

**CONSTITUTION**  
**Of**  
***Emmanuel Church of Westbank***

**Article 1 – NAME**

- 1.01 The name of the society of *Emmanuel Church of Westbank*

**Article 2 – PURPOSES**

*The purposes of the society are:*

- 2.01 To establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father.
- 2.02 To provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honoured according to our distinctive testimony.
- 2.03 To assume its share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands.
- 2.04 To accept, uphold, and promote both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, as approved by the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, because we believe most assuredly that the Holy Scriptures are God's final revelation and constitute all-sufficient rule for faith and practice by Members and Adherents of the Church.
- 2.05 To voluntarily associate and affiliate and enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith as part of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada in the General Conference and the British Columbia/Yukon District Conference, thereby sharing in the privileges and responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation, while still holding inviolate its inherent and sovereign rights in the conduct of its affairs.
- 2.06 To constitute this society as a local assembly in fellowship with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.
- 2.07 To purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of the Church's charitable purposes; all in accordance with its Constitution and Bylaws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.



  
**T.K. SPARKS**

**BYLAWS**  
relating generally to the transaction of the affairs of  
**Emmanuel Church of Westbank**

**I. DEFINITIONS**

**1. DEFINITIONS**

1.01 In these Bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions shall apply:

- (a) “Act” means the *Societies Act*, SBC 2015, c 18, as amended from time to time and any statute enacted in substitution thereof, and in the case of such a substitution, any references in these Bylaws to provisions of the Act shall be read as references to the substituted provisions thereof in the new statute or statutes;
- (b) “Adherent” means an adherent of the Church, as described in Section 9.01;
- (c) “Annual General Meeting” means the annual business meeting of the Members, as described in Section 14.01;
- (d) “Appeal Committee” means the appeal committee appointed by the District Superintendent, as described in Section 12.17;
- (e) “Board” means the board of the Church, including the Lead Pastor, which shall be deemed to be the board of Directors of the Church pursuant to the Act;
- (f) “Board Resolution” means a resolution passed at a meeting of the Board by a simple majority of the votes cast by those Board members entitled to vote at such a meeting;
- (g) “Bylaws” means the bylaws of the Church filed with the Registrar;
- (h) “Church” means the legal entity incorporated as a non-profit society under the Act and named **Emmanuel Church of Westbank** through which its Members and Adherents may fellowship locally together as a New Testament church;
- (i) “Constitution” means the constitution of the Church filed with the Registrar, including both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC;
- (j) “Credential Holder” means a Person who holds credentials with the PAOC in accordance with the PAOC General Bylaws;
- (k) “District” means The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada British Columbia and Yukon District Society;
- (l) “District Bylaws” means the bylaws adopted by the District from time to time;
- (m) “District Ex Officio Member” means the District Superintendent or their designate, as described in Section 8.03;
- (n) “District Superintendent” means the superintendent of the District from time to time;

- (o) "Extra-Special Resolution" means a resolution passed at a General Meeting by a unanimous vote (100%) of the Regular Members and the District Ex Officio Member entitled to vote at that meeting;
- (p) "General Meeting" means any meeting of the Members, whether the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting;
- (q) "Hearing Committee" means a hearing committee appointed by the Board for the purposes of Section 12.15;
- (r) "Inactive Member" means a Member without active status, as described in Section 8.02;
- (s) "Lead Pastor" means the Person called and appointed as the Lead Pastor, as described in Section 22.01;
- (t) "Member" means a member of the Church, as described in Section 4.01;
- (u) "Membership Committee" means the Board;
- (v) "Nominating Committee" means the nominating committee constituted by the Board, as described in Section 18;
- (w) "Officer" means an officer of the Church, as described in Section 26;
- (x) "Ordinary Resolution" means a resolution passed at a General Meeting by a simple majority of not less than fifty percent (50%) plus one (1) of the votes cast by the Regular Members entitled to vote at that meeting;
- (y) "PAOC" means The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada;
- (z) "PAOC General Bylaws" means the bylaws adopted by the PAOC from time to time;
- (aa) "Person" means an individual person, but does not include a corporation, partnership, trust, or unincorporated organization;
- (bb) "Policy Statements" means any policy statements adopted by the Board from time to time concerning its position on practical applications of biblical principles and Christian conduct and the administration of Church business;
- (cc) "Positions and Practices" means such document as approved by the General Conference of the PAOC, from time to time, and appended to these Bylaws.
- (dd) "Purposes" means the charitable purposes as set forth in the Constitution;
- (ee) "Quorum" means the number of Regular Members required for a General Meeting, as described in Section 14.07;
- (ff) "Registered Address" of a Member or Board member means the address of that Member or Board member as recorded in the register of Members or the register of the Board;
- (gg) "Registrar" means the Registrar of Companies of the Province of British Columbia;
- (hh) "Regular Member" means a Member with voting status, as described in Section 8.01;
- (ii) "Special General Meeting" means any meeting of the Members outside of the Annual General Meeting, as described in Section 14.04;



- (jj) “Special Resolution” means a resolution passed at a General Meeting by a majority of not less than two-thirds (2/3) of the votes cast by the Regular Members entitled to vote at that meeting; and
- (kk) “Statement of Essential Truths” means such document as approved by the General Conference of the PAOC, from time to time, and appended to these Bylaws.

## **2. CONSTITUTION, INTERPRETATION AND HEADINGS**

- 2.01 Constitution – These Bylaws shall be strictly interpreted at all times in accordance with, and subject to, the Purposes and both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC, which, for the purposes of these Bylaws, are appended to these Bylaws. If any of the provisions contained in these Bylaws are inconsistent with those contained in the Constitution or the Act, the provisions contained in the Constitution and the Act, as the case may be, shall prevail.
- 2.02 Interpretation – In these Bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires, the following rules of interpretation shall apply:
  - (a) words importing the singular number include the plural and vice versa; and
  - (b) words importing the masculine gender include the feminine and neuter genders, unless these Bylaws otherwise specifically provide; and
  - (c) words importing or referring to Person or Persons shall include individual persons only and shall not specifically include corporations, partnerships, trusts and unincorporated organizations.
- 2.03 Headings – Headings used in these Bylaws are for convenience of reference only and shall not affect the construction or interpretation thereof.

## **II. TENETS OF FAITH**

### **3. TENETS OF FAITH, PREROGATIVES, ORDINANCES AND PRACTICES**

- 3.01 Tenets of Faith - We believe most assuredly that the Holy Scriptures are God’s final revelation and constitute our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This local Church, by virtue of its affiliation with the PAOC, shall accept the current versions of both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC, as approved by the General Conference of the PAOC.
- 3.02 Prerogatives – This Church shall have a right to:
  - (a) Govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...till we all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:3, 13).
  - (b) Govern itself according to both the PAOC General Constitution and Bylaws and the District Constitution and Bylaws.
  - (c) Choose its own pastors, provided they hold credentials with, or are endorsed by, the PAOC. The Church shall select its own Officers and Board members, transact local business and exercise discipline over its Members.

- (d) Have representation in the General Conference and District Conference of the PAOC, through properly accredited delegates, according to the provisions of the respective constitutions of these bodies, in force from time to time.

3.03 Ordinances and Practices

- (a) To administer the ordinance of Baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) to all those who have repented of their sins, who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).
- (b) To regularly observe the ordinance of the Lord's Supper for believers as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).
- (c) To observe the practices of:
  - i. Dedication of Children
  - ii. Prayer for the Baptism in the Holy Spirit
  - iii. Prayer for the Sick
  - iv. Christian Marriage
  - v. Christian Burial of the Dead

### III. MEMBERSHIP

4. DEFINITION OF MEMBERSHIP

4.01 The Members are the Members as at the date these Bylaws become effective. Thereafter, the Members shall consist of those Persons who:

- (a) give credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior (John 1:12, 3:3-8; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Peter 1:18-25);
- (b) give evidence of a consistent Christian life and compliance with the biblical standard of Christian practice, manifesting spiritual growth, and living so as not to be a stumbling block for the Gospel (Romans 6:4, 8:1-4, 13:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 5:19-24; Ephesians 4:17-32, 5:1, 15; 2 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 1:6-7, 2:15-16). They shall refrain from "acts of the sinful nature: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like" (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV). Sexual immorality shall be interpreted to mean common-law marital relationships, pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationships (1 Corinthians 6:15-18; 7:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4), and all forms of homosexual and lesbian activity, along with other practices deemed inexcusable for Christian conduct, and which place a person under God's judgment (Romans 1:26-2:11);
- (c) subscribe to both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC;
- (d) show willingness to regularly contribute financially to the support of the Church (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8);
- (e) have regularly attended the services of the Church or predecessor thereof for a period of at least three (3) months immediately prior to applying for membership; and
- (f) seek to promote unity and growth in the Church, indicating a desire to live in harmony with this body of believers, and being open to receiving guidance from the preached Word, the general direction of the Lead Pastor and the pastoral staff, the Board, and the Constitution and these Bylaws.

**5. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

- 5.01 A Person eighteen (18) years of age or older shall qualify to be a Member if, in the opinion of the Membership Committee, such Person meets all of the following qualifications:
- (a) the Person fulfills the definition of membership as set out in Section 4.01;
  - (b) the Person has completed the procedure for admission into membership set out in Sections 6.01 to 6.05; and
  - (c) a Person, if a Member, would not be under the discipline of the Church, as set out in Section 12.

