
**APOSTOLIC
TRUTH Church**

Bylaws

BYLAWS
OF
Apostolic Truth Church
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P R E A M B L E

We, the members of Apostolic Truth Church, a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Wisconsin, affirm our belief that God's people should: 1) be efficiently organized to successfully carry on the gospel work, 2) properly conduct our business affairs as stated in Romans 12:11, "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

The Lord taught in Matthew 12:25, "That every house divided against itself shall not stand"; and the Psalmist reminds us in Psalms 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

The general purpose of this assembly shall be that of a religious organization, more specifically that of a Christian congregation, established and maintained for the express purpose of disseminating the gospel according to the Word of God, and to provide, erect, own, lease, furnish, or manage any building, hall, parsonage, or other facility for said purposes.

It is our intent to establish the blessing of the Lord as we provide rules to govern the assembly, according to both the Scriptures and laws of the land, so that we may advance in the will of God (Titus 1:5; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

ARTICLE I THE ASSEMBLY

SECTION 1: The Name

The name of this assembly shall be known as "Apostolic Truth Church."

SECTION 2: The Purpose

1. In accordance therewith, the corporation is organized exclusively for religious purposes, including the making of distributions to organizations that will qualify as tax exempt organizations under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding sections of any future federal tax code, and to provide organization, rules and procedures to govern the membership of the church and:
 - a. To establish and maintain a place of worship.
 - b. To unite a people of like faith in the bonds of brotherly love and fellowship (Hebrews 13:1).
 - c. To meet together to worship God in Spirit and in truth, and to receive biblical teaching (John 4:24, Ephesians 4:11-15).
 - d. To point the lost to the way of life by publishing at home and globally the true plan of salvation, exhorting believers to be baptized and filled with the Spirit of God according to Chapter 2 of the Book of Acts.
 - e. To provide rules of Christian conduct based upon the Word of God (Titus 2).

- f. To assist the body of believers in realizing their full potential for the Lord through discovery and development of their spiritual gifts in a variety of effective and fulfilling ministries (Ephesians 4:11-12).
 - g. To do any other lawful acts as allowed for by the laws of the State of Wisconsin.
- 2. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on: (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), or (b) by a corporation, receiving contributions which are deductible under the Internal Revenue Code section. No part of the activities of this corporation shall be in violation with the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code for non-profit corporations regarding legislative or political activities.
- 3. No part of the net earning of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, officers, or other private persons except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered as stated further in these bylaws.
- 4. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation and the corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of partisan statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE II MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: Standards of Membership Eligibility

Anyone who believes and obeys the apostolic doctrine as set forth in the Articles of Faith of the United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI), having received the experience of salvation as described in its Fundamental Doctrine, is eligible for membership. Anyone who does not believe or obey the apostolic doctrine as set forth in the Articles of Faith of the UPCI shall be ineligible for membership but shall be loved, served, and designated as an *attender*.

SECTION 2: Qualification Obligations

As a member of the assembly, each one must accept the following obligations:

1. To believe and obey the Apostolic doctrine as set forth in the Articles of Faith.
2. To cleanse oneself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Corinthians 7:1).
3. To conduct oneself everywhere as a Christian.
4. To endeavor to manifest a spirit of brotherly love and fellowship toward all people.
5. Not forsaking the attendance of church services, but to be faithful to all regular and/or special called services of the assembly (Hebrews 10:25).
6. To support the work of the assembly with one's prayers and giving as God prospers, which includes tithing of personal income (10% of an individual's increase as recorded in the Bible) and offerings

(Malachi 3:7-10, 1 Corinthians 16:2).

7. To strive to maintain personal and family devotion to God through prayer, fasting and reading God's Word.
8. To seek to win the lost to Jesus Christ and to manifest a spirit of evangelism in the world (Acts 1:18).
9. To make one's self available for the work of the ministry within the local church in order to use one's God-given gifts for the glory of God.
10. To abide by the bylaws of the assembly as prescribed in this form of local government (Titus 2:1-8, Hebrews 13:17).
11. To secure, in case of moving, a letter of transfer from the former church of like faith as soon as possible.
12. To respect and obey the pastor that he may give an account for your soul with joy and not with grief (Hebrews 13:17).
13. Have reached the age of majority in the state of Wisconsin and are not a ward.

SECTION 3: Member Admission

1. Anyone who is eligible and meets the qualifications of membership and abides by the foregoing obligations shall become a member of the assembly by registering his/her name and address with the church pastor and secretary.
2. No person being a member of another church of like faith shall be received as a member of this assembly without a letter of transfer unless, due to special circumstances, the pastor deems it appropriate.

