

ChristWay Community Church Constitution and Bylaws

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**CHRISTWAY COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.
OF OOLTEWAH, TENNESSEE**
(A Nonprofit Corporation)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

We declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly and biblical manner consistent with the essential tenets of Southern Baptist churches. This Constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual Church Member and the freedom of action of this body in its relations to other churches of like faith.

ARTICLE I – NAME AND LOCATION

This body shall be known as CHRISTWAY COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC. of OOLTEWAH, TENNESSEE. The principal office of the corporation, hereinafter referred to as the “Church”, shall be located at 6201 Mountain View Road, the address set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The Church may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Tennessee, as the officers may determine from time to time.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE

In seeking to carry out the New Testament mandate, this Church desires to be the “body of Christ” locally. We are one body with many members, each having differing responsibilities, all working under the direction of the Head, which is Jesus Christ (Eph. 4:4-16). The purpose of the church is to equip the body through worship, education, and fellowship in order to witness, to disciple, to minister, and to apply the teachings of Jesus Christ in all areas of life. In carrying out the purpose of the body, ChristWay will pursue three vital relationships: Intimacy with God, Community with Insiders, and Influence with Outsiders. In order to have a balanced life with Christ and his Church we must always pursue each of these relationships as equally important.

We believe that practicing faith is a serious, yet simple matter. We have established a clear mission, strategy to carry out that mission, distinctives, and core values that guide us as we seek to carry out the work of Jesus Christ. The following are the **Mission, Strategy, Distinctives, and Core Values** of our Church.

Our Mission:

ChristWay's mission is “Developing people into faithful followers of Jesus Christ.”

Our Strategy:

ChristWay will encourage spiritual development by connecting people in small group environments. In order to become an authentic community of Christ we recognize that Sunday morning worship environments are not the most conducive context for accountability, belonging, and care. Therefore ChristWay will strive to move it's attendees through, but not out of, our large group congregational worship into a small group context where we feel real authentic life change can occur most easily.

Our Distinctives:

ChristWay will be seeker aware in our approach to ministry. We will seek to be sensitive to the needs of those who attend our services by trying to create excellent and relevant environments that are conducive for the Holy Spirit to work most effectively. We will be proactive in removing all potential obstacles but the cross (the message of Christ). We will seek to be a place where the hurting and confused can find love, acceptance, help, forgiveness, guidance, and encouragement. We will have seeker events. These events are designed for people who may be seeking answers concerning God. These people will have the opportunity to come and learn in a non-threatening environment.

However, ChristWay will NOT be a seeker driven church. We will seek to be Savior sensitive in our worship. For seekers cannot worship the Living God. We will seek to represent a holy and righteous, yet loving and forgiving God in the worship of our church. We will uphold a high standard of Christian living while answering the question of why for those seeking answers.

ChristWay will seek to become a spirit-filled church. We will value spirit-filled music and preaching/teaching of the Word of God. We will value joyful and celebrative praise and worship. We will use the latest technology to communicate but will not compromise the message.

ChristWay will be an Elder governed and equipped church. Members will be free from unnecessary maintenance meetings to perform ministry. We will embrace ministry teams for the effective execution of ministry. Every member will be viewed as a minister and expected to participate in group life as well as Strategic Service teams.

ChristWay will utilize covenants to uphold the highest integrity and accountability for membership and ministry.

Our Core Values:

1. Biblical Authority

The Bible is God's Word to us. It is divine, authoritative, infallible, inerrant, God-breathed, and truth without any mixture of error. ChristWay will uphold the authority of Scripture. WE will seek to apply timeless truth in timely ways without compromising accurate interpretation of the text in its original context.

2. Personal Integrity

ChristWay will value authentic Spirit-led living. Christ's desire is that His body be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt. 5:13-16). We are to live by the power of His Spirit and allow His life to be formed in us (Gal. 5:16-25).

3. Intimacy with God

ChristWay will value intimacy with God. This is an important value because it affects two important functions of the healthy church: prayer and worship. The Christian life is an intimate relationship with God. It is this personal relationship that transforms our lives into His likeness. ChristWay will value this intimate relationship and seek to develop passionate, fully devoted followers of Christ. (*Vital Relationship #1*)

4. Authentic Community

ChristWay will value authentic relationship within the body. We will seek to become a Biblically functioning community of believers who reflect His love before a watching world. (*Vital Relationship #2*)

5. A Passion for the Lost

ChristWay will value the intentional building of relationships with the lost. A healthy church must have the heart of God, and God's heart beats for those who are lost. ChristWay must properly understand God's great salvation, embrace the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ as the atonement for the world's sins, and see herself on mission with God to reach the world with the Good News. Reaching the lost is to be a priority at ChristWay. (*Vital Relationship #3*)

6. Disciple-development

ChristWay will take seriously the mandate of Christ to "make disciples" (Mt. 28:19). The goal of ChristWay will be that every newborn Christian becomes a mature, faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship is more than knowing God's Word. Discipleship is living God's Word and mentoring others in God's Word!

7. Each Believer's Giftedness

ChristWay will value the commitment to use individual spiritual gifts in ministry. Each member of the body has an important function within the overall mission of the body. For the body to accomplish its God-given purpose each member must recognize his or her area of giftedness and delight to serve to the betterment of the entire body. ChristWay will value this giftedness and help believers discover, develop and use their spiritual gifts.

ARTICLE III – DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

This Body of Christ, acting together with the leadership of the Holy Spirit, determines its doctrine and practice, always respecting the priesthood of every believer. In essentials we have unity, in non-essentials we have liberty, and in all things we have love. Any action or judgment of doctrine and practice shall always be referred to the Elders of the Church and will be considered by them with serious intent and prayer. The Baptist Faith & Message, most recently Revised Version, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention and interpreted by this local body, shall serve as a guideline for this local church's interpretation of Scripture, doctrine, and practice, so long as it remains true to God's Word.

ARTICLE IV – GOVERNING POLICIES

This local body will be independent and self-governing; always recognizing Jesus Christ is the Head of the body. The government of this Church is vested in the body of believers, under the leadership of the Lord Jesus, and guided by the Holy Spirit. This Church shall set up Bylaws supplementing this Constitution to serve as guidelines for the carrying out of the pastoral, educational, administrative, and supportive functions of the Church. This Church is not subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body.

ARTICLE V – COOPERATION

In carrying out the wider ministry for which Jesus Christ has made us responsible, we shall voluntarily cooperate with and be a supporting part of the HAMILTON COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, the TENNESSEE BAPTIST CONVENTION, and the SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION, so long as each remains true to God's Word. The Church will, as possible, cooperate with other local, state, national and international Christian organizations.