**6. ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP**

- 6.01 Application for membership in the Church shall be submitted to the Membership Committee on a signed application form, whereby the applicant agrees to abide by the provisions of the Constitution and these Bylaws including the terms of membership as stated in Section 4.01.
- 6.02 The applicant shall be given a complete copy of the Constitution, these Bylaws and both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC, with a request that the applicant read the documents in full.
- 6.03 The Membership Committee shall make investigation relating to the applicant, as it deems appropriate.
- 6.04 If the applicant understands and agrees with the Constitution, these Bylaws, and both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC and meets the membership standards as set out in Section 4.01, the Membership Committee shall approve the membership of the applicant by a simple majority vote.
- 6.05 Applicants who have been approved for membership in the Church by the Membership Committee shall receive notification confirming membership and shall be publicly received into the Church (Galatians 2:9).
- 6.06 A Member's membership may be reviewed annually by the Membership Committee.

**7. PRIVILEGES, RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERSHIP**

- 7.01 Church membership shall carry the following privileges, rights and duties:
- (a) the privilege to attend all public worship services of the Church, subject to Section 11;
  - (b) the privilege to participate in the ordinances administered by the Church;
  - (c) the duty to minister to one another's spiritual needs as part of the Body of Christ;
  - (d) the duty to participate in Church activities and ministries as the Lord directs and personal circumstances permit;
  - (e) the duty to support financially the work of the Church, as the Lord directs and personal circumstances permit;

- (f) the duty to respect and submit to the spiritual authority and procedures of the Church, as expressed in the Constitution and these Bylaws;
  - (g) the right to attend, speak and participate at all General Meetings; and
  - (h) subject to these Bylaws, the right to a single vote either in person or by means described in Section 14.14 at all General Meetings.
- 7.02 No Member shall call any meeting or conduct any activity in the name of or on behalf of the Church without the knowledge and consent of the Board.
- 7.03 Church membership is transferable to and from another PAOC church, whereby:
- (a) Persons moving from another PAOC church, who desire to have their membership transferred, should request a letter of transfer from the membership committee of the former church, indicating the status of the person, for presentation to the Membership Committee of the Church.
  - (b) Persons moving from another PAOC church shall apply for membership as set out in Section 6, and, notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, where a Person otherwise meets the qualifications of membership, that Person need not have regularly attended the services of the Church for a period of at least three (3) months immediately prior to applying for membership.
  - (c) The Membership Committee shall give a Member who moves to another church, upon written request, a letter of transfer indicating the status of the Member.
- 7.04 A Member in good standing is one whose membership has not been terminated under Section 11 or is not under discipline as outlined in Section 12.

## **8. TYPES OF MEMBERS**

- 8.01 Regular Members – Persons eighteen (18) years of age and over, who fulfill the requirements of the standards for membership and who have made application on the approved application form and have been accepted, shall be known as Regular Members. Such Regular Members shall be entitled to voting privileges at all duly called General Meetings, subject to the conditions hereinafter stated.
- 8.02 Inactive Members – Regular Members who are not active in the life of the Church because of infirmity, temporary relocation, or for any reason deemed appropriate by the Board shall be known as Inactive Members. Such Inactive Members shall not qualify for voting privileges at General Meetings. Inactive Members shall be reinstated as Regular Members upon approval by the Board.
- 8.03 District Ex Officio Member – The District Superintendent, by virtue of their office, shall be a Member of the Church when acting as the Lead Pastor, appealed for assistance, a vote of confidence is called, or an Extra-Special Resolution is being considered and shall be known as the District Ex Officio Member. The District Ex Officio Member shall be given notice for such a General Meeting with voting privileges. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the District Superintendent may appoint a designate to act on their behalf at any such a General Meeting.

## **9. ADHERENTS**

- 9.01 An Adherent is a Person who regularly attends the services of the Church, but who has not made formal application for membership.
- 9.02 An Adherent shall not vote or participate at and need not be given notice of any General Meeting, but may attend any General Meeting.

**10. MEMBERSHIP REGISTER**

10.01 A register of Members, both active and inactive, shall be kept by the secretary of the Board.

**11. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

11.01 Grounds for termination of membership in the Church shall include:

- (a) Voluntary withdrawal from membership in the Church;
- (b) Transfer of membership to another church;
- (c) Absence from the regular services of the Church for three (3) consecutive months without valid reason, upon issuance of a letter from the Membership Committee noting this voluntary withdrawal;
- (d) The propagation of doctrines and practices which are, in the opinion of the Board, contrary to those set forth in both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC, and where carrying out a full investigation as set out in Section 12 could reasonably be expected to directly or indirectly threaten the health or safety of any Person;
- (e) Any act or action which is, in the opinion of the Board, the cause of serious discord or dissension with or without intent (Proverbs 6:19; Romans 6:17-18), and where carrying out a full investigation as set out in Section 12 could reasonably be expected to directly or indirectly threaten the health or safety of any Person;
- (f) Subject to Sections 11.01(d) and (e), any proven act or conduct which, in the opinion of the Board, after a full investigation as set out in Section 12, may be determined to be in contradiction of the terms as defined in 4.01 of these Bylaws may give just cause for disciplinary action by the Board. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, among such causes for action shall be:
  - i. Any moral failure involving sexual misconduct or sexual deviation (including, but not limited to adultery, homosexuality, incest, sexual assault, pornography, and improper contact with the opposite sex);
  - ii. Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct or any conduct unbecoming of a Member (including, but not limited to deception, fraud, theft, and assault);
  - iii. The propagation of doctrines and practices contrary to those set forth in both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC;
  - iv. Any act or action of a Member, which is the cause of serious discord or dissension, with or without intent (Proverbs 6:19; Romans 16:17-18); or
  - v. The failure to enter the restoration program or complete the same as set out in Section 12.16.

11.02 When, by Board Resolution, disciplinary action is taken against a Member under Sections 11.01(d), (e), or (f), the Member in question shall be advised in writing by a registered letter by the secretary of the Board and a date set for the hearing before the Board to which the Member in question shall be invited to appear, with a copy of the aforementioned letter being sent to the District Superintendent or their designate.

- 11.03 The membership status of the Member shall be terminated by the Board if, in accordance with the procedures set out in these Bylaws, the Board by Board Resolution votes to do so.

## **12. PROCEDURE FOR DISCIPLINE**

- 12.01 The Nature and Purposes of Discipline – Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the Church is responsible. The aims of discipline are that God may be honoured, that the purity and welfare of the Church may be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration.

Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of a Member, while fully providing for the protection and advancement of the spiritual welfare of the Church. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective, and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of both justice and mercy. The following shall be administered with gentleness.

### **12.02 Initiative**

- (a) Authority – Occasions sometimes arise which make it necessary to deal with a Member who has reached the place where, in the opinion of the Board, endorsement can no longer be given. The Board, which has the authority to approve membership, also has the right to withdraw their approval and to terminate membership.
- (b) Board Responsibility – The Board is responsible to deal with allegations of misconduct according to these Bylaws.

In the event that the Board finds itself compromised in any manner or appearing to lack impartiality, it shall have the right to appoint a substitute committee to hear charges against a Member.

- 12.03 Statement of Conduct – Should a Member admit to, or confess to a wrongdoing or misconduct to the Board, such as should require disciplinary action, then the Board shall exercise discretion as to the appropriate form of discipline.
- 12.04 Reports, Rumours, or Complaints – Should there be reports, rumours, or complaints, written or unwritten, which appear to be persistent, serious, becoming publicly known and posing a detriment to the testimony of the individual or Church, then the Lead Pastor shall use judgment in discussing the matter with the respondent Member, always in the presence of another Board member. The Lead Pastor and Board member shall exercise their discretion as to whether or not to commence an official investigation.
- 12.05 Investigation of Reports or Complaints of Alleged Violations – Written and signed allegations involving a Member, as referenced in Sections 11.01(d), (e), and (f), shall be investigated. The Lead Pastor shall appoint two (2) Board members to investigate the allegation, having in mind that it is their responsibility to safeguard the Member, the Church, and the PAOC. This shall be done to determine the credibility of the allegation.
- 12.06 Signed written allegations shall be filed with the Lead Pastor or other Board member or both, by the complainant(s) describing the alleged violations.
- 12.07 The Persons making the allegation shall be interviewed in order to ascertain the facts in the case and the reasons underlying the allegation.
- 12.08 The respondent Member shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed to discuss the allegation.

- 12.09 Should a Member, when presented with the allegations, acknowledge a wrongdoing that requires disciplinary action, then the Lead Pastor or the Lead Pastor's designate shall report the acknowledgement of wrongdoing to the Board who shall initiate appropriate disciplinary action and a restoration program.
- 12.10 Should the Member deny the allegations made, the investigators shall determine if the evidence merits a disciplinary hearing.
- 12.11 Where a respondent Member serves in a leadership capacity in the local Church, such ministry may be restricted during the investigation at the discretion of the Lead Pastor.

12.12 Legal Charges

- (a) Where a Member has been legally charged under the *Criminal Code*:
- i. No disciplinary procedures shall be followed until the legal proceedings, including appeal, have run their course.
  - ii. Continuing involvement in Church leadership may be subject to restriction during the time of the legal proceedings at the discretion of the Board.
  - iii. A guilty verdict of a Member following the legal proceedings, including appeal, shall automatically precipitate disciplinary action by the Board.
  - iv. A Member may be eligible for participation in a restoration program, upon request for reconciliation.
- (b) Should the allegations against the Member be one of a violation which is required by law to be reported (including, but not limited to, offenses against minors), the Board shall report the respondent to the appropriate legal authorities and delay their own investigation, until the appropriate legal authorities have opportunity to investigate.

