



Bylaws  
South County Church  
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[www.southcountycares.org](http://www.southcountycares.org)

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## Bylaws

South County Church (hereinafter referred to as "South County"), a Virginia nonstock, non-profit corporation, by the solemn action of its members and the approval of its presbytery, hereby adopts these bylaws and willingly submits to be governed by them so that it may effectively carry out the sacred mission of the Church given by Jesus Christ as described herein. Thus, these bylaws shall constitute and evidence the agreement by all South County participants that its governance, business, and activities shall be conducted as permitted to the fullest extent by §13.1-852.1 of the Code of Virginia of 1950 (hereinafter referred to as "Code"), as amended from time to time, and the bylaws of the affiliated network of ministries, as amended from time to time, and described herein, notwithstanding any inconsistency with the other provisions of Chapter 10 of Title 13.1 of The Code.

Masculine pronouns used herein include and apply to both genders.

### I. MISSION

Our mission is to CARE for the South County Region and beyond. We are a community of believers who:

- Care to Connect people to Jesus Christ
- Care to Grow together in a small group
- Care to Serve our community and world

South County shall maintain an atmosphere where its people may both corporately and individually encounter God genuinely through worship and the spiritual gifts, embrace one another authentically through fellowship and discipleship, and engage its community and the world relevantly through evangelism and service. All three purposes shall have a balance of emphasis.

In willful compliance with §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended from time to time, South County shall have perpetual existence and shall operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes.

### II. TENETS OF FAITH

2.1 Consistency: South County shall maintain a cooperative fellowship with the Assemblies of God, (described in Paragraph 3.3 and the Exhibit herein) and, as a church in voluntary cooperative fellowship, shall endorse its Statement of Fundamental Truths and be amenable to its Constitution and Bylaws.

2.2 United in Thought and Purpose: Since it is absolutely necessary for the participants to be united in thought and purpose so that the church will remain healthy and vibrant, South County shall embrace the following position:

- In essential beliefs, South County shall endeavor to maintain unity.



- In non-essential beliefs, South County shall endeavor to maintain liberty.
- In all beliefs, South County shall endeavor to maintain charity.

### 2.3 Essential Beliefs: South County shall safeguard the following essential beliefs:

- The Bible is...
  - The divine revelation of God to mankind.
  - Our fixed source of authority for faith and conduct.
  - Without error and endurable for all generations and cultures.
- God is...
  - Eternal, having always existed outside of time and space.
  - A single Being consisting of three Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Jesus is...
  - The eternal Son of God, both fully God and fully man.
  - Conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin.
  - Without sin.
  - The only One who ultimately restores mankind from sin through the shedding of His blood.
  - Raised from the dead and seated with the Heavenly Father.
  - The healer of the sick.
  - Returning again to reign forever in the new heavens and new earth.
- The Holy Spirit is...
  - Present to make people aware of their need of salvation.
  - Present to empower every believer to follow Christ more victoriously, offering a baptism that is subsequent to the salvation experience with gifts to confirm the power of the gospel. The gifts of the Holy Spirit shall operate in harmony with the Holy Scriptures and shall never be used in violation of Biblical parameters.
- Mankind is...
  - Made in the spiritual image of God.
  - Fallen from innocence due to a willful choice to do wrong.
  - Destined for eternal separation from God.
  - Provided an opportunity to be reconciled to God through Christ, not as a result of human effort and good works, but through faith alone.
  - Invited to accept Christ, repent of sin, and be regenerated through the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - In need of being separated from carnality and set apart unto God in order to become more like the character of Christ.
  - Commanded to relinquish the authority over their lives to Christ, making Him the Lord of their lives.

- The Church is...
  - The body of Christ that consists of all Believers on a three-fold mission of encountering God, embracing one another, and outreach to the community.
  - Observant of water baptism and Holy Communion.
- The Future is...
  - Hopeful for the Christ-follower because of the imminent, physical, and visible return of Christ to establish His Kingdom of a new heaven and a new earth at a date that is undisclosed by the Scriptures.
  - Dismal and bleak for the unbeliever who has rejected Christ because of eternal judgment and damnation in hell, separated from God.
- Sin is...
  - A condition of the human heart since birth that causes each and every person to fall short of the standard of perfection established by God.
  - Any unrighteous behavior identified in the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted by the pastoral leadership team and the Assemblies of God, therefore requiring appropriate action, including sanctions as necessary, to protect the fellowship of believers and the testimony of Jesus Christ.
- Matrimony is...
  - A holy, monogamous marriage between one man and one woman as long as both shall live.
  - A divinely ordained institution of God.
  - The basic unit of a healthy society.