From time to time members or non-members of the Church may desire to use the Church's property, buildings and meeting facilities, vehicles, equipment, assets and other resources in support of their private pursuits or those of their groups or organizations. The Church reserves the right and privilege to establish such policies and guidelines appertaining to non-Church use of Church assets. Persons or groups associated with unscriptural conduct or not in friendly cooperation with the Church's Purpose, Objectives, Doctrine, and Practice may be disqualified from using Church assets and resources for non-Church purposes and events.

The Church desires to be in voluntary compliance both organizationally and operationally with the Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (c) (3) applying to religious, nonprofit corporations. The private inurement prohibition will be adhered to in policies and guidelines pertaining to Church members who may be granted use of assets and resources for non-Church functions.

ARTICLE VI – ORDINANCES

The ordinances of this Church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

- A. **Baptism.** A person who receives Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith and who indicates a commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord, shall be received for baptism. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the death and burial of the old life, and the resurrection and new life in Christ. The Elders, Deacons and Ministerial Staff shall be responsible for planning baptism services.
- B. **The Lord's Supper.** The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act during which Christians, through the partaking of bread and the fruit of the vine, commemorate the life, death, resurrection, and return of our Lord Jesus Christ. This Church, through open communion, invites any believer to participate with us in the Lord's Supper. The Elders, Deacons, and Ministerial Staff shall be responsible for planning times to observe the Lord's Supper.

ARTICLE VII – MEMBERSHIP

Membership in this Church is a covenant relationship, not only with God, but also with other members of the body. Under God's leadership through Jesus Christ, the members become committed to each other to do the work of the Church. Membership requires the following: a conversion experience in which the individual becomes a new person in Christ, a public profession of that faith, believer's baptism, and a commitment to be an active part of this local body, supporting it in word and deed.

ARTICLE VIII – ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

This Church shall organize itself into the necessary units for carrying out the purposes of this Church. These units shall be subject to periodic review and change, so that we might always carry out the purposes of this Church in the most effective and orderly manner. Those serving in the capacity of leadership in these units shall be members actively involved in fulfilling the Church's mission.

ARTICLE IX– LEADERSHIP

The offices and leadership of this Church shall be set forth in the Bylaws of this Constitution, and their qualifications and responsibilities shall be defined.

ARTICLE X– AMENDMENT

Any amendments to this Constitution must be based upon the unanimous recommendation of the Elders and the affirmative consensus of the congregation. Proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be provided, in writing, to every resident Church member for at least 30 days of prayer and discussion prior to the date of affirmation by the membership. Affirmation will be according to the process outlined in the Bylaws.

**CHRISTWAY COMMUNITY CHURCH, INC.
OF OOLTEWAH, TENNESSEE**

BYLAWS

These Bylaws are adopted in accordance with and subject to the Constitution of CHRISTWay Community Church (C.W.C.C), hereinafter referred to as the “Church”, so that there might be orderly, biblical organization and administration of the Church.

ARTICLE I – CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1.1. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Members must be authentic followers of Jesus Christ. It is expected that Members will understand and agree with the following statements.

- a. I recognize that I was born a sinner and have offended a holy God by my own sins.
- b. I understand my depravity and lack of any righteousness in myself.
- c. I recognize that I cannot save myself by my own effort.
- d. I recognize that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, was born of a virgin, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross in order to pay the penalty for my sins.
- e. I believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and now sits at the right hand of God the Father.
- f. I have repented of my sins and have trusted in the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ for a full pardon for my sins, and have received the gift of eternal life and the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- g. It is my intention to faithfully follow Jesus Christ for the rest of my life.

SECTION 1.2. MEMBERSHIP TYPES

2 Types of Memberships:

1. **Full Membership:** Anyone that is living in the area indefinitely.
 - a) Will obtain all member privileges. (Able to serve in any role and vote on church matters.)
2. **Transient Membership:** Anyone that is already a member of another church but is away from home for either school or work for an extended amount of time.
 - a) Will have all the privileges of the full membership with the exception of voting on church matters as well as being on any governing team.
 - b) Also church discipline will not apply. However their home church will be contacted and given the responsibility of discipline.

SECTION 1.3. RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

Applicants for membership become candidates by presenting themselves to any pastoral staff, Elder, or at any public worship service where opportunity is given. Candidates will be required to complete a new member’s orientation class. After completion of the membership orientation and requirements, the Elders will review and approve the candidate’s membership request. Upon approval, candidates will be publicly affirmed by the body. New Members may be received in the following ways:

- a. By Baptism after conversion.
- b. By Letter of Recommendation from another church of like faith and order, which verifies membership.

- c. By Statement. When a church letter cannot be obtained because of lost records or similar unavoidable circumstances, applicants are received upon their statement affirming their faith, baptism by immersion and church membership.
- d. By Restoration. When members of this Church who have been excluded from membership, per Section 1.7, seek restoration; they will meet with the Elders to make explanation of their experiences and their desire for restoration. Once the Elders see evidence of repentance and reformation, the Member shall be restored to membership.

1.3A. Process for Consideration of Church Membership

- a. The person shall meet with an elder or an elder-appointed member to discuss if he or she has truly trusted Christ as Savior.
- b. An elder or an elder-appointed member of the church shall give an information packet including the constitution and by-laws, and the membership covenant/commitment to the applicant.
- c. An elder or elder-appointed member of the church shall meet with the candidate to discuss and answer any questions regarding the church and his or her membership commitment, which includes their willingness to regularly serve the body.
- d. If after meeting with an elder of the church, the person is found to be of kindred spirit with the church, and can and will commit to the responsibilities of membership, an elder shall present his or her request for membership to the elder body for approval.
- e. If a request for membership is denied due to the person's inability or unwillingness to meet any of the requirements for membership set forth herein, an elder of the church shall meet with the person to discuss and answer any questions regarding the decision of the elder body.
- f. Upon elder body approval, the new member shall be publicly presented to the church as a fellow member of the church.
- g. The new member shall be assigned to a small group for care.

SECTION 1.4. MEMBERSHIP ROLL

A roll of the membership shall be kept for the sake of records. The membership roll shall be regularly reviewed and updated at least annually by the Church office.

SECTION 1.5. RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- a. Members have the responsibility to prayerfully seek God's direction and affirm the direction of the Church.
- b. Members have the responsibility to scripturally support the Church through regular participation, serving, fellowship and giving.
- c. Members have the responsibility to love one another.
- d. Members have the right to voice their ideas, concerns, and questions to the Elders.

- e. Every member of this Church is eligible for service in or appointment to places of leadership, except when otherwise specified in the Bylaws.