12.13 Preparation and Filing of Charges – Allegations shall only be investigated when they have been made in writing, dated, and signed by the complainant.

If, after due investigation, it is determined by the investigators that a disciplinary hearing shall occur, charges shall be filed with the Board.

The Member against whom charges have been filed shall be informed in writing of the charges made according to Sections 11.01(d), (e), and (f), including a signed copy of the charges; either by registered mail or hand delivered to the individual on behalf of the investigating committee at least fifteen (15) days before being called to appear before the Board for a disciplinary hearing. The hearing shall take place within forty (40) days of formal charges being delivered to the Member, or the entire proceeding shall be rescinded. A copy of the charges shall be sent to the District Superintendent or their designate.

The Member must confirm attendance at the disciplinary hearing no later than seven (7) days prior to the date established for the disciplinary hearing. Failure to confirm or appear at the disciplinary hearing may constitute voluntary withdrawal from membership. A hearing may proceed as outlined in Section 12.15.

The said Member may be relieved immediately from their Church involvement upon being notified of the charges.

12.14 Disposition of Allegations

- (a) If written allegations are made and signed, but the investigators conclude under the guidelines of these Bylaws that no reason exists for a hearing, then the matter shall be dropped.
- (b) The Lead Pastor, or the Lead Pastor's designate, may seek to counsel all parties involved and to bring to an end any continuation of rumours or conflicts related to the matter.
- (c) The complainant shall be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and the allegations dismissed.
- (d) There shall be no record of the investigation kept except the verdict in the minutes of the Board.
- (e) The Member shall be informed in writing that the investigation of the allegations has concluded and no charges have been laid.

12.15 Disciplinary Hearing – In the event the investigators find the charges merit a hearing they shall request the Lead Pastor and the Board to arrange for a disciplinary hearing for the respondent Member. The Member shall be requested to appear at the hearing.

To ensure the ability of the Hearing Committee to render an impartial judgment, no Board member may sit on the Hearing Committee when they have been party to the details of the investigation or any event or incident related to the alleged offence.

The Lead Pastor may attend the hearing as an observer, but shall not participate nor be present when a vote is taken in the decision as to guilt or innocence. The role of the Lead Pastor is to be redemptive to all parties involved.

If the respondent Member refuses to appear at the hearing to offer a defense, the hearing may proceed and the respondent Member may be disciplined if found guilty of the charges preferred.

- (a) The Chair – A member of the Hearing Committee shall be appointed by the Lead Pastor to serve as chair.

The chair of the Hearing Committee, along with the Lead Pastor, shall prepare an agenda and arrange for all matters of the hearing.

The chair shall appoint a recording secretary from the members of the Hearing Committee.

- (b) The Role of Investigators

- i. The investigators shall bring a report to the hearing and offer evidence as discovered during the investigation procedures.
- ii. They shall not participate nor be present when a vote is taken in the decision as to guilt or innocence.
- iii. No evidence or comment regarding the evidence shall be given by the investigators or accusers in the absence of the respondent Member, unless the respondent Member has failed to or has refused to appear at the hearing.

- (c) Member's Support – The respondent Member shall have the right to have another Member or a member of their immediate family present for support but not as an active participant in the hearing process.

Legal counsel shall not be present for either side at the hearing.



- (d) The agenda and proceedings shall provide sufficient opportunity for the complainant and complainee to speak, offer evidence, cross examine, present witnesses, and to make a summation statement. It shall be the role of the Hearing Committee to question and make inquiry of the participants and to seek to have all the facts, evidence, and testimony duly presented and examined, to ensure an objective decision.
- (e) The verdict shall be made by secret ballot in the absence of investigators, the complainant, the supporting Member, if present, and the complainee. A resolution passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Hearing Committee shall be required to determine guilt.
- (f) If it has been determined that guilt has been established, discipline shall be administered by the Board, with the leadership of the Lead Pastor, prayerfully and in the fear of God, in accordance with the Scriptures and as set forth in the Constitution and these Bylaws in accordance with Section 12.16.

(g) Announcement of the Verdict

- i. The verdict shall be communicated to the Lead Pastor and placed in the minutes of the Board. If the verdict is one of guilt, the minutes of the hearing and any other relevant documents shall be maintained in a confidential file, until the disciplinary process has been completed.
- ii. The Lead Pastor shall communicate the verdict in writing to the Member and the complainant within five (5) days of the decision of the Hearing Committee.
- iii. If a guilty verdict is reached, the Member shall be informed in writing of the right and process of appeal.
- iv. If the verdict is one of not guilty, then no record of the hearing shall be maintained except the verdict in the minutes of the Board.

- 12.16 Discipline – A Member who has been found guilty of violating or who has confessed in writing to having violated any of the principles set forth in the Constitution and these Bylaws, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Board. Said discipline shall be administered in Christian love and kindness. The Board shall weigh decisions on the basis of the offense itself.

A Member who has confessed to, or been found guilty of, the charges may have their membership placed on probation, or suspended.

A Member who refuses to enter the restoration program and does not complete the same shall have their membership terminated.

- 12.17 Right of Appeal – The Member shall have the right of appeal. A written request must specifically state the nature, purpose and reason for the appeal based on the process leading to the judgment rendered.

Any appeal of the decision by the Hearing Committee must be made in writing, within thirty (30) days of receiving the decision of the Hearing Committee, to the secretary of the Board. The Board shall request the District Superintendent or their designate to appoint a committee to hear the appeal.

The appeal shall be heard within sixty (60) days of receiving the request for an appeal in writing.

The respondent Member shall be present at this appeal, but if the respondent Member neglects or refuses to attend the hearing, it may proceed in the absence of the respondent Member. The decision of this Appeal Committee shall be final.

The chair of the Appeal Committee shall communicate the decision of the Appeal Committee in writing to the respondent Member within five (5) days of the appeal hearing.

Legal counsel shall not be present for either side at the appeal hearing, nor in any other investigative or disciplinary hearing provided for in these Bylaws.

- 12.18 Restoration – In the event a Member who has been found guilty of an offence shows repentance and indicates a desire for continued fellowship with the Church, the Board shall determine an appropriate restoration program that shall have in view the completion of a suspension period or the reinstatement of membership as applicable.

The program of restoration shall be administered in Christian love and kindness. The restoration program may include limitations of ministry involvement during the term of restoration.

- 12.19 Reinstatement of Membership – Persons who have had their membership suspended and have successfully completed the restoration program may apply for reinstatement of membership by communicating their request to the secretary of the Board and may be reinstated as a Member at the discretion of the Board.

### **13. WAIVER AND MEDIATION**

- 13.01 Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, membership in the Church is given upon the strict condition that disciplinary proceedings or any other proceedings or matters arising out of these Bylaws shall not give a Member cause for any legal action against either the Church, the Lead Pastor, any associate pastor, any staff member of the Church, any Board member, any Officer, or any Member, and the acceptance of membership in the Church shall constitute conclusive and absolute evidence by a Member of all rights of action, causes of action, and all claims and demands against the Church, the Lead Pastor, any associate pastor, any staff member of the Church, any Board member, any Officer, or any Member in relation to disciplinary proceedings or any other proceedings or matters arising out of these Bylaws or involving the Church in any matter whatsoever and this provision may be pleaded as a complete estoppel (i.e., the prevention of an action) in the event that such action is commenced in violation hereof.
- 13.02 In the event that a Member is dissatisfied with any matters of procedure involving the Member and the Church as set out in these Bylaws, then, if that Member does not violate or circumvent the waiver contained in Section 13.01 or attempt to do so, that Member may seek to have their concerns resolved through a process of Christian mediation whereby the Member shall appoint one (1) mediator, the Church shall appoint another mediator, and the two (2) mediators so appointed shall jointly appoint a third mediator. The three (3) mediators may then meet with the Board and the Member in attempt to mediate a resolution, provided, however, that such mediation shall not be binding either upon the Church or the Member.

## **IV. MEMBERS' MEETINGS**

### **14. GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 14.01 Annual General Meeting – There shall be an Annual General Meeting, at such time and place as determined by the Board, no later than four (4) calendar months from the end of the fiscal year of the Church. Notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given, in accordance with Section 14.05. The fiscal year end shall be at December 31. Annual reports shall be sent to the District office following the Annual General Meeting.
- 14.02 The Annual General Meeting agenda shall include, but not be limited to:
- (a) Devotional
  - (b) Establish Quorum and voting bar

