

# The Pathway Church Bylaws

## ARTICLE 1 Name

### 1.01 Name

The name of this Corporation is THE PATHWAY TACOMA. The church may commonly be referred to as The Pathway or The Pathway church.

living out communion, community, and mission together, and always seeking to reproduce disciples, leaders, and ICs.

A detailed description of ICs, their structure and guidelines for leadership can be found in the IC Leader Handbook.

## ARTICLE 2 Purposes

### 2.01 Purposes

**Vision Statement:** The Pathway Church exists to reflect God's glory and make disciples by becoming a reproducing church in 5 specific areas. We are committed to:

- Reproducing Disciples
- Reproducing Leaders
- Reproducing Intentional Communities
- Reproducing Worship Gatherings
- Reproducing Churches in Tacoma, across the nation, and throughout the world.

**Mission Statement:** We exist to reflect God's glory by reproducing disciples through Intentional Community.

## ARTICLE 3 Intentional Communities

### 3.01 Definition

An Intentional Community (IC) is a group of ordinary people who are daily trying their best to intentionally love God, love one another, and love their city. Each IC gathers weekly to study Scripture, pray, ask hard questions, and plan ways to tangibly love Tacoma.

IC shall be the church's primary means for living out the purposes of the church. ICs do this by

## ARTICLE 4 Partnership

### 4.01 Requirements

The church will have one class of membership hereby referred to as "Partnership." Partners of the church shall consist of all persons who have met the minimum qualifications for Partnership and are listed on the Active Partnership Roll. The church does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of gender, race, age, or ethnic origin. A person of any age may be a Partner, but minors shall have consent from a parent/guardian. The requirements of Partnership are the following:

- Completion of Partnership Class
- Signing and living in accordance with the Partnership Covenant

The Elders may adopt and amend application procedures and requirements for Partnership.

### 4.02 Responsibilities

Partnership within a local church carries both privileges and responsibilities. Partners of the church are held accountable to the responsibilities of general Christian obligations and to the church. These responsibilities are outlined in the Partnership Covenant, which is incorporated by reference into these Bylaws.

### 4.03 Voting Rights of Partners

The time, place, and nature of upcoming votes will be communicated to the church at least twenty-one (21) days in advance (unless these Bylaws provide otherwise for a particular vote),

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and Active Partners shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns, which will be considered by the Elders. Voting shall take place at the discretion of the Elders.

\*The following require two-thirds (66%) affirmative vote from the Partners:

- The annual operating budget
- Purchase and/or sale of land or buildings
- Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or the Bylaws of the church
- Annual vote to empower the Lead Pastor & staff to make the day-to-day decisions of the church
- Annual vote to empower the Elders to cast vision and lead the church in accomplishing the vision

\*The following require ninety percent (90%) affirmative vote from the Partners:

- Dissolution of the church
- The calling or removing of the Lead Pastor
- Election of the Elders

## 4.04 Formal Dispute Resolution

Partners shall refrain from filing lawsuits against the church or against another Partner or leader of the church. In keeping with 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, all formal, non-criminal disputes which may arise between any Partner of the church and the church itself, or between any Partner of the church and any Elder, employee, volunteer, agent, or other Partner of this church, shall be resolved by mediation through the Elders.

## 4.05 Partnership Renewal and Termination

Partnership is reviewed and renewed on an annual basis. Partners are removed from the church's Active Partnership Roll through:

- death
- failure to renew their Partnership
- inactivity in the church for a period of 1 year
- transfer of Partnership/membership to another church
- by personal request of the Partner
- a decision by the Elders according to the disciplinary process laid out in Article 11.

Partners are prohibited from voluntarily resigning their Partnership while subject to the formal disciplinary process laid out in Article 11.

## 4.06 Restoration of Partners

Partners dismissed by the Elders shall be restored by the Elders in accordance with the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when they have repented and their lifestyles are determined by the Elders to be in accordance with the Partnership Covenant.

## 4.07 Partnership Rolls

In an effort to properly reflect Partnership in the church, the following partnership rolls shall be maintained:

**Active Partnership Roll:** This roll shall list all partners who have a current (less than one year old) signed and dated Partnership Covenant.