3. No person desiring to withdraw their membership shall be refused a letter of transfer unless proven guilty of misconduct by confession or pastoral assessment, or failure to adhere to the obligations of the membership as previously set forth.
4. No person shall be excluded from membership in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, prior religious affiliation, physical challenge or national origin.

SECTION 4: Membership Participation/Voting Privileges

1. All members fulfilling the obligations as set forth, may be able to participate in offices and positions of the church, provided they meet the guidelines for leadership and public ministry and have pastoral approval.
2. All members shall be qualified to vote at business meetings, and shall have a voice in church business matters.
3. Anyone not following the obligations of membership will not be able to hold any office or position nor have any voice or vote in church business matters, until appropriate changes have been made. Members not meeting all the obligations of membership as noted shall be known as "non-qualified members."
4. In the event of immoral conduct or rebellious acts, it shall be handled according to Scripture and according to the church discipline as noted in Section 5 below.

SECTION 5: Church Discipline

1. Any member who fails or refuses to keep the obligations of members may be suspended by action of the pastor or church board after first or second admonitions from the pastor according to 2 Thessalonians 3:6.
2. If any member is overtaken in fault, he shall be dealt with according to Galatians 6:1 and James 5:19-20.
3. Any grievance between two or more members shall be dealt with according to Matthew 18:15-17.
4. If a member is proven guilty of misconduct by confession or church board determination, the member may be removed from the membership roll and possibly banned from church property and activities. If the member repents and makes an appropriate reconciliation, his membership may be reinstated.

ARTICLE III OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Names of Officers

The officers of the church shall be as follows: (1) A pastor, (2) an associate pastor (if deemed necessary by the pastor, he shall be a non-voting officer), (3) board of directors consisting of not less than three members and no more than seven members, (4) a secretary, and (5) a treasurer. Other positions may be used for the benefit of the church work, however, these will not be considered as officers of the church.

SECTION 2: Officer Requirements

1. The pastor: The pastor must have a recommendation from the Wisconsin District Superintendent of the UPCI. The pastor must also hold a current license with the UPCI and must be in good standing. If there are questions concerning his qualifications, the district superintendent shall contact the church board of directors to discuss such matters.
2. Other officers must have been a member of this local assembly for at least one year, and must meet the requirements of a qualified member. The length of membership may be waived for an associate pastor at the discretion of the pastor.

SECTION 3: Pastor

1. To select a pastor, the board of directors shall recommend to the church, one or more qualified names. Only one name will be voted upon at a time, at any given business meeting, with the final decision being determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the qualified members present in a duly called business meeting. The sectional presbyter or district superintendent (as selected by the board of directors) shall conduct the voting for a pastor.

- a. If there are less than three members on the board of directors at the time of the selection of a new pastor, then the district superintendent and/or his designee shall with the board, call for the election of the pastor. In such case the method of election shall be the same as listed in the manual of the UPCI.
2. In case of alleged misconduct of the pastor, the same shall be reported in writing, sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, by any member of the board of directors to the Wisconsin District Superintendent of the UPCI, and also in writing to the pastor. The district superintendent shall investigate said report and take further action by first contacting the pastor and arranging a meeting of the pastor and board for the purpose of discussing the allegation. If the allegation is found to be true, the district officials shall handle it according to the judicial procedures and constitution of the UPCI. If it is found that there is no basis for the alleged misconduct, the district official shall attempt to restore the pastor and board to a working relationship. If this cannot be done, the board shall be required to resign their position and the pastor is to follow the selection of a new board according to these bylaws.
3. Resignation or dismissal:
 - a. A pastor desiring to leave the church must give the board of directors a notice of sixty days. Only by mutual agreement can this time be changed or altered. In any event, it shall be considered the church's responsibility to pay his stipulated income for 60 days following the notice of resignation, unless the pastor desires to make the resignation effective immediately. In the event of a resignation, the board is immediately at liberty to search for a new pastor according to these bylaws and the manual of the UPCI.

