

Hockinson Community Church
Bylaws approved January 30, 2000 **DRAFT 3/14/10**

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Article 1 NAME

The name, by which this organization shall be known in law as “Hockinson Community Church”, referred to herein as “the church”.

Article 2 THE CONSTITUTION ~~BYLAWS~~, FAITH, AND THE WORD

The ~~Constitution~~ **bylaws** of "the church" **is are** subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We are united in striving to know all the teaching of God as taught in the Holy Scriptures and in our purpose to walk in the ways of the Lord, made known or to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to proclaim the gospel to all mankind. (Matthew 28:19-20).

~~Whenever possible,~~ **These** bylaws shall be interpreted so as to be consistent with the ~~Constitution;~~ **Scriptures;** should any bylaw be found to contradict a provision of the ~~Constitution,~~ **Scriptures,** the ~~Constitution~~ **Scriptures** shall ~~control;~~ **prevail, and the bylaws will be modified accordingly.**

Article 3 ORGANIZATION AND INCORPORATION

The organization shall be organized as a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Washington.

Article 4 LOCATION OF OFFICE

The registered office of "the church" shall be located within the State of Washington at 15918 NE 182nd Avenue, Brush Prairie, WA 98606. The Council of Elders or a majority of the members may change the corporation's registered agent and the address of the registered office from time to time, upon filing the appropriate statement with the Secretary of State.

Article 5 PURPOSE AND LIMITATIONS

Section 1

A. The purposes of "the church" are:

- (1) Since we recognize the Lord Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, which is His body, and this local assembly of believers, we shall be united for the worship of God, ministry to the believers and the work of evangelism both at home and abroad;
- (2) To bring glory and honor to the triune God by promoting true worship, mutual edification, and gospel witness and to turn the hearts of people to God, to their families and to others so that they may know Christ;
- (3) To operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the classification of legal charities; and no part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of any member or individual; and no substantial part of the activities of the church, or any receipt of its funds, shall be utilized for any other purpose except those purposes mentioned above;
- (4) To handle affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters as required by the civil authorities.

Section 2

"The church" shall not have or issue shares of stock, and no dividends shall be paid. No part of the income or assets of "the church" shall be distributed to any member or officer without full consideration. "The church" is prohibited from lending money to guarantee the obligation of any member or officer of "the church." No member or officer of "the church" has any vested right, interest or privilege in or to the assets, property, functions, or activities of "the church." "The church" may contract in due course, for reasonable consideration, with its members or officers without violating this provision.

Article 6 MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 Membership

We hold that membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is not dependent upon being enrolled by a particular congregation or denomination but is, rather, dependent upon a personal relationship with God, the Father, through Jesus Christ, His Son. Membership shall not be required for full participation by anyone in all spiritual activities of "the church." However, it shall be required for the holding of office or council position or participating in the legal affairs of "the church" including right to vote.

Section 2 Voting Members

"The church" will may receive into voting membership any person, 18 or more years of age, who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, purposes to live by the Word of God and who is willing to submit to the spiritual leadership of "the church" (Hebrews 13:17).

Section 3 Reception of Members

A. A person who has attended church services for three consecutive months or more may be received into membership by a letter of transfer from another church of like faith and practice approved by the Council of Elders, by confession of faith, or by reaffirmation of faith. In order to be received into membership, a person must submit a Membership Application, complete the membership course, sign a Membership Commitment, signed Membership Application & Commitment (see attachment A), {to be developed} Attend a membership orientation, and be presented to "the church" for approval.

B. All members, 18 years of age or older, in good standing in "the church" shall be voting members. ("Good standing" means that a member is not presently under suspension, deposition church discipline or has failed to attend church services for a period of 3 months without adequate reason.) Any voting member in attendance at a duly called meeting shall be entitled to one vote on matters brought before the congregation. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. The Pastor shall also be entitled to vote.

Section 4 The Members

~~A. The Pastor and his wife will automatically be members by virtue of the office.~~

~~B. Active Members: Persons eighteen (18) years of age and older who have been received into membership according to Section 1 of this Article.~~

~~C. Inactive Members: Persons who, for various reasons, are temporarily unable to function in the local assembly.~~

~~D. Members under 18 shall enjoy all privileges of church life except voting.~~

~~E.~~ C. The Council of Elders shall maintain and update the membership roster.