**Inactive Partnership Roll:** Partners removed from the Active Partnership Roll according to the provision of Article 4.05 of these Bylaws shall be recorded on the Inactive Partnership Roll for a maximum of two years. Inactive Partners may not vote and must renew their Partnership Covenant and consistently resume the activity and duties of a Partner for four months to become Active again. Former Partners who have been inactive for more than two years must complete a Partnership class to become Active Partners again.

Nothing in Article 4 shall be construed as limiting the right of the church to refer informally to

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persons associated with it as “members,” such as regular church attenders who have not signed a Partnership Covenant. No such reference, however, shall constitute any such person as a Partner of the corporation.

## ARTICLE 5 Partner Meetings

### 5.01 General

Worship and Intentional Community (IC) gatherings shall take place regularly. Partner meetings (i.e. membership or business meetings) shall be held at a place or places as may be designated by the Elders. Partner meetings will be referred to as Family Meetings.

### 5.02 Family Meetings

A general Family Meeting of the Partners shall be held at least annually at such time as determined by the Elders. The purpose of Family Meetings may include but is not limited to the adoption of an annual budget, the empowering of the Lead Pastor and church staff, the installing of Elders, and conducting any other necessary business.

### 5.03 Special Family Meetings

The Elders or Lead Pastor may call special Family Meetings at any time for any purpose by giving notice to the Partners in accordance with Section 5.04.

### 5.04 Notice of Family Meetings

At the direction of the Lead Pastor or the Elders, notice of a Family Meeting will be given to Partners as follows:

- Written or printed notice stating the place, day, and hour of the Family Meeting and, in case of a special meeting, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, may be delivered via regular mail or electronic mail not less than ten (10) days before the date of the meeting. Notice

may be given as far in advance as deemed beneficial but a reminder must be given within thirty (30) days.

- Alternatively, notice may be given by verbal and written announcement at regular weekend gatherings. If given at regular weekend gatherings, notice shall be deemed delivered if distributed for two (2) consecutive weeks.
- At their discretion, the Lead Pastor or Elders may use more than one method of notice, including additional notice via social media.

### 5.05 Quorum and Voting

The number of Partners present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Votes shall be cast by secret ballot and counted by the Elders unless otherwise specified. Absentee voting is permitted if a Partner waives his/her right to a secret vote by e-mailing a vote to the Elders before the Family Meeting which the Partner is unable to attend. Proxy voting is not permitted. Unless otherwise dictated by applicable Bylaws, every action taken or decision made by a majority of the Partners present at a meeting duly noticed and called shall be the act of the Partners.

## ARTICLE 6 Elder Council

### 6.01 General

The Partners shall elect a group of men to serve as the Elder Council. The Elder Council establishes a vision and mission and provides spiritual leadership for the Church. The Elder Council will also constitute the legal representation of the church as the Board of Directors.

In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the Elder Council shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound

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doctrine), and shepherding God's people. The Elder Council shall recognize the unique vocational calling and responsibilities placed upon pastors and ministry staff. Under the leadership of the Lead Pastor, the Elder Council shall serve to uphold the theology, advance the vision, and guard the unity of The Pathway. The Elder Council will provide counsel, encouragement, and exhortation to vocational staff.

## 6.02 Number and Term

The Elders shall be composed of the Lead Pastor and at least two laymen, such that the number of Elders shall be no less than three (3). The majority of the team must be laymen. Elders may serve indefinitely but may take a one-year break as needed or as recommended by the Elder Council.

## 6.03 Qualifications

The minimum qualifications for Elders shall not be less than those listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. An Elder must be a Partner of The Pathway who fully subscribes to the church's doctrinal statement (Appendix 1), is actively involved in an Intentional Community, and has submitted to a background check.

## 6.04 Responsibilities

The responsibility of the Elder Council shall be:

- To establish the overall vision and mission of the church.
- To adopt and maintain a resolution establishing any additional qualifications for a person, except the Pastor, to be installed as an Elder.
- To govern and lead the church from a centralized vantage point, including but not limited to teaching, protecting, leading, disciplining, equipping, and caring for the corporate church body and its individual Partners.
- To regularly pray for the Lead Pastor.

- To annually review the Pastor and assist the Pastor in supervising staff as necessary.
- To hold in trust for Covenanted Partners all church property.

## 6.05 Discharge of Duties

Elders shall discharge their duties in good faith and in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interest of the church. Elders may, in good faith, rely on information, opinions, reports, and/or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, concerning the church or another person, that were prepared or presented by a variety of persons, including officers and employees of the church, professional advisors, or experts such as accountants or legal counsel.

