

**BYLAWS**  
**of**  
**THE BRIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**Clover, South Carolina**

**ARTICLE I: PURPOSE**

**Section A: Name and Address**

The name of the corporation is The Bridge Community Church, which will hereafter be referred to in these Bylaws as “Church”. The principal office of the church is located at 117 South Main Street, Clover, South Carolina 29710. The mailing address of the church is the same. The principal office and mailing address of the church may be changed from one location to another by the Council of Elders and such changes of address shall not be deemed, nor require, an amendment of these Bylaws. The church may also have offices at such other places, within or without its state of incorporation, where it is qualified to do business, as its business and activities may require, and as the Council of Elders may, from time to time, designate.

**Section B: IRC Section 501(c)(3) Purposes**

This church is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes as specified in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

**Section C: Specific Objective and Purposes**

The specific objectives and purposes of this church shall be: The mission of The Bridge is to see lives transformed by the truth and love of Jesus Christ, for the good of the community and the glory of God.

The Church will provide regular opportunities for worship that will include praying, preaching, singing, teaching, counseling, fellowship, and observing communion and baptism. The purposes for which the Church is organized are: (1) to engage in such religious, educational, charitable, and benevolent activities as are permitted to be carried on by a church exempt from federal income tax under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law); (2) to accept donations and contributions, either in trust or otherwise, for all the foregoing purposes; and (3) to do any and all other things necessary or incident to the above and foregoing purposes and powers and including all of the rights, powers and authority incident to general non-profit corporations organized under the laws of the State of South Carolina .

**ARTICLE II: COVENANT MEMBERSHIP**

**Section A: General**

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body of believers (Acts 2:42-46; 11:26; Romans 16:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1; Philippians 1:1).

The Church shall have one class of membership. The covenant membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications of membership and are listed on the membership roll. Membership shall be open to anyone who upholds our common beliefs, meets the qualifications listed in these Bylaws, and commits to faithful church membership as expressed in the Church’s membership covenant.

Membership is not a prerequisite for involvement in every ministry, but is required for ministry leadership and involvement in certain ministries as determined by the Lead Pastor and the Council of Elders.

### **Section B: Qualifications for Covenant Membership**

The minimum qualifications for covenant membership are as follows:

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation;
2. Believers baptism by immersion as a testimony of salvation;
3. Completion of the Church's membership class; and
4. A commitment to abide by the Church's membership covenant.

### **Section C: Actions Requiring the Approval of the Covenant Members**

Every covenant member shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

1. The calling or removing of the Lead Pastor,
2. The affirmation of candidates for the office of Elder,
3. The acquisition of real property and related indebtedness,
4. The disposition of all or substantially all the assets of the Church,
5. The merger or dissolution of the Church,
6. Formal affiliation or disaffiliation with a denominational body,
7. The adoption or modification of the Church's Statement of Belief,
8. The adoption or modification of the Church's membership covenant, and
9. Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of the Church.

Every covenant member 16 years of age and older is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

### **Section D: Release from Covenant Membership**

Release from covenant membership can occur in one of the following ways:

1. By personal request of the member;
2. Transfer of membership to another church;
3. Death of the member; or
4. Church discipline.

### **Section E: Discipline and Restoration of Covenant Membership**

Church discipline is the process of correcting a church member. Church discipline becomes necessary when a member continually dishonors the name of Christ and His church through conduct that is unbecoming of a follower of Christ. This process should be pervaded with love and the hope of restoration. If the Council of Elders determines:

1. that a covenant member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant or is unbecoming of a follower of Christ, and that the member hinders ministry influence in the Church and/or in the community, or
2. that a covenant member has failed to attend or contribute to the ministries of the Church for a period of at least six months,

the member shall be released from covenant membership until restored by the Council of Elders (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13).

Covenant members dismissed by the Council of Elders may be restored by the Council of Elders according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when the member's lifestyle is judged to be in accordance with the Church's membership covenant.

## **ARTICLE III: CHURCH MEETINGS**

### **Section A: General**

The Church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, outreach, and fellowship. Meetings may be held within or outside South Carolina as may be designated from time to time by the Lead Pastor and/or other leaders designated by the Council of Elders.

