

Bylaws

Bell City Church, Inc.

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Bylaws

Preamble

WHEREAS, it is the express purpose of God our Heavenly Father to call out of the world a saved people who shall contribute to the Body of Christ, built and established on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the Chief Cornerstone.

WHEREAS, the members of the Body of Christ are enjoined to assemble themselves together for worship, fellowship, counsel, and instruction in the Word of God and the work of the ministry and for the exercise of those spiritual gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we recognize ourselves as a body of Christian believers working together for the common purpose of spreading the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that under the laws of the state of Ohio, we may exercise all the rights and privileges granted to religious bodies.

Male and Female References

The masculine gender stated within this document shall refer to both men and women.

Article I Name

The name of this corporation shall be Bell City Church, Inc.

Article II Purpose

The specific purpose for which the corporation is organized is to establish and oversee places of worship, teach and preach the gospel to all people, conduct evangelistic and humanitarian outreach, license and ordain ministers of the gospel, and to also engage in activities which are necessary, suitable or convenient for the accomplishment of that purpose, or which are incidental thereto or connected therewith which are consistent with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

Article III Tenets of Faith

The human phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired nor contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full Gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all the truth in the Bible, only that it covers orthodox fundamental matters.

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus-Israel's promised Messiah-was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

Article IV Ordinances

Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by burial with Christ should be observed (as commanded in the Scriptures) by all that have repented of their sins and in their hearts have believed on Christ as their Savior and Lord. In doing so, they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they have also been raised to walk with Him in newness of life (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4).

The Lord's Supper (Communion)

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements, bread and fruit of the vine, is the symbol expressing our sharing in a memorial to His suffering and death, and a prophecy of His second coming, and is enjoined to all believers "until He comes" (John 6:48,51,53-57; Luke 22:19,20; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Cor. 11:25).

Article V Membership

This church shall maintain a congregational membership with limited voting rights, restricted to the affirmation of elders, the acceptance or decline of the annual budget, and confirmation of a new senior pastor.

Article VI Government

Section 1 Board of Directors

The board of directors shall be composed of:

1. The Senior Pastor/President.
2. Each elected Elder.
3. The Community Pastor.

The board of directors will appoint:

1. A Vice President.
2. A Secretary.
3. A Treasurer.
4. Other individuals as needed.

Section 2 Official Board of Directors and Voting Power

1. The Board of Directors is the group of persons vested with the management of the business and affairs of the corporation.
2. The official Board of Directors shall consist of individuals listed above and those added by official action of the Board of Directors.
3. The majority of the Board of Directors shall serve without remuneration. The majority shall also not be comprised of one group whose members are related by blood, business, or marriage.
4. The Senior Pastor/President shall be chairman of the Board of Directors.
5. Each member of the Board of Directors shall have equal voting power among all of the other members.
6. A decision by the Board of Directors is considered valid with a two-thirds majority vote, including the approval of the Senior Pastor/President, unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws.
7. The Board of Directors shall adopt a Conflict of Interest Policy to prevent voting by disqualified individuals, as defined in IRC Section 4958(f)(1). All members who are disqualified with respect to a decision shall recuse themselves from the vote.
8. The Board of Directors shall be authorized to create any additional committees as may be deemed necessary for the management of the corporation.
9. The Senior Pastor/President shall be an ex officio member of every committee and can at his discretion be the chair of such committee at the time of its creation.

Section 3 Removal From the Board of Directors

Any member of the Board of Directors may be removed from office with or without cause by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors, including the Senior Pastor/President's approval. However, the removal of the Senior Pastor/President is subject to Article X.

The following reasons are considered just cause for Board of Directors member removal by the Board of Directors:

1. In absentia at three consecutive Board of Directors meetings;
2. Violation of the mutual interest clause of Article XII;
3. Not acting in the best interests of the organization;
4. Willful nondisclosure of a conflict of interest as interpreted by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.
5. Failing to live up to the tenants of scripture.

Section 4 Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy on the Board of Directors due to resignation or removal, the Board of Directors shall have a reasonable amount of time to nominate an individual who meets the qualifications and requirements set forth in these Bylaws. The nomination must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors. Board nominee shall serve as an interim board member until the annual congregational vote.

Section 5 Resignation

Any Director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board of Directors. Such resignation shall take effect on the date of the receipt of such notice, and acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

Article VII Official Functions

The officers listed below are ultimately responsible to oversee that all listed duties are properly executed. The actual carrying out of necessary actions may be accomplished by any individual whom the Board of Directors sees fit.

Section 1 Senior Pastor/President

Qualifications

The Senior Pastor/President shall have wisdom in handling the corporation's affairs. He shall be of sound doctrine and good judgment.

Duties

The Senior Pastor/President shall be the leader of the church as provided by the Holy Scriptures.

The Senior Pastor/President shall be chairman of the official Board of Directors and preside over all corporate meetings.

The Senior Pastor/President shall hold the Ecclesiastical Authority and be responsible for the day-to-day decisions.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Senior Pastor/President shall be reviewed every year. The number of consecutive terms that he may serve is unlimited. The Board of Directors must adhere to the provisions set forth in Article X should they choose not to renew his term.

Succession

The Senior Pastor/President may nominate a successor at any time. The nominee shall be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors after the nomination is made. A congregational vote will be held within 30 days of the boards approval, where the nominee shall be confirmed by two-thirds majority vote. This person will assume the role of the Senior Pastor/President if the Senior Pastor/ President retires, passes away unexpectedly, or is otherwise incapacitated.

Removal by the Accountability Board

If the Senior Pastor is removed by the Accountability Board, the previously approved successor may only assume the office of Senior Pastor/President after two conditions are met. First, the Board of Directors must gain a thorough understanding of the circumstances surrounding the removal of the former Senior Pastor. Second, the Board must then vote on whether to elect or not elect the previously approved successor.

No Successor Appointed

Should the Senior Pastor/President fail to appoint a successor, the following shall serve as an order of succession:

1. Vice President
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer

If the retirement, passing, removal, or incapacity of the Senior Pastor/President leaves the Board of Directors unbalanced or without a quorum, then the first motion of the person who assumes the role of the Senior Pastor/President through this section shall be to nominate prospective Board of Director member(s). The nominee(s) shall be confirmed by a unanimous vote of the remaining Board of Director members.