## 6.06 Delegation of Duties

Members of the Elder Team may delegate duties that are delegable by law to employees, agents, or advisors and ascribe to them full power and authority to perform such duties. Elder Team members shall have no liability for actions taken or omitted by such employees, agents, or advisors if the Elder Team acts in good faith in selecting the employees, agents or advisors.

## 6.07 Compensation

Elder Council members shall not receive compensation for their services on the Elder Council, with the exception of salaried employees who also serve as pastoral staff. An Elder may serve the church in any other capacity and receive reasonable compensation for those activities.

## 6.08 Nomination and Election

Prospective Elder Council members shall be nominated by the existing Elders (whether active or those currently on a break under Section 6.02), with recommendations made by the Partners, and evaluated for candidacy by current members of the Elder Council. The Elder Council shall ensure that any candidate brought before the church for appointment meets the qualifications of this

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section. Persons nominated to serve on the Elder Council shall be presented to the Partners for election at the Annual Family Meeting or at a special meeting. Partners shall have an opportunity to submit questions, comments and concerns. Each individual nominee must receive an affirmative vote of at least ninety percent (90%) of the Partners present in order to be appointed to the council.

## 6.09 Removal

If at any time a member of the Elder Council fails to maintain the biblical standards of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 or Titus 1:5-9 and/or to live by and uphold the Partner Covenant of this church, he may offer his resignation or be dismissed from the Elder Council by a unanimous vote of all other members of the Council. The procedure for dismissal shall be subject to the biblical guidelines as set forth in 1 Timothy 5:19-20, Matthew 18:15-17, and Galatians 6:1-2. Removal of the Lead Pastor is also subject to section 4.03.

## 6.10 Vacancies

A vacancy in the Elder Team because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled only in the manner prescribed in these Bylaws for regular appointments to that office, except that vacancies may be filled as they occur.

## 6.11 Decision Making

The Elders shall always prayerfully endeavor to make all decisions by consensus of the leadership considering such action, at times seeking affirmation from the Partners.

“Consensus” does not mean unanimity or that every applicable leader agrees with every aspect of every issue. Rather, consensus indicates that no applicable leader has a significant enough disagreement to preclude all applicable leaders from fully supporting any given decision. Consensus requires applicable leaders to “speak with one voice” on important matters and confines disagreements to discussion at the meetings of the applicable leadership team. If consensus cannot be reached, the Elder Council

will not immediately move forward on any decision or change until a consensus can be reached.

## ARTICLE 7 Deacons

### 7.01 Qualifications

Deacons are lead servants who support the vision, mission, and goal of the church. Deacons must be Partners in good standing in accordance with Section 4.02 and possess the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

### 7.02 Responsibilities

Deacons are responsible for supporting the Elders in the ministry of the Word, caring for the needs of the church and community, and promoting the unity of the church (Acts 6:1-6).

### 7.03 Appointment

Deacons are men and women appointed by the Elders for service to the church. Partners may, at any time, submit to the Elders the name of a person believed to be qualified. Elders will determine that a nominated individual meets the qualifications for Deacon ministry and then may approve that person as a Deacon. The Elders will assign to each Deacon responsibilities based on giftedness and need.

### 7.04 Removal

Concerns regarding Deacons shall be brought to the Elders for review. A Deacon may be removed from service as a Deacon by (i) the Elders, (ii) resignation, or (iii) death.

## ARTICLE 8 Church Staff

The church may employ ministerial staff in addition to the Lead Pastor to equip the church for ministry. Persons so employed must be approved by the Elders. Men and women serving

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on the Ministerial Staff must affirm in writing their agreement with the Partnership Covenant and these Bylaws and give evidence of spiritual maturity, service, devotional life, and leadership ability that is required for the position. They are responsible to their respective supervisors and/or designated leaders for accountability, serve at the will of the church, and may be removed with or without cause or any particular length of notice by the Elders. The Elders will determine job titles (e.g., Pastor, Minister, Associate, Assistant, etc.) and establish the hiring criteria and responsibilities for each position.

## ARTICLE 9 Church Council

### 9.01 General

From time to time, if the church has less than three (3) active Elders, a Church Council will assist the Lead Pastor (or interim pastor) in serving and leading the church in vision and mission. The Church Council will make decisions as described in Section 6.11.

