by Lay Elders only, a majority of the Lay Elders currently serving shall constitute a quorum. Except as the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws, the act or decision done or made by the Elders present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Elders.

### **Section 12. Participation in Meetings by Conference Telephone**

Members of the Board may participate in a meeting through use of conference telephone or similar communications equipment, so long as all members participating in such meeting can hear one another.

### **Section 13. Adjournment**

A majority of the Elders present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any Elders' meeting to another time and place. Notice of the time and place of holding an adjourned meeting need not be given to absent Elders if the time and place be fixed at the meeting adjourned, except as provided in the next sentence. If the meeting is adjourned for more than forty-eight (48) hours, notice of any adjournment to another time and place shall be given prior to the adjourned meeting to the Elders who were not present at the time of the adjournment.

### **Section 14. Action Without Meeting**

Any action required or permitted to be taken, by the Board may be taken without a meeting if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to a duly prepared resolution to such action. Such consent or consents shall have the same effect as a unanimous vote of the Board and shall be documented by attaching the signed resolution with the minutes of proceedings of the Board.

### **Section 15. Right of Inspection**

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the Corporation of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder.

### **Section 16. Decisions of the Board of Elders**

Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration by unanimous vote in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself

### **Section 17. Committees**

Committees of the Board may be appointed by resolution passed by a majority of the whole Board. Committees shall be composed of two or more members of the Board and shall have such powers of the Board as may be expressly delegated to it by resolution of the Board of Elders, except with respect to:

- A) The Board as a whole must approve the approval of any action.
- B) The filling of vacancies on the Board or on any committee.
- C) The amendment or repeal of Bylaws or the adoption of new Bylaws.
- D) The amendment or repeal of any resolution of the Board, which by its express terms is not so amendable or repealable.
- E) The appointment of other committees of the Board or the members thereof.
- F) The approval of any self-dealing transaction.

The Board shall have the power to prescribe the matter in which proceedings of any such committee shall be conducted. In the absence of any such prescription, such committee shall have the power to prescribe the matter in which its proceeding shall be conducted. Unless the Board or such committee shall otherwise provide, the regular and special meetings and other actions of any such committee shall be governed by the provision of this Article applicable to meetings and actions of the Board. Minutes shall be kept of each meeting of each committee.

### **Section 18. Fees and Compensation**

Elders (as such) shall not receive any stated or fixed salary for their services, however, nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any Elder from serving the Corporation in any other capacity and receiving compensation.

Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Strong Tower At Washington Park shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of said compensation.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Other Councils and Committees**

#### **Section 1. Councils and Committees**

To promote efficient handling of Board matters, the Board may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. The councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Board. The general functions of councils and committees are:

- A) To bring considered recommendations to the Board concerning ministries.
- B) To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.

All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Board.

#### **Section 2. Deacons**

The Deacons shall consist of members possessing the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and shall be nominated by the Elders. The Board of Elders will submit the names to the members of affirmation at the annual meeting. A deacon shall serve for a term of one (1) year. The Deacons shall assist the Elders at Communion and Baptismal Services, aid in the general spiritual care of the church, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.

A Deacon shall be a man of dignity, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not fond of sordid gain, holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience, first tested and found to be beyond reproach.

### **Section 3. Deaconesses**

The Deaconesses shall consist of members of possessing the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5 and shall be nominated by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will submit the names to the members for affirmation at the Annual Meeting. The Deaconesses shall serve for a term of one (1) year. They shall prepare the Communion elements, assist the Elders at Baptismal services and in the general spiritual care of the church, shall assist in the care of the sick and needy, and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Elders.

A Deaconess shall be dignified, not a malicious gossip, temperate, and faithful in all things.

### **Section 4. Ushers**

The Usher shall consist of members to be nominated by the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will submit the names to the members for affirmation at the Annual Meeting. The Ushers shall serve for a term of one (1) year. They shall act as church ushers, greeters at the door, church collectors, and assist the Elders in the services in such matters, as he deems necessary. They shall also be responsible for the safety and security of all church property during the services. An Usher shall meet the qualifications enumerated for a Deacon and Deaconess in Section 2 and 3 above.

### **Section 5. Nomination and Selection**

The nomination and selection of Deacons, Deaconesses, and Ushers shall be done in the same manner as for the Elders, as set forth in Article VI, Section 3 of these Bylaws.

### **Section 6. Vacancies**

In the event that one of the above-mentioned offices becomes vacant during the period between annual elections, the Board of Elders may fill such vacancy for the unexpired term.