- (c) Approval of agenda
  - (d) Approval of the minutes of the previous General Meeting
  - (e) Unfinished business
  - (f) Report of the Lead Pastor, and acceptance
  - (g) Report of the treasurer of the Board, and acceptance
  - (h) Acceptance of financial statements
  - (i) Election of lay Board members
  - (j) Appointment of the auditor, if any
  - (k) New business
  - (l) Adjournment
- 14.03 New Business at the Annual General Meeting – If a Regular Member desires to present a matter for consideration at the Annual General Meeting, the same shall be in writing and signed by that Member and submitted to the Board no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 14.04 Special General Meetings – Special General Meetings may be called by:
- (a) the Lead Pastor;
  - (b) the secretary of the Board when a majority of the Board in writing so orders; or
  - (c) the Board when no less than ten percent (10%) of the Members so petition.
- 14.05 Notice of Meeting – Notice of all General Meetings shall be given personally, by mail, by electronic mail, or by facsimile to the Member, to be sent to the Member's registered address, the Member's email address, or facsimile number, as recorded in the Church's records. Notice shall be given at least 14 days preceding the General Meeting. The notice for all General Meetings shall include the date, time, place, text of all special resolutions, and purpose of the General Meeting, and shall contain sufficient information to permit the Member to form a reasoned judgment on the decisions to be taken. No General Meeting shall be held in the absence of the Lead Pastor without the written authorization of the Lead Pastor.
- Notice of a General Meeting shall be given only to:
- (a) every Member shown on the register of Members on the day notice is given, and
  - (b) the auditor, if any.
- 14.06 Omission of Notice – The accidental omission to give notice of any General Meeting or any irregularity in the notice of any General Meeting or the non-receipt of any notice by any Member or by the auditor of the Church shall not invalidate any resolution passed or any proceedings taken at any General Meeting, provided that no Member objects to such omission or irregularity.
- 14.07 Quorum – A Quorum for any General Meeting shall be constituted by the greater of three (3) Regular Members or twenty-five percent (25%) of the total Regular Members of the Church (not including Inactive Members) immediately prior to the time of the General Meeting in question and for the duration of the General Meeting, except that Quorum for a General Meeting at which the Members consider an Extra-Special Resolution shall be the greater of three (3) voting Members or twenty-five percent (25%) of the total voting Members, which includes, in either case, the District Ex Officio Member. No business shall be transacted at any General Meeting, unless the requisite Quorum is constituted at the time of the transaction of such business. If a Quorum is not constituted at the time appointed for a General Meeting or within such reasonable time thereafter as the Members in attendance may determine, the Members in attendance and entitled to vote may adjourn the General Meeting to a fixed time and place, but may not transact any other business and the provisions of Section 14.05 with regard to notice shall apply to such adjournment.

- 14.08 Chair – The Lead Pastor, or in their absence a designate appointed by Board Resolution, shall act as chair of all General Meetings.
- 14.09 Majority Vote – At all General Meetings, every question shall be determined by Ordinary Resolution (simple majority), unless otherwise provided for by the Act or elsewhere in these Bylaws.
- 14.10 Voting Procedure – Every question submitted to any General Meeting shall be decided by a show of hands, except where a secret ballot is provided for or requested as stated below. At any General Meeting, unless a secret ballot is provided, a declaration by the chair that a motion has carried or carried unanimously or by particular majority or lost or not carried by a particular majority shall be conclusive evidence of the fact. A secret ballot may be held either upon the decision of the chair or upon request of any Regular Member and shall be taken in such manner as the chair directs. The result of a secret ballot shall be deemed to be the decision of the General Meeting at which the secret ballot was held. A request for a secret ballot may be withdrawn.
- 14.11 When the Regular Members are voting on business matters, a definite voting bar shall be made between those who are entitled to vote and those who are not so entitled. A Regular Member wishing to challenge the right of another to vote may do so. In the event of such a challenge, a majority of the Regular Members shall decide.
- 14.12 Parliamentary Order – In order to expedite General Meetings, General Meetings shall be governed by the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and by the accepted rules of parliamentary procedure as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, as amended from time to time.
- 14.13 Provision may be made for absentee votes, for Members who, in the opinion of the Board, would be legitimately unable to attend and requesting to submit their votes. Such votes are only allowed on the first ballot, if the Members in attendance at the General Meeting would approve by Ordinary Resolution and if no further relevant positive or negative input relating to the vote is given in the meeting.
- 14.14 Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.
- 14.15 Any General Meeting may also be held, or any Member may participate in any General Meeting, by conference call or similar communication equipment or device so long as all the Persons participating in the General Meeting can hear and respond to one another. All Persons so participating in a General Meeting shall be deemed to be in attendance of the General Meeting and, notwithstanding the foregoing, shall be entitled to exercise their vote, if any, by a voice vote recorded by the secretary of such meeting.

## **V. BOARD MEMBERS**

### **15. DEFINITION OF THE BOARD**

- 15.01 The Board shall act in an administrative capacity in matters pertaining to the Church, its spiritual life, and its financial affairs. The Board shall consist of the Lead Pastor and not fewer than two (2) lay Board members, as established by the Members at an Annual General Meeting.
- 15.02 The Board may exercise all such powers and do all such acts as the Church may exercise and do, and which are not by these Bylaws or by statute or otherwise lawfully directed or required to be exercised or done by the Church at a General Meeting, but subject, nevertheless, to the provisions of:
- (a) all laws affecting the Church;
  - (b) these Bylaws; and

- (c) Policy Statements and rules, not being inconsistent with these Bylaws, which are made from time to time by the Church at a General Meeting.

No rule made by the Church at a General Meeting invalidates a prior act of the Board that would have been valid if that rule had not been made.

- 15.03 The Lead Pastor shall act as chair of the Board and shall be deemed to be a Board member.
- 15.04 At any time and at all times when the Church does not have a Lead Pastor, the District Ex Officio Member shall assume the chair of the Board, where along with the lay Board members shall be deemed to constitute a complete Board for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Constitution and these Bylaws. This Section 15.04 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).

## **16. QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE BOARD**

- 16.01 To be eligible for election to the Board, a Person must fulfill all of the following qualifications:
  - (a) the Person must be a Member in good standing;
  - (b) the Person must have been a Regular Member for at least one (1) year at the time of election;
  - (c) the Person must have the scriptural qualifications referred to in Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-12; Titus 1:5-9;
  - (d) the Person must be a faithful person, of good report and sound judgment, an example to the Members and Adherents in matters of stewardship, Church attendance, and spiritual maturity;
  - (e) the Person must seek constantly, as a sanctified vessel, to be “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18).

## **17. ACCOUNTABILITY OF BOARD MEMBERS**

- 17.01 To the Lead Pastor – To support the Lead Pastor in their primary responsibility to their family; encourage and enable the Lead Pastor to a continual growth in leadership through continuing education, development, courses, seminars, and resources; assure administrative excellence in financial reporting, strategic planning, communication, labour relations and other assigned duties; assist in creating and implementing a vision and strategy for the Church; assist in the development of the Church as a disciple-making, equipping community; ensure a global missions strategy and commitment; respect and understand mutual accountability (Romans 1:8); and provide covering, care, and nurture for the Lead Pastor.
- 17.02 To Other Board Members – Support the Board in their primary responsibility to their family; encourage and enable the Board to a continual growth in leadership; assume responsibility for areas of expertise and giftedness to assure administrative excellence in the Church; fulfill assigned duties as directed by the Board; assist in creating and implementing a vision and strategy for the Church; assist in the development of the Church as a disciple-making, equipping community; ensure that adequate resources are available for reaching and discipling the community; ensure a global missions strategy and commitment; respect and understand mutual accountability (Romans 1:8); and provide covering, care, and nurture for each Board member. It is expected that the Board shall function in confidentiality and loyalty, and model personal discipleship, which shall contribute to the well-being, reputation, and respect of the entire Board.

- 17.03 To the Church – Model healthy family life and teach family values; ensure that adequate resources are available for reaching and discipling the community; ensure clear communication of the vision, strategy and needs to the Members and Adherents; ensure that an adequate membership process is in place (including education, ministry, accountability and discipline); assist the Church in understanding their spiritual responsibility to serve, give, share and be involved; assist the Church in understanding their responsibility to support the leadership in its vision and direction for the future and health of the Church; and assist the Church to understand its role in, and commitment to, the community, as an agency of grace and spiritual light.
- 17.04 To the Community – Understand their role of modeling Christian values of grace, love and acceptance to the community; raising Church awareness of the community's needs, and the responsibility of the Church to the community; to pray for and encourage the leadership of the community; and uphold and communicate justice and truth in the community.

**18. SELECTION OF THE BOARD**

- 18.01 The applicants for incorporation shall be the first Board members, whose terms in office shall continue until their successors are elected. At the first Annual General Meeting, the Board members then elected shall replace the provisional Board members.
- 18.01 A Nominating Committee, when needed for nominating Members to serve on the Board, shall be established by Board Resolution. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the Board or of a committee appointed by the Board that shall consist of the Lead Pastor, one (1) lay Board member, and three (3) Regular Members not being Board members.
- 18.02 When a vacancy occurs in the Nominating Committee, the Board shall fill the vacancy from the register of Regular Members.
- 18.03 The Nominating Committee shall invite confidential submissions of qualifying Members from every registered Regular Member, until twenty-one (21) days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The submissions shall be in writing and signed by the Member presenting the submission. The submissions shall not be recognized as nominations, but submissions to be vetted by the Nominating Committee and thus confidentially submitted without the knowledge of the Member being recommended.
- 18.04 After the Nominating Committee has determined whether such individuals are qualified and willing to serve on the Board, the Nominating Committee shall nominate such names at the Annual General Meeting.
- 18.05 The Members may empower, at a previous General Meeting, a Nominating Committee to set aside the submission process and agree on the names of Members who are qualified and willing to serve on the Board. Such names shall be nominated at the Annual General Meeting.
- 18.06 Voting:
- (a) The chair shall appoint at least three (3) scrutineers to count the ballots.
  - (b) When the Regular Members are voting on business or any other matters, a definite voting bar shall be made between those who are entitled to vote and those who are not so entitled.
  - (c) The election of lay Board members shall be by secret ballot. Each Regular Member shall be entitled to cast one (1) vote for each candidate they wish to elect according to the number of vacancies to be filled.
  - (d) To be elected to the Board, a candidate must receive a majority of the ballots cast. The first candidate, or candidates, to receive a majority of the ballots cast, shall be elected. If no candidates

are elected on any particular ballot, the name receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated in the succeeding ballot, until a full election is achieved. In event that a partial term is to be filled, the last Member to be elected shall fill that term.