### 9.02 Number and Term

The Church Council will exist only in the absence of an Elder Council. If the Elder Council decreases to less than three qualified and affirmed men, the Deacons will meet to form a Church Council, which will be affirmed by the Partners at a regular or special Family Meeting. The number of members of the Church Council, which should include the Lead Pastor, interim pastor and/or remaining Elders, shall not be less than five and no more than seven. Other than the Lead Pastor and/or other Elders, the Church Council shall consist of deacons who are not on the payroll. Once the required number of Elders is in place to reestablish the Elder Council, the Church Council will dissolve immediately.

### 9.03 Qualifications

All members of the Church Council shall have been Partners of The Pathway for a minimum of one

year and are actively involved in Intentional Communities. They must also be qualified as a Deacon, as described in Article 7, and affirmed by the Partners at a Family Meeting.

While in existence, the Church Council may adopt, amend, and repeal resolutions establishing additional qualifications for members of the Church Council.

### 9.04 Discharge of Duties

Members of the Church Council shall discharge their duties in good faith, with ordinary care, and in a manner they reasonably believe to be in the best interest of the church. Church Council members may, in good faith, rely on information, opinions, reports and/or statements, including financial statements and other financial data, concerning the Church or another person, that were prepared or presented by a variety of persons, including officers and employees of the Church, professional advisors, or experts such as accountants or legal counsel.

### 9.05 Delegation of Duties

Members of the Church Council may delegate duties that are delegable by law to employees, agents, or advisors and ascribe to them full power and authority to perform such duties. Church Council members shall have no liability for actions taken or omitted by such employees, agents, or advisors if the Church Council acts in good faith in selecting the employees, agents or advisors.

### 9.06 Nomination and Election

The Deacons, with the advice and consent of the Lead Pastor, shall nominate by consensus deacons to serve on the Church Council. Persons (other than the Lead Pastor or another Elder) nominated to serve on the Church Council shall be presented to the Partners for election at a regular or special called Family Meeting.

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## 9.07 Removal

A member of the Church Council may be removed with due notice, with or without cause, by a majority vote of the Church Council, at any regular meeting or special meeting of the Church Council with at least two thirds (2/3) of the voting members present. Removal of the Lead Pastor is also subject to section 4.03.

## 9.08 Vacancies

A vacancy in the Church Council because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled only in the manner prescribed in these Bylaws for regular appointments to that office, except that vacancies may be filled as they occur.

## 9.09 Decision Making

The Church Council shall always prayerfully endeavor to make all decisions by consensus of the leadership considering such action, at times seeking affirmation from the Covenant Partners.

“Consensus” does not mean unanimity, or that every applicable leader agrees with every aspect of every issue. Rather, consensus indicates that no applicable leader has a significant enough disagreement to preclude all applicable leaders from fully supporting any given decision. Consensus requires applicable leaders to “speak with one voice” on important matters, and confines disagreements to discussion at the meetings of the applicable leadership team.

## ARTICLE 10 Finance Team

### 10.01 General

The church shall have a Finance Team that oversees and approves the major financial decisions for the church.

The Finance Team shall consist of three Partners who are not employed by the church. The Elder serving in the office of Treasurer will lead the Team and will select two Partners (non-Elders) to serve on the Team for a minimum of two consecutive years, not to exceed five consecutive years.

The Lead Pastor shall submit an annual budget to the Finance Team for approval. Upon approval, the Finance Team will present the budget to the Partners for final adoption. The Team shall also approve:

- budgeted purchases over \$1,000
- all non-budgeted purchases above \$500
- financial partnerships with churches, missionaries, organizations and individuals
- salaries and wages of church staff

The Finance Team shall always prayerfully endeavor to make all decisions by consensus of the leadership considering such action, at times seeking affirmation from the Covenant Partners.

“Consensus” does not mean unanimity, or that every applicable leader agrees with every aspect of every issue. Rather, consensus indicates that no applicable leader has a significant enough disagreement to preclude all applicable leaders from fully supporting any given decision. Consensus requires applicable leaders to “speak with one voice” on important matters, and confines disagreements to discussion at the meetings of the applicable leadership team.

Regular meetings of the Finance Team shall occur each quarter (January, April, July, October). These meetings shall consist of discussions on the overall financial health of the church, important financial decisions that may take place in the near future, and the Lead Pastor presenting any new or possible financial information to the team. The Lead Pastor or team may call any special meeting as they deem necessary outside of the regular quarterly meetings.