### **Section B: Family Gatherings**

Meetings of the covenant members of the Church for conducting the business of the Church shall be known as Family Gatherings. Such meetings may be called by either the Lead Pastor or the Council of Elders. A Family Gathering may also be called by a petition signed by at least 25% of the covenant members of the church. At least one Family Gathering shall be held per year for the purpose of reporting on the state of the Church, casting vision, and/or allowing covenant members to vote on any pending matters requiring the approval of the Church under Section C of Article II of these Bylaws. Unless otherwise presented, all votes may be taken without discussion and, unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws, all decisions will be by a simple majority. Other matters may also, from time to time, be brought before the Church by the Council of Elders, in order to obtain the general affirmation of the Church.

### **Section C: Notice Requirements**

Whenever covenant members are required to give or withhold approval to an item presented at a Family Gathering, notice shall be given to the covenant members not less than two (2) weeks prior to the Gathering. Notification to the covenant membership shall be given in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a Family Gathering:

1. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a scheduled worship service;
2. Announcement of the Family Gathering in a church program, bulletin, worship guide, announcement sheet, or newsletter;
3. Oral announcement to the congregation at a scheduled worship service; or
4. Delivery by United States mail and/or by electronic mail to each covenant member at the address listed for that member on the membership roster.

The notice for any Family Gathering where the covenant members will be requested to give approval to any of the matters listed in Section C of Article II of these Bylaws must also specify the general nature of the proposal to be presented.

### **Section D: Quorum**

A quorum shall consist of ten percent (10%) of the Church's covenant membership.

## **ARTICLE IV: CHURCH LEADERS**

### **Section A: General**

The leadership structure of the Church is based upon the nature of the church as revealed in Scripture, and is intentionally designed to accommodate simplicity, growth, unity, and biblical teaching.

### **Section B: Elders**

#### **1. The Office of Elder**

Christ alone is the head of the church (Colossians 1:8; Ephesians 1:22-23), yet for the purpose of order and in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, certain individuals are called to and charged with leadership responsibility in the local church. Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same church leader(s): "poimen" (pastor), "presbuteros" (elder), and "episcopos" (overseer). These terms are used interchangeably to refer to the biblical office of elder. The New Testament church has a plurality of elders in each local setting (1 Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:17-18, 28; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Timothy 5:17).

#### **2. Selection of Elders**

- a. **Introduction:** To be selected for the office of elder, an individual must be selected by the Council of Elders and affirmed by the congregation.
- b. **Qualifications:** The requirements for the office of elder are found in 1 Timothy 2:12 – 3:7, Titus 1:6-9, and other relevant passages of Scripture. A candidate for the office of elder must be assessed by the Council of Elders as satisfying the biblical standards for the office of elder, which include, but are not limited to: (1) male (1 Timothy 2:12-14); (2) desire and calling to serve (1 Timothy 3:1); (3) gifted with elder-like gifts, such as: ability to equip and instruct others, leadership, willingness

to serve, and/or shepherding and ministering to God's people (Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 3:2-5; Titus 1:9; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:14); (4) theologically competent and correct (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9-11); (5) emotional and spiritual maturity (1 Timothy 3:1-6; Titus 1:6-8); (6) relational purity (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6); (7) worthy of respect in the community (1 Timothy 3:7); (8) respected by God's People (1 Timothy 3:4-7); (9) love for Christ and His mission; and (10) supportive of the vision, mission, elders, and other leaders of the Church (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17).

- c. **Selection:** The Council of Elders may select candidates of the office of elder as they deem appropriate. Candidates for the office of elder shall first be assessed to the satisfaction of the Council of Elders as satisfying the biblical standards for the office of elder. An affirmative vote of three-fourths majority of the Council of Elders shall be required for approving an individual as a candidate for the office of elder.
- d. **Notice:** Once a candidate for the office of elder has been selected and approved by the Council of Elders, notice that the candidate is being recommended for affirmation as an elder shall be given to the congregation as required by Section C of Article III of these Bylaws. The Council of Elders may remove the candidate from consideration as an elder at any time between the giving of notice and the affirmation of the candidate by the congregation, if a vote of more than one-third of the Council of Elders determines that candidate is not qualified to serve as elder.
- e. **Affirmation:** After sufficient notice, the Council of Elders may submit the candidate's name for affirmation as an elder to the congregation. A vote of three-fourths of those members of the congregation present and voting at a meeting shall be deemed sufficient to affirm a candidate as an elder.