### **Section 7. Secondary Councils and Committees**

To promote efficient handling of Board matters, the Board may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with the powers specifically delegated by the Board. The general functions of councils and committees are:

- (A) To bring considered recommendations to the Board concerning ministries.
- (B) To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.

All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Board.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Offices**

#### **Section 1. Offices**

The officers of the Corporation shall be a President, Director, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Corporation may also have, at the discretion of the Board of Elders, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this Article.

#### **Section 2. Election**

The Officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 or Section 5 of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Board of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

#### **Section 3. Subordinate Officers**

The Board of Elders may appoint, and may empower the President to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Bylaws or as the Board of Elders may from time to time determine.

#### **Section 4. Removal and Resignation**

Any officer may be removed upon disqualification and removal as an Elder per Article VI, Section 6 of these Bylaws.

Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Board of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

#### **Section 5. Vacancies**

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the Bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

#### **Section 6. Inability to Act**

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Board of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Board may select.

### **Section 7. The President**

The President shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the control of the Board of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Corporation. He shall preside at all meetings of the Board of Elders, which are to be conducted according to Scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex officio member of all the standing committees, if any, and shall have powers and duties, as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders or the Bylaws.

### **Section 8. Director**

In the absence or disability of the President, the Director shall perform all the duties of the President, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the President. The Director shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as from time to time may be prescribed for him by the Board of Elders or the Bylaws.

### **Section 9. Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Board of Elders may order, of all meetings of the members, the Board and its committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the meetings, the Board and committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, the original and a copy of the Corporation's Articles and Bylaws, as amended to date.

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings to the Board and any committees thereof required by these Bylaws or by law to be given, shall keep the seal of the Corporation in safe custody, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board.

### **Section 10. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Corporation, "taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration...for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of me" (II Corinthians 8:20-21). He shall select "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3) to implement and accomplish this responsibility.

The Treasurer shall ensure that all financial activities and transactions are consistent with Articles I, II, III, VI, XII, XIV, XV, XVI, and XVII of these Bylaws.

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder.

The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name, and to the credit of the Corporation, with such depositories, as may be designated by the Board of Elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Board of Elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the President and the Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Elders. He shall make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular Board Meeting and at the Annual Meeting of members.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning**

#### **Section 1. Ordination**

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

#### **Section 2. Licensing**

The license is issued by the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's call to that ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform the ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis.

#### **Section 3. Commissioning**

When local-church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary for inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect and as long as the person maintains the qualifications for ministry.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Pastoral Staff**

#### **Section 1. Election of Pastor-Teacher**

The Pastor-Teacher shall be selected by the Board and confirmed by the members of the church at its annual meeting or at a special business meeting, and such confirmation shall be a three-fourths (3/4) majority of all the votes cast. He shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: 1) The Elders reserve the right to dismiss the Pastor-Teacher upon giving him one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss. 2) The Pastor-Teacher must give one month's notice if he intends to resign. The time limit of the Pastor-Teacher resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both the Pastor-Teacher and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

## **Section 2. Duties of Pastor-Teacher**

The Pastor-Teacher shall be an ex-officio of all councils and committees and he shall be responsible to the board of Elders. The Pastor-Teacher shall arrange for and conduct all public and regular services and be responsible for the general welfare of the church.

## **Section 3. Election of Associate Pastors**

Associate Pastors shall be selected by the Board and confirmed by the members of the church at its annual meeting or at a special business meeting, and such confirmation shall be a three-fourths (3/4) majority of all the votes cast. They shall remain in office for an indefinite period of time subject to the following reservations: 1) The Elders reserve the right to dismiss Associate Pastors upon giving them one month's written notice of its intention to dismiss. 2) Associate Pastors must give one months notice if they intend to resign. The time limit of Associate Pastors resignation or dismissal is subject to a lesser time if both Associate Pastors and the church by mutual agreement provide otherwise.

## **Section 4. Duties of Associate Pastors**

Associate Pastors shall be an ex-officio of all councils and committees assigned by the Pastor-Teacher and they shall be responsible to the Board of Elders. Associate Pastors shall aid in arranging and conducting all public and regular services and be responsible for the general welfare of the church.

## **ARTICLE XI Settlement of Disputes**

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matter of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Board of the church (or a duly appointed Committee of the Board, per Article VI, Section 17 of these Bylaws, at the sole discretion of the Board). A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration, in a spirit of humility, with each Elder regarding one another before himself and striving to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3).