### III. PREROGATIVES

3.1 Governance: South County shall be a congregation led by a pastoral leadership team, upon the counsel of advisors, and subject to the apostolic authority of the presbytery of the affiliated network of ministries as described in Paragraph 3.3 hereof. This presbytery shall protect South County through advice, prayer, and the accountability of its pastors. The pastoral leadership team shall be the Board of Directors of South County under the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, and as such, shall act as the governing authority for South County by providing spiritual guidance, setting its major policies, and exercising responsibility for its ministries and operations. The advisory team shall serve to lend counsel and local accountability regarding the business activities of the church. Other leaders, both volunteers and paid staff, shall protect the pastors from distractions from ministry by assisting with the operations of the church. The congregation shall be empowered to share in the work of the ministry under the supervision of the pastoral leadership team and their designees.

3.2 Autonomy: South County maintains the right to govern itself and to conduct its own affairs provided herein, including but without limitation, the calling of a Lead Pastor, the selection of leadership, and the implementation of its own ministries and operations.

South County shall also have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or property as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by these Bylaws, the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act, other applicable laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the bylaws of the affiliated network of ministries, as described in Paragraph 3.3 hereof.

3.3 Affiliation: South County shall voluntarily commit to enter into full cooperative relationship with the affiliated network of ministries known as the General Council of the Assemblies of God, within the jurisdiction of its Potomac District Council (hereinafter referred to as the "Assemblies of God"). South County willingly shares in the privileges and assumes the responsibilities enjoined by such an affiliation. Accordingly, South County commits to recognize, align with, and support the officials, churches, and other ministries within this network. A detailed description of the Assemblies of God is listed in The Exhibit.

#### IV. APOSTOLIC OVERSIGHT BY A PRESBYTERY

4.1 Function: Since the presbytery serves an apostolic role, the pastoral leadership team shall be personally accountable to them and remain submitted to their directives in relation to theology, morals, and ethics. The presbytery shall not receive any compensation for their services from South County, but may be reimbursed for substantiated, out-of-pocket expenses incurred while serving South County in their oversight capacity, subject to the availability of funding. As a privilege of affiliation, South County may seek advice and assistance from the presbytery in dealing with issues upon the request of any of the following:

- The Lead Pastor.
- Any member of the pastoral leadership team credentialed with the Assemblies of God, or two or more of those who are non-credentialed.
- Two or more members of the advisory team.
- A petition signed by at least twenty percent of the members, as described herein.

4.2 Appointment and Removal: The members of the pastoral leadership team who are credentialed with the Assemblies of God, and their designated delegates, from time to time, shall serve in the voting constituency of the Assemblies of God, which shall name persons to serve as the presbytery and set their ministry descriptions and term limits accordingly. This same body also has the sole authority to remove such persons designated with apostolic oversight for South County.

## V. PASTORAL LEADERSHIP TEAM

5.1 Function: The Lead Pastor shall serve the dual roles as both the spiritual overseer of all other South County participants and ministries as well as the president of the pastoral leadership team as board of directors. Such a role also includes the leader of the advisory team and the chair of membership meetings. The Lead Pastor shall have the general powers and duties of supervision and management usually vested in the pastoral office of any local church and the president of any corporation.

Members of the pastoral leadership team, as the legal board of directors of South County, shall provide spiritual guidance and corporate stability while serving as its spiritual and temporal governing body. Whereas the New Testament uses the term “elder” in every instance to describe the vocational office of a pastor (“elder” and “pastor” are interchangeable terms), and whereas the Scriptures also make it abundantly clear that the early church was pastor-led (elder-led), therefore the governing council of South County shall consist of the pastoral leadership team which is primarily authorized to fulfill the following duties and responsibilities:

- Protect the Church Body
  - Mediate disputes in the church
  - Prevent doctrinal errors from being circulated
  - Exercise church discipline
  - Warn the church of behavior that violates Scriptural principles
  - Ensure that the bylaws herein are followed carefully
  - Defend, protect, and support the integrity of the pastors
  - Contact the presbytery, if a pastor’s behavior is suspect, to initiate investigation and potential discipline
- Feed the Church Body
  - Preach and teach the congregation the sound doctrine and principles
  - of the Scriptures in keeping with Article II
  - Ensure that the membership is consistently being rooted and
  - established in the faith, growing in maturity as Christ-followers, and
  - ultimately discovering their spiritual gifts and producing spiritual
  - fruit that remains
- Govern the Body
  - Direct all the affairs of the church to ensure that the mission is accomplished in a spirit of unity, including business decisions enacted upon the counsel of the advisory team
  - Oversee the provision of the physical facilities needed by South County, including the buying and selling of real estate and securing real estate leases, subject to Paragraph 7.4 and Paragraph 8.2 herein.
  - Work in cooperation with the advisory team as a pastoral search team to assist in locating a new Lead Pastor, when such need arises.

- Care for the Body
  - Provide spiritual advice to members of the congregation
  - Pray for those who are sick spiritually, mentally, physically, socially, or emotionally, and make arrangements for tangible assistance when necessary
  - Be benevolent toward those who have needs
  - Ensure that the environment of church events is a safe place for adults and children, believers and seekers

5.2 Qualifications: The Lead Pastor shall be someone who not only fulfills all the qualifications of pastoral leadership as described hereof, but who also shall be in good standing as an active, ordained minister with the Assemblies of God.

Members of the pastoral leadership team shall possess the character and attributes of a leader as described in Paragraph 7.6 herein. They shall also be able to teach and use Scripture to exhort and refute others, be blameless and above reproach, not be overbearing or lord their positions over others, and have a good reputation with people outside South County. Furthermore, members of the pastoral leadership team shall be credentialed with the Assemblies of God, or working toward credentials with the Assemblies of God, unless specifically exempted by the Lead Pastor upon the advice of the advisory team and notification to the presbytery.

5.3 Appointment and Removal: If the Lead Pastor is deceased while in office, incapacitated indefinitely, disciplined by the presbytery, resigns, or if the position becomes vacant for any other reason, then the advisory team shall work cooperatively with the remaining pastoral leadership team to locate a new Lead Pastor. Both bodies jointly functioning as one pastoral search team shall first consult with the presbytery for a list of eligible candidates who might possess similar style and philosophy to that of South County. The spouse of the Lead Pastor may participate in conjunction with the pastoral search team in the search for a successor unless the Lead Pastor has resigned, retired, or is under discipline by the presbytery. Once the team has determined its choice of candidate, then they shall present their recommendation to the members, giving ample opportunity to become acquainted with the candidate. Then at a duly called member meeting, confirmation of the new Lead Pastor by the members shall be in accordance to Paragraph 7.5 herein. Accusations and procedures for discipline regarding the Lead Pastor, and his subsequent removal, shall be in accordance with the bylaws of the presbytery.

When it becomes necessary to add or replace any member of the pastoral leadership team, with the exception of the Lead Pastor himself, the Lead Pastor shall conduct the following process:

- Determine the specific ministry description for the new pastor.
- Consult with the advisory team regarding the salary implications of the new pastor upon the general budget.
- Receive ratification from the advisory team regarding the new pastor and his ministry description.

- Notify the presbytery of such intentions once a new pastor is being considered.

Except for the Lead Pastor, any member of the pastoral leadership team may be removed by the Lead Pastor without cause, provided all legal regulations regarding employment termination have been satisfied, the advisory team has been consulted, and the presbytery has been notified.

**5.4 Transition Between Lead Pastors:** To ensure the unity of the church by a smooth transition between Lead Pastor appointments, the pastoral search team, as defined by Paragraph 5.3 hereof, in consultation with the presbytery, shall select an interim Lead Pastor during the period of time between pastoral appointments to fulfill the basic duties of the Lead Pastor until a new Lead Pastor is selected. The qualifications for the interim Lead Pastor shall be the same as the Lead Pastor, according to Paragraph 5.2 hereof. In the event that a dispute arises, the presbytery shall serve as the mediator and their counsel shall be binding. The interim Lead Pastor shall not cast vision or alter the philosophy of South County to reflect his own personal views. The interim Lead Pastor shall cover the primary preaching schedule, discharge the basic pastoral care duties, and ensure that the ministries of South County continue to function. The interim Lead Pastor shall not possess any other corporate powers granted to the Lead Pastor by these bylaws without the unanimous approval of the pastoral search team. The interim Lead Pastor shall be remunerated for his service at a fair salary mutually agreed upon by the interim Lead Pastor and the pastoral search team, upon the counsel of the advisory team. During the interim period between Lead Pastor appointments, members of the pastoral leadership team are to continue in their positions. Should leadership or financial problems arise, the interim Lead Pastor shall have the authority to alter the duties, roles, and/or terms of employment of all employees and the terms of service for all volunteer leadership positions, including dismissal if necessary, but only upon the ratification of the advisory team and notification to the presbytery. Any employees serving under a previous Lead Pastor shall tender their resignations to the new Lead Pastor immediately upon his appointment. The new Lead Pastor shall have up to six months to accept or reject said resignations. When the new Lead Pastor is in place, he has full authority to select his staff, replacing existing staff members if he should so choose.