### 3. The Lead Pastor

- a. **As an Elder:** The Lead Pastor, by virtue of his position, shall be an elder of the Church for so long as he holds his position as Lead Pastor. The Lead Pastor shall function as the leader of the Council of Elders as the "first amongst equals." He shall have the primary responsibility to teach, equip, discern and cast vision, and oversee the care for the overall direction of the Council of Elders as well as the Church.
- b. **Responsibility and Authority:** The Lead Pastor has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of the Church and the shepherding of the congregation (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-32). He is responsible for providing spiritual instruction and strategic leadership to the members, staff and ministries of the Church. The calling, supervision, and dismissal of Pastoral Staff, Ministry Directors, and employees is under the direction of the Lead Pastor, assisted by the Council of Elders. The Lead Pastor shall teach God's Word and lead the Church to obey the Word by making disciples of all nations, first in our immediate area and reaching out into the nations. The Lead Pastor is given the freedom and authority to operate the Church in all its activities and departments subject to the policies adopted and the orders issued by the Council of Elders in accordance with these Bylaws.
- c. **Qualifications:** The qualifications for Lead Pastor are the same as those listed for Elders in Paragraph b of Subsection 2 of this Section. When seeking to fill the position of Lead Pastor, the Council of Elders may list further qualifications for a candidate for that position.
- d. **Selection & Term of Service:** The Lead Pastor shall continue to serve as the Lead Pastor until the relationship is ended by resignation or terminated in accordance with Subsection 5 of this Section. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the position of Lead Pastor, the Council of Elders shall initiate the process leading to the calling of a new Lead Pastor. The selection of a Lead Pastor shall require: (1) selection of a candidate by the Council of Elders in accordance with the selection requirements of Paragraph c of Subsection 2 of this Section, (2) recommendation of a candidate to the covenant members by the Council of Elders in accordance with the notice requirements of Paragraph d of Subsection 2 of this Section, and (3) affirmation of the covenant members of the

candidate by a vote of three-fourths of those members present and voting at a Family Gathering specifically called for that purpose in accordance with Article III of these Bylaws.

#### **4. Other Pastoral Staff (Other Vocational Elders)**

- a. **General:** Other Pastoral Staff may be called and employed as the Church determines the need for such positions upon recommendation of the Council of Elders. Staff Members who are considered by the Council of Elders to be Pastoral Staff shall serve as elders for so long as they hold their Pastoral Staff position. These positions shall require the affirmation of the covenant members of the Church, just as any other elder candidate, and may be dismissed from their position in the same manner as any other elder.
- b. **Qualifications:** Candidates for Pastoral Staff positions must meet the requirements for the office of elder as well as any qualifications set by the Council of Elders for their position. To be called and employed as Pastoral Staff, the candidate must be selected by the Lead Pastor with the assistance of the Council of Elders and affirmed by the congregation as an elder.
- c. **Supervision:** All Pastoral Staff shall report to the Lead Pastor as staff members. In the event that no Lead Pastor is in place, the Pastoral Staff shall report to the Chairman of the Council of Elders.
- d. **Salary and Benefits:** Salary and benefit adjustments for all Pastoral Staff, as well as the Lead Pastor, shall be made in accordance with the procedure established by the Council of Elders. The Lead Pastor shall not vote on adjustments to his salary or benefits and other Pastoral Staff members shall not vote on adjustments to the salary or benefits of the Lead Pastor or any other Pastoral Staff member, including their own salary or benefits.

#### **5. Dismissal of Elders**

Any disciplinary action regarding an elder shall be guided by the Council of Elders in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Dismissal of an elder may be instituted by the petition of 25% of the covenant members, by 3/4ths of the elders, or by the Lead Pastor. Once dismissal has been instituted against an elder, an elder may be dismissed by a vote of a majority of the covenant members of the church at a Family Gathering specifically called for that purpose or by a vote of 3/4ths of the Council of the Elders. Dismissal of the Lead Pastor shall require first a vote of 3/4ths of the Council of Elders and then a vote of the majority of the congregation at a Family Gathering specifically called for that purpose.