## **ARTICLE XII Other Provisions**

### **Section 1. Endorsement of Documents and Contracts**

The Board of Elders, except as in the Bylaws otherwise provided, may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized by the Board of Elders, no officer, agent or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or agreement, or pledge its credit, or render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

Subject to provisions of applicable law, any note, mortgage, evidence of indebtedness, contract, conveyance, or other instrument in writing and any assignment or endorsement thereof executed or entered between this Corporation and any other person, when signed jointly by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, and the Secretary and the Treasurer of this Corporation shall be valid and binding on this Corporation in the absence of actual knowledge on the part of the other person that the signing officers had no authority to execute the same.

## **Section 2. Representation of Shares of Other Corporations**

The Chairman or any other officer or officers authorized by the Board are each authorized to vote, represent, and exercise on behalf of the Corporation all rights incident to any and all shares of any other Corporation or Corporations standing in the name of the Corporation. The authority herein granted may be exercised either by any such officer in person or by any other person authorized to do so in proxy or power of attorney duly executed by said officer.

## **Section 3. Construction and Definitions**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the general provisions, rules of construction and definitions contained in the general provisions of the Alabama Nonprofit Corporation Law and in the Alabama Nonprofit Religious Corporation Law shall govern the construction of these Bylaws.

## **Section 4. Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended and new and additional Bylaws may be made from time to time at any time by the Board of Elders in the exercise of the power granted to said Board of Elders in these Bylaws.

## **Section 5. Record of Amendments**

Whenever an amendment or new Bylaw is adopted, it shall be copied in the book of minutes with the original Bylaws, in the appropriate place. If any Bylaw is repealed, the fact of repeal with the date of the meeting at which the repeal was enacted or written assent was filed shall be stated in said book.

# **ARTICLE XIII**

## **Receipt, Investment, and Disbursement of Funds**

### **Section 1. Records**

The Corporation shall receive all monies or other properties transferred to it for the purposes for which the Corporation was formed (as shown by the Articles of Incorporation). However, nothing contained herein shall require the Board of Elders to accept or receive any money or property of any kind if it shall determine in its discretion that receipt of such money or property is contrary to the expressed purposes of the Corporation as shown by said Articles.

## **Section 2. Inspection of Books**

The Corporation shall hold, manage, and disburse any funds or properties received by it from any source in a manner that is consistent with the expressed purposes of this Corporation.

## **ARTICLE XIV Corporate Records and Reports**

### **Section 1. Records**

The Corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of Alabama, as fixed by the Board of Elders from time to time.

### **Section 2. Inspection of Books and Records**

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of the Corporation, and also its subsidiary organizations, if any.

### **Section 3. Fiscal Year of the Corporation**

The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of July and end on the last day of June in each year.

## **ARTICLE XV Dissolution**

Upon dissolution of this Corporation, the Board of Elders shall cause the assets herein to be distributed to another Corporation with purposes similar to that identified in Article II of these Bylaws and Article II of the Articles of Incorporation as amended.

## **ARTICLE XVI Miscellaneous Provisions**

All checks, drafts, demands for money and notes of the Corporation and all written contracts of the Corporation shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents, as the Board of Elders may from time to time by resolution designate.

## **ARTICLE XVII Homosexuality**

This church is opposed to homosexuality as being an alternative lifestyle. Additionally, this church holds that a homosexual lifestyle is contrary to God's Word and purpose for humanity. The Bible instructs that it is a sin that leads to death. Moreover, this church is instructed to love those living such lifestyles, while abhorring their sin. I Corinthians 6:9 says the following: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of

God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders.”

### **Homosexual Marriage**

This church will not perform homosexual marriages. It will not condone or recognize such marriages, even if the state passes laws that provide for recognition of such unions.

### **Members and Homosexuality**

Members of the church are forbidden to practice such sin. Any member found to be in such sin and unrepentant shall be subject to dismissal.

## **ARTICLE XVIII Privacy**

This church shall diligently watch to keep private all records concerning polity, doctrine, counseling and information on individuals in fellowship with this church. This church must not disclose any records that may compromise information about a member's attendance, membership status, giving and counseling records.

## **ARTICLE XIX Standard Of Living**

This church requires every Board member and Congregational member to adhere to a lifestyle that is consistent with the doctrines of this church as taught in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, this church reserves the right to refuse service to any individual, whether member or not, that is not submitting their life style to this Scriptural mode of conduct. This refusal would include services, benefits and any use of church assets.

### **Certificate**

These bylaws adopted on this day make null and void all prior addendums and these bylaws supersede and replace all previous bylaws voted on prior to this day.

Signed and certified this 6 day of October 2011, to be effective immediately.

---

Lead Pastor/ President of Strong Tower At Washington Park, Inc.

---

Secretary of Strong Tower At Washington Park, Inc.

---

Treasury of Strong Tower At Washington Park, Inc.