**5.5 Limits of Authority:** Because the pastoral leadership team is responsible for all final decisions for South County, except for the decisions itemized in Paragraph 7.4 herein, they shall seek the counsel of, and remain within the reasonable bounds of accountability of, the advisory team regarding all major financial and business decisions so as to protect the interests of the membership and the integrity of the church. The Lead Pastor shall preside over all decisions as long as the issue at hand does not involve a conflict of interest or personal benefit for him. Matters regarding the Lead Pastor must be referred to the advisory team.



## VI. ADVISORY TEAM

6.1 Function: The advisory team shall recognize the God-given, Biblical role of the pastoral leadership team's leadership, and lend counsel and provide cooperative accountability, so as to wisely guard and protect the pastoral leadership team regarding the business operations of the church, except in the case of the following decisions that they shall ratify:

- The selection of the Lead Pastor.
- The Lead Pastor's appointment of other members of the pastoral leadership team.
- The alteration of terms of employment for employees during an interim period between Lead Pastors.
- The annual budget.
- The purchase or sale of any asset(s) in accordance with Paragraph 7.4 herein.
- Amendment to these bylaws.
- Any church health concerns caused by poor leadership by the pastoral leadership team.

6.2 Appointment and Removal: The number of advisors shall be determined by the Lead Pastor, but shall not be less than three and no more than one percent (1%) of the membership up to a maximum of seven. An advisor shall be removed if he fails to satisfy all the qualifications as described in Paragraph 7.6 herein. Advisors shall be appointed according to the following procedures:

- Process: On an annual basis, an assessment shall be made as to the effective ratio of Advisors to the Membership. Should it be deemed necessary by the Lead Pastor, in consultation with the advisory team, to add another member to the advisory team, then potential names shall be submitted and considered, according to the leadership criteria outlined in Paragraph 7.6 herein. The advisory team shall consider all qualified nominations fairly. The Lead Pastor shall meet with the candidate(s) and his (their) spouse(s), if married, to ensure eligibility and willingness to serve for a term as defined herein. Once the Lead Pastor is convinced the candidate will be compatible with the team, the candidate shall be added to the advisory team.
- Terms: A term for an advisor is three years. Upon completion of a term, the advisor must rotate off of the team, and remain off of the team for a minimum of one year. Following the year sabbatical, an advisor may be eligible to return to the team for another term as long as the criteria for qualifications are sustained.
- Pastoral Restriction: So as to avoid redundancy, except for the Lead Pastor, employees of South County shall not serve on the advisory team.

6.3 Meetings: The Lead Pastor shall preside over all meetings of the advisory team. If it is not possible for the Lead Pastor to attend, then the Lead Pastor shall choose a designate chairman for the meeting with an appointed member keeping minutes for the record. All decisions require a simple majority of those present.

6.4 Limits of Authority: Advisors are non-legislative members, except as otherwise noted in Paragraph 6.1 hereof, and are empowered to lend advice to the pastoral leadership team concerning any and all matters of South County. The ultimate responsibility of decision-making rests with the pastoral leadership team since they are the ones designated by Scripture to lead the church; however, a majority of the advisory team may petition the presbytery should concerns arise about actions of the pastoral leadership team that threaten the health and witness of South County.

6.5 Compensation: Members of the advisory team shall not receive any compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for substantiated, out-of-pocket expenses incurred while serving the church in their advisory capacity.

## VII. MEMBERS

7.1 Description: Members shall be all people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or disability, who satisfy the membership criteria, as described in Paragraph 7.2 hereof. The word “member” is used in these bylaws solely to reflect a means for individuals to participate in the ministries and operations of South County, together in its mission, as described in Article I herein. No member shall hold any ownership or other legal interest in South County. Furthermore, the word “member” referenced herein reflects only a spiritual unity and shall not be deemed to have any legal status under Virginia law.