#### **6. The Council of Elders**

- a. **Introduction:** The Council of Elders is the governing body (Board of Directors) of the Church. The Council of Elders has the power and authority to make rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of the State of South Carolina, the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, and Scripture. Elders are directed by the Bible to lead the church in vision and direction (Acts 11:30; 14:23; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 5:17). The elders are the spiritual leaders and administrators of the church, equipping members for ministry and overseeing the ministries of the church (Exodus 18:17-18; John 21:16-17; Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2). In response to these biblical patterns of leadership, members are taught in Scripture to lovingly support their leaders and submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Corinthians 16:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). While the elders are charged with the overall shepherding of the Church, the ministry of shepherding is carried out by the elders, Ministry Directors, Ministry Leaders, and Small Group Leaders, as well as the covenant members of the Church.

The Council of Elders does not exist to micromanage leadership or ministry, but rather to guard the larger vision of the church and to entrust leadership and ministry down to every level, so long as the leadership and ministry is conducted in a manner consistent with the vision, direction, and doctrine of the church. The Council of Elders also does not exist to second guess or overrule the vision and direction of the Lead Pastor, but rather to work in Christian brotherhood to provide affirmation, wise counsel, and accountability for the Lead Pastor and the vision that God gives him.

- b. **Composition, Term, and Calling:** The Council of Elders shall be composed of at least three (3) members, including the Lead Pastor, with the number of elders at any time determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men in the church. Each elder shall be called by the membership of the Church to a term of three years. Upon the recommendation of the Lead Pastor or the Council of Elders, an elder may be submitted to the covenant members for reaffirmation following the completion of their term. An elder's call to service and any reaffirmation(s) shall be conducted as provided in Sections 2 and 3 of Article II of these By-Laws.
- c. **Responsibilities:** The fundamental responsibility of the elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The elders are responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word, and shepherding and equipping the flock of God in this Church. The Council of Elders has, under the Lordship of Christ and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the following duties, among others:
  - (1) exercising oversight over the Church, shepherding the flock without lording it over them (1 Peter 5:2);
  - (2) guarding the purity of doctrine within the Church, acting for the Church in the reception, discipline, and dismissal of members in accordance with the Scripture and these Bylaws;
  - (3) supporting and assisting the Lead Pastor in establishing the vision and direction of the Church, managing, governing, and directing the affairs of the Church subject to the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws;
  - (4) developing and managing the Church's budget;
  - (5) establishing policies and procedures for the Church consistent with the vision and direction of the Church, these Bylaws, and Scripture;
  - (6) scheduling and providing a moderator for Family Gatherings;
  - (7) overseeing the work of appointed Church officers and agents and Church ministry directors, leaders, teams, and volunteers;
  - (8) overseeing administration of the ordinances of the Gospel and the ordination of elders and deacons, when necessary and appropriate;
  - (9) equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry and teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally;
  - (10) correcting error;
  - (11) overseeing, coordinating, and promoting the ministries of the Church; and
  - (12) mobilizing the Church for the mission of God.

The Council of Elders may establish ministry teams to assist it in its duties and may delegate responsibilities to these teams or to the Leadership Team, but the Council shall maintain final oversight of its duties. The Council of Elders shall have final authority in the appointment and removal of Ministry Leaders and Directors and in establishment and termination of ministries and ministry teams. In accordance with Section C of Article II of these Bylaws, there will be matters concerning which the Council of Elders will seek the approval of the membership of the Church.

- d. **Organization:** The Council of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. The Lead Pastor shall function as the leader of the Council of Elders as the "first amongst equals." The Lead Pastor may, at his discretion, appoint a chairman from amongst the elders to reside over the Council of Elders at the Lead Pastor's request. In the event that no Lead Pastor is in place, a chairman shall be elected from amongst the Elders by a majority vote of the Council of Elders.
- e. **Meetings:** The Council of Elders shall meet at least once per quarter. At the discretion of the Council of Elders and in accordance with their established policies and procedures, a meeting of the Council of Elders may be open or closed and may be held concurrently with the meetings of other groups, such as the Leadership Team. The meetings of the Council of Elders may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication through which the elders

may simultaneously hear and/or otherwise communicate with each other. Unless the Council provides otherwise, meetings of the Council may be held immediately upon notice. A quorum for meetings of the elders is defined as at least one-half of the elders plus the Lead Pastor, except for matters on which the Lead Pastor is not entitled to vote in which case a majority of the elders shall constitute a quorum. In matters that require action by the Council of Elders, the Council shall seek to make decisions in a spirit of cooperation and prayer, seeking consensus, and seeking to lovingly consider the needs and feelings of others before self. However, where a vote is required, each elder shall be entitled to one vote, except in matters that involve that elder's dismissal, salary, or other direct financial interest. A majority vote, consisting of one-half the total number of current elders plus one, shall be required for action, unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws.