The successor will automatically and immediately become the Senior Pastor/President. In the event that the successor is not prepared to assume both the role of the Senior Pastor and that of the President, the Board of Directors can move to separate the roles of the Senior Pastor and President by a two-thirds majority vote. Such action would require an amendment to the Bylaws. The Board of Directors will begin the search for the replacement

Senior Pastor, and the successor will assume the role of the President. The Board of Directors may select an interim Senior Pastor until a permanent replacement is found.

Section 2 Vice President

Qualifications

The Vice President shall have wisdom in handling the corporation's affairs. He shall be of sound doctrine and good judgment.

Duties

He will serve as chief advisor to the Senior Pastor/President.

He shall carry out the responsibilities that the Senior Pastor/President delegates to him.

Manner of Appointment

The Senior Pastor/President shall nominate and the Board of Directors shall confirm the Vice President to office by a two-thirds majority vote.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Vice President shall be reviewed every year. The number of consecutive terms that he may serve is unlimited. The Vice President is subject to removal at any time in accordance with Article VI.

Section 3 Secretary

Qualifications

The Secretary shall be a spiritually minded person and of sound judgment. He must be administratively minded with the ability to multi-task.

Duties

By virtue of his office, the Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings, including business meetings of the corporation. He shall perform clerical duties and shall be the custodian of all legal documents.

Manner of Appointment

The Secretary shall be nominated by any member of the Board of Directors and appointed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Secretary shall be reviewed every year. The number of consecutive terms that he may serve is unlimited. The Secretary is subject to removal at any time in accordance with Article VI.

Section 4 Treasurer

Qualifications

The Treasurer shall be a spiritually minded person and of sound business judgment. He shall be capable of doing the accounting required to maintain the corporate books.

Duties

By virtue of his office, the Treasurer shall keep, in a business-like manner, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements of monies committed to his trust and shall make reports to be presented during the official Board of Directors meetings. He shall deposit and make withdrawals in a manner prescribed in Article XX.

Manner of Appointment

The Treasurer shall be nominated by any member of the Board of Directors and appointed by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Term of Office

The term of office of the Treasurer shall be reviewed every year. The number of consecutive terms that he may serve is unlimited. The Treasurer is subject to removal at any time in accordance with Article VI.

Section 5 Elders

The Elders are tasked with overseeing the spiritual care of the congregation. They are tasked with the financial and governmental control within the fellowship and should focus solely on addressing the spiritual needs of the congregation.

Qualifications

All Elders must qualify by exemplifying the following in their lives:

1. Above reproach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
2. The husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
3. Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Tim. 3:2)
4. Sober-minded, prudent (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8)
5. Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Tim. 3:2)
6. Hospitable (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8)
7. Able to teach (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9)
8. Not a drunkard (1 Tim. 3:3,8; Titus 1:7)
9. Not violent; not pugnacious (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
10. Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
11. Not a brawler; not contentious, not quick-tempered (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
12. Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy for money (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)

13. Rules his own house well; his children are faithful (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)

14. Not a new convert (1 Tim. 3:6)

15. Well thought of, has a good reputation with outsiders (1 Tim. 3:7)

16. Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)

17. A lover of good (Titus 1:8)

18. Just, upright (Titus 1:8)

19. Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)

20. Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

Duties

The Elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The Elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, equip the congregation for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The Elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. They shall work to ensure a healthy spiritual atmosphere within the fellowship.

Manner of Appointment

Congregation members may suggest Elder nominations in writing to the Board of Directors anytime between the start of the first quarter and before the end of the third quarter. The Board of Directors shall review these suggestions, interview new candidates and make the final nominations to be confirmed by the Congregation at the annual congregation meeting during the fourth quarter.

Term of Office

The term of office of each Elder shall be reviewed every two (2) years. The number of consecutive terms that an Elder may serve is unlimited. An Elder is subject to removal at any time as outlined in the Removal process described below.

Removal

Should an Elder be found in violation of the Bylaws, the Board of Directors may dismiss him by a two-thirds majority vote.

Article VIII Meetings

Section 1 Church Services

In any established place of worship, the appointed Pastor will be responsible for regular church services.

Section 2 Corporate Meetings

The corporate year shall coincide with the calendar year, beginning on January 1st and running through December 31st.

Proper notice of ten days shall be given to all Directors prior to any corporate meeting.

The Senior Pastor/President will call the official Board of Directors meeting to discuss the direction of the corporation. The Senior Pastor/President shall set dates and times for Board of Directors meetings. The Board of Directors may have invited guests present at any meeting so long as the Senior Pastor/President has approved it.

The Secretary shall accurately record the minutes of each Board of Directors meeting. He must then present these minutes at the following Board of Directors meeting for review by the Board and approval by the Senior Pastor/President. Once approved by the majority of the Board of Directors, the minutes shall be adopted, and all included policies and procedures will remain in effect.

Section 3 Waiver of Notice

A Director's attendance at any Board of Directors meeting constitutes a waiver of notice for that meeting, unless the Director is present specifically to object, at the outset of the meeting, to conducting any business due to the meeting not being appropriately called or convened.

Section 4 Meetings by Remote Communications Technology

Subject to the notice provision in Section 2 of this Article, the Directors may also hold meetings by means of a remote electronic communications system, including but not limited to video or telephone conferencing technology or the Internet, such as Zoom, Google Meeting, FaceTime, Skype, or any combination. This is permissible only if each person entitled to participate in the meeting consents to the meeting being held by means of that system, and the system provides access to the meeting in a manner or using a method by which each person participating in the meeting can communicate concurrently with each other participant. Participation in such a meeting shall constitute presence in person at such meeting, except participation for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business on the ground that the meeting is not properly called or convened.