SECTION 1.6. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

The policy of this Church shall be to remove the names of Members from the Church roll for the following reasons:

- a. Death.
- b. Letter. Letters of dismissal for any Member of the Church in good standing shall be granted upon the request from any other church of like faith and order.
- c. Resignation. A Member of this Church who desires to terminate their membership with this body may do so by expressing such desire to the Church.
- d. Erasure. When it is known that a Member has become affiliated with a church of another faith and order, the name shall be removed from the membership roll.
- e. Deactivation. A Member's name may be deactivated after one year of no contact or involvement with the local church body. Since this is under the category of Termination, a letter should be sent to the Member requesting a status of their church attendance plan. If no response is received within one month, the Member's name should be removed from the membership role. The Elders will be responsible for initiating deactivation.
- f. Exclusion. The Elders may also, after giving due notice to the Member and making every effort to make such action unnecessary, terminate the membership of Members if restoration is not possible (see Section 1.7).

SECTION 1.7. ACCOUNTABILITY, DISCIPLINE, AND RESTORATION OF MEMBERS

This Church will extend every reasonable measure to restore any Member entangled in sin. The Elders, Ministerial staff, and Deacons will always be available for counsel and guidance. Restoration rather than exclusion is held to be the goal that governs this process. Every reasonable measure will be taken by the Elders to resolve the problem in accordance with scriptural teachings. A spirit of Christian kindness, gentleness, and forbearance shall pervade all such proceedings (Gal. 6:1-5). But, finding that the Member is unrepentant, the Elders may make the decision to exclude the person from fellowship and membership and will inform the church appropriately. In the rare event that a person is excluded from membership they shall not be treated as an enemy, but as a person to be encouraged to repentance and won back into fellowship with God and the Church.

The purpose of church discipline is to effect a return to a biblical standard of conduct and doctrine in a member who errs, to maintain purity in the local church, and to deter sin. Members of this church who shall err in doctrine or conduct shall be subject to dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18, Galatians 6:1, 1Cor 5:1-5; 1Tim. 1:18-20, 1Tim. 5:19-20; 2Tim. 2:16-18; James 5:19-20.

Before such dismissal, however:

1. It shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring member's heresy or misconduct to warn and to correct such erring member in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.
2. If said erring member does not heed this warning, then the warning member shall again go to the erring member accompanied by one or two witnesses to warn and correct such erring member, seeking his or her repentance and restoration.

3. If said erring member still refuses to heed this additional warning, then, it shall be brought to the attention of the elders.
4. The elders, upon careful and prayerful investigation, shall tell it to the church.
5. If said erring member refuses to heed the warning of the elders and the church, he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the church.
6. There shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.
7. It is understood that this process will continue to conclusion even if the erring member leaves the church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process. Any person who has been excluded from membership may seek restoration, by meeting with the Elders to make explanation of their experiences and their desire for restoration. Once the Elders see adequate evidence of repentance, the Member shall be restored to membership. The Elders will inform the church of the Member's restoration.

SECTION 1.8. MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

I affirm that I have made a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and have been scripturally baptized. I further affirm that I have read the statement of faith and doctrine of this church and am of like faith and kindred spirit.

I understand that my responsibilities as a member of this church are to:

1. *Protect the unity of ChristWay...*
 - By acting in love and respect toward all members.
 - By discussing any issue with the person involved rather than gossiping.
 - By following the leaders.

References Romans 12:5, Romans 14:19, Ephesians 4:29, Hebrews 13:17
2. *Share in the vision of ChristWay...*
 - By praying for its growth.
 - By inviting the unchurched to attend.
 - By warmly welcoming those who visit.

References Colossians 1:9-10, Luke 14:23, Romans 15:7
3. *Serve the ministry of ChristWay...*
 - By developing a servant's heart.
 - By discovering and developing my gifts and talents.
 - By being available to serve where I am gifted.

References I Peter 4:10, Ephesians 4:11-12, Philippians 2:4
4. *Support the mission of ChristWay...*
 - By attending a small group and worship services faithfully.
 - By living a godly life.
 - By financially giving to the church as a steward of God's resources.

References Hebrews 10:25, Philippians 1:27, I Corinthians 16:2

ARTICLE II – CHURCH GOVERNMENT AND LEADERSHIP

SECTION 2.1. THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

The Lord Jesus is the Chief Shepherd of this congregation. It is before Him that all other leadership must bow (Eph. 1:22, 23; Matt. 23:8–11; 1 Peter 5:4, Heb.13:20-21). He communicates His will for the church through the Bible and through prayer. He gives additional guidance by means of the specific leading of the Holy Spirit who indwells the heart of each believer. He also shepherds the flock through the leaders of the Church, to whom He has given specific gifts.

SECTION 2.2. BIBLICAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT

We believe there are three key concepts that must be recognized and applied for biblical church government to function as God intended.

2.2A. Plurality

Upon study of the key passages concerning church government (Titus 1:5, Acts 14:23.) it is clear that individual New Testament churches were led by a plurality of leaders, most often referred to as Elders, who met the qualifications outlined in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Elder model of church government is not only biblical, it is also practical. Instead of placing leadership responsibility on one man, a group of biblically qualified men are entrusted with seeking God's direction for the church, and with shepherding the church in that direction. Plurality also provides increased accountability among leadership.

2.2B. Unanimity

God's will is singular. When the Elders are in touch with the Holy Spirit, God's direction will not differ and unanimity will be the result. In Acts 15:25 (NASB), the leaders at the Jerusalem Council knew they had heard God's will when they "became of one mind." The Elders must come to unanimous agreement as to God's direction. In order for unanimity to be a practical reality, it is imperative that biblically qualified men are appointed.

2.2C. Affirmation: A Voice Instead of a Vote

The Bible teaches that prayer (hearing from God) and adherence to God's Word are the keys to the Church's decisions, not majority rule. When churches limit Members to a single vote on major issues, their voice may never be heard above that of the majority of the congregation. Each believer is a priest and has direct access to God through prayer and His Word (1 Peter 2:5). Thus, each Member of the body should have a voice, regardless of their role in the Church or the majority opinion. The expression of a Member's voice is not for the purpose of complaint or merely to express an opinion, but rather, to affirm, apply, and investigate Scripture.

The role of the Elder Council is not to follow the majority, but to ensure that God's voice is heard and His direction is followed on all decisions. After reaching a unanimous decision among themselves, the Elders will present to the church the direction they feel the Lord is leading. For major decisions, including (but not limited to) hiring pastoral staff, appointing Elders or Deacons, significant financial decisions (such as the sale or purchase of property or buildings), and changes in the constitution or bylaws, the Church will then have a period of time to voice their thoughts or concerns birthed from their prayer for God's direction. The Elders will welcome respectful communication from Members in writing and/or in special sessions of the Elder Council to hear from membership on major decisions. The Elders will humbly listen, even if it is one member who has a concern. They will continue to pray and, if appropriate, will make any changes that the Lord leads them to make after hearing the voice of the Church. After a season of prayer and discussion the Church will affirm the direction set by the Elders, trusting that God's voice has

been heard. Affirmation by the Church body will be publicly indicated by standing or raising of hands or by written affirmation during a special business meeting.