### **Section C: Other Staff Members and Employees**

#### **1. General**

Other Staff Members and Employees may be called and employed as the Council of Elders determines the need for such positions.

#### **2. Qualification and Selection**

The Council of Elders shall designate positions other than Lead Pastor and Pastoral Staff as a "Staff Member" position or an "Employee" position. All Staff Members are required to affirm the Church's membership covenant and Statement of Beliefs, as well as meeting the requirements set by the Council of Elders for their positions. Employees are required to meet the requirements set by the Council of Elders for their positions.

#### **3. Supervision**

All Staff Members and employees shall report to the Lead Pastor, or his designee. In the event that no Lead Pastor is in place, Staff Members and employees shall report to the Chairman of the Council of Elders, or his designee. Staff Members and employees may be terminated, with or without cause, by their supervisor.

#### **4. Salary and Benefits**

Salary and benefit adjustments for all Staff Members and employees shall be made in accordance with the procedure established by the Council of Elders.

### **Section D: Ministry Directors, Leaders, and Teams**

#### **1. Ministry Leaders and Teams**

Subject to the supervision of the Council of Elders, the Lead Pastor and other Pastors, and the Ministry Directors may enlist and equip Ministry Leaders, establish ministry teams, and recruit team members to fulfill their various areas of ministry responsibility. These Ministry Leaders and teams may be given the freedom and authority to lead in their areas of ministry under the supervision and leadership of the Ministry Director and/or Pastor over their area of ministry and the Council of Elders. There are not a set number of Ministry Leaders or teams, as this is dependent on the ongoing ministries of the Church and the Holy Spirit's disbursement of spiritual gifts in the Church.

#### **2. The Servant-Leader Office**

The second church office established by the Bible is the office of deacon, which in the New Testament functions as a "servant-leader." The deacons liberated the apostles from direct oversight of church ministries in order that they might be free to study, teach, pray, and to lead. There are no specific, ongoing roles specified in the Bible for deacons; they served as needed (Acts 6:1-4; Philippians 1:1).

#### **3. Ministry Directors**

Certain Ministry Leaders may be selected by the Lead Pastor, or by a Pastor designated by the Lead Pastor, to become Ministry Directors, who oversee a large portion of a particular area of ministry. Ministry Directors are equated with deacons in the New Testament and serve on the basis of their qualifications and giftedness (1 Timothy 3:8-12). Ministry Directors shall be supervised by the Lead

Pastor or by a Pastor designated by the Lead Pastor and shall be responsible for enlisting, equipping, and encouraging those serving in their designated area of ministry. Ministry Directors are given the freedom and authority to lead in their area of ministry under the supervision and leadership of the Pastor over their area of ministry and the Council of Elders. Ministry Directors serve until the relationship is ended by resignation, the Lead Pastor, the Council of Elders, or by the expiration of a predetermined time of service.

#### **4. The Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team shall consist of the Lead Pastor plus certain elders and Ministry Directors selected by the Lead Pastor. The Leadership Team shall meet periodically to assist the Pastor(s) with planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating the short-term and on-going ministries of the Church. Members of the Leadership Team serve until the relationship is ended by resignation or by the Lead Pastor.

### **Section E: Church Officers**

The Church Officers may include the Trustees, the Treasurer, the Clerk, and the Secretary. The officers shall be appointed by the Lead Pastor with the approval of the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may establish other Officers as they deem appropriate. Church Officers shall serve for a period of one year and may serve for subsequent years if so appointed. Any officer may be removed from office by the Council of Elders with or without cause. So long as it is approved by the Council of Elders, an individual may serve in more than one office concurrently.

#### **1. Trustees**

Trustees are individuals selected by the Lead Pastor and approved by the Council of Elders to provide servant leadership in the Church. A trustee shall be either an elder, a Ministry Director, or another individual who, in the eyes of the Lead Pastor and Council of Elders, meets the biblical qualifications for one or both of those offices. A trustee must also fulfill the responsibilities contained in the membership covenant. The trustees shall serve the Church as the official representatives of the Church in terms of contracts and other legal matters.