Section 5 Action by Unanimous Written Consent Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Directors under any provision of law may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board of Directors shall individually or collectively consent in writing to such action. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as the unanimous vote of the Directors. Any certificate or other document filed under any provision of law which relates to action so taken shall state that the action was taken by unanimous written consent of the Board of Directors without a meeting and that the Bylaws of this corporation authorize the Directors to so act and such statement shall be prima facie evidence of such authority.

Article IX Quorum

A two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors members (including the Senior Pastor/President) at an official Board of Directors meeting constitutes a quorum.

Article X Accountability Board

The process for removing the Senior Pastor/President is governed by the provisions of this article. Until an accountability board is established, the removal of the Senior Pastor/President shall be accomplished by a unanimous vote of the Board of Directors, excluding any disqualified individuals, [see article VI Government]. However, after the Accountability Board is established and confirmed by a vote of the Board of Directors, the responsibility to investigate the Senior Pastor/President shall be placed upon the Accountability Board.

The Accountability Board shall be made up of no less than three (3) and no more than five (5) persons, who shall serve without remuneration. The Accountability Board shall be made up of individuals nominated by the Senior Pastor/President of the corporation and confirmed by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors after careful consideration (II Timothy 3:16, 17; Acts 15). The Board of Directors shall consider the nominations and vote to have each nomination appointed.

After the Accountability Board is established and confirmed by a vote of the Board of Directors, it shall be subject to the following;

1. At any time the Board of Directors may call upon the Accountability Board so long as the resolution is passed by a two-third majority vote of the Board of Directors.
2. The Accountability Board may make a recommendation for discipline or termination of the Senior Pastor/President but only after a unanimous vote. The Board of Directors must then vote to accept or decline the accountability Board's recommendation.
3. In order to confirm the Accountability Board's recommendation a two-thirds majority vote must pass of the Board of Directors.
4. If the Board of Directors chooses to not follow the Accountability Board's recommendation, the Board of Directors must do so by passing a unanimous vote.
5. If the Accountability Board fails to make a unanimous decision the vote returns to the Board of Directors. Additionally, the Board of Directors can take disciplinary action but in order to terminate the Senior Pastor/President they must pass a unanimous vote.

Section 1 Purpose

To hear accusations against the Senior Pastor/President of the corporation brought to them by a two-third vote of the official Board of Directors, excluding any disqualified individuals serving on the Board of Directors, and make a determination as to whether the Senior Pastor/President has committed any of the infractions listed below.

- A. Adultery

- B. Embezzlement
- C. Compulsive Lying
- D. Sexual Impurity
- E. Conviction of a felony that is a violation of Scripture
- F. The Senior Pastor/President not acting in the best interest of the church
- G. Any cause of concern from failure to carry out duties as defined by the board of directors.

The Accountability Board will determine if the Senior Pastor/President is guilty or innocent and whether to discipline or dismiss him from office. The Accountability Board is the only entity that has the authority to dismiss the Senior Pastor/President from his position if, after being called into session in accordance with the provisions of this Article and after considering all accusations against him, they determine that it is the best course of action for him and the church. The decision of the Accountability Board is final.

Section 2 Structure

Any member of the Accountability Board may be replaced or removed at any time, if requested by the Senior Pastor/President and confirmed by the Board of Directors, provided this action occurs before the Accountability Board has been officially convened according to Section 1 of this Article.

The representative nominated by the Senior Pastor and confirmed by the Board of Directors shall chair the Accountability Board.

Future vacancies shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and confirmed by the Board of Directors.

A record of the current and past members of the Accountability Board shall be kept in a log under the custody of the official Board of Directors. The log shall clearly list the names of each member and the current chairman.

Any successor to the founding or current Senior Pastor shall keep the Accountability Board that was in existence at the time he became Senior Pastor. He may, after a six-month period, make nominations for replacements of no more than one Accountability Board member per year. When establishing any new Accountability Board member, he must follow the procedure set forth in Section 1 of this Article.

Section 3 Quorum

100% of the Accountability Board must be present to constitute a quorum. The Accountability Board may only meet if it has been called to do so with a unanimous vote by the official Board of Directors, excluding any disqualified individuals, according to the provisions of this Article.

Section 5 Power

The Accountability Board shall have no innate power or authority as a legal organizational

entity, except that which is invested in them by these Bylaws.

Article XI Ecclesiastical Authority

This church operates under a theocratic model of governance, acknowledging that members of a growing congregation will be at varying stages of spiritual development and maturity. As such, the church's day-to-day affairs are not governed by democratic vote, as its mission is to discern and align with the will of God rather than reflect the preferences of the majority.

However, the congregation is entrusted with voting authority on the following specific matters:

1. Approval or rejection of the annual budget following the completion of the first year of the life of the ministry, requiring a simple majority vote.
2. Affirmation of elders, which requires a two-thirds majority vote for approval.
3. Confirmation of a Senior Pastor candidate as presented by the Board of Directors, requiring a two-thirds majority vote for approval.

In *Watson v. Jones*, the court ruled that: "Whenever the questions of discipline, or of faith, of ecclesiastical rule, custom, or law have been decided by the highest church judicatory to which the matter has been carried, the legal tribunals must accept such decisions as final, and as binding on them . . ."

Article XII Mutual Interest

The behavior of anyone in fellowship with this church is of common interest to the Board of Directors and congregation (Gal. 6:1). This church requires every member of the Board of Directors and every congregant to adhere to a lifestyle that is consistent with the doctrines of this church as taught in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore, this church reserves the right to refuse service to any individual who is not submitting their lifestyle to this Scriptural mode of conduct. This refusal would include services, benefits, and any use of church assets.

Article XIII Prohibited Activities

This church is prohibited from engaging in activities that violate its written doctrines. This church is also prohibited from condoning, promoting, or allowing any of its assets to be used for activities that violate its written doctrines.

Article XIV Senior Pastor's Vision

To establish an efficient leadership infrastructure, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible to articulate in clear, concise, and simple language the vision of the church. The purpose of this is to create a consistent and logical framework that empowers staff and volunteers to participate in the decision-making processes that reflect the Senior Pastor's heart and vision for the church.