Section 5 4 Accountability of Members

A. Members may be removed from membership at their own request by informing the Council of Elders **in writing** of their intention to withdraw and the reasons therefore. If a member requests to withdraw because of specific problems or disappointments with "the church," the Council of Elders shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain in "the church." ~~and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. If the Council of Elders is unable to resolve those matters, it shall offer to assist the member in locating a church of like faith and practice that can respond more effectively to his or her personal and family gifts and needs.~~

B. Members may also be removed from membership by the Council of Elders when they:

(1) Persistently, over an extended period of time, and without adequate reason absent themselves from the stated services of "the church";

(2) Unite with another church;

~~(3) Cannot be found for a period greater than two years;~~

~~(4)~~ (3) Are removed for persistent **unrepentant sin**. ~~impenitence when they reject the covenantal responsibility of submission to home or Church and neglect the ongoing exhortation of the Council of Elders to profess faith in Christ.~~

Article 7 GOVERNMENT AND OFFICERS

Section 1

A. The Lord Jesus Christ is ~~alive and present in the church today and is~~ the ultimate authority in "the church." He exercises His authority through the instrument He Himself ordained for that purpose, the **eldership**. The task of the **elders** is not to run "the church" themselves, but to determine how the Lord in their midst wishes to run His church. In the day to day decisions that face "the church," **elders** are to seek and find the mind of the Lord ~~through an uncoerced unanimity~~ in any and all decisions, reached after thorough and biblically related discussion and prayer. Thus, ultimate authority in the day to day operations of "the church" is vested in the Lord and no one else. ~~Elders should seek the mind and will of Christ through the Holy Spirit, acting together in unity of thought and purpose. (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; John 17:20-23).~~

B. "The church" strives to make decisions by seeking the mind and will of Christ through the Holy Spirit, acting together in unity of thought and purpose. (Acts 20:28;

Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; John 17:20-23). On occasion where a decision is at an impasse, the elders, deacons and ministry councils may find it necessary to resolve an issue through a majority vote

~~B.~~ C. There shall be a Church Leadership Council consisting of the Council of Elders, the overseer of the Council of Deacons and the overseers of ~~at least three (3)~~ of the ministry councils established within "the church."

~~C.~~ D. The officers of the corporation shall be the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, and they shall be appointed by the Council of Elders and their length of service will be established at the time of appointment. The President may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer of "the church" that the Council of Elders has authorized, corporation deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other Council of Elders authorized instruments. **Under no circumstances can both signatories be related.**

Section 2 Elders, Deacons and Ministry Councils

A. The work of ministry belongs to the entire body of the believers, who should be equipped, guided, and encouraged by those who are gifted by God to expound and apply His Word with wisdom and power. The entire body has received gifts from the Spirit, and it is the task of the ~~Eldership~~ **leadership** to encourage the entire body to discover and exercise those gifts which are used in the different and varied ministries of "the church" represented by the Council of Deacons and the various Ministry Councils established to fulfill the commands of Christ. (Romans 11:29; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-27).

(1) Elders: Elders must be male voting members. "An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless – not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it." (Titus 1:6-9)

(a) In order to be eligible for appointment, a man shall have been a member in good standing in "the church" for at least one year and shall have served "the church" in functions requiring responsible leadership. They shall be nominated by the congregation, then examined and approved by the Council of Elders. Their names will be placed before the congregation for examination and **comment for 30 days** approval prior to appointment. ~~and they will receive appropriate training under the direction or with the approval of the Council of Elders.~~

(b) Elders, individually and jointly with the Pastor, are to lead "the church" in the service of Christ. They are to watch diligently over the people committed to their charge to prevent corruption of doctrine or morals. ~~Evils that members cannot correct by private admonition should be brought to the notice of the Council of Elders.~~ Elders are to counsel and offer Biblical correction to members struggling with sin issues which have been unresolved through private admonition.

(c) ~~They~~ Elders should visit the people, especially the sick, instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourning, and nourish and guard the children of the covenant. They should pray with and for the people. They should have particular concern for the doctrine, conduct and needs of the Pastor and help him in his labors.