7.2 Eligibility: Individuals at South County may become members in good standing if they satisfy all of the following criteria:

- Salvation – Must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a desire to grow in that relationship.
- Water Baptism – Follow the Lord’s direction to be baptized in water by immersion, as a public sign of a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Participation – Participate regularly for a period of three consecutive months in primary worship services and other ministry opportunities held by South County.
- Agreement – Agree with the mission and essential beliefs of South County, as described in Articles I and II herein.
- Financial Support – Contribute regularly to the financial support of South County.
- Age Requirement – Attain the age of eighteen years old.
- Instruction – Attend the Church Membership Class and sign the Membership Covenant.

### 7.3 Appointment and Removal:

- Appointment: Individuals who possess all of the above qualifications shall be entitled to apply for official membership. Potential candidates shall be evaluated by the pastoral leadership team, and, upon approval, shall be officially received into the church publicly at any of its primary services.



- Removal: Any individual who fails to satisfy the membership criteria, as described in Paragraph 7.2 hereof, shall be deactivated from the membership roster, by action of the pastoral leadership team. The pastoral staff shall apprise the individual promptly regarding that decision. A deactivated member surrenders his rights to confirm or deny any official proposals submitted by the pastoral leadership team at any duly called member meeting.

7.4 Advice and Confirmation: Members shall provide advice and give or withhold confirmation, as the case may be, with respect to proposals made by the pastoral leadership team, for the following matters that affect the spiritual health and mission of South County:

- The selection of the Lead Pastor.
- The purchase or sale of any asset(s), real or personal, during a calendar year, in an amount that exceeds 20% of the approved operating budget for that particular year.
- Affiliation/disaffiliation with a network of ministries.
- Amendments to these bylaws.

In the event the members fail to confirm any of the foregoing, the pastoral leadership team shall not execute the proposed action. Regarding all other major decisions of South County, the pastoral leadership team may seek non-binding advice from the members in whatever format they deem necessary at the time.

7.5 Member Meetings: Meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor, or by a petition delivered to the Lead Pastor that has been signed by not less than twenty percent (20%) of the membership. However, if the petition pertains to the status of, or grievance with, the Lead Pastor, a member meeting shall not be held and, instead, the petition shall be directed to the presbytery. The Lead Pastor shall preside over all member meetings. Notice of a member meeting shall be: 1) announced on the two Sundays preceding the meeting, and 2) transmitted either by email or letter sent through the U.S. Postal Service. No "confirmation" business other than that specified in the notice of the meeting shall be transacted at any meeting.

No survey shall be taken at any member meeting except as shall be authorized by the pastoral leadership team. All surveys taken shall be advisory in nature except for the confirmation of proposals submitted pursuant to Paragraph 7.4 hereof. A quorum shall consist of all members who are present. All confirmations shall be decided by simple majority of the members present, except disaffiliation, which shall require confirmation by two-thirds of all members who are present. No person shall be eligible to participate at a member meeting unless he was listed as a member in good standing on the first day of the third full month preceding, and remains in good standing as of the date of the meeting. Participating in absentia shall not be permitted; a member must be present to participate in discussions prior to a "confirmation" survey. Surveys shall be conducted by voice acclamation.

All member meetings shall be conducted in a warm spirit of cooperation, loving deference to one another's opinions, and by accepted rules of parliamentary procedure. (A current copy of Robert's Rules of Order shall be kept on file in the church office.)

7.6 Prerequisites and Criteria for Leadership Roles: Members serving on the pastoral leadership team, the advisory team, or any other significant leadership role shall possess at all times the following qualities:

- Demonstrate the character, competence, and chemistry of leadership conducive to the South County environment.
- Support the pastoral staff and refrain from divisive attitudes and behavior.
- Possess wisdom, a good reputation, exemplary conduct, and self control.
- Be committed to a covenant relationship with his spouse, if married.
- Manage his own household wisely.
- Abstain from excessive use of alcoholic beverages and from all illegal drugs.
- Abstain from all forms of extra-marital, sensual behavior.
- Not be a new convert.
- Be a member in good standing for at least six months (except new pastors).

## VIII. BUSINESS POLICIES AND PRACTICES

8.1 Voluntary Contributions: Funds for the maintenance of the vision and mission of South County shall be provided by the voluntary contributions of its members, friends, and guests without pressure or coercion.