Article XV Safety and Security

Section 1 Ministry of Helps

To help ensure the protection, security, and safety of congregants, guests, and volunteers during church functions, this church recognizes the Ministry of Helps. The Board of Directors may establish teams and committees who are trained in the policy and procedures of the church to carry out this ministry.

Section 2 Weapons Usage Policy Requirements

The Board of Directors shall adopt a Weapons Usage Policy. This policy will detail the procedures for executing the following, but not limited to:

1. Purpose

This article establishes the requirement for the Board of Directors to formulate and adopt a weapons usage policy for the church. The aim is to ensure the safety and security of all members and visitors while respecting legal and ethical considerations related to firearms on church property.

2. Formulation of Weapons Usage Policy

1. **Mandate:** The Board of Directors is mandated to develop a comprehensive weapons usage policy that addresses the presence and regulation of firearms within church premises.
2. **Considerations:** The policy shall consider local and state laws, the safety and security needs of the congregation, and the church's commitment to creating a safe worship environment.

3. Adoption

Once formulated, the weapons usage policy must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

4. Amendments and Revisions

The Board of Directors may review and amend the weapons usage policy from time to time as deemed necessary.

Article XVI Emergency Lockdowns

Section 1 Right to Remain Open

In alignment with recent Supreme Court rulings, this church reaffirms its vital role in the spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being of its congregation. As such, the church maintains its constitutional right to remain open or closed as the Board of Director sees fit.

Section 2 Safety Measures

1. **Health and Safety Protocols:** While asserting the right to remain open, the church

shall implement appropriate health and safety protocols to protect the health and safety of its members, staff, and volunteers.

2. **Cooperation with Guidelines:** The church will seek to cooperate with public health guidelines to the extent possible without compromising its essential function of worship and ministry.
3. **Online Services:** The church will enhance its online presence and provide virtual worship services, Bible studies, and other forms of support to its members during lockdowns.

Article XVII Review of Church Records

Section 1 Requests Made by Congregant

To ensure the trust of the congregants and to also ensure that a public interest is being served, church records and basic financial information may be available for congregational inspection and review. At no time may information be supplied that would violate Section 4 of this Article or Article XVIII. Any questions by any congregant shall be addressed to the treasurer either in writing or by scheduled appointment.

Section 2 Required Provisions of the Request

The request must state the name of the individual, the reason for the request, and that the information shall in no way be made public or shared with any other congregant in a way that will jeopardize the church.

Section 3 Required Fee

This corporation may require a reasonable per-page fee for any copies that are required in order to accommodate approved records requests.

Section 4 Confidentiality

In order to keep the records of the church confidential, records shall not be released to any outside agency, person, or entity unless due process has been served and a certified subpoena has been personally delivered. This includes the IRS, except under the provisions of Section 7611 which shall be limited only to information deemed to be relevant to the inquiry being made. At all times the IRS will be expected to comply with all of the provisions of Section 7611.

Section 5 Denying a Request

The Board of Directors reserves the right to deny such a request for any of the following reasons:

1. The request is considered by the Board of Directors and deemed to be frivolous;
2. The individual making the request has a history of being divisive;
3. The individual does not adequately provide the required information on the request as stated in this Article;

4. The person making a request is not a regular attendee or regular financial contributor.

Article XVIII Privacy

This church shall diligently watch to keep private all records concerning polity, doctrine, counseling, and information on individuals in fellowship with this church. This church must not disclose any records that may compromise information about a congregant's attendance, status, giving, and counseling records.

Article XIX Order

For the purpose of conducting business, the Senior Pastor/President shall, in an orderly manner, preside over all of the affairs of the corporation.

Article XX Finances

Section 1 Audit

The Treasurer and another person appointed by the Board of Directors shall conduct an internal audit. This audit of all financial records shall be made after the close of the calendar year, prior to the end of February.

Section 2 Checks, Payments, and Withdrawals

The Board of Directors shall adopt a Corporate Expenditures Policy detailing the procedure for properly executing checks, payments, and withdrawals.

Section 3 Salaries

All salaries shall be determined in the following manner:

1. The Board of Directors shall consider each candidate, create a compensation package and vote on the package.

Only uncompensated individuals of the Board of Directors shall vote on any recommended compensation package.

All salaries shall be reviewed each year during the last meeting of the calendar year.

Section 4 Digital Currency

The Board of Directors shall adopt a Digital Currency Policy. This policy will detail the procedures for executing the following, but not limited to:

1. **Acceptance Guidelines:** Adhere to IRS guidelines for accepting digital currency donations.
2. **Communication with Donors:** Inform donors about the policy and tax implications.

3. **Acknowledgment of Donations:** Send acknowledgment letters with specified details and ensure IRS compliance.
4. **Investment Strategy:** Develop, implement, and approve an investment strategy for digital assets.
5. **Transactions:** Obtain board approval for transactions involving digital assets.
6. **Management:** The chief officer will decide on storage methods and ensure security measures for digital assets.

Article XXI Property Rights

All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the corporation's name.

No real or chattel property of the corporation shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without authorization of the Senior Pastor/President.

The Senior Pastor/President of the corporation shall certify in such conveyances, leases, or mortgages.

Article XXII Dissolution

In the event that the corporation ceases to exist, all assets of this church shall, at the discretion of the Board of Directors be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction in the county in which the principal office of the church is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article XXIII Ministers of the Gospel

The Senior Pastor/President of this ministry shall by virtue of his office automatically be recognized as an ordained minister.

Section 1 Classes of Ministers

This ministry shall have a set number of classes of ministers, as set forth below. Each class of minister will have distinct rights and privileges; they are listed below:

Ordained Pastor/Minister:

This recognition is conferred by the Senior Pastor/President to those persons who have an "established" or "proven" ministry. Ordained ministers are authorized to perform all

functions of the Christian ministry and religious functions and must be capable of doing so. Ordained ministers are authorized to perform all religious functions, including but not limited to:

1. Conduct religious worship
2. Religious instruction
3. Administer communion
4. Provide spiritual counseling
5. Serve on the Board of Directors of a church
6. Ministry administration
7. And other sacerdotal functions including
 - A. Conduct baby dedication ceremonies
 - B. Perform baptisms
 - C. Perform weddings
 - D. Conduct funerals
 - E. Visit the sick and shut-in
 - F. Minister in prisons

He must be capable, as determined by the Senior Pastor/President, to take charge of a congregation.