In summary, the affirmation process for major decisions (including, but not limited to, hiring of pastoral staff, sale or purchase of property, constitution or bylaws changes, appointing of Elders or Deacons) will be as follows:

- a. The Elders will pray for God's direction for the Church.
- b. Upon reaching unanimity through prayer, the Elders will clearly present to the Church the direction God is leading.
- c. The Church will be given a season of time to pray and search scripture with regard to the direction that the Elders have communicated.
- d. The Church will have the opportunity to respectfully share the results of their prayers with the Elders; either in writing, or in special sessions with the Elder Council for the purpose of hearing from the Members.
- e. The Elders will carefully and humbly listen to each Member who voices any concerns based on their prayer and biblical examination.
- f. If there is concern about the direction from the Members, and if further communication does not resolve that concern, then the Elders will continue to pray in order to be certain they have clearly heard God's voice.
- g. If God leads the Elders to continue in the original direction, then the Church will gather in a special meeting to publicly affirm that this is the direction God is leading the Church.
- h. Affirmation in the meeting will be indicated by raised hand, by standing, or by a written affirmation, depending on which the Elders believe is most appropriate for each situation. Affirmation will be a celebration acknowledging that, after a season of prayer, God's voice has been heard.

SECTION 2.3. ELDERS

2.3A. General Scope: It is our desire to let the Bible define our Church government. After diligent study of the Scriptures, our conclusion is that the New Testament churches were jointly pastored by a biblically qualified council of shepherd-elders, rather than by a single person. The Scriptures consistently show that a plurality of godly men are to share in the responsibility of leading and shepherding each individual Church (Acts 15, James 5:14, Acts 14:23, Acts 20:17, Acts 20:28, Philippians 1:1, Titus 1:5, 1 Peter 1:1, 1 Peter 5:1), though the Elders within each Church may differ in their specific functions and giftedness. Based on the New Testament, we believe that in the early Church the *presbuteros* (elders), *episkopos* (overseers or bishops) and *poimen* (pastors) were one and the same, and that their role was to humbly and ably shepherd the Church as a team, under the headship of Jesus Christ.

2.3B. Authority and Responsibilities of Elders

“To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock, and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.” – 1 Peter 5:1-3

- 1. Feed the Flock.** Elders must be able to feed the flock by teaching God's Word. They protect, guide, guard, lead, nourish, comfort, educate, and heal the flock by teaching and preaching the Word. The Bible is clear that Elders must have the ability to teach and to be heard, although not all have to preach. The elders are responsible for equipping the saints for ministry. (Acts 2:42, 1 Tim. 3:2, 1 Tim. 4:13, 1 Tim.5:17, Titus 1:9, Eph. 4:11-13). Elders

must protect the Church from unsound doctrine, sin and spiritual attack (Acts 20:17, 28-31; Titus 1:5, 9; 1 Peter 5:2-9).

2. **Lead the Flock.** In biblical language, to shepherd a group means to lead. This requires humility, leadership gifts, spiritual maturity, management skills, and hard work. Eldership is very demanding, time-consuming pastoral work, with great responsibility to God and the Church. Elders must lead by example and should model what it means to be a faithful member of the local body. Elders must be men of prayer (2 Sam. 5:2, Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:4-5, 1 Tim. 5:17, 1 Peter 5:1-3, Titus 1:7, 1 Thess. 5:12).
3. **Care for the Flock.** Elders must share the responsibility of caring for the Church's practical needs (comfort, visits, strengthening, discipling, praying, counseling, and managing) through pastoral care and hospitality. The Church is not only a flock, but also a body of Spirit-gifted, royal priests who minister to the Lord and His people. As leaders, Elders set the example and work alongside the rest of the body in caring for each other. However, each Member of the Church body must also be a minister. Biblical Elders do not control a passive congregation but lead an active, alive every member ministering church. Elders **MUST** love people. (James 5:14, Acts 6:2-6, 2 Cor. 2:4, Gal. 6:10, 1 Cor. 13:1-2, 1 Tim. 3:2, Titus 1:8).

2.3C. Qualifications of Elders

The biblical qualifications of Elders are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. An explanation of the biblical qualifications for Elders is given in Appendix I.

2.3D. Initial Selection of Elders At the date of this revision, there is no existing Ordained Elder Council. Suggested guidelines for the process of selecting the first Ordained Elder Council are in Appendix II.

2.3E. Selection of Future Elders

Nomination: When the Elders determine that there is a need for additional Elders, the Church will nominate candidates based on the biblical qualifications defined in Appendix I. Nominees must be a member of the Church for one year unless already ordained as an Elder at another church. Nominees will be contacted by the existing Elders to see if they aspire to serve and if they meet the basic qualifications to be a Candidate.

Examination: candidates will be interviewed, observed, and evaluated by the Elder Council to consider their spiritual qualifications. After a season of prayer and fasting, those whom they feel led to appoint as Elders will be placed before the Church for 21 days of public examination. During that time any Church member may present in writing to the Elder Council any concerns, based upon scripture that a Candidate may not be qualified to serve as an Elder at this time. All written concerns must be signed. No anonymous concerns will be considered. The existing Elders will investigate all concerns and will address them with each candidate as necessary.

Affirmation: Those candidates who have been proven through examination by the Elders and the Church will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

Ordination: If they have not been ordained as an Elder previously, Elder candidates will be publicly ordained in a special public service involving the laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22).

2.3F. Elder Term of Office

Once a man is appointed as an Elder, he should be honored and recognized as such for life. The only exception to this would be in the case of Biblical reasons why the man should no longer be recognized as an Elder, or because of no longer participating as an active member of the Church. However, it is expected that there may be seasons where an Elder takes a period of time off as an active member of the Elder Council, in order to reduce his leadership or teaching load during special circumstances, or due to the need for a season of rest and renewal. It is required that every Elder take a one-year inactive break from the Elder Council at least every four years for a season of refreshment and renewal. The Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder is the exception to the periodic inactive recommendation, but he will be given generous sabbatical periods after certain periods of service. An inactive Elder will not be expected to attend Elder Council meetings, or function as a Pastor during the inactive period. He may continue other duties, as necessary. The Elder Council must unanimously approve an inactive Elder returning to active status. During their active service, each Elder shall be reviewed annually by the rest of the Elders asking the following questions:

Do they continue to meet the character qualifications of an elder as outlined in this document?

Are they effective in their service as an Elder with respect to:

- (1) an active ministry and shepherding relationship with a portion of the flock?
- (2) devotion to prayer and the Word of God?
- (3) a willingness to set aside personal opinions and pursue a unified answer from God with the rest of the Council?
- (4) healthy relationships with the other Elders?
- (5) availability for and participation in the Elder meetings?