8.2 Expenditure Limitations: Notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, no expenditures shall be made for, or on behalf of, South County that would cause the loss of South County's exemption from taxation under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as the same may be amended from time to time, or any other tax exemption. No one shall buy, sell, rent, lease, or invest on behalf of the church unless approved by the pastoral leadership team, upon the advice of the advisory team.

8.3 Budget Requisites: The annual budget shall be prepared by the Lead Pastor, or his designee, with the assistance of the advisory team, at least two months before the beginning of the next fiscal year. The advisory team shall be given opportunity to ratify the final budget at least one month thereafter. The budget shall be prepared observing conservative fiscal principles, taking into consideration the amount of undesignated income for the previous year and limiting expenses to that necessary to carry out the work. At the same time, the budget shall show evidence of faith in God to finance His work as necessary and a belief in the faithfulness of God's people to respond to the need. Budgeted amounts shall not be considered actual monies available. The budget shall be reviewed quarterly and adjusted accordingly.

All overages of projected revenue shall be regarded as discretionary spending under the supervision of the Lead Pastor, but upon the counsel of the advisory team. The Lead Pastor, with the assistance of the advisory team, shall make adjustments in the annual

budget if there are shortfalls in revenue in order to avoid indebtedness to support the operating budget. The budget shall be appropriated to categories designated by the Lead Pastor to finance the basic ministry and operational needs of South County (salaries, utilities, facility maintenance, accounts payable, missions, benevolence, departmental financial allocations, etc.). The pastoral leadership team shall be authorized under the direction of the Lead Pastor to reflect their values and wisdom in allocating monies for the various categories of the budget; however, no less than ten percent (10%) of the entire budget shall be designated for missions and benevolence.

8.4 Personal Benefit: All members, whatever their capacity, shall demonstrate due care and diligence, avoid self-dealing, expend designated funds only for the purposes specified, unless otherwise authorized by the pastoral leadership team, and shall not commingle their personal funds with corporate funds. No part of the net earnings of South County shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to, any private persons; except that South County may pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and may make payments and distributions in the furtherance of its purposes.

## IX. ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

9.1 Authority: No major asset, real estate or otherwise, valued in excess of 20% of the current approved operating budget, shall be purchased by South County, nor shall a contract to sell said major South County assets be entered into, unless the same shall be first approved by the pastoral leadership team, upon the counsel of the advisory team, and confirmed by the members at a duly called member meeting. Furthermore, the pastoral leadership team and the advisory team shall have the authority to unilaterally accept major assets, including real property, valued in excess of the current approved operating budget if it is partially or entirely being donated, provided that it has clear title and that any funding used to augment the donation does not exceed available funding.

9.2 Documentation: Title to all real property acquired by South County shall be deeded to South County Church, Incorporated, and held in its name. The Lead Pastor, upon the counsel of the advisory team, shall certify all documents relating to the purchase, sale, or lease of real property, and that the same has been duly authorized in accordance with these bylaws.

9.3 Property Status upon Division: In the event the members of South County become divided over irreconcilable differences, all property of South County shall remain with those members, whatever their number, adhering to the Tenets of Faith outlined in Article II herein and remaining in good standing with the Assemblies of God. The determination as to which members are adhering to the Tenets of Faith shall be made at a member meeting presided over by the presbytery, called for such purpose. The presbytery shall be allowed to address the situation prior to the survey. After due investigation, the presbytery shall make a binding determination as to which members are adhering to the Tenets of Faith and the same shall be deemed authorized to continue as members under

these bylaws. The remaining members shall then be promptly deactivated from the membership roster.

9.4 Property Status upon Disaffiliation: South County shall not disaffiliate with the Assemblies of God without a decision of the pastoral leadership team, upon the counsel of the advisory team, after confirmation by the members pursuant to Paragraph 7.5 hereof. Such proposal shall include an identification and description of the proposed new affiliated network of ministries and a statement of the reasons for the proposed change in affiliation. In the event of a survey on disaffiliation, or the submission for confirmation thereof, a representative from the existing presbytery shall be present and allowed to address the situation prior to the "confirmation" survey. In the event that the members confirm such a proposal, the Lead Pastor shall give written notice of disaffiliation to both the former affiliated network of ministries and to the proposed new affiliated network of ministries. South County may not disaffiliate with one network without being prepared to immediately affiliate with another network. Upon disaffiliation, all of the property and monies gifted to South County by the Assemblies of God shall be returned to the Assemblies of God. Any remaining property owned by South County shall remain the property of South County.