(2) Deacons: Deacons must be male voting members. "Deacons are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well." (1 Timothy 3:8-12)

(a) In order to be eligible for appointment, a man shall have been a member in good standing in "the church" for at least one year, and shall have served "the church" in functions requiring responsible leadership. They shall be nominated by the congregation, then examined and approved by the Council of Elders. Their names will be placed before the congregation for examination and **comment for 30 days approval** prior to appointment. ~~and they will receive the appropriate training under the direction or with the approval of the Council of Elders.~~

(b) Deacons shall show ~~forth~~ the compassion of Christ in ~~manifold~~ ministries of mercy and service toward the saints and strangers on behalf of "the church." As delegated and directed by the Council of Elders, they shall minister to the temporal needs of members and friends, manage "the church" finances, and see to the care and maintenance of church property.

(3) Ministry Council Members **Leaders**: In order to be eligible for appointment, a man or woman shall be a member in good standing in "the church." **They shall be appointed by the council of elders. They will receive encouragement, support and direction from the council of elders.** ~~nominated by the congregation, then examined and approved by the Council of Elders. Their name will be placed before the congregation for examination and approval prior to appointment and they will receive appropriate training under the direction or with the approval of the Council of Elders.~~

~~(a) The Council of Elders may, after examination and prayer, certify and appoint men and women who are members in good standing in other biblically centered fellowships who elect to participate in specific areas of church ministry with broad based community involvement. They shall be nominated by the congregation, then examined and approved by the Council of Elders. Their name will be placed before the congregation for examination and approval prior to appointment and they will receive appropriate training under the direction or with the approval of the Council of Elders.~~

~~(4) The Council of Elders shall announce to "the church" the names of those it has certified at least two (2) Lord's Days preceding the date appointed for their election. Election of Elders, Deacons and Ministry Council Members shall be done by an affirmation vote from the names brought forth by the Council of Elders.~~

~~(5)~~ (4) An Elder, Deacon or Ministry Council Member Leader may be removed from office by church discipline for an offense in doctrine or life. He or she may also be divested removed upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the congregation. An Elder, Deacon or Ministry Council Member Leader may resign their his or her office.

Section 3 Pastors

A. It is the charge of the Pastor to feed and tend the flock as Christ's minister and, with the other elders, to lead them in all the service of Christ. It is his task to ~~conduct~~ be responsible for the public worship of God; to pray for and with Christ's flock as the mouth of the people unto God; to feed the flock by the public reading and preaching of the Word of God, according to which he is to teach, convince, reprove, exhort, comfort, and evangelize, expounding and applying the truth of Scripture with ministerial authority, as a diligent workman approved by God; to administer the sacraments; to bless the people from God; to shepherd the flock and minister the Word according to the particular needs of groups, families, and individuals in the congregation, mentoring and teaching plainly the first principles of the Word of God to all, visiting in the homes of people, instructing and counseling individuals, and training them to be faithful servants of Christ; to minister to the poor, the sick, the afflicted, and the dying; and to make known the gospel to the lost.

B. The Pastor may resign his position upon thirty days' written notice. If a significant portion of the congregation believes that the Pastor's services are no longer edifying to the congregation and, if private efforts to remedy the situation are unsuccessful, the ministerial relationship may be dissolved as follows:

~~(1) A special congregational meeting shall be called as provided in the bylaw on~~

congregational meetings;

~~(2) Those requesting the Pastor's resignation shall be allowed to state the reasons for their request, and the Pastor shall be given the opportunity to respond, as shall other members of "the church."~~

~~(3) The meeting shall be adjourned to a time not sooner than one week later, and not later than two weeks later;~~

~~(4) At the next congregational meeting, further appropriate debate shall be allowed, and a vote shall be taken;~~

~~(5) The ministerial relationship may be dissolved upon a 2/3 majority vote.~~

(1) Those requesting the Pastor's resignation shall be ~~allowed~~ **required** to state **in writing** the **biblical** reasons for their request. A special congregational meeting shall be called **within two weeks** as provided in the bylaws on congregational meetings.

(2) The Pastor shall be given the opportunity to respond, as shall other members of "the church."

~~(3) At the next~~ **A second** congregational meeting **shall be held two weeks later**. Further appropriate debate shall be allowed, and a vote shall be taken;

(4) The ministerial relationship may be dissolved upon a 2/3 majority vote.

~~€.~~ (5) If the ministerial relationship is dissolved, "the church" shall provide the Pastor with at least one month's severance pay, and shall consider providing such other assistance as is necessary for his needs and the needs of his family while he seeks other employment.