Section 2 Senior Pastor/President's Authority

The Board of Directors of this ministry shall have ecclesiastical authority to decide who, how, or if a person will be licensed by this ministry to hold any of the classes mentioned above (Matt. 16:13-19).

Article XXIV Indemnification

Section 1 Indemnification Coverage

This church shall indemnify, to the extent legally permissible, each person who serves or has served as an officer, director, or employee of the church. Indemnification means protecting these individuals against all expenses and liabilities they might incur, including but not limited to:

- Legal fees
- Judgments
- Fines

- Excise taxes
- Penalties
- Settlement payments

Section 2 Scope of Protection

These protections apply to any costs that arise from their service in these roles if they become involved in any threatened, pending, or completed legal action, suit, or proceeding because of their service.

Section 3 Exceptions to Indemnification

Indemnification will not be provided if:

1. The person is finally adjudicated (legally determined) in a proceeding to have not acted in good faith.
2. It is determined that the person knew or should have known that their actions were not in the best interests of the church.

Section 4 Approval of Settlements

Any compromise or settlement payment must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of a quorum of directors who are not involved in the proceeding.

Article XXV Media and Communication

The Board of Directors shall adopt a Media and Communications Policy, which must include the following:

1. **Public Statements:** Designated spokesperson and approval process.
2. **Social Media:** Guidelines and monitoring procedures.

The policy document outlines the specific procedures and requirements related to public statements and social media management and is binding upon adoption.

Article XXVI Subsidiaries

Section 1 Authority to Form a Subsidiary SMLLC

The church may, at any time it deems appropriate, form a subsidiary known as a Single Member Limited Liability Company (SMLLC) by passing a resolution through a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 2 Purposes of the SMLLC

The SMLLC may be formed for any of the following purposes:

- a. To hold title to buildings and properties owned by the church.
- b. To conduct revenue-generating activities consistent with the church's purposes and

mission.

- c. To manage and operate specific programs or initiatives, including but not limited to:
 - a. Citywide outreach programs to feed the poor
 - b. Sports programs
 - c. Men's and women's auxiliary groups
 - d. K-12 schools and higher learning education agencies
 - e. Bible colleges
 - f. Daughter churches
 - g. Local and foreign mission outreach programs
 - h. Evangelistic outreach
 - i. Minister ordination organizations
- d. To engage in any other purpose or activity that promotes the purposes and activities of the church, as determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 3 Adding Additional Members to the SMLLC

At any time, the church may add additional members to the SMLLC by passing a resolution through a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Article XXVIII Intellectual Property (IP)

Section 1 Purpose and Scope

1. **Purpose:** This section establishes the ownership, use, and distribution of intellectual property (IP) created within or on behalf of this church. The intent is to provide clarity and guidance to all parties involved.
2. **Scope:** This article applies to all employees, volunteers, and contractors of the church, including but not limited to pastors, staff members, and any individual involved in the creation of church-related content.

Section 2 Ownership of Intellectual Property

1. **Sermons and Recorded Content:** All sermons, teachings, and other content created by pastors or church representatives during the course of their duties, whether delivered orally, recorded, or transcribed, shall be considered the intellectual property of this church. This includes, but is not limited to, audio recordings, video recordings, written transcripts, and any other form of media.
2. **Books and Written Works:**
 - a. **Authorship:** Pastors employed by the church are permitted to author books and

other written works while under the church's employment. These works must be created during personal time, outside of regular working hours.

- b. **Ownership:** Any books or written works authored by a pastor during off-duty hours shall be the sole intellectual property of the pastor, unless an agreement to the contrary is made in writing before the work begins. The church shall have no claim to these works.

3. **Social Media Content:**

- a. **Personal Social Media Use:** Pastors and church employees may use their personal social media accounts to discuss church-related matters, promote church activities, and share their teachings or sermons.
- b. **Ownership:** Content created and posted on personal social media accounts by pastors, provided it is prepared during off-duty hours and does not include recordings of church services or events, shall remain the property of the pastor. This church shall not claim ownership or rights to any such content unless otherwise agreed upon in writing.

Section 3 Dual License Usage

- 1. **Prohibition of Use During Employment:** Employees or volunteers of this church are prohibited from using intellectual property created during their time with the church for personal or business purposes.
- 2. **Post-Employment Use:** Upon leaving the organization, former employees or volunteers may be permitted to use intellectual property under a dual license agreement, which allows both the individual and the church to utilize the intellectual property, subject to terms agreed upon prior to the individual's departure.

Section 4 Agreements and Amendments

- 1. **Prior Agreements:** Any specific agreements regarding the ownership or usage of intellectual property, including any exceptions to this policy, must be documented in writing and signed by all parties involved before the creation of the intellectual property in question.
- 2. **Amendments:** This policy may be amended by the Board of Directors at any time, provided that such amendments are documented in writing and communicated to all affected parties.

Section 5 Dispute Resolution

Any disputes arising from the interpretation or application of this Intellectual Property Policy shall be resolved through mediation or arbitration, as agreed upon by the parties involved.

Section 6 Compliance with IRS Guidelines

- 1. **Non-Commercial Use:** The development and distribution of intellectual property shall

not primarily be a revenue-generating activity operated like a commercial enterprise. The primary purpose must support the church's mission, rather than merely supplement its budget.

2. **Private Benefit:** Intellectual property agreements shall avoid providing private benefits to individuals within the church. Proceeds from the sale or distribution of IP must support the church's mission, and any such transactions shall be conducted at arm's length to avoid conflicts of interest.

Section 7 Record Keeping

The Secretary of the corporation shall ensure that all intellectual property agreements, licenses, and amendments are properly documented, maintained, and incorporated by reference into the church's records.

Article XXIX Other Considerations

Any matters not addressed within these Bylaws shall be deliberated and resolved at an official meeting of the Board of Directors.