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## 10.02 Salaries & Compensation

The Finance Team will work with the Elders to determine salary and financial package for the Lead Pastor including but not limited to raises and bonuses.

The Finance Team will work with the Lead Pastor and Elders to determine the salary, compensation, and financial package for all other staff members.

## ARTICLE 11 Church Discipline

Most church discipline will take place within the confines of Intentional Community, and the goal is always repentance, reconciliation, and restoration.

In the broadest sense, church discipline is everything the church does to help its members pursue holiness and fight sin. Preaching, teaching, prayer, corporate worship, accountability relationships, and godly oversight by IC Leaders and elders are all forms of discipline.

In a narrower sense, church discipline is the act of correcting sin in the life of the body, including the possible final step of excluding a professing Christian from fellowship with the body.

We use the model shown to us by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20:

*“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”*

## 11.02 Steps in Church Discipline

1. First, a Partner with cause to believe that another Partner has sinned should lovingly confront that individual alone with evidence of the sin.
2. If the offending person is in sin and will not repent, we are instructed to take two or three together to establish the charge of the offense. Whenever possible, the offending person's IC Leader should be present. If the offender is an IC Leader, an Elder should be invited into the process at this point.
3. If the offending person still will not repent, the IC Leader (or, in the absence of an IC Leader, another Partner who has spoken with the offending person) should inform the Elders. After the Elders have been brought into the process the entire IC should be informed with grace and love for the purpose of prayer and unity. Specific details should not be shared unless absolutely necessary. The IC should be informed that previous steps were taken to address sin.
4. Finally, if all the previous steps have been faithfully pursued and repentance is not displayed, the Elders will terminate Partnership and remove that person from fellowship with the body. This will entail exclusion from corporate worship gatherings, Intentional Community gatherings, and all other church events until full repentance is displayed. The Elders will take this step if the Partner's life and conduct are not in accordance with the Partnership Covenant in such a way that the Partner hinders ministry or harms the influence of the church in the community without repentance. If the Elders must remove someone from Partnership and fellowship with the body, the Active Partnership will be informed at a regular or special called Family Meeting.

We believe that church discipline can be the means by which God brings awareness to us of our sin and our need to repent and turn from it, and He uses the people in the believer's life to accomplish this. Each step should be covered in



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prayer, and clear communication between all involved parties should be exhibited throughout the process.

The overall goal of church discipline is repentance, reconciliation, and restoration to the body of Christ for the believer. We desire to be a grace-filled church that shows love to a fellow believer who has sinned, showing the same love and grace that Jesus Christ has shown us. We will rejoice together when a wayward believer returns.

## ARTICLE 12 Dissolution

In the event of a voluntary dissolution of the church, the net assets of the church shall, after payment or provision for payment of all liabilities of the church, be distributed to the Puget Sound Baptist Association Church Planting Group.

## ARTICLE 13 Indemnification

### 13.01 Indemnification

To the full extent permitted by the Washington Business Corporation Act, the church shall indemnify any person who was or is part of or is threatened to be made a party to any civil, criminal administrative or investigative action, suit or proceeding (whether brought by or in the right of the church or otherwise) by reason of the fact that this is or was a director or officer of the church, or is serving at the request of the church as a director or officer of another corporation, against expenses (including attorney's fees), judgments, fines, and amount paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him/her in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding; and the Elders may, at any time, additionally approve indemnification of any other person which the church has the power to indemnify under the Washington Business Corporation Act. The indemnification provided by this section shall

not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which a person may be entitled as a matter of law or by contract.

### 13.02 Insurance

The church may, at the discretion of the Elders, purchase and maintain insurance, at its expense, to protect itself and any director, officer, employee or agent of the church or who, while a director, officer, employee or agent of the church, is or was a director, officer, trustee, employee, partner or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan or other enterprise against any expense, liability or loss, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify such a person against such expense, liability or loss under the Washington Nonprofit Corporation Act or the Washington Business Corporation Act.

### 13.03 Survival of Benefits

Any repeal or modification of this Article shall not adversely affect any right or claim to indemnification already existing at the time of such repeal or modification.

### 13.04 Severability

If any provision of this Article or any application thereof shall be invalid, unenforceable, or contrary to applicable law, the remainder of this Article or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, unenforceable, or contrary to applicable law shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.