- b. If the board of directors desires a change in the pastor (by virtue of the fact it becomes evident that the majority of the church want this change), the board shall express this desire according to the following procedure:
- i. Any member of the board shall request in writing to the pastor that a board meeting be called for the purpose of discussing the office of the pastor. The reason for the requested meeting must be set forth in a letter, sent by certified mail with return receipt requested to the pastor and a copy to the sectional presbyter and district superintendent. Either the pastor or board can request that a district official be present at this meeting.
 - ii. The pastor shall call a board meeting within 15 days of receipt of the letter to discuss the situation and if possible to resolve the matter. In the event the pastor refuses to meet with the board, the board shall contact the district superintendent to assist them in resolving the matter in question.
 - iii. In the event that the meeting between the pastor and board cannot resolve the existing problems or differences, then the pastor and/or board shall be required to contact the district superintendent to intervene on the behalf of the church.
 - iv. The district official contacted shall arrange for a meeting with the pastor and board to assist in mediation.
 - v. Should the matter not be resolved in a meeting arranged by the district official, then the matter shall be brought to the church membership in a duly called meeting, presided over by the district official, in which meeting a vote of confidence on the pastor may be taken.

- vi. In the event that the pastor does not receive a majority vote (51%) of the total qualified members present, he is dismissed as pastor immediately, and shall receive pay for 30 days from the date of the vote.
 - vii. In the event that the pastor receives the majority vote of the people, and is retained as pastor, the board shall resign, and the pastor shall have the right to appoint a new board at this time, according to the selection procedures of the board as recorded in these bylaws. The pastor and board shall attempt to resolve their differences as Christians for the sake of the church assembly regardless of the outcome of any vote.
 - c. After the pastor is duly notified that the church desires to replace pastors, or the pastor notifies the church that he desires to change pastorates, there shall be no changes made in the bylaws, membership roll, or officers until a new pastor has been selected.
- 4. The income of the pastor shall be such as agreed upon by he and the board. (Luke 10:7, 1 Corinthians 9:7-14). There shall be an annual review of the total compensation package of the pastor. Should the board and pastor not be able to agree upon the compensation of the pastor, it shall be taken before a church business meeting to discuss and decide the compensation.
- 5. Pastoral duties shall be but are not limited to:
 - a. To preach and teach the Word of God as God gives him the ability, as established by biblical truth;
 - b. To work in unity with the board of directors, the pastoral team, directors, and members;

- c. To cast vision and lead the congregation in a manner that will result in the making of disciples and true holiness;
 - d. To encourage and guide;
 - e. To reprove and warn;
 - f. To administer in the fiscal areas of the church as an overseer of the church's business;
 - g. To insure the day to day operations of the church are undertaken with excellence;
 - h. To ensure that proper communication and oversight is provided to all paid staff, pastor team members and leaders.
6. The pastor's authority shall be:
- a. He shall have the oversight and superintendence of all church interests and departments, both spiritual and temporal, inasmuch as he is responsible for the guardianship and spiritual oversight of all who are committed to his trust (1 Peter 5:2-3).
 - b. He should be regularly consulted regarding all business of any importance pertaining to the spiritual, moral, material, and financial matters of the church.
 - c. He shall be the chairman of all boards and business meetings regarding the business of the church unless he designates another chair. He shall call for and preside over all business and board meetings, and shall appoint committees and other positions required for the growth and continuance of the church.

- d. He shall be required, with the assistance of the secretary, to maintain a current listing of the qualified and non-qualified members and attenders of this assembly.
- e. He shall handle disciplinary actions of the membership when necessary, according to the discipline procedures of these bylaws, with the assistance of the pastoral team or board of directors.
- f. The pastor shall be the president of the corporation in accordance to the laws of the State of Wisconsin. If the pastor is unwilling to serve in this position, then he shall nominate an individual as president of the corporation, with this being approved by the church membership at a duly called meeting.

SECTION 4: Associate Pastor

- 1. The associate pastor shall be selected by the pastor and approved by the church board.
- 2. The duties of the associate pastor shall be to assist the pastor in all areas of church work as directed by the pastor.
- 3. The decision as to the job description of the associate pastor and financial arrangements of the associate pastor shall be the pastor's.

SECTION 5: Board of Directors

- 1. The board of directors shall be nominated by the pastor and approved by church vote for alternate terms of two years.
- 2. These individuals shall be of good standing in the local church and must meet the obligations of a qualified member in order to serve

as a member of the board of directors.