- 18.07 Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, in the event of a vacancy on the Board, the Board may temporarily extend membership privileges to a District leader or other Credential Holder and invite the individual to serve on the Board.

## **19. TERM OF OFFICE OF BOARD MEMBERS**

- 19.01 The term of office of all lay Board members shall be for either one (1), two (2), or three (3) years, as determined by Ordinary Resolution (simple majority). Any lay Board member having served for six (6) consecutive years shall not be eligible for re-election for a period of one (1) year.
- 19.02 Membership on the Board shall cease if any Board member during the term of office resigns, moves away, ceases to be a Regular Member (unless the Board member is a District leader or other Credential Holder), or is disqualified under the provisions of Section 12. If a vacancy occurs on the Board, the Board may appoint a successor Board member to fill the vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting. If a vacancy occurs on the Board during the first year of a two-year term, a Member shall be elected at the next Annual General Meeting to fill the role and serve a one-year term, in accordance with the procedures set out in Section 18.
- 19.03 The Regular Members may remove a lay Board member before the expiration of their term of office by a Special Resolution (2/3 majority), and may elect a successor to complete the term of office, but no lay Board member shall be removed until they have been given notice of the proposed action and an opportunity to be heard by the Members at a General Meeting.
- 19.04 A lay Board member may be disciplined, suspended, or removed from office before the expiration of their term, in accordance with the Policy Statements and in keeping with Section 11 to 13.

## **20. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BOARD**

- 20.01 Specific Responsibilities – The Board is chosen to serve the Church and therefore shall be authorized to carry out the following duties and responsibilities:
- (a) Act in an administrative capacity in matters pertaining to the Church, its spiritual life and financial affairs, assisting also in the ministry of its ordinances.
  - (b) Act in the examination of applications for membership and in the administration of the discipline of the Church.
  - (c) Facilitate the engagement of the Lead Pastor, in consultation with the District Superintendent or their designate, and ensure that an adequate compensation package is provided for the Lead Pastor, together with suitable housing facilities should a parsonage be included and travel reimbursement either by allowance or based on a per kilometre rate, taking into consideration the cost of living and the Church's financial ability. (Suitable housing facilities shall be understood to mean an adequate dwelling in good repair, together with utilities such as heat, electricity, and telephone or financial provision for such services). An annual salary review shall be made.
  - (d) Engage, approve the job description outlined by the Lead Pastor and establish the remuneration of such assistants and other employees, as are needed to carry out the work of the Church effectively.



- (e) Determine the time and place of the regular services of the Church.
  - (f) Annually appoint one (1) of its members as secretary of the Board.
  - (g) Fill all appointed positions of leadership in the Church at the first meeting of the Board following the Annual General Meeting.
  - (h) Appoint financially qualified individuals prior to the Annual General Meeting to review the Church finances and bring to the Members financial statements at the Annual General Meeting.
  - (i) Work in conjunction with the Lead Pastor in formulating and recommending Policy Statements to the Church, as may be necessary from time to time.
- 20.02 Remuneration – The Board members shall serve as such without remuneration and no Board member shall directly or indirectly receive any profit for being a Board member, provided that a Board member may be paid for reasonable expenses incurred by them in the performances of their duties or paid in a different capacity for services to the Church.
- 20.03 Conflict of Interest – No Board member shall place himself in a position where there is conflict of interest between their duties as a Board member and their other interests. Every Board member who is in any way directly or indirectly interested in, or may become interested in, a material way in existing or proposed contract, transaction, or arrangement with the Church or who otherwise has a conflict of interest by virtue of involvement of with a member of their family (with “family” defined as spouse, father, mother, child, brother or sister, or spouse of such family members) or by the involvement of their partner, business associate, or a corporation that the Board member is involved with as either a Board member, shareholder, officer, employer, employee, or agent, then such Board member shall declare a conflict of interest fully at a meeting of the Board and shall withdraw from any discussion or vote thereon.
- 20.04 Documents – The Board shall from time to time at their discretion determine whether and to what extent and at what times and places and under what conditions or regulations the documents, including the books of account, of the Church and minutes of the meetings of the Board shall be open to the inspection by Members not being Board members. In the absence of such determination by the Board, the documents, including the books of account, of the Church and minutes of the meetings of the Board shall not be open to inspection by any Member not being a Board member, subject to the provisions of the Act.

## 21. **BOARD MEETINGS**

- 21.01 Regular Meetings – Regular meetings of the Board shall be held at such time and place as shall be determined by the Board at regular intervals.
- 21.02 Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Board shall be called by the chair of the Board or upon written request of the majority of the Board to the chair, who shall then give notice of a special meeting of the Board as soon as possible thereafter.
- 21.03 Notice of Meeting – At all meetings of the Board, the chair or, in the chair’s absence, the secretary of the Board shall be required to notify each Board member of the time and place of each meeting of the Board. No meeting shall be held in the absence of the Lead Pastor without the written authorization of the Lead Pastor, except in an emergency when the Lead Pastor cannot be contacted or is incapacitated.
- 21.04 Chair – The chair of the Board shall be the Lead Pastor. The duties of the chair of the Board shall be those set out in Section 27.01.



- 21.05 Secretary of the Board – The secretary of the Board shall be appointed by the Board from amongst their members at the first meeting of the Board following the Annual General Meeting. The secretary shall serve for a term of one (1) year and shall be an Officer. The duties of the secretary of the Board shall be those set out in Section 27.02.
- 21.06 Quorum – A quorum for a meeting of the Board shall be majority of the Board, provided that all the Board members have been duly notified.
- 21.07 Voting Rights – All Board members, including the Lead Pastor as chair of the Board, shall each have one (1) vote.
- 21.08 Minutes – The Board shall keep written minutes of each meeting. The Board shall appoint the secretary of the Board to prepare and maintain such minutes. The minutes may be made public or available for review by Members at the discretion of the Board, with the exception of matters of a potentially confidential nature discussed by the Board, where such matters shall be considered *in camera*.
- 21.09 No meeting of the Board shall be held in the absence of the Lead Pastor without the Lead Pastor's written authorization, except in an emergency when the Lead Pastor cannot be contacted or is incapacitated. In such case, the Board members shall be authorized to call a special meeting of the Board.
- 21.10 The Lead Pastor who serves as a Board member, or any member of the Church staff, shall absent themselves from a meeting of the Board, when salary and allowance reviews are being considered.
- 21.11 Agenda – The agenda shall be prepared by the Lead Pastor or the secretary of the Board. A Member in good standing may submit an agenda item to the Board, where such item must be in writing, signed, and delivered to the Board at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting.

## **VII. LEAD PASTOR**

### **22. CALL OF LEAD PASTOR**

- 22.01 Appointment and Call
  - (a) A candidate for Lead Pastor shall be submitted to the Regular Members by the Board, after consultation with the District Superintendent or their designate. The Lead Pastor shall be a Credential Holder or shall be a Person whom the District approves. This Section 22.01 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).
  - (b) A call shall be made to a prospective Lead Pastor when that prospective Lead Pastor is approved by Special Resolution at a Special General Meeting duly convened for that purpose. Upon acceptance of the call or confirmation of the appointment, a ministry agreement shall be established.
  - (c) The Church shall assume the responsibility of paying the moving expenses of an incoming Lead Pastor.
- 22.02 The Lead Pastor shall give spiritual oversight to the Church and shall be deemed, by virtue of their position, to be a Member. The duties and rights of the Lead Pastor shall be as follows:
  - (a) to be the spiritual overseer of the Church with responsibility for the direction of all of its activities (the Lead Pastor shall consult with the Board regarding the ongoing health and wholeness of the Members and Adherents, and to ensure the appropriate ministries and programs are in place to accomplish the same);

- (b) to be responsible for arranging all services, special meetings, missionary conventions, revival campaigns, and other Church events. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the Church, without the approval of the Lead Pastor (and as provided in Sections 10.5.6 and 10.5.7 of the PAOC Operating Bylaws);
- (c) to act as chair of all General Meetings and meetings of the Board;
- (d) to be, *ex officio*, a member of all committees and ministries of the Church;
- (e) to work in conjunction with the Board in formulating and recommending Policy Statements to the Church, as may be necessary from time to time;
- (f) to be fully in agreement with, uphold, and be subject to the Constitution and Bylaws.

### **23. CONCLUSION OF MINISTRY AGREEMENT OF THE LEAD PASTOR**

- 23.01 The Lead Pastor may conclude their ministry agreement by giving one (1) month's written notification to the Board or to the Members addressed to the secretary of the Board. The Lead Pastor shall also give immediate written notice of their conclusion of ministry agreement to the District Superintendent or their designate. Such conclusion of ministry agreement shall be deemed to include a termination of the *ex officio* membership of all committees and the Board, and termination as a Member.

### **24. VACANCY OF THE LEAD PASTOR**

- 24.01 When the Lead pastorate becomes vacant, the District Superintendent or their designate shall be empowered to act in the full legal capacity of the Lead Pastor, and shall be empowered to arrange, in consultation with the Board, suitable pulpit ministry until such time as a new Lead Pastor has been called by the Church. This Section 24.01 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).
- 24.02 In the event that the Lead Pastor is or may be absent for an extended period due to inability or ineligibility to serve, the District Superintendent or their designate may, in conjunction with the Board, assist in arranging for pulpit supply and chair the Board.