The trustees, under the direction of the Council of Elders, or, if required by Section C of Article II of these Bylaws, by congregational approval, shall:

1. borrow money and incur indebtedness on behalf of the Church and caused to be executed and delivered for the Church's purposes and in the Church's name, promissory notes, and other evidences of debts and securities;
2. execute all checks, drafts, or orders for payment of money; and
3. conduct other duties and activities as requested by the Lead Pastor or the Council of Elders.

#### **2. Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be the general custodian of all funds and other valuable effects belonging to the Church and shall deposit the same or cause the same to be deposited in the name and to the credit of the Church with such depository or depositories as the Council of Elders may from time to time designate. The Treasurer shall have the responsibility for the safekeeping of the funds and securities of the Church and shall keep or cause to be kept full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in books of accounts and other accounting records of the Church. The Treasurer shall disburse or permit to be disbursed the funds of the Church in such a manner as may be ordered or authorized only by the Council of Elders and shall render to the officers of the Church and the Council of Elders on an annual basis or whenever deemed necessary, an account of all his transactions as Treasurer and of the financial status and affairs of the Church in accordance with these Bylaws. He or she shall have the general duties, powers and responsibilities of a Treasurer of a Church and shall perform such other duties and have such other responsibilities and authority as may be assigned to him from time to time by the Council of Elders.

### **3. Clerk**

The Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate roll of the Church membership, with date of admission and other pertinent information, and for issuing letters of dismissal as authorized by the Council of Elders and these Bylaws. The Clerk shall maintain or cause to be maintained the records of the Church membership as well as the records of individual contributions and shall make these reports available to each member consistent with the policies establish by the Council of Elders. He or she shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Clerk and as may be assigned by the Council of Elders or their designee under whose supervision he or she shall be.

### **4. Secretary**

The Secretary shall record or cause to be recorded minutes for the Family Gatherings or the Church including a record of all votes taken at such meetings. He or she shall have charge of the official records and seal of the Church, and he or she shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Secretary and as may be assigned by the Council of Elders or their designee under whose supervision he or she shall be.

#### **Section F: Authority to Execute Legal Documents**

While trustees represent the Church for matters requiring the approval of the Church membership or the Council of Elders, day-to-day documents of the Church may be executed by the Lead Pastor or his designees.

## **ARTICLE IV: REAL PROPERTY**

#### **Section A: Introduction**

Title to all real property of the Church shall be held in the name of the Church.

#### **Section B: Purchasing Real Property**

Real property may be purchased in the name of and on behalf of the Church by act of the Trustees after the proposal to do so has been presented and approved by the Council of Elders and by the Church membership in accordance with Section C of Article II of these Bylaws.

#### **Section C: Disposition of Real Property**

Real property of the church may be sold, mortgaged, conveyed, transferred, or otherwise disbursed with the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at a business meeting as detailed in Article III of these Bylaws.

## **ARTICLE V: FINANCES**

#### **Section A: Church Budget**

The Church shall have a budget that is developed and maintained in accordance with the policies and procedures established by the Council of Elders. This budget shall serve as the normative guide for the financial operations of the Church.

#### **Section B: Budget Management**

The budget is to be managed by the various Pastors, Staff Members, and Ministry Directors, according to their area of responsibility, under the supervision of the Council of Elders.

So long as the modifications are within the policies and procedures set forth by the Council of Elders, minor modifications within the budget can be made by the Pastors, Staff Members, and Ministry Directors, or others with budget responsibilities if circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change. For example, if a budgeted item is not needed, or if expenses in a particular area are less than expected, the individual or group with responsibility for that portion of the budget may reallocate those resources as needed. The budget should, however, be the normative guide for the financial operations of the Church.

**Section C: Annual Review**

In accordance with the policies and procedures established by the Council of Elders, an annual review of the church's financial matters will be performed and made available to the Church's covenant members.

**Section D: Fiscal Year**

The Church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

**ARTICLE VI: ORDINANCES**

**Section A: General**

The Church recognizes two ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

**Section B: Baptism**

The Church may receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. The Lead Pastor, assisted by the Council of Elders, shall schedule and administer the Church's baptismal services. Subject to this supervision, any person who has trusted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and who has been baptized as a believer, by immersion, may be permitted to perform the ordinance of baptism.