2.3G. The Elder Council

The Elder Council will consist of all ordained, active Elders. The Council will determine its own meeting schedule and location. If there are no Ministerial Staff members on the Elder Council (such as when there is a vacancy in the position of Lead Pastor), then one of the Ministerial Staff will be asked to attend Elder Council meetings in order to serve as a communication liaison to and for the Church staff. The Lead Pastor will serve as the leader among equals in the Elder Council, and may delegate administrative responsibilities among Elders and Ministerial Staff. He shall have but one vote in the elder body and in that way is an equal among equals. At the discretion of the Elder Council, Ministerial Staff or others may be invited to Elder meetings as deemed helpful to the administration and leadership of the Church.

2.3H. Number of Elders

The number of elders shall be as many as are qualified and needed to carry out the ministry of elders in the church. The elder council shall determine that number but should never be less than four and not to exceed 12. For every ordained staff Elder there shall be at least two lay Elders.

2.3I. Accountability and Removal of Elders

Elders are subject to strict accountability to the Church and to each other. Each Elder is under the oversight of the Elder Council and subject to discipline, as are all members of the Church according to Scripture. In case discipline becomes necessary, restoration to wholeness is always a goal. An Elder may be removed because he has disqualified himself due to his behavior or he is unable to presently fulfill his responsibilities. The decision to remove an Elder must be a unanimous decision from the other Elders, excluding the one in question, after much prayer. Two or more members of the congregation can bring a Biblical concern to the Elder Council concerning the qualification of an Elder (I Timothy 5:19), upon which the Elder Council will investigate and prayerfully determine what direction to follow.

The Elders will regularly communicate with the Church. Annually, the Elder Council will present to the congregation a report on all the ministries of the Church.

2.3J. Elder Training and Education

No specific education level is required of Elders. The qualifications are based on character, spiritual maturity and biblical knowledge. Elders will be encouraged to regularly attend training that further develops their biblical knowledge and leadership skills. The existing Elders will mentor and develop future Elders from the existing leaders in the Church.

2.3K. Paid and Non-Paid Elders

Both paid Ministerial Staff and non-paid members are eligible to serve as Elders and must meet the same qualifications. Paid staff Elders and non-paid Elders are of equal authority. Employment and Elder appointment are separate and distinct considerations; and not all paid ministerial staff have to be Elders. A paid member of the Ministerial Staff may cease to be an employee of the Church, either voluntarily or otherwise, but may still continue to be an Elder; and an unpaid Elder may become a member of the staff and receive compensation for specific services rendered. The Church Ministerial Staff who are not Elders should be referred to as “Ministers” not Pastors. Staff Elders and non-paid Elders should also be referred to as Pastors. Paid staff Elders will be held accountable to the Elder Council just as are all non-paid Elders, without distinction.

SECTION 2.4. LEAD PASTOR/TEACHING ELDER

2.4A. Qualifications of a Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder

The general qualifications of a Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder are the same as that of any other Elder. The Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder must be spiritually and educationally qualified to teach the Church as an under-shepherd of Christ. He should be particularly gifted in the public preaching and teaching of the Word to the body and in leadership.

2.4B. Responsibilities of a Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder

The primary responsibilities of the Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder will be prayer, study of the Word, and teaching/preaching of the Word. He will be responsible for weekly preaching for the majority of the year. He may appoint other Ministerial Staff, Elders, or guests to preach when necessary (e.g. vacations, revivals, special emphasis, etc.). He will also be first among equals on the Elder Council and will be responsible for either serving as Chair of the Elder Council or the appointment of a Council Chairman (with approval by the Elder Council). He will be responsible for daily oversight and management of the Church staff, although he may designate another staff member or Elder to serve that role with approval by the Elder Council.

The Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder will be expected to take one working weekday per month away from the office to focus purely on prayer and study. A one-month sabbatical may be taken at his discretion (with agreement on the dates from the Elder Council) between years 3 and 6 of service. After 7 years of service, a three-month sabbatical will be provided for personal and ministerial renewal. Another month of sabbatical may be taken between years 10 and 13, and another three month sabbatical will be provided after 14 years. This pattern will continue to repeat for longer tenures. At the discretion of the Elders, they may increase the frequency or duration of sabbatical time necessary for the Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder or may grant sabbaticals to other paid staff Elders.

2.4C. Selection Process of a Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder

The Elders will oversee the Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder search process and may appoint other Church Members to be involved in the search process. Upon reaching unanimity through much prayer, the Elders will present a candidate before the Church for affirmation.

2.4D. Accountability and Removal of a Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder

The process of disciplining the Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder is the same standard as for any other Elder (Section 2.3I). No partiality is to be shown. Restoration to wholeness is always a goal. In the case that removal is necessary; the Church will compensate the Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder with not less than one-twelfth of the total annual compensation. The Lead Pastor may resign by giving at least a two-week notice to the Church.

SECTION 2.5. DEACONS

2.5A. General Statement

The New Testament gives us a clear indication of both Elders and Deacons in the local Church. Deacons were those who rendered service (*diakonos*) in the local Church. As distinct officers in the local Church, they are referred to in the plural (*diakonoi*, Phil. 1:1), and are mentioned in addition to Elders in 1 Tim. 3:8–13. The government of the local Church rests upon the Elders (1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:17), while the Deacons give needed assistance in the various ministries of the body of believers.

2.5B. Qualifications of Deacons

The qualifications of Deacons are detailed in 1 Tim. 3:8–13.

2.5C. Responsibilities of Deacons

The Biblical role of a Deacon is to actively serve the physical needs of the Church, so that the Elders have more time to pray, study, teach the Word, and shepherd the flock. This is a special office of the Church, which is to be filled with men of highest character and a passion for serving others. Deacons are not required to teach. Deacons shall serve as assistants to the Elders in the work of the ministry and as servants for the various needs of the Church.

2.5D. Selection of Deacons

Nomination: When the Elder Council determines that there is a need for additional Deacons, the Church will nominate candidates based on the biblical qualifications. Nominees will be contacted by the Elders to see if they aspire to serve and if they meet the basic qualifications.

Examination: candidates will be interviewed, observed, and evaluated by the Elders and Deacons to consider their spiritual qualifications. After a season of prayer, those whom they feel led to appoint as Deacons will be placed before the Church for 21 days of public examination. During that time any Church member may present, in writing, to the Elders, any biblical reasons that a candidate may not be qualified to serve as a Deacon at this time. All written concerns must be signed. The Elders will investigate all concerns and will address them with each candidate as necessary.

Affirmation: Those candidates, who have been proven through examination by the Elders, Deacons, and the Church, will be presented to the congregation for affirmation.

Ordination: If they have not been ordained as a Deacon previously, Deacon Candidates will be publicly ordained in a special service involving the laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22).