(6) If the ministerial relationship with the Pastor is maintained, members of "the church" leadership council shall continue to strive together to resolve and bring remedy to any outstanding issues. Members are advised to first search their own heart. (Mt 7:5)

Section 4 Council of Elders

A. The Council of Elders is the governing body of "the church" and consists of the Pastor and duly appointed elders. The Council of Elders shall have the authority to make rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Washington, the Word of God (Article 2), and these bylaws. The Council of Elders shall manage the business affairs of the corporation, oversee all matters concerning the conduct of public worship, and it shall seek through **unity unanimity** of heart the best measures

for promoting the spiritual growth and evangelistic witness of the congregation. It shall receive, dismiss, and exercise discipline over the members of "the church," supervise the activities of the deacons, all Ministry Councils and all other organizations of the congregation, and have final authority over the use of all church property.

B. The Council of Elders shall choose its own Moderator and Clerk annually from among its members. The Clerk shall maintain the minutes of the proceedings of the Council of Elders, keep a current register of each member and in general perform all duties the Moderator of the Council of Elders may assign. The Council of Elders may also choose a Vice-Moderator from among its members, and shall appoint the corporation Treasurer, who shall ordinarily be a deacon.

Section 5 Leadership Structure

A. The Council of Elders shall have final authority for affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters as required by the civil law for nonprofit corporations. In particular, the Council of Elders shall be responsible for the acquisition and disposition of church property, which includes the management of its financial resources. Neither the Council of Elders nor its delegates shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, pledge or in any manner encumber any church property worth more than ~~\$10,000~~ \$2,500, nor to incur any indebtedness exceeding the sum of ~~\$10,000~~ \$2,500, unless first authorized to do so at a congregational meeting, either through the adoption of the annual budget or by special action of the congregation. The Council of Elders will normally delegate to the deacons or to other members such of these responsibilities as it deems appropriate.

B. The Council of Elders shall consist of three (3) or more elders. In no case may the Council of Elders proceed with fewer than two present. If at any time there are less than three men on the Council of Elders, ~~the congregation may elect first from the Council of Deacons and, if necessary, from among the voting members, individuals who will temporarily serve as elders of "the church" for the purpose of carrying out any required corporate business. The terms of such temporary elders shall expire when sufficient elders have been appointed and ordained to bring the number of the Council of Elders to three or more. If the Council of Elders shall cease to exist or become so small as to prevent it from working effectively, the Council of Deacons shall provide for the examination and ordination of elders from within the congregation, or, with the consent of the congregation, may appoint elders or ministers, or both, normally from within the congregation, to be an acting Council of Elders or to augment the existing Council of Elders temporarily.~~

C. The Moderator shall be appointed by the elders to be the overseer of the Council of Elders. The Moderator shall be subject to the control of the Council of Elders. ~~and shall, in general, supervise and control, in good faith, all of the business and affairs of "the church." The Moderator shall, when present, preside at all meetings of the members of "the church" and of the Council of Elders, and shall conduct such~~

meetings so as to facilitate free and respectful debate and decision making.

D. If the Council of Elders appoints a Vice-Moderator, he shall perform, in good faith, the Moderator's duties if the Moderator is absent, dies, or is unable or refuses to act. If the Vice-Moderator acts in the absence of the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator shall have all of the authority of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the Moderator. If there is no Vice-Moderator or the Vice-Moderator is unable or refuses to act, then the Clerk shall perform the Moderator duties.

E. The Corporate Secretary of "the church" shall in good faith maintain one or more books for the minutes of the proceedings of the members; provide that all notices are served in accordance with these bylaws or as required by law; be custodian of "the church" and corporate records; when requested or required, authenticate any records of "the church;" keep a current register of the post office address of each member; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and any other duties that the Moderator or the Council of Elders may assign to the Secretary.

F. The Treasurer shall not be an elder or a Pastor in "the church." The Treasurer, who shall ordinarily be a deacon, shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of "the church;" receive and give receipts for moneys due and payable to "the church" from any source, and deposit all moneys in "the church's" name in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the Council of Elders shall select; submit the books and records to a Certified Public Accountant or other accountant as directed by the Council of Elders; and in general perform all of the duties incident to the office of Treasurer and any other duties that the Moderator or Council of Elders may assign to the Treasurer. The Treasurer will submit monthly financial reports to the Council of Elders and the Council of Deacons.