### **25. REMOVAL OF LEAD PASTOR**

- 25.01 The Lead Pastor may be removed in keeping with the provisions of the District Bylaws by the following procedure:
- (a) Should difficulties arise between a Lead Pastor and the Regular Members which do not involve the credentials of the Lead Pastor, but only the position as Lead Pastor, and which apparently cannot be resolved at the local level, the Lead Pastor, the Board or not fewer than one-third (1/3) of the Regular Members shall have the right to appeal to the District Superintendent or their designate.
  - (b) The refusal of the Lead Pastor to call a special meeting of the Board when requested to do so by a majority of the Board shall constitute a right to appeal to the District Superintendent or their designate.
  - (c) If a satisfactory settlement cannot be reached, the District Superintendent or their designate may call a Special General Meeting, which the District Superintendent or their designate shall preside over.

- (d) At such Special General Meeting, the chair may call for a vote of confidence in the Lead Pastor. The membership register for the vote shall include only those Regular Members who held membership sixty (60) days prior to the vote of confidence, and shall exclude the Lead Pastor and members of the pastoral staff, as identified in the minutes of the Board, along with their spouses, who each shall not be included in the Quorum necessary to have a Special General Meeting. The vote shall require an Ordinary Resolution in support of the Lead Pastor, for the Lead Pastor to retain the position as Lead Pastor. If such Ordinary Resolution is not achieved, the Lead Pastor's duties shall be terminated immediately. The Lead Pastor shall be given salary with benefits and the use of the Church parsonage if applicable, or the regular housing allowance, in accordance with the requirements of the provincial employment laws.
- (e) Allegations leading to charges in matters involving a Lead Pastor's right to hold credentials with the PAOC, as defined in Section 10.6.2 of the PAOC Operating Bylaws, must be made to the District Superintendent or their designate in writing, and properly signed by one who is willing to appear in person and give testimony concerning the charges. Charges brought against a Credential Holder shall be dealt with according to provisions made in the PAOC Operating Bylaws and the District Bylaws.
- (f) In the event that ministry is restricted by the District Superintendent or their designate as a result of a Credential Holder being charged under the *Criminal Code*, the Credential Holder shall continue to receive remuneration for a maximum of three (3) months.

## **VIII. OFFICERS**

### **26. OFFICERS**

26.01 The Officers of the Church shall be:

- (a) the Lead Pastor, who is chair of the Board;
- (b) the secretary of the Board, who shall be appointed annually by the Board and may or may not be one of its own members;
- (c) the treasurer of the Board, who shall be appointed annually by the Board and may or may not be one of its own members; and
- (d) such other Officers as may be elected, called, or appointed by the Church or the Board from time to time.

26.02 The offices of secretary of the Board and treasurer of the Board may be held by one Person who shall be known as the secretary-treasurer of the Board.

26.03 All Officers shall be required to hold Church membership.

### **27. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

27.01 Lead Pastor – The duties of the Lead Pastor, who is chair of the Board, shall be as set forth in Section 22.02.

27.02 Secretary of the Board – The duties of the secretary of the Board shall be as follows:

- (a) to be custodian of the records of the meetings of the Board and all General Meetings, and to ensure the faithful recording of the business of all such meetings;

- (b) to be responsible for conducting all correspondence on behalf of the Church arising out of meetings of the Board or General Meetings;
- (c) to be responsible for preserving the records of the Church;
- (d) to be responsible for preparing notice and reports of General Meetings, as directed from time to time by the Board; and
- (e) to be responsible for keeping an up-to-date register of Members.

27.03 Treasurer of the Board – The duties of the treasurer of the Board shall be as follows:

- (a) to be the custodian of the general funds of the Church;
- (b) to be responsible for the depositing of funds received by the Church in the name of the Church in a financial institution approved by the Board;
- (c) to be responsible for disbursing funds received by the Church as authorized by the Board;
- (d) to ensure that an accurate record of accounts is kept; and
- (e) to ensure that accurate financial statements are presented at the Annual General Meeting or when requested by the Board or Regular Members. A Person or Persons appointed by the Board shall review the books before the Annual General Meeting.

## **IX. PROPERTY**

### **28. REAL PROPERTY**

- 28.01 All real estate owned by the Church shall be held in the name of the Church, in its corporate name as a local Church of the PAOC; the name of the District, as trustee for the local Church according to the terms of a declaration of trust; or in the name of the PAOC, as trustee for the local Church according to the terms of a declaration of trust. This Section 28.01 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).
- 28.02 In the event of the Church desiring to sell or otherwise dispose of any real estate or in the event of the Church electing to withdraw from affiliation with the PAOC, or being deemed by the District to have abandoned its affiliation, or in the event of the Church having actually ceased to exist as an organized body or otherwise losing its charter and status as a local Church within the meaning of the PAOC Operating Bylaws and the District Bylaws, then and in such case title to the real property shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions set forth in the PAOC Operating Bylaws and the District Bylaws, the applicable provincial laws, and the declaration of trust, where applicable. This Section 28.02 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).
- 28.03 The affairs of the Church as pertaining to the holding of property, both real and personal, shall be managed by the Board.
- 28.04 The Board shall not buy, sell, exchange, mortgage, or make any other disposition of real estate without being authorized to do so by Special Resolution (2/3 majority) of the eligible votes cast at a General Meeting, which has been called in accordance with these Bylaws. Such vote shall be by secret ballot.
- 28.05 The chair of the General Meeting and the secretary of the Board shall certify that such conveyance, lease or mortgage, has been duly authorized by the vote of the Church, and such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

- 28.06 If the Church at any time becomes unable to govern itself without the assistance of the District or the PAOC, the Board members shall cease to be Board members and the Members shall elect replacement Board members, who shall be nominated by the District Ex Officio Member. This Section 28.06 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).
- 28.07 The acquiring and disposal of real property shall be decided by Special Resolution (2/3 majority) of the Regular Members in attendance at a duly called General Meeting. Where property is placed in trust with the District or the PAOC, the acquiring and disposal of real property shall be decided by a resolution of seventy-five percent (75%) majority of ballots cast at a duly called General Meeting. This Section 28.07 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).

**29. BORROWING**

- 29.01 The Board shall have the power to borrow or raise or secure the payment of money in such manner as the Board shall think fit; and without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the Church may issue debentures, perpetual, or otherwise, charge upon all or any of the Church's present or future property, and to purchase, redeem, or pay off any such security, provided that debentures shall not be issued without the authority of a Special Resolution.
- 29.02 The Church shall consult with and obtain the approval of the officers of the District before proceeding with the requirements of Section 28.04 hereof, and prior to the making of application for loan from any source or incurring indebtedness on a purchase plan or otherwise when repayment is not to be made in full within 12 months of the date of the intended loan; or where the intended indebtedness, together with all other indebtedness of the Church, in the aggregate shall exceed ten percent (10%) of the total amount of the previous year's gross revenues. The Church shall then obtain the approval of its Regular Members to the proposed action by Special Resolution (2/3 majority), passed at a duly called Special General Meeting.

**30. AUDITOR**

- 30.01 The Church shall only have an auditor upon Ordinary Resolution (simple majority).
- 30.02 If the Members resolve to appoint an auditor, the Church shall appoint an auditor at the next General Meeting to serve until they are re-appointed or their successor is appointed at the next Annual General Meeting in accordance with the procedures set out in the Act.
- 30.03 The Board shall fill all vacancies occurring in the office of auditor between Annual General Meetings.
- 30.04 An auditor may be removed by Ordinary Resolution (simple majority) in accordance with the procedures set out in the Act.
- 30.05 An auditor shall be promptly informed in writing of appointment or removal.
- 30.06 No Board member, Officer, or employee of the Church or Person related to a Board member or employee by blood or marriage shall be auditor.
- 30.07 The auditor may attend General Meetings.

**X. COMMITTEES**

**31. COMMITTEES OF LEADERSHIP, PROGRAMS, MINISTRIES**

- 31.01 The Board may create such standing and special committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, or ministries as may from time to time be required. Any such committee or ministry shall limit its activities to the purpose or purposes for which it is appointed and shall have no powers except those specifically conferred by a Board resolution.
- 31.02 All committees and ministries of the Church shall be responsible to and subject to the authority of the Board, and shall present annual reports to the Annual General Meeting either through an independent report or through representation in the pastor's report.
- 31.03 The Board shall approve the selection of leadership of each committee and ministry.
- 31.04 The Board shall establish or otherwise approve the governing and operating procedures for each committee and ministry.

## **XI. INDEMNITIES**

### **32. INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE**

- 32.01 Subject to the provisions of the Act, every Board member or Officer who has properly undertaken or is about to undertake any liability on behalf of the Church or any society controlled by it and their heirs, executors, administrators or personal representatives respectively, shall from time to time and at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the funds of the Church, from and against:
  - (a) all costs, charges and expenses whatsoever which such Board member or Officer actually and reasonably sustains or incurs in or about any action, suit or proceeding which is brought, commenced, or prosecuted against him or her, or in respect of any act, deed, matter or thing whatsoever, made, done, or permitted by him or her, in or about the execution of the duties of his or her office or in respect of any such liability; and
  - (b) all other costs, charges, and expenses which he or she actually or reasonably sustains or incurs in or about or in relation to the affairs thereof, except such costs, charges, or expenses as are occasioned by his or her own willful neglect or default;

provided that

  - (c) the Board member or Officer acted honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Church; and
  - (d) in the case of criminal or administrative proceedings, the Board member or Officer had reasonable grounds for believing that their conduct was lawful.
- 32.02 The Church may purchase and maintain insurance for the benefit of any or all Board members or Officers against personal liability incurred by any such person as a Board member or Officer.