### 13.05 Applicable Law

For the purposes of this Article, "applicable law" shall at all times be construed as the applicable law in effect at the date indemnification may be sought, or the law in effect at the date of the action, omission or other event giving rise to the situation for which indemnification may be sought, whichever is selected by the person seeking indemnification.

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## ARTICLE 14 Amendments

The Elders may propose amendments to the Bylaws and submit them to be approved at any Family Meeting. The Elders must provide advance notice of proposed amendments to all Partners at least ten (10) days before such meeting. To be approved, amendments must receive at least 2/3 (66%) of all votes cast.

## ARTICLE 15 Affiliations

Southern Baptist Convention  
Northwest Baptist Convention  
Puget Sound Baptist Association

## ARTICLE 16 Officers

The Elders shall appoint officers of the church including a Chairman (also referred to as a President), one or more Vice Chairmen, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, each of whom shall be selected from amongst the Elders; provided, however the Lead Pastor will serve as the Chairman. Any officer may be assigned by the Elders any additional title that the Elders deem appropriate. Any two (2) or more offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of Chairman and Treasurer.

### 16.01 Duties

#### (a) Chairman

The Chairman shall perform such duties as are incumbent upon such Officer, including making certain that all orders and resolutions of the Elders are carried into effect. The Chairman shall set the agenda and moderate Elder and Family Meetings unless he is absent or there is good cause why he should not (e.g. if he is the subject of proposed action at the meeting).

#### (b) Vice Chairman

The Vice Chairman shall, in the absence of a duly-appointed Chairman or in the event of the Chairman's inability or refusal to act, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the Chairman and shall perform such other duties as the Elders may assign.

#### (c) Secretary

The Secretary shall record or cause to be recorded minutes of all Elder and Family Meetings and all decisions made at such meetings. He shall maintain and secure church records, perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Secretary, and perform such other duties as the Elders may assign

#### (d) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall serve as the overseer of the financial operations of the church. Paid church staff members are accountable to the Treasurer for management of the financial aspects of the church. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties as the Elders may assign.

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## Appendix 1

### Doctrinal Statement

Simply put, we believe in the triune God (Father, Son, & Holy Spirit) and that Jesus (the Son) is the only way to salvation. We believe the Bible is God's holy word to us and it is absolutely true. The following is a summary of our major doctrinal beliefs which is adapted from "The Baptist Faith and Message" and was adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

#### I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18;22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

#### II. God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

#### A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10;17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

#### B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

# The Pathway Church Bylaws

## C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

## III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew*

*16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

## IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace. Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior. B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God. C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life. D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

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## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## VI. The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors, elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor/elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture. The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

*Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14;*

*3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

## VII. Baptism and Communion

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper. Communion (the Lord's Supper) is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## II. Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. Marriage is the unity of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7*

# The Pathway Church Bylaws

## Appendix 2

### Partner Covenant

Partnership within a local church carries both privileges and responsibilities. Partners of the church are held accountable to the responsibilities of general Christian obligations-outlined within the Partnership Covenant which are as follows:

- Responded to the Holy Spirit's call to follow Jesus and trust him for salvation through his death and resurrection and have been or have plans to be baptized.
- Consistent and contributing part of an Intentional Community.
- Consistent and contributing part of The Pathway's weekly worship gathering. This includes serving on a volunteer team.
- Self-feeder who spends consistent time reading the Bible and praying throughout the week.
- Pursue a life worthy of being described as a member of the body of Christ. This includes but is not limited to: obedience to the teachings of Jesus & the Scriptures, unity with other members of the body, grace towards others, confession, repentance and restoration through the gospel.
- Give financially to the work and ministry of The Pathway - monthly at a minimum, starting with something, working towards a tithe (10% of income) - and pursue extreme generosity.
- Submit to the pastoral leadership of the church, starting with the senior pastor Jesus Christ, and including counsel, accountability and spiritual discipline from church leadership, defined as Elders, Church Council, and IC Leaders.
- Committed to living as a missionary for the gospel. This includes reproducing oneself

by making disciples within one's sphere of influence and working sacrificially with one's Intentional Community toward saturating a mission field with the gospel and birthing a new Intentional Community.

- Renew partnership on an annual basis.
- Attend or listen on-line to The Pathway's annual Vision Series.