2.5E Deacon Term of Office

Once a man is appointed as a Deacon, he should be honored and recognized as such for life. The only exceptions to this would be: (1) if he is subsequently appointed as an Elder, in which case he would no longer hold the office of Deacon; (2) in the case of Biblical reasons why the man should no longer be qualified as a Deacon; or (3) because of no longer participating as an active member of the Church. In the case of special personal circumstances, a Deacon may request to move from active to inactive status, and may do so at any time upon agreement of the Deacons and Elders. Further, it is recommended that after three years of active service, each Deacon rotate off active service for at least one year, in order to provide a time of refreshing and to provide opportunity for other men to serve in that office. If it is of benefit to the Deacons or the Church, some Deacons may serve up to four years before rotating off active status. The active Deacons and Elders must unanimously approve an inactive Deacon returning to active status.

2.5F. Accountability and Removal of Deacons

Deacons are subject to strict accountability to the Church and to each other. Each Deacon is under the oversight of the Deacons and the Elder Council and subject to discipline as are all members of the Church according to Scripture. Restoration to wholeness is always a goal. A Deacon may be removed because he has disqualified himself due to his behavior or he is unable to presently fulfill his responsibilities. The decision to remove a Deacon must be a unanimous decision of the Elders, after much investigation and prayer.

SECTION 2.6. CHURCH STAFF

This area includes all employed personnel. There are four categories of Church staff: ministerial, support, custodial, and other.

1. Selection. The Elders shall be responsible for the creation of positions, filling of positions, and dismissal of employees. The Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder will be responsible for day-to-day supervision of all employees, although these responsibilities may be delegated to other Elders or staff.
2. Responsibilities. The Elders shall maintain a “Personnel Policies and Procedures Guide” as part of the Church Policies & Procedures Handbook, detailing the job descriptions and areas of responsibility of the Church staff.
3. Salaries for all paid staff, including all paid Elders, will be determined by an administrative team of Members, which will include at least one non-paid Elder. The Lead Pastor/Teaching Elder, or the assigned staff leader, will be responsible for participating in the determination of salaries and raises for other paid Elders, and will make salary recommendations for the other paid staff to the administrative team.
4. Licensing and Ordination. The Church may license and/or ordain any person as a minister of the Gospel, after first examining the applicant’s background, moral and religious character, education and training, and previous Christian service. Final determination of a person’s suitability for licensing or ordination shall be within the discretion of the Elders. The person does not have to be an employee of the Church. Requests for licensing or ordination as a minister of the Gospel shall be submitted to the Elders. Candidates who are approved shall receive a certificate evidencing the licensing or ordination after the Elder Council has approved and completed the process.

ARTICLE III – CHURCH ORGANIZATION

SECTION 3.1. DEFINITION

Church is composed of those whose names appear on the membership roll of the Church.

SECTION 3.2. WORSHIP

Worship services, special meetings, and the Ordinances of the Church shall be observed at times set by Elders.

SECTION 3.3. BUSINESS

1. Church business meetings may be held as often as the need arises. An annual business meeting will be held in December of each year at which time the Elders will present the next calendar year's budget proposal for adoption by the Church. At other times when the need arises, special business meetings may be scheduled by the Elders.
2. Business meetings shall be guided by an agenda presented by the Elders. All business requiring the affirmation of the Church shall be in writing with advance notice.
3. In the event of major decisions affecting the direction of the Church such as (but not limited to) Ministerial Staff hiring, changes in the Constitution, Bylaws, or the transaction of business pertinent to the purchase, sale, or mortgage of property. The congregation will be given an extended period of time for the affirmation process. All prayerful, biblical concerns shall be given careful consideration by the Elders.

SECTION 3.4. CHURCH ORGANIZATION

All administrative areas of the Church shall be autonomous to CWCC with all officers and ministry leaders being active Members of the Church. The leadership of organizational elements and ministries of the Church shall be appointed by the Elders in cooperation with the Ministerial Staff. Committees, officers, organizations, and ministries may be appointed by the Elders and Ministerial Staff as necessary, to meet the needs of the Church.

ARTICLE IV. CHURCH FINANCE

SECTION 4.1. BUDGET

The Elders shall appoint a finance team to oversee the preparation, submission, and oversight of the church budget.

The finance team in cooperation with the Elders, the Ministerial Staff and ministry leaders, shall prepare and submit to the church for affirmation an inclusive budget, indicating by items the amount needed for all expenses.

SECTION 4.2. ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds for any and all purposes shall pass through the Church's financial system and be properly recorded. All individuals who have signature or accounting authority over funds in excess of five hundred dollars shall be bonded.

SECTION 4.3. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the Church shall be the calendar year, unless otherwise designated by the Elders.

SECTION 4.4. FINANCIAL REPORTING

The Church Financial Secretary shall make copies of the financial statements available to the active resident membership at least quarterly in the church office. These financial statements will show summaries of receipts and disbursements, with expense reports structured similar to the budget line items. The Financial Secretary will also provide end-of-year individual contribution records to the membership.

ARTICLE V. INDEMNIFICATION OF ELDERS AND OFFICERS RESPONSIBLE FOR FINANCE

The Church shall indemnify the Elders, any member of the Finance or Budget Teams, any officer of the Church, its Financial Secretary, and any person who may have served at its request as a member of the Finance Team, against and for any expense, fine, penalty, tax liability or similar item or cost, or the expense actually and necessarily incurred by him or her in connection with the defense of any action, suit or proceeding in which he or she is made a party by reason of being or having been such Finance Committee member or Treasurer, except in relation to matters as to which he or she shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty. "Negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty" shall not include mistakes in calculation, mistakes in filings, or mistakes in connection with the processing or preparation of the Church's payroll, accounting, or books and records, unless any such mistake constitutes or otherwise is attributable to the gross neglect or intentional dereliction of such person in the performance of such person's duty as a member of the Church's Finance Team or as an officer of the Church. No intentional act of misconduct will be indemnified.

The Church may also reimburse to an Elder, any such member of the Church's Finance or Budget Teams, or an officer of the Church, or the Financial Secretary, the reasonable costs of settlement of any such action, suit, or proceeding, including administrative proceedings involving the Church, brought by any government agency, if it shall be found by a majority of a committee composed of directors not involved in the matter in controversy (whether or not a quorum) that it is in the best interest of the Church that such settlement be made and that such Finance Team member, or Financial Secretary, or officer, was not guilty of negligence or misconduct. Such rights of indemnification and reimbursement shall not be deemed exclusive of any other right to which such Finance Committee member or officer may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement or otherwise.

Any such indemnification by the Church shall not exceed the maximum available liability limits of any applicable insurance policy.