## **XII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AFFILIATION**

### **33. RESPONSIBILITIES OF AFFILIATION**

- 33.01 Missions – Accepting its responsibility under the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, as stated in Matthew 28 and Mark 16, the Church shall support the missionary program and policy of the PAOC and shall regularly receive offerings and remit contributions for this purpose.
- 33.02 Administration – Recognizing the important services rendered to the Church by the PAOC and the District, the Church accepts the responsibility of providing support for the ministry and fellowship

services of the PAOC and the District, the PAOC Mission Global, the PAOC Bible college serving this District, and other responsibilities as may be determined by the General Conference of the PAOC.

This shall be done in accordance with the General Conference resolution that each local Church forward an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of its general fund offerings (does not include missionary offerings, building fund, or any other special fund) to the District at regular intervals to support the ministry and fellowship services. From these funds the District shall forward ten percent (10%) to the PAOC for ministry and fellowship services.

- 33.03 District Conference Expenses – The Church assumes the responsibilities of paying the Lead Pastor's expenses incidental to attending the District conference, District seminars, and any District-sponsored convention held for the benefit of its ministers. Consideration for other staff members may be made as finances allows.
- 33.04 The Pension Fund – Recognizing the responsibility of the Church to adequately provide for those who are employed in pastoral and staff services to the Church, including adequate provision for current ministry and future retirement support; and recognizing that The Pension Fund (1969) of the PAOC exists to serve retired ministers, missionaries, and employees of local Church, as an affiliated local Church, the Board shall ensure that each credentialed pastor and qualifying local Church employee shall regularly participate in a retirement income plan such as The Pension Fund (1969) of the PAOC, and the Church shall match the contributions of its employees in accordance with Canadian pension legislation and regulations.
- 33.05 The Church grants the District Leadership Team the privilege to create policies which shall allow this Church to request care and intervention from time to time.

### **XIII. FORMS AND CERTIFICATES**

#### **34. FORMS AND CERTIFICATES**

- 34.01 Certificates, when applicable, of membership (membership cards), marriage certificates, dedication certificates, and baptismal certificates for use in the Church shall be approved by the Board and shall be in line with both the *Statement of Essential Truths* and the *Positions and Practices* of the PAOC.

### **XIV. AMENDMENTS**

#### **35. AMENDMENTS**

- 35.01 These Bylaws may be amended by Special Resolution (2/3 majority) in any Annual General Meeting or in any Special General Meeting duly called for that specific purpose.
- 35.02 For such General Meeting, a copy of the proposed amendment or amendments must be presented in writing by a Regular Member to the Board and to the District Superintendent or their designate at least sixty (60) days before the date of the General Meeting for approval.

Any proposed amendment(s) shall not contradict the regulations of the General Conference, the *General Constitution and By-Laws*, the *District Constitution and Bylaws*, the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the applicable provincial or territorial laws, or the *Declaration of Trust* where applicable.

- 35.03 The secretary of the Board must also provide notice of the approved proposed amendment or amendments in the announcements of the General Meeting.

- 35.04 A copy of the approved proposed amendment or amendments shall be available to any Regular Member between the time of announcements and the time of the General Meeting on application to the secretary of the Board.
- 35.05 Subject to Section 35.06, an amendment of these Bylaws to be adopted shall require a Special Resolution (2/3 majority) of the eligible votes cast at the General Meeting.
- 35.06 This Section 35.06 and the following sections of the Bylaws shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution at a General Meeting called for that purpose and at which there is a Quorum in accordance with Section 14.08:
- (a) Section 8.03;
  - (b) Section 15.04;
  - (c) Section 22.01;
  - (d) Section 24.01;
  - (e) Section 28.01
  - (f) Section 28.02;
  - (g) Section 28.06;
  - (h) Section 28.07;
  - (i) Section 36.01; and
  - (j) Section 37.01.
- 35.07 Any amendment to these Bylaws shall not be contrary to the PAOC General Bylaws or the District Bylaws.

## **XV. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **36. NON-PROFIT**

- 36.01 The Church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its Members and any profits or other accretions to the Church shall be used for promoting its charitable purposes in accordance with its Constitution and Bylaws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended. This Section 36.01 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).

### **37. DISSOLUTION**

- 37.01 In the case of dissolution or winding up the Church, the assets of the Church remaining after the satisfaction of its debts and liabilities shall be distributed to the British Columbia and Yukon District of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, provided that it is then a qualified donee allowed under the *Income Tax Act*; if effect cannot be given to the aforesaid provisions, then such assets shall be given to the International Office of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, provided that it is then a qualified donee allowed under the *Income Tax Act*; if effect cannot be given to either of the aforesaid provisions, then such assets shall be given or transferred to such organization or organizations promoting the same purposes as the Church, as may be determined by the Members of the Church at the time of winding up or dissolution, provided that such organization is a qualified donee allowed under the *Income Tax Act*. This Section 37.01 shall not be amended except by Extra-Special Resolution (unanimity).

**Dated: April 6, 2025**



## SCHEDULE

### STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS AND POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

#### Article 5 and Article 6 of the *General Constitution and By-Laws* Amended by General Conference, May 2024

#### ARTICLE 5 STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

##### PREAMBLE

This version of the Statement of Essential Truths represents the result of an extensive collaborative process to rephrase and refresh what is most essential to us. As before, we make no claim that this statement covers all biblical truth, nor that the human phraseology employed here is inspired. We recognize as we did at the outset of our movement that there is some diversity of theological thought among us, but we remain committed as a Pentecostal community to the historic creeds of the church, to evangelical convictions of faith, and to the Full Gospel that Christ is Saviour, Healer, Spirit-Baptizer, and Soon Coming King.

##### TRIUNE GOD

There is one God, the creator, who exists eternally in unity as three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> The triune God is loving, holy, infinite, just, and worthy of all worship.<sup>2</sup>

The Father accomplishes his plan of salvation through both redemption and judgement.<sup>3</sup> All things will be subject to him, and his kingdom will have no end.<sup>4</sup>

The Father sent the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary when she was a virgin.<sup>5</sup> Jesus became fully human while remaining fully God.<sup>6</sup> Anointed by the Spirit, Jesus revealed the Father and the kingdom of God by his sinless life, teaching, and miracles.<sup>7</sup> After he died for our sin, God raised him from the dead, and he is now at the right hand of the Father.<sup>8</sup>

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and gives life throughout creation.<sup>9</sup> The Spirit draws people to repentance and new life in Jesus Christ.<sup>10</sup> Through the Spirit's indwelling, the Father and the Son are present to all believers, making them children of God.<sup>11</sup>

##### BIBLE

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the written revelation of God's character and saving purposes for humanity and for all creation.<sup>12</sup> As God's revelation, the entire Bible is true and trustworthy, and is the final and absolute authority for belief and conduct.<sup>13</sup> The Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible enables its interpretation and application.<sup>14</sup>

##### CREATION

God created and sustains the heavens and the earth,<sup>15</sup> which display God's glory. Formed in the image of God, both male and female, humankind is entrusted with the care of God's creation as faithful stewards.<sup>16</sup> As a result of human rebellion, sin and death entered the world, distorting the image of God and all of God's good creation.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matt 28:19; 2Cor 13:14

<sup>2</sup> Exod 34:6-7; Psalms 99:4-5

<sup>3</sup> Exod 6:6; Rom 1:16-18

<sup>4</sup> Psalms 103:19; Rev 11:15; Eph 1:10

<sup>5</sup> Matt 1:18-25

<sup>6</sup> John 1:1, 14; Col 1:19; Heb 2:17

<sup>7</sup> John 1:32; 14:7-10; Luke 4:18-19

<sup>8</sup> Acts 2:32-33; Rom 8:34

<sup>9</sup> Psalms 104:21-30; Acts 2:33

<sup>10</sup> John 16:7-15

<sup>11</sup> Rom 8:14-17; 1John 3:24

<sup>12</sup> Psalms 119; John 20:30-31; Rom 15:4

<sup>13</sup> 2Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12

<sup>14</sup> 2Pet 1:20-21; John 16:13; 1Cor 2:12-13

<sup>15</sup> Gen 1:1; Col 1:15-17

<sup>16</sup> Gen 1:26-27

<sup>17</sup> Rom 5:12; 8:20-22

Angels were created as supernatural beings to worship and serve God.<sup>18</sup> Along with Satan, some angels chose to rebel and oppose the purposes of God.<sup>19</sup> Christ gives believers victory over Satan and these demons.<sup>20</sup>

### **SALVATION**

Salvation is available to all people by the loving, redemptive act of the triune God.<sup>21</sup> Through obedience to the Father,<sup>22</sup> Christ gave himself as a ransom.<sup>23</sup> Christ, who had no sin, became sin for us offering himself and shedding his blood on the cross so that in him we might become right with God.<sup>24</sup> The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ<sup>25</sup> provide the way of salvation for those who, by God's grace, repent from their sin and confess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.<sup>26</sup>

Salvation means to receive the Spirit, to be forgiven, reconciled with God and others, born again, and liberated from sin and darkness, transferring the believer into God's kingdom.<sup>27</sup> Our experience of liberation includes healing — whether spiritual, physical, emotional, or mental — as a foretaste of our future, complete restoration.<sup>28</sup> Those who remain in Christ and do not turn away are assured of salvation on judgement day by the indwelling Holy Spirit,<sup>29</sup> who sanctifies and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.<sup>30</sup>