G. The Council of Elders may establish such Ministry Councils or committees as it deems necessary for the work of "the church."

Section 6 Council of Deacons

The Council of Deacons shall oversee the ministries of mercy and service in "the church." Other forms of service for "the church" may also be committed to the deacons. ~~The Council of Deacons shall choose its own overseer from its membership.~~

Section 7 Ministry Councils

Ministry Councils, as designated by the Council of Elders, shall attend to those specialized areas of ministry and body life of "the church." ~~Each Ministry Council shall choose its own overseer, a voting member of the church, from its membership.~~ All individuals involved as leaders with youth (under 18 years of age) shall be required by "the church" to submit to a background check. Expense for this will be the responsibility of "the church."

Article 8 CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

A. Meetings for worship, prayer, teaching, fellowship and other spiritual or corporate purposes shall be at such time and place as determined by the Council of Elders.

B. The Church Leadership Council shall meet monthly at such time and place as they determine to spend time in worship, prayer and fellowship with one another, to report on the different Ministry Councils and to bring forth any needs or decisions and transact business as may concern "the church" A report of all business transacted, decisions made, and the financial status of "the church" shall be made available to all members of "the church" monthly.

C. An annual meeting of "the church" shall be held in January of each year at a date, time, and place to be determined by the Council of Elders. At the annual meeting, the voting members shall, ~~by affirmation vote, adopt an~~ be provided a copy of the annual budget as approved by the Council of Elders and the Council of Deacons and transact any other business that may come before the meeting.

D. Special meetings of "the church" shall be called at a date and location to be determined by the Council of Elders whenever the Council of Elders deems it to be in the best interest of "the church" or when requested in writing to do so by one-fourth (1/4) of the voting members of "the church" in good standing.

E. The purpose of a special meeting shall be announced in advance if it involves a proposed amendment to the bylaws or articles of incorporation; the election or removal of officers; the calling or removing of a Pastor; the acquisition or disposition of property worth more than \$2,500 \$10,000; or the dissolution of "the church."

F. When a meeting is called for the transaction of specific matters of business, no business shall be conducted except that which is stated in the notice.

~~G. Unless provided otherwise in these bylaws, a majority vote of those in attendance is sufficient to decide any matter.~~

~~H~~ G. The Moderator and the Clerk of the Council of Elders shall serve as Moderator and secretary respectively in congregational meetings.

Article 9 CHURCH RECORDS

A. The Council of Elders shall keep the following records: minutes of its meetings and changes in the membership of the congregation; minutes of the meetings of the congregation; rolls of the members in the congregation; resolutions adopted by the Council of Elders; appropriate accounting records; its articles or restated articles of incorporation and all amendments to them currently in effect; its bylaws or restated bylaws and all amendments to them currently in effect.

B. A member shall be entitled to inspect and copy, at a reasonable time and location specified by the Council of Elders, any of "the church" records described above, provided the Council of Elders finds that the member has a proper purpose and is acting in good faith. The Council of Elders may limit access to any records that contain confidential information about a particular person or persons.

Article 10 BIBLICAL COUNSELING

A. All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on our lives and our relationships (Romans 3:23; 7:7-25). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviors through private efforts, God commands that he should seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Pastor and elders, who have the responsibility of providing Pastoral counseling and oversight (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:1-2; Colossians 3:16; II Timothy 3:16-4:2; Hebrews 10:24-25; 13:17; James 5:16). Therefore, this church encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other and especially from our Pastoral counselors.

B. We believe that the Bible provides thorough guidance and instruction for faith and life. Therefore, our counseling shall be based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the Pastoral nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.

C. Although some members of "the church" work in professional fields outside "the church" when serving as Pastoral or lay counselors within "the church" they do not provide the same kind of professional advice and services that they do when they are hired in their professional capacities. Therefore, members who have significant legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions should seek the advice from independent professionals. Our Pastoral and lay counselors shall be available to cooperate with such advisors and help members to consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