ARTICLE VI. INDEMNIFICATION, INSURANCE, AND LIABILITY

SECTION 6.1. INDEMNIFICATION OF CHURCH ELDERS, OFFICERS, AND OTHERS

1. The Church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative (other than an action by or in the right of the Church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Church Elder, director, officer, employee, or ministry leader of the Church, or is or was serving at the request of the Church as a director or officer or ministry leader of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise, against expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding. Any such indemnification may be payable by the Church only if the

claim for indemnification relates to an activity by said persons that is not excluded, expressly or by operation of law, from any applicable policy of liability insurance. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or upon a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner which he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Church, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had reasonable cause to believe that his conduct was unlawful.

2. The Church may indemnify any person who is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the Church to procure a judgment in its favor by reason of the fact that he is or was an Elder, director or officer or ministry leader of the Church, or is or was serving at the request of the Church as a director, officer, ministry leader or representative of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise against expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such threatened, pending or completed action or suit by or in the right of the Church. Any such indemnification may be payable by the Church only if the claim for indemnification relates to an activity by said persons that is not excluded, expressly or by operation of law, from any applicable policy of liability insurance.
3. Expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action, suit or proceeding of the kind described in Section 6.1, Sub-Sections 1 and 2 of this Article may be paid by the Church in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking, by or on behalf of the person who may be entitled to indemnification under those Sections, to repay such amount unless it shall ultimately be determined that he is entitled to be indemnified by the Church.
4. The Church may, at the discretion of and to the extent and for such persons as determined by the Elders, (i) indemnify any person who neither is nor was an Elder, a director or officer or ministry leader of the Church, but who is or was a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative (and whether brought by or in the right of the Church), by reason of the fact that the person is or was a representative of the Church, against expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement, actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such threatened, pending or completed action, suit or proceeding; and (ii) pay such expenses in advance of the final disposition of such action, suit or proceeding, upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of such person to repay such amount if it shall ultimately be determined by a court of competent jurisdiction that such person is not entitled to be indemnified by the Church.
5. Any right to indemnification provided in this Article shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, director or officer or ministry leader of the Church and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person.
6. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as limiting the power or obligation of the Church to indemnify any person in accordance with applicable state law provisions as amended from time to time or in accordance with any similar law adopted in lieu thereof.
7. The Church shall also indemnify any person against expenses (including attorneys' fees), actually and reasonably incurred by him in enforcing any right to indemnification under this Article, under the Church's state nonprofit corporation law as amended from time to time or under any similar law adopted in lieu thereof.

8. Any person who shall serve as an Elder, a director, officer, ministry leader, employee, or agent of the Church or who shall serve at the request of the Church, as a director, officer, ministry leader, employee, or agent of another corporation, joint partnership, joint venture trust, or other enterprise shall be deemed to do so with knowledge of and in reliance upon the rights of indemnification provided in this Article, under applicable state law indemnification provisions as amended from time to time and, in or under any similar law adopted in lieu thereof.

SECTION 6.2. INSURANCE

The Church shall have the power to purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was an Elder, director, officer, ministry leader, employee or agent of the Church or is or was serving at the request of the Church as a director, officer, ministry leader, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in any such capacity, or arising out of his status as such, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify him against such liability.

SECTION 6.3. LIABILITY OF ELDERS AND OFFICERS

To the fullest extent permitted by applicable state law, as now in effect and as amended from time to time, the Elders, or a director or officer or ministry leader of the Church shall not be personally liable for monetary damages for any action taken or failure to take any action.

ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended by the Elders and affirmed by the Church with an extended affirmation period of at least 30 days.

APPENDIX 1: QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

The following is an interpretation and clarification of the biblical qualifications of Elders and Deacons in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and is intended to be used as the criteria for examining and appointing qualified men. Since only the Lord Jesus Christ was perfect, these qualifications shall not be interpreted as an indication of human perfection, but of the normal, usual, and predictable behavior of the one being qualified. It is expected that deviations would be the exception, and would be appropriately responded to by the individual. The Bible translation used in this Appendix is the *New International Version (NIV)*.

1 Timothy 3:1-7

1. Above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2, Gk. *anepileptos*). Literal Greek: “blameless, affording nothing of which an adversary can take hold”

- a. Blameless: There is no valid accusation of wrong-doing that can be made against him. This is an umbrella statement under which all of the other qualifications fall.
- b. This is a present-tense phrase. The present participle *einai* (be) means that the Elder is in a present state of being above reproach.
- c. If they could be accused of violating any of the qualifications it would have to be in the past, and there would have had to be a notable change that has been publicly observed for a significant period of time.

2. Husband of one wife (1 Tim 3:2 and Titus 1:6, Gk. *mias gynaikos andra*): Literal Greek: “one woman man”

- a. This does not mean an elder must be married, since there is no definite article in the Greek text, but if a man is married then he must be faithful to his wife. Single men and widowers are eligible.

3. Temperate (1 Tim. 3:2, Gk. *nephalios*): Literal Greek: “wineless” or “unmixed with wine”

- a. The Greek context for this word means alert, sober, watchful, vigilant, clear-headed, self-controlled, mentally stable, and emotionally stable.
- b. ii. Freedom from excess or rash behavior.

4. Self-controlled (1 Tim 3:2, Gk. *sophron*) Literal Greek: “One who has a healthy mind”

- a. Prudent, sober-minded, sensible
- b. A person who is free to act, but his sound mind tells him how to limit his freedom of action.
- c. This characteristic tempers pride, authoritarianism, and self-justification
- d. One who is self-controlled, particularly as it relates to exercising good judgment, discretion and common sense.

5. Respectable (1 Tim 3:2, Gk. *kosmios*)

- a. Honest, decent, and well behaved
- b. Demonstrates a well-ordered life and honorable behavior.
- c. Someone who behaves in a manner that others would want to follow.