Article XXX Amendments

Section 1 Amendments to the Bylaws

Amendments to the Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the official Board of Directors, including the Senior Pastor/President.

Section 2 Incorporation by Reference

1. **Authority to Incorporate:** All policies, decisions, and programs required to be adopted under these Bylaws are hereby incorporated into these Bylaws by reference and shall have the same legal effect as if fully set forth herein.
2. **Approval Process:** Upon approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Directors, the specific item shall be recorded in the church's corporate records book.
3. **Effective Date:** Such approval shall take effect immediately and shall be incorporated by reference into the church's Bylaws.
4. **Record Keeping:** The Secretary of the church shall be tasked with maintaining an up-to-date copy of this approval and ensuring that it is promptly recorded and stored as part of the church's Bylaws.

Certification of Approval

These Bylaws, adopted on this 11/21/25 nullify all prior addenda and supersede all previous Bylaws voted on before this date.

Core Policies

Bell City Church, Inc.

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Accountable Reimbursement Policy

Whereas Treasury Regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5(e) provide that an employee "need not report on his tax return" expenses paid or incurred by him/her solely for the benefit of his/her employer for which he/she is required to account and does account to the employer and which are charged directly or indirectly to the employer; and Whereas Treasury Regulation 1.274-5(e) further provides that "an adequate accounting means the submission to the employer of a reimbursement form (statement of expense) or similar record maintained by the employee in which the information as to each element of expenditure (amount, time and place, business purpose, and business relationship) is recorded at or near the time of the expenditure, together with supporting documentary evidence, in a manner which conforms to the 'adequate records' requirements" set forth in the regulation; and Whereas this organization desires to establish a reimbursement policy pursuant to Treasury Regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5(e); therefore be it Resolved, that This organization hereby adopts a reimbursement policy pursuant to IRC Section. 62(c), IRC Section 274 and Treasury Regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5(e), upon the following terms and conditions:

The President, or any person now or hereafter employed by this organization shall be reimbursed for any ordinary and necessary business and professional expense incurred on behalf of the organization if the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The expenses are reasonable in amount;
2. The person incurring the expense documents the amount, time and place, business purpose, and business relationship of each such expense with the same kinds of documentary evidence as would be required to support a deduction of the expense on the person's federal income tax return; and
3. The person documents such expenses by providing the organization treasurer with an accounting of such expenses no less frequently than monthly. In no event will an expense be reimbursed if substantiated more than sixty (60) days after the expense is paid or incurred by a President, associate in ministry, or employee.

The organization shall not include on a President's or other employee's Form W2 the amount of any business or professional expense properly substantiated and reimbursed according to the preceding paragraph, and these persons should not report the amount of any such reimbursement on his or her Form 1040.

Any organization reimbursement that exceeds the amount of business or professional expenses properly accounted for pursuant to this reimbursement policy must be returned to the organization within 120 days after the associated expenses are paid or incurred and shall not be retained by the President, associate or employee.

If, for any reason, the organization's reimbursements are less than the amount of business

and professional expenses properly substantiated by a President or other employee, the organization will report no part of the reimbursements on the employee's W2, and the President or employee may deduct the unreimbursed expenses as allowed by law.

Under no circumstances will the organization reimburse a President or other employee for business or professional expenses incurred on behalf of the organization that are not properly substantiated according to this policy. The organization and staff understand that this requirement is necessary to prevent our reimbursement plan from being classified as a "non-accountable" plan. All receipts and other documentary evidence used by a President or other employee to substantiate the business nature and amount of business expenses incurred on behalf of the organization shall be retained by the organization. The President or employee may, at his or her election, make copies of such evidence.

The organization reserves the right to deny a reimbursement request for the following reasons:

1. The individual requesting the reimbursement incurred an unauthorized expenditure;
0. The individual does not submit the request within 60 days of incurring the expenditure; or
0. The organization's budget cannot support the reimbursement.

In the case where the organization denies a reimbursement request, a written explanation shall be given to the individual stating one of the three items described above.

Anti-Terrorism Policy

WHEREAS, exempt organizations under section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code may engage in activities overseas and give money and support to foreign organizations that have not qualified for tax-exempt status in the United States, Revenue Ruling 68-489, 1968-2 C.B. 210 clearly indicates that "An organization will not jeopardize its exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Code, even though it distributes funds to nonexempt organizations, provided it retains control and discretion over use of the funds for section 501(c)(3) purposes so long as it meets certain requirements."

1. All foreign activities and support of foreign organizations shall be to further the purposes of this organization as stated in the articles of incorporation.

0. The exempt organization will be required to ensure that the use of the funds for section 501(c)(3) purposes will be limited to specific projects that are in furtherance of this organization's exempt purposes.

0. This organization shall retain control and discretion as to the use of the funds and;

0. Maintain records establishing that the funds were used for section 501(c)(3) purposes.

WHEREAS, Executive Order 12947, and its annex 13099, issued by President Bill Clinton, and Executive Order 13224, issued by President George W. Bush, blocking certain

transactions between U.S. citizens, including corporations and persons who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism.

Be it RESOLVED, that this organization adopts an International Activities and Terrorism Policy effective immediately and unless rescinded or amended shall remain in effect perpetually. This policy is based on the voluntary best practices guidelines issued by the U.S. Treasury Department. The organization shall take all reasonable steps to stay up to date with the latest list of countries considered state sponsors of terrorism and are subject to special sanctions under 31 CFR Part 596. This organization shall regularly check and rely upon the data provided by the U.S. Department of State as found in the "Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List" and "List of Sanctioned Countries". Furthermore, this organization shall ensure that all transactions between this organization and any foreign entity or individual will be for the furtherance of our exempt purposes and that the following information be gathered:

1. The foreign organization's name in English, in its native language, and any other identifying information;
2. The places where the foreign organization maintains a physical presence;
3. Copies of the organization's formation documents as approved by the proper authorities.
4. The addresses and telephone numbers for the organization's offices.
5. The organization's principal purpose.
6. The full names, addresses, and other identifying information of the individuals in charge of the organization.
7. The names of financial institutions where funds will be deposited.
8. The names and addresses of its employees, contractors and subcontractors.
9. A written agreement describing how the funds will be used, and how it will further our exempt purposes.