**Section C: The Lord's Supper**

The Church shall observe the Lord's Supper in keeping with the commands of the Bible at such times as the Lead Pastor and the Council of Elders deem appropriate. All who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are invited to participate in the Lord's Supper.

**ARTICLE VII: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**Section A: Affiliation**

The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other churches in world missions, this Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention, the South Carolina Baptist Convention, and the York Baptist Association.

**Section B: Records and Manuals**

The Church shall maintain the following records and reports:

1. Adequate and current books and records of accounts (financial records);
2. Written minutes of the proceedings of Family Gatherings and the meetings of the Council of Elders;
3. A roll of the covenant membership, setting forth the member's names and addresses;
4. Contribution statements for contributors; and
5. A manual or manuals of policies and procedures established by the Council of Elders.

**Section C: Indemnification**

For the purpose of this Section, the term "Indemnified Person" shall include the Pastors / Elders, officers, employees, and agents of the Church, and any reference herein to the Pastors / Elders, officers, employees, and agents of the Church shall include the former Pastors / Elders, officers, employees, and agents of the Church and their respective heirs, executors, and administrators.

The Church shall indemnify an Indemnified Person who is or was a party to any proceeding by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an Indemnified Person or is or was serving at the request of the Church as a Pastor / Elder, officer, employee, or agent of the Church against all liabilities and expenses incurred in the proceedings except such liabilities and expenses as incurred because of his or her willful misconduct or knowing violation of the criminal law. Unless a determination has been made that indemnification is not permissible, the Church may make advances and reimbursements for reasonable expenses incurred by

an Indemnified Person in a proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking from him or her to repay the same if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not entitled to indemnification. Such undertaking shall be an unlimited, unsecured general obligation of the Indemnified Person and shall be accepted without reference to such person's ability to make repayment. A determination of the right to indemnification under the South Carolina Nonprofit Corporation Act of 1994, as amended, shall be made by legal counsel selected by a majority vote of the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may authorize the Church to make any other indemnification as it deems necessary or appropriate.

#### **Section D: Alternative Dispute Resolution**

The Church believes that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Church (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Therefore, any dispute which may arise (1) between any covenant member of the Church and the Church itself, or (2) between any member of the Church and any Pastor / Elder, officer, Ministry Director, Ministry Leader, employee, volunteer, agent, or other member of this Church, if the dispute cannot be settled internally by the Church or through negotiation, shall be presented for mediation administered by the religious dispute division of Mediation Law Group, or another faith-based mediation group agreed upon by the parties. If the efforts to conciliate or mediate the dispute fail, then the matter shall be resolved through binding arbitration through the religious dispute division of Mediation Law Group, or another faith-based arbitrator or group agreed upon by the parties. The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on both parties, and both parties shall submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the courts of South Carolina, both state and federal, for the entry of a judgment confirming the arbitrators' award. Each party shall bear their own costs, including attorney's fees, relating to any mediation, conciliation, or arbitration proceeding. Should the Mediation Law Group, Faith-Based Division not be in existence at the time the dispute arises, the parties shall attend mediation and arbitration through another faith-based conflict resolution service.

If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages, then use of the conciliation, mediation, and arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurer of the Church and the insurer's agreement to honor any mediation, conciliation, or arbitration award up to an applicable policy limits. The mediation, conciliation, and arbitration process is not a substitute for any Church discipline or restoration process and shall in no way affect the authority of the Church to investigate reports of misconduct, conduct hearings, or administer discipline of members.

### **ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS**

#### **Section A: The Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation**

All requests for amendments to these Bylaws or the Articles of Incorporation must be in writing and shall be submitted to the Council of Elders for study and consideration. The Council of Elders shall determine whether to propose such amendments to the Church for adoption which shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Council of Elders. If proposed to the Church by the Council of Elders, amendments to the Bylaws or Articles of Incorporation require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a Family Gathering called for that specific purpose.

#### **Section B: The Church's Membership Covenant or Statement of Belief**

The Council of Elders may propose the adoption of or modifications to the Church's Membership Covenant or Statement of Belief by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Council of Elders. If proposed to the Church by the Council of Elders, such an adoption or modification shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a Family Gathering called for that specific purpose.