9.5 Property Status upon Dissolution: In the event that South County shall cease to function as a church body, not having a primary service for a period of six months, then after providing for the payment of all liabilities of the church, the remaining assets shall not inure to the benefit of any private person(s), but the same shall revert to, and become the property of, the Assemblies of God or any ministry affiliated therewith, provided any such entity is exempt from taxation under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as the same may be amended from time to time. In such case, the Assemblies of God shall have full authority to sell or dispose of such property and to use the proceeds derived there from for the extension of its mission and objectives.

## X. AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These Bylaws may not be altered, amended, or repealed, except upon a proposal submitted by the pastoral leadership team, approved by the advisory team, and confirmed by the members pursuant to Paragraphs 7.5 herein.

# Exhibit

## Assemblies of God – the Designated Presbytery

South County Church has voluntarily affiliated with the Assemblies of God – a worldwide “cooperative fellowship” of churches and ministries functioning more like a network rather than a denomination. Whereas denominations have traditionally been pyramidal in structure and relationship, networks like the Assemblies of God strive to relate laterally and share common interests covenantally.

The official website for the Assemblies of God, [www.ag.org](http://www.ag.org), contains information regarding the Assemblies of God history, beliefs, vision, leadership, governing structure, statistics, affiliations, and other matters of interest. We fully endorse the Assembly of God tenets of faith.

Local churches in this network operate independently once they become affiliated with the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This necessarily means:

- every church may choose its own Lead Pastor
- every church owns its own assets
- every church determines its own programs and ministries

South County is located within the Potomac District of the Assemblies of God, whose stated purpose is “neither to usurp authority over the various local assemblies, nor to deprive them of their Scriptural and local rights and privileges, but to recognize and promote Scriptural methods and order for worship, unity, fellowship, work, and business for God; and to disapprove unscriptural methods, doctrines and conduct...” (Constitution and Bylaws of the Potomac District Council of the Assemblies of God)

The presbytery oversight for South County is the officers of the Potomac District Council of the Assemblies of God. The candidates for these offices are chosen from the membership of the District Council – a body of credentialed ministers of which members of the pastoral leadership team of South County are a part.

Overview: As of 2008, the Assemblies of God USA and Assemblies of God organizations around the world made up the world's largest Spirit-filled fellowship with some 60 million members and adherents.

Beliefs: The Fundamentals of Truth of the Assemblies of God are as follows: The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.



### 1. The Scriptures Inspired

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

### 2. The One True God

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

### The Adorable Godhead

#### a) Terms Defined

The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words certainly in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely Scriptural. Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17)

#### b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained. (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4)

#### c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one. (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9)

#### d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others. (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; 8:17,18)

- e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ  
The appellation Lord Jesus Christ is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God. (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3)
- f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us  
The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us. (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2, 10, 14; Revelation 1:13,17)
- g) The Title, Son of God  
Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time. (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13)
- h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ  
Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2)
- i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord  
The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all. (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28)
- j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son  
Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father. (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11)

### 3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

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

- a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35)
- b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22)
- c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38)
- d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)
- e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4)
- f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Phil 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3)

### 4. The Fall of Man

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

### 5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus the Son of God.

#### a) Conditions to Salvation

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

#### b) The Evidences of Salvation

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

### 6. The Ordinances of the Church

#### a) Baptism in Water

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

#### b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements – bread and the fruit of the vine – is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26; and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"



#### 7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

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

#### 8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

#### 9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit. (Rom 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Gal 2:20; Phil 2:12,13; 1 Pt 1:5)

#### 10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23)

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

- a) To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16)
- b) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13)
- c) To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12)

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason for being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to

be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a) Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4)
- b) Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14)
- c) Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29)

#### 11. The Ministry

A divinely called and Scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), and (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16).

#### 12. Divine Healing

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

#### 13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52)

#### 14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years. (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6) This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

#### 15. The Final Judgment

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

#### 16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22)

History: The Assemblies of God has its roots in a religious revival that began in the late 1800s. In 1914, both clergymen and laymen from 20 states and several foreign countries gathered for a "General Council" in Hot Springs, Arkansas. From that meager beginning, the Assemblies of God network of churches was born.

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Plus Eleven Additional Executive Presbyters

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