Benevolence Policy

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Psalm 112:9

They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor,
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn will be lifted high in honor.

Proverbs 22:9

The generous will themselves be blessed,
for they share their food with the poor.

Matthew 25:34-36

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

Purpose:

This benevolence policy is a tool to help Bell City Church (Bell City Church) comply with federal and state government guidelines in operating 501c3 nonprofit organizations. This policy is intended to help Bell City Church avoid conflicts by providing a written policy based on biblical ethics and financial wisdom for handling the resources God has provided.

Adoption and Amendments:

The Benevolence policy is not included in the Bell City Church By-laws and can be amended, deleted or added to at any Bell City Church Board meeting.

Guidelines:

Bell City Church, in exercising our mission, vision, and values, has established the benevolence fund to assist persons in significant financial need. Bell City Church welcomes contributions to the fund. The administration of the fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the control and discretion of the Bell City Church Board. The Board may consider recommendations from

anyone, but in no event is the Board bound in any way to honor the recommendations.

Bell City Church recognizes that planning for future needs is a practice of good stewardship and has established this fund as an ongoing fund. Should at any time in the future the Board vote to close this fund, all money in the fund at that time will go into Bell City Church's general fund.

The Board will make sure the required Internal Revenue Service records for benevolence requests are documented and properly filed. As a minimum, the following documentation should be recorded for accurate record-keeping:

1. A complete description of the assistance requested and given.
2. The purpose for which the aid was given.
3. The objective criteria for disbursement.
4. How the recipients were selected.
5. The name, address and amount distributed to each recipient.
6. Any relationship between recipient and church officers, church employees, or contributors who recommended this benevolence to Bell City Church.

Bell City Church benevolence assistance is always based on the availability of benevolence funds.

The church will help via payments of bills to 3rd party that will provide receipts for expenditures

It is the policy of Bell City Church that benevolence money will not be given directly to the requestor. Where food is needed, Bell City Church gives food; utility bills assistance, Bell City Church pays the bill directly with the utility company; medical bills, Bell City Church pays the bill directly with the medical provider; etc.

Example types of help that will be provided by the benevolence fund include: payments of water, food, gas or medical bills, but are not limited to those categories. Once an individual or family has met the limit of \$200.00 in financial assistance, given within any 12 consecutive months, they are no longer eligible. However in special circumstances, Bell City Church reserves the right to exceed the \$200.00 limit, up to a maximum of \$1,000.00, to be approved by special recorded motion and vote by the Bell City Church Board. The Board will not vote on any benevolence request without the Request Form and all documentation filled out and submitted to them.

Bell City Church
Benevolence Request Form

Bell City Church is making every effort to live for and be surrendered to Christ and the teachings of the Bible. It is our privilege, purpose, and passion to share about Jesus Christ from our doorstep to all the world. Please give your request to one of our staff, or a Board Member. You may also put this form into a sealed envelope and place in the offering.

Note: Information given on this form is confidential and will not be disseminated to anyone other than the

Board and others directly necessary for accounts payable and church accounting processing.

RECIPIENT INFORMATION (ID should be presented and a copy attached):

Legal Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

VENDOR: (attach copy of invoice/bill)

Name on Invoice: _____

Account/Invoice No: _____

REQUEST:

Amount of Request: _____ Date of Request: _____

PURPOSE: (Please explain why there is this specific need):

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Yes No Not Sure

Are you a member of Bell City Church? Yes No Attend Occasionally

Which best describes your Church attendance?

Frequent Sometimes Seldom Never

In your opinion which description best describes your financial situation?

Short term emergency Short term problem Long term problem

Is the recipient related to any employee, officer, Board member of this Church?

No Yes

(If yes) Who? _____

(If yes) What is your relationship to the above mentioned?

Have you received assistance from Bell City Church within the last 12 consecutive months?

No Yes

(If yes) Explain:

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Are you willing to receive financial counseling?

Yes

No

REQUESTOR NAME if different from recipient (print):

REQUESTOR SIGNATURE: _____ Date: _____

Please use the space below, or on back of page, to add any additional information that may help the

Board to make a better informed decision.

Bell City Church

DISBURSEMENT FORM

Complete this form to verify all required information has been received and approved prior to writing a check. After check has been written, give this form to the Treasurer for accounting and filing. All documents pertaining to this Benevolence Request and Disbursement are confidential and must be kept in the locked file cabinet at the church and will be maintained as required by the IRS.

Legal Name

Copy of ID (if possible)

Address

Phone

Relationship between recipient and members, officers or trustees

Need of financial assistance

Copy of invoice/bill

Receipt of payment

Payable to: _____

Amount: _____ Check Number: _____

Date on Check: _____

Children and Student Ministry Policy

Bell City Church requires all staff members and volunteers working with children and students to complete the necessary steps. A volunteer must attend this church for three months before being eligible to serve in positions providing access to children, students, or vulnerable populations. The following steps must be completed before working in our children and student areas.

Screening Process

Staff members and volunteers are required to complete our Screening Process, which requires a staff member or volunteer to complete a face to face interview.

Policies & Procedures

Staff members and volunteers are required to review the policies contained in this manual and sign the last page indicating that he or she has read and understood the material, and agrees to comply with policy requirements.

Criminal Background Check

Our church requires that all staff members and volunteers working or volunteering in children or student activities undergo a criminal background check. Background checks must be submitted at minimum every 24 months.

Children's Safety Policy for

ABUSE TOLERANCE

Our church has a zero tolerance for abuse in ministry programs and ministry activities. It is the responsibility of every staff and volunteer at this church to act in the best interest of all children in every program.

In the event that staff or volunteers observe any inappropriate behaviors (i.e. policy violations, neglectful supervision, poor role-modeling, etc.) or suspected abuse (physical, emotional, or sexual) it is their responsibility to immediately report their observations to the Children's Pastor/Director or an Elder.

REPORTING SUSPICIOUS OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

Our church is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. To this end, any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the Police Department, Child Protective Services, or other appropriate agency.