### **SPIRIT BAPTISM**

On the Day of Pentecost, Jesus poured out the promised Holy Spirit on the church.<sup>31</sup> As his return draws near, Jesus continues to baptize in the Holy Spirit those who are believers.<sup>32</sup> This empowers them to continue his work of proclaiming with speech and action the good news of the arrival and coming of the kingdom of God.<sup>33</sup> This experience is available for everyone, male and female, of every age, status,<sup>34</sup> and ethnicity.<sup>35</sup>

The sign of speaking in tongues indicates that believers have been baptized with the Holy Spirit<sup>36</sup> and signifies the nature of Spirit baptism as empowering our communication, to be his witnesses with speech and action as we continue to pray in the Spirit.<sup>37</sup>

### **THE CHURCH**

Jesus Christ is the head of the church.<sup>38</sup> All who are united with Christ are joined by the Spirit to his body.<sup>39</sup> Each local church is an expression of the universal church whose role is to participate in the mission of God to restore all things.<sup>40</sup>

Central to the church is the shared experience of the transforming presence of God.<sup>41</sup> The church responds with worship, prayer, proclamation, discipleship, and fellowship,<sup>42</sup> including the practices of water baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in his death and resurrection.<sup>43</sup> The Lord's Supper symbolizes Christ's body and blood, and our communion as believers. Shared together, it proclaims his death in anticipation of his return.<sup>44</sup>

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18 Heb 1:14; Psa 103:20

19 Rev 12:7-9

20 Acts 10:38; Eph 6:10-13

21 John 3:16; Gal 4:4-7; Titus 2:11-14

22 John 8:28-29; Phil 2:8; Heb 5:8

23 Mark 10:45; 1Tim 2:6

24 2Cor 5:21; 1John 3:16

25 Rom 4:22-25; 5:19; 6:4-5; Heb 7:24-28

26 Rom 10:9; 1John 1:9; Acts 3:19; 4:12

27 Eph 2:13-16; Col 1:13-14, 19-20; 1Pet 1:3

28 Isa 53:4-5; 1Pet 2:24; Psa 147:3; Rom 8:23

29 Eph 1:13-14; 1John 4:13; Heb 6:5-6; Phil 3:12-14

30 1Thess 4:3-4; 1Cor 6:11; Rom 12:1-2; 1Pet 1:2

31 Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33

32 Acts 2:38-39; 8:14-17; 19:1-6

33 Luke 4:18-19, 43; Acts 1:8

34 Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18, 39

35 Acts 10:45-46

36 Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6

37 Acts 1:8; 2:11-43; 4:31; Rom 15:19; 1Cor 14:15

38 Col 1:18; Matt 16:18

39 1Cor 12:12-14

40 Acts 1:8; Matt 28:18-20; Acts 13:1-3; Rev 21:5

41 Acts 2:42-43; 1Cor 12:7; Matt 18:20; 2Cor 3:17-18

42 1Pet 2:9-10; Col 4:2-6; Acts 2:42

43 Rom 6:3-8; Matt 28:19

44 Matt 26:26-29; 1Cor 11:23-26

The Spirit gives all gifts to the church to minister to others in love for the purpose of bearing witness to Christ and for the building up of the church.<sup>45</sup> The Spirit also empowers leaders, both female and male, to equip the church to fulfil its mission and purposes.<sup>46</sup>

## **RESTORATION**

Our great hope is for the imminent return of Christ in the air to receive his own, both the living who will be transformed, and the dead in Christ who will be resurrected bodily.<sup>47</sup> Christ will complete at his second coming the restoration begun when he initiated God's kingdom at his first coming.<sup>48</sup> Christ will liberate creation from the curse, fulfil God's covenant to Israel, and defeat all powers that oppose God.<sup>49</sup> Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.<sup>50</sup>

Ultimately, God will judge the living and the dead.<sup>51</sup> Such judgement is God's gracious answer to humanity's cry for justice to prevail throughout the earth and is consistent with God's character as loving, holy, and just.<sup>52</sup> The unredeemed will go away into eternal punishment, but the redeemed into eternal life.<sup>53</sup> The redeemed will enjoy the presence of God where there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain.<sup>54</sup> Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!<sup>55</sup>

## **ARTICLE 6 POSITIONS AND PRACTICES**

### **6.1 MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY**

Marriage is a provision of God wherein one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others enter into a lifelong relationship<sup>56</sup> through a marriage ceremony that is recognized by the church and legally sanctioned by the state.

Marriage establishes a "one-flesh" relationship<sup>57</sup> that goes beyond a physical union and is more than either a temporary relationship of convenience intended to provide personal pleasure or a contract that binds two people together in a legal partnership. Marriage establishes an emotional and spiritual oneness that enables both partners to respond to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the other.<sup>58</sup> It provides the biblical context for the procreation of children.

Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship that is maintained in purity.<sup>59</sup> It is intended by God to be a permanent relationship. It is a witness to the world of the relationship between Christ and His church.<sup>60</sup>

Marriage requires a commitment of love, perseverance and faith. Because of its sanctity and permanence, marriage should be treated with seriousness and entered into only after counsel and prayer for God's guidance. Christians should marry only those who are believers.<sup>61</sup> An individual who becomes a believer after marriage should remain with his/her partner in peace, and should give witness to the Gospel in the home.<sup>62</sup>

The Bible holds family life as a position of trust and responsibility. The home is a stabilizing force in society, a place of nurture, counsel, and safety for children.<sup>63</sup> therefore, abuse has no place in a marriage or in the home.

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45 Acts 8:5-7; 1Cor 12:4-11; 14:12; Heb 2:3-4

46 Eph 4:11-16; Matt 20:25-28; Acts 2:17-18; 6:2-4; Rom 16:7

47 1Thess 4:14-17; 5:1-2

48 Matt 13:24-41; Rev 11:15-17; Acts 1:6-7; 3:20-21; Rom 11:25-27

49 Rom 8:19-21; 1Cor 15:20-26

50 Phil 2:10-11; Isa 45:23

51 Acts 10:42; 1Pet 4:5

52 Mal 2:17-3:1; Rev 6:9-11

53 Matt 25:46; Dan 12:1-2

54 Isa 25:8-12; Rev 21:3-4

55 Rev 22:20

56 Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6

57 Matt 19:5; Mal 2:15

58 Gen 2:18; 1Cor 7:2-5; Heb 13:4

59 Eph 5:3, 26-27

60 Eph 5:25, 31-32

61 2Cor 6:1, 14-15

62 1Cor 7:12-14, 16

63 Eph 6:4

Marriage can only be broken by *porneia*, which is understood as marital unfaithfulness<sup>64</sup> involving adultery, homosexuality, or incest. While the Scriptures give evidence that the marriage vow and "one-flesh" union are broken by such acts and therefore recognize the breaking of the marriage relationship, the Scriptures do recommend that the most desirable option would be reconciliation.<sup>65</sup>

## **6.2 DIVORCE**

We believe that divorce is not God's intention. It is God's concession to the "hardness of men's hearts."<sup>66</sup>

We, therefore, discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. Our objective is reconciliation and the healing of the marital union wherever possible. Marital unfaithfulness should not be considered so much an occasion or opportunity for divorce but rather an opportunity for Christian grace, forgiveness, and restoration. Divorce in our society is a termination of a marriage through a legal process authorized by the State. While the Church recognizes this legal process as an appropriate means to facilitate the permanent separation of spouses, the Church restricts the idea of divorce, in the sense of dissolution of marriage, to reasons specified in Scripture.

The weight of the biblical record is negative and the explicit statement is made, "God hates divorce."<sup>67</sup> Divorce is more than an action of the courts which breaks the legal contract between partners in a marriage. It is also the fracture of a unique human relationship between a male and a female. Divorce has profound consequences for the children. Divorce is evidence of the sinful nature expressed in human failure. Jesus gives one explicit cause for the dissolution of marriage: *porneia* or marital unfaithfulness.

Where all attempts at reconciliation have failed and a divorce has been finalized, we extend Christ's love and compassion.

## **6.3 REMARRIAGE**

Remarriage is the union, legally sanctioned by the State, of one man and one woman, one or both of whom have been previously married. It is regarded as acceptable in Scripture in the event of the death of a former spouse. It is also regarded as acceptable if there has been sexual immorality on the part of the former partner or if the former partner has remarried.

## **6.4 GENDER**

We believe in the biblical teaching of God's original and ongoing design for humanity as two distinct sexes, male and female, determined by genetics. The basis and the intent for this is the conviction that the matter of human sexuality and gender is fundamental to biblical anthropology, not merely biblical morality. Due to human sin and brokenness, our experience of our sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed. In light of this foundational understanding of creation, fall, and redemption, we will avoid any behaviour or alignment with identity that contradicts the biblical teaching. We do not affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender by the adoption of an identity contradictory with one's birth sex.

## **6.5 TITHING**

Tithing was divinely instituted by God under the old covenant and was compulsory upon the people who worshiped God.<sup>68</sup> Under the new covenant we are not bound by arbitrary laws; but the principles of right and wrong, as expressed by the law, are fulfilled in the believer's life through grace. Grace should produce as much as or more than law demanded. Regular systematic giving is clearly taught in the New Testament. It is known as the grace of giving.<sup>69</sup> The gauge or rule of this systematic giving is defined in the Old Testament, known as the law of tithing. All Christians should conscientiously and systematically tithe their income to God.

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64 Matt 5:32; 19:9

65 Eph 4:32

66 Matt 19:8

67 Mal 2:16

68 Lev 27:30-32; Mal 3:10

69 2Cor 9:6-15