6. Hospitable (1 Tim 3:2 and Titus 1:8, Gk. *philoxenos*) Literal Greek: “friend of strangers”

- a. Their home life is open so all can see their spiritual character.
- b. Taking the initiative to invite others into their home, including strangers.
- c. Available

- 7. Able to teach** (1 Tim 3:2, Gk. *didaktikos*) Literal Greek: “instructive”
- An Elder must be able to teach, but is not required by the text to have the spiritual gift of teaching.
 - The ability to teach involves three basic elements: knowledge of Scripture, the readiness and desire to teach, and the ability to communicate in a manner that is heard and received by the flock.
 - All Elders do not have to be gifted to fill the pulpit in a public setting, but must be able to clearly communicate the Word of God according to the guidelines in Titus 1:9.
 - In 1 Timothy 5:17 it is clear that some Elders will focus more strongly on preaching than others.
 - A teacher has earned the right to be heard by their lifestyle and people are willing to learn from them.
- 8. Not given to drunkenness** (1 Tim 3:3, Gk. *me paroinon*) Literal Greek: “not staying near wine”
- An Elder must be above reproach with regard to alcohol or other addictive behaviors.
- 9. Not violent** (1 Tim. 3:3, Gk. *plektes*): Literal Greek: “not a striker”
- A man who keeps his temper under control.
 - Not a fighter, bad-tempered, irritable, or out-of-control individual.
 - He must react to situations calmly, coolly, and gently.
- 10. Gentle** (1 Tim. 3:3, Gk. *epiekes*) No English word fully conveys the meaning of this Greek word. The range of meaning includes: kind, gentle, equitable, gracious, forbearing.
- He does not keep a list of wrongs and does not hold grudges.
 - Yielding wherever yielding is possible instead of standing up for one’s rights.
 - The shepherd must be patient, gracious, and understanding with the erring – and at times frustrating – sheep and/or fellow Elders.
- 11. Not quarrelsome** (1 Tim. 3:3, Gk. *amachos*): Literal Greek: “disinclined to fight, not a brawler”
- A person who is not disposed to fights or quarrels.
 - Not quick-tempered but peaceable.
 - Should contend for the faith, but not fight other believers.
 - Must be able to handle disagreements within a team environment in a loving and godly manner.
- 12. Not a lover of money** (1 Tim. 3:3, Gk. *philarguros*): Literal Greek: “one who is not a friend of money”
- An Elder must not be greedy, and love of money must not drive his life.
 - Not one who tries to gain financial wealth through dishonest means.
 - Must be content with the financial blessings God has given him.
- 13. Must manage** (1 Tim 3:4-5, Gk. *prohistemi*, Literal Greek: “lead and care for”) **his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s Church?)**
- An Elder must have a reputation for managing his home and family well. He must be a model Christian father, husband, and household manager.
 - The home is a proving ground for ministry. A man must provide proper leadership to his own family before he can provide it for the Church.

- c. He must have a reputation for providing for his family, financially, emotionally, and spiritually.
- d. If he is a father and husband, his leadership style should not be tyrannical. He must be a loving and responsible spiritual leader, and his children must obey and submit to the father's leadership while under his care.
- e. An Elder's first ministry is to his family, and if he does not fulfill this duty well, then he is not ready to lead the Church.
- f. This qualification does not mean that Elders must be married or have children.

14. Not a recent convert (1 Tim. 3:6, Gk. *neophutos*, Literal Greek: "not a novice") **or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.**

- a. Must not be a new convert whose stability in the faith has not yet been tried and proven.
- b. An Elder must be spiritually mature, not just a believer for a number of years, and must know his own heart.
- c. A new Christian does not yet know his own heart or understand the craftiness of the enemy, so he is vulnerable to pride – the most subtle of all temptations and most destructive of all sins.
- d. A strong evidence that a man is mature is that humility characterizes his life.

15. He must also have a good reputation (1 Tim. 3:7, Gk. *marturia*, Literal Greek: "certifying testimony") **with outsiders so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.**

- a. A man chosen to lead the church must maintain a reputation in the community for moral character, love, kindness, generosity, and goodness.
- b. Even if outsiders don't agree with his theology or moral stance, they respect his integrity and lifestyle.

Titus 1:5-9

16. An Elder must be blameless (Titus 1:6, Gk. *aneglektos*) Literal Greek: "not arraignable"

- a. Meaning is very similar to Qualification #1.
- b. If he does wrong, then he makes it right.

17. Husband of one wife (Titus 1:6, Gk. *mias gynaikos andra*): Literal Greek: "one woman man"

- a. See Qualification #2.

18. A man whose children believe (Titus 1:6, Literal Greek: "having faithful children") **and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient** (Gk. *pista, me in kategoria asotias e anupotakta*)

- a. His children are not to be continually rebellious or uncontrollable.
- b. He has the ability to lead his children to salvation and sanctification.
- c. His children should be believers, or on a clear path to salvation, depending on age and understanding. We recognize that the Holy Spirit is ultimately responsible for prompting the process of salvation.
- d. His responsibility to shepherd the spiritual condition of his children takes precedence over Elder responsibilities.

19. Not over-bearing (Titus 1:7, Gk. *authade*) Literal Greek: "pleasing himself"

- a. Arrogant, stubborn, condemning, self-willed.
- b. A person who does not have to have his or her own way and puts the needs of others first.
- c. This person does not try to impose his will on others.

- 20. Not quick-tempered** (Titus 1:7, Gk. *orgilos*): Literal Greek: “easily angered”
- This refers to one who gets easily angered at the wrong time and for the wrong reason.
 - Their anger should be limited to when the cause of Christ is attacked, and not to personal injury or insults.
 - An Elder is a person who should not be angry, unless there is an unselfish reason to be angry.
- 21. Not given to drunkenness**
- See Qualification # 8.
- 22. Not violent**
- See Qualification #9.
- 23. Not pursuing dishonest gain**
- See Qualification #12.
- 24. Hospitable**
- See Qualification #6.
- 25. Loves what is good** (Titus 1: 8, Gk. *philagathos*) Literal Greek: “lover of goodness”
- A lover of good things, good people, and good actions.
 - Loves to see good done and loves to be involved in doing good.
 - This is a redemptive love to both friends and enemies.
- 26. Self-controlled** (Gk. *egkrates*) Literal Greek: “master of himself”
- A man who pursues self-mastery.
 - God’s steward must be characterized by self-control and self-discipline in every aspect of life.
 - Particularly self-controlled in his physical desires, since an undisciplined man has little resistance to sexual lust, anger, slothfulness, a critical spirit, or other base desires.
- 27. Upright** (Titus 1:8, Gk. *dikaio*s) Literal Greek: “justly”
- A man who makes fair, just decisions for the church.
 - Should care about whether people are treated fairly, and should want to see justice in the world at all levels.
 - Views the rights of others, as though they were his own.
- 28. Holy** (Titus 1:8, Gk. *hosios*) Literal Greek: “Devout”
- A man who is firmly committed to God and His Word, despite the changing winds of culture and circumstances.
 - He should have a deep personal relationship with the Lord.
- 29. Disciplined** (Titus 1:8, Gk. *sophron*) Literal Greek: “One who has a healthy mind”
The NIV chose to translate the word *sophron* as “self-controlled” in qualification #4 (1 Timothy 3).
- See Qualification #4.
- 30. Hold firmly** (Titus 1:9, Gk. *antecho*, Literal Greek: “cling firmly to”) **to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.**
- A man who is solid and unshakeable in his grasp of the Word of God.

- b. His lifestyle is characterized by a continual studying of the Word of God.
- c. Understands and knows what is sound doctrine and is able to teach and instruct others.
- d. He can recognize false doctrine and lovingly confront and correct the one in err.