3. They, together with the pastor, shall care for the business affairs of the assembly as prescribed in these bylaws. The board and pastor can make financial decisions as to major purchases or borrowing money in amounts of up to \$50,000.00 without approval of the church membership. If the amount exceeds \$50,000.00 or if the transaction involves the purchase or sale of church property valued at or more than \$50,000, the matter must be taken to the church membership for a majority vote.
4. In the case of a vacancy in the pastorate, the board shall immediately notify the district superintendent or sectional presbyter of such vacancy and begin the selection process of a new pastor in accordance to these bylaws and the manual of the UPCI.
5. The board shall work closely with the pastor to keep current with all governmental regulations and shall have the authority to pass resolution concerning such, especially those pertaining to the pastor.
6. The board shall be responsible for any duty as noted in these bylaws and can be called upon by the pastor for assistance in all areas of church work as needed.
7. This board, along with the president of the corporation, shall handle all church matters according to the rules and regulations of this state regarding corporate matters.
8. The board shall hold all property belonging to the church in trust as required by state law.
9. The board shall make all legal acquirements and transactions, which the assembly shall dictate concerning the purchase and/or

sale of property and borrowing of money concerning the church property.

10. The board shall be responsible for looking after the physical property of the church regarding improvements and repairs.
11. The board of directors shall serve without compensation except where they also serve in other capacities for which compensation shall be determined by the board.
12. The board shall be able to change or modify the bylaws of this corporation when pertaining to governmental matters and matters that do not materially affect the normal operation of the church. Any change of this nature shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the board of directors. Should a change be needed, desired, or required that affects the normal method by which the church has been operating, the change must be presented to the membership in a duly called business meeting as recorded in Article VII of these bylaws.

SECTION 6: Secretary and/or Treasurer

1. The secretary-treasurer may be one or more persons and shall be nominated by the pastor and approved by the church membership for a period of one year.
2. The duties of the secretary shall be to take minutes, preserve records of business meetings, record the financial data of the church, and transact business concerning the corporate matters of this church.
3. The duties of the treasurer shall be to receive and care for all funds of the assembly, make all disbursements as approved by the board of directors or the pastor, and to keep an accurate accounting of all

transactions. These records shall be made available to the board and/or pastor at any time upon request.

4. The treasurer shall make reimbursements to any member, employee, or officer of the church in accordance to the Qualified Accountable Reimbursement Plan of the church.
5. The board and/or pastor may call for financial reports as often as necessary, and may call for an audit of the books once each year.
6. The board shall review the books, not less than once per year, to determine the financial conditions of the church, and with the pastor make available an annual report for any qualified member to review or discuss.
7. The books of the church shall remain open for review by any qualified member for 30 days after the annual business meeting of the church, at which time the books will be closed and maintained according to government regulations. Should any qualified member desire to review the books, they shall make an appointment with the pastor within the 30-day period for such.

SECTION 7: Other Positions

1. Other positions needed for the operations of the church shall be filled by appointment of the pastor with updates provided to the board.
2. The decision as to the job description of these positions, and financial arrangements of the employees lies with the pastor.

SECTION 8: Dismissal of Officers or Positions

Any officer or other individual who holds an office in the church,

manifesting a lack of interest and/or failure to meet the obligations of a qualified member as stated in these bylaws, shall be removed from office by the pastor. At the time of removal, the pastor shall notify the existing board of such dismissal and determine with the board as to the filling of the unexpired term until the next duly called business meeting.

ARTICLE IV PROPERTY

1. If at any time the church decides to purchase or sell property, the pastor and board shall look after the business matters and present their views to the church. Then, when a majority of the qualified members decide upon the purchase or sale of the property in a duly called business meeting, the board shall be responsible for transacting the necessary business as required by the church.
2. The title of the property shall be in the name of the church according to the laws of the county and state of Wisconsin.

ARTICLE V CORPORATE DISSOLUTION

1. In the event this assembly ceases to function as a non-profit church, the board shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all the current bills of the church, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner as necessary.
2. The church shall be dissolved according to the non-profit requirements of the Internal Revenue Service, and all assets shall be assigned to another religious, non-profit organization. The disposition of these assets shall be to another non-profit organization of like faith and belief as this church. This non-profit organization must be organized under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.
3. Any disposition of assets to another non-profit organization shall be done with the assumption of any liability by that organization and any board member of this assembly shall be absolved of any further liability of the property.