Article 11 CONFIDENTIALITY

A. The Bible teaches that Christians should carefully guard any personal and private information that others reveal to them. Protecting confidences is a sign of Christian love and respect (Matthew 7:12). It also discourages harmful gossip (Proverbs 16:28; 26:20), invites confession (Proverbs 11:13; 28:13; James 5:16), and encourages people to seek needed counseling (Romans 15:14). Since these goals are essential to the ministry of the gospel and the work of this church, all members are expected to refrain from gossip and to respect the confidences of others. In particular, our Pastor and elders, and their wives, who are required to sign the confidentiality agreement (stated here in sections A and B) shall carefully protect all information that they receive through Pastoral counseling, subject to the following guidelines:

(1) Although confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the Pastor and elders of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people in the following circumstances:

- (a) When a Pastor or elder is uncertain of how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other Pastors or elders in this church;
- (b) If the person attends another church, then to the Pastors or elders of that church (Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 19:20; 20:18; Matthew 18:15-17);
- (c) When the person who disclosed the information or any other person is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12);
- (d) When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matthew 18:15-20) or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Romans 13:1-5);
- (e) When required by law.

B. Scripture commands that confidential information is to be shared with others only when a problem can not be resolved through the efforts of a small group of people within the Church (Matthew 18:15-17). Therefore, except as provided, a Pastor or elder may not disclose confidential information **received during the Council of Elders meetings** to anyone outside this church without the approval of the Council of Elders or the consent of the person who originally disclosed the information. The Council of Elders may approve such disclosure only when it finds that all internal efforts to resolve a problem have been exhausted (1 Corinthians 6:1-8) and the problem cannot be satisfactorily resolved without the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (Romans 13:1-5).

~~C. The Pastors and elders may, but need not, provide counselees with written notice of these confidentiality provisions, but these provisions shall be in effect regardless of whether such notice is given.~~

Article 12 CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. This church is committed to resolving in a biblical manner all disputes that may arise within our body. This commitment is based on God's command that Christians should strive earnestly to live at peace with one another (Matthew 5:9; John 17:20-23; Romans 12:18; Ephesians 4:1-3) and that when disputes arise, Christians should resolve them according to the principles set forth in Holy Scripture (Proverbs 19:11;

Matthew 5:23-25; 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Galatians 6:1). We believe that these commands and principles are obligatory on all Christians and absolutely essential for the well-being and work of the Church. Therefore, any and all disputes in this church shall be resolved according to biblical principles, as provided in this bylaw.

B. When a member of this church has a conflict with, or is concerned about the behavior of another member, he shall attempt to resolve the matter as follows:

(1) The offended or concerned person shall prayerfully examine himself and take responsibility for his contribution to a problem (Matthew 7:3-5), and he shall prayerfully seek to discern whether the offense is so serious that it cannot be overlooked. (Proverbs 19:11; 12:16; 15:18; 17:14; 20:3; Ephesians 4:2; Colossians 3:13; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-5).

(2) If the offense is too serious to overlook, the offended or concerned person shall go, repeatedly if necessary, and talk to the offender in an effort to resolve the matter personally and privately, having first confessed his own wrongdoing (Matthew 18:15).

(3) If the offender will not listen and if the problem is too serious to overlook, the offended or concerned person shall return with one or two other people who will attempt to help the parties resolve their differences (Matthew 18:16); these other people may be members of "the church," other respected Christians in the community, or trained mediators or arbitrators (conciliators) from a Christian conciliation ministry.

C. At the request of either party to the dispute or in the event of continued strife, the Council of Elders shall act as final arbitrators and make every effort to assist the parties in resolving their differences and being reconciled.

Article 13 OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY

A. "The church" shall hold, own, and enjoy its own personal and real property, without any right of reversion to another entity, except as provided in these bylaws.

B. "Dissolution" means the complete disbanding of "the church" so that it no longer functions as a congregation or as a corporate entity. Upon the dissolution of "the church," its property shall be applied and distributed as follows: all liabilities and obligations of "the church" shall be paid and discharged or adequate provision shall be made therefore; assets held by "the church" upon condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution, shall be returned, transferred, or conveyed in accordance with such requirements; assets received and not held upon a condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance by reason of the dissolution, shall be transferred or conveyed to one or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations that qualify as exempt organizations

under section 501 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the responding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), and are engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the corporation; this distribution shall be done pursuant to a plan adopted by the Council of Elders, provided that no assets are distributed to any organization governed by a member of the Council of Elders; and any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine.

Article 15 14 AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS

These bylaws may be amended or repealed only by the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present at a duly-called meeting of "the church" called for such purposes.