ARTICLE VI POWERS

The church shall have the following powers:

1. To have perpetual succession by its corporate name as set forth in Article X.
2. To sue and be sued, complain and defend in its corporate name, except that as a non-profit, religious, charitable organization, it may not be sued in tort and therefore enjoys immunity from tort liability.
3. To purchase, take, receive, lease, take by gift, devise, or bequest, or otherwise acquire, own, hold, improve, use, and otherwise deal in and with real and personal property or any interest therein, wherever situated.
4. To sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, transfer, and otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property or income as approved by the membership.
5. To make contracts and incur liabilities; borrow money; issue its notes, bonds, and other obligations; and secure any of its obligations by mortgage or pledge all or any of its property or income.
6. To manage its internal affairs in any desired manner so long as the provisions of the state's non-profit corporation code or other laws are not violated.
7. To do any and all things necessary, convenient, useful, or incidental to the attainment of its purposes as fully and to the same extent as natural persons lawfully might or could do so long as consistent

with the provisions of the Non-Profit Corporation Code of this State.

8. Notwithstanding any provisions to the contrary, all proposed actions pertaining to real property or to the borrowing of money, must be presented to the church membership by the pastor and approved by a majority vote of the qualified membership present.

ARTICLE VII BUSINESS MEETING

1. The church is required to have an annual business meeting within 90 days of the church's yearend to conduct church business. This meeting shall be announced publicly in at least three regular services, the first announcement being ten (10) days prior to the meeting date.
2. A majority vote of the qualified members present at any business meeting shall be the deciding factor of any church business unless otherwise noted in these bylaws.
3. The minimum age of a member voting in the local business meeting shall be age 18.
4. Those participating in the church business must meet the obligations and requirements of membership as previously noted.
5. Any changes in the bylaws shall require a two-thirds vote of the qualified membership present in a duly called business meeting of the church. The only exception is that the board of directors may change or modify the bylaws when the change does not materially affect the normal operation of the church. Any changes to the bylaws must not conflict with the UPCI Constitution.
6. Absentee voting may be permitted for qualified members, only when the vote pertains to the election or dismissal of the pastor, or the purchase or sale of real property. Anyone desiring to vote in absentia must notify the pastor (or the board of directors in the absence of a pastor) in writing no later than three (3) days prior to the scheduled vote. Approval may be withheld if the absence is not deemed unavoidable.

7. The church fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31 of each year.
8. The church shall follow Robert's Rules of Order for all business meetings and it shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedures not specifically covered by these bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII QUORUM

In any business meeting of the membership or board of directors, a majority of those present who are qualified to vote shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for transacting and conducting any business as allowed by these bylaws except where stipulated differently by Article X or by laws of the state or federal government.

ARTICLE IX REFUND OF CONTRIBUTIONS

All gifts, contributions and bequests made to the church shall, in accordance with current Internal Revenue Service regulations, be given as an “irrevocable transaction.” No gift, contribution, or bequest made to the church shall be refundable to any person, corporation, estate, or other party for any reason except where current laws regulate such.

ARTICLE X AFFILIATION

Be it hereby noted that Apostolic Truth Church is affiliated with the United Pentecostal Church, International, headquartered in Weldon Spring, Missouri, and has been so since inception. By being so affiliated, the church comes under the umbrella of the non-profit exemption of the UPCI, as stated by the Internal Revenue Service in Code Section 501(c)3.

ARTICLE XI MARRIAGE

In accordance with the Bible and the manual of the United Pentecostal Church International, Apostolic Truth Church defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Only those marriages or weddings meeting this definition will be recognized by Apostolic Truth Church and be eligible for wedding services and marriage ministries.

ARTICLE XII RECORD OF ADOPTION

These bylaws are approved by the congregation of the Apostolic Truth Church on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

President_____

Secretary_____

ARTICLES OF FAITH

For the complete Articles of Faith, see the following source: *Manual, United Pentecostal Church International* (ministerial book).

PREAMBLE

We believe the Bible to be inspired of God, the infallible Word of God. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). The Bible is the only God-given authority which man possesses; therefore, all doctrine, faith, hope, and all instruction for the church must be based upon, and harmonize with, the Bible. It is to be read and studied by all men everywhere, and can only be clearly understood by those who are anointed by the Holy Spirit (1 John 2:27). “No prophecy of the scripture is of any interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINE

The basic and fundamental doctrine of this organization shall be the Bible standard of full salvation, which is repentance, baptism in water by immersion in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost with the initial sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. We shall endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit until we all come into the unity of the faith, at the same time admonishing all brethren that they shall not contend for their different views to the disunity of the body.

HOLINESS

Godly living should characterize the life of every child of the Lord, and we should live according to the pattern and example given in the Word of God. “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to

all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11-12). “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously” (1 Peter 2:21-23). “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (1 Peter 1:15-19).