ENFORCEMENT OF POLICIES

Our staff members and volunteers who supervise other staff members or volunteers are charged with the diligent enforcement of all our policies. Violations of these policies are grounds for immediate dismissal, disciplinary action, or reassignment from Children and Student Ministry positions for both volunteers and staff members.

Reporting Abuse or Suspicions of Abuse

REPORTING VIOLATION OF POLICY

In order to maintain a safe environment for our children and students, our staff members and volunteers must be aware of their individual responsibility to report any questionable circumstance, observation, act, omission, or situation that is a violation of these policies. All questions or concerns related to inappropriate, suspicious, or suspected grooming behavior should be directed to the team leader in the ministry area, the Children's Pastor, or an Elder.

CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLATION

Any person accused of committing a prohibited act or any act considered by the church to be harmful to a child will be immediately suspended from participation in Children and Student Ministries. This suspension will continue during any investigation by law enforcement or Child Protective agencies.

Any person found to have committed a prohibited act should be prohibited from future participation as a staff member or volunteer in all activities and programming that involves children, students or vulnerable populations at our church. If the person is a staff member or employee, such conduct may also result in termination of employment from our church.

Failure to report a prohibited act to the designated person is a violation of this policy and grounds for termination of employment of a staff member or employee. Volunteers who fail to report a prohibited act may be restricted from participation in any activities involving children, students or vulnerable populations at our church.

REPORTING SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Staff members and volunteers at our church are required to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, or any inappropriate behavior of a colleague or co-worker, to the Children's Pastor/Director and/or the Board of Directors.

RESPONSE TO REPORT OF ABUSE

Once reported our leadership team will take appropriate action on behalf of the church when a report of abuse occurs.

Safety

The Children's Pastor/Director will be responsible for ensuring that the Children's Building/Area is monitored during programming. This will include unobserved monitoring of staff members, volunteers and children in children's classrooms.

No child will ever be left unattended in the Children's Ministry areas. Children and Student Ministries staff members or volunteers are prohibited from being alone with an individual child in any room, building, or vehicle.

After every programming event, Children and Student Ministries staff members and volunteers must ensure every room and restroom is checked prior to leaving.

DISCIPLINE POLICY OF

It is the policy that staff members and volunteers are prohibited from using physical discipline in any manner for behavioral management of children. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. Children are to be disciplined using time-outs and other non-physical methods of behavior management. In employing this procedure, staff members and volunteers should observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Verbally redirect the child before physically intervening. With younger children some physical redirection may be necessary (for example, removing a toy from the hands of a child that is hitting another).
- 2) If the behavior does not cease, remove or direct the child away from the group to a corner of the room where the group is meeting (avoid being alone with the child).
- 3) If the child will not stop the unacceptable behavior, contact the Children's Ministry Pastor/Director.

ONE-TO-ONE INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN

Staff members and volunteers should never conduct one-to-one, unobserved meetings or interaction with children while participating in our Children and Student Ministry program. Another adult who has completed the application and screening process should always be present.

PARENTAL CONTACT

Parents who leave a child in the care of our staff members and volunteers during church services or activities will be contacted if their child becomes ill, injured, or has a severe disciplinary problem while participating in Children and Student Ministry programs. This will be accomplished by notifying the Children's Ministry Pastor/Director.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are encouraged to visit any and all services and programs in which their child is involved at our church. Parents have an open invitation to observe all programs and activities in which their child is involved. However, parents who desire to participate in or have continuous, ongoing contact with their children's programs will be required to complete our volunteer application and screening process.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

At any time that a child has been entrusted to our Children's Ministry staff members or

volunteers, our church incurs responsibility for the safety and well-being of the child. Staff members and volunteers must act to ensure the appropriate supervision and safety of children in their charge.

Children's Ministries staff members or volunteers are responsible for releasing children in their care only to parents, legal guardians, or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians at the close of services or activities. Each person picking up the child must have their sticker with matching number. If a parent loses their pick up sticker they must see the children's director with appropriate ID.

**Policies and Procedures
Statement of Acknowledgement and Agreement**

I have received and read a copy of the Children's Ministry Policies and Procedures and understand the importance of the material in the manual. I agree to abide by these guidelines while serving or working at this church.

I understand the manual may be modified, and that any guideline may be amended, revised, or eliminated by this church. Any changes will be made public.

I have reviewed the duties listed in my ministry position description, and I agree to fulfill these duties. I understand I may choose to end my employment or voluntary service at any time (If possible, I will provide two weeks' notice to my supervisor).

I acknowledge and understand that the materials and guidelines contained in this handbook in no way express or imply a contractual employment relationship between me and this church.

I understand it is my responsibility to review new guidelines which may be created and distributed as well as manual guidelines that are changed or deleted.

I acknowledge receipt of the policies and procedures manual.

Staff Member or Volunteer's name (please print)

Staff Member or Volunteer's signature

Date:

Conflict of Interest Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization's interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private

interest of an officer or director of the organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

Definitions

Interested/Disqualified Person:

Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest defined below, is an interested person.

Financial Interest:

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement,

Compensation arrangement with the organization or with any entity or individual with which the organization has a transaction or arrangement, or

A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.

A Financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. A person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures

Duty to Disclose:

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists:

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest:

An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose. If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Records of Proceedings

The minutes of the governing board and all committees with board delegated powers shall contain:

The names of the persons who disclosed or otherwise were found to have a financial interest in connection with an actual or possible conflict of interest, the nature of the financial interest, any action taken to determine whether a conflict of interest was present, and the governing board's or committee's decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed. The names of the persons who were present for discussions and votes relating to the transaction or arrangement, the content of the discussion, including any alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement, and a record of any votes taken in connection with the proceedings.

Compensation

A voting member of the governing board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

A voting member of any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the organization for services is precluded from voting on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

No voting member of the governing board or any committee whose jurisdiction includes compensation matters and who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the organization, either individually or collectively, is prohibited from providing information to any committee regarding compensation.

Annual Statements

Each director, principal officer and member of a committee with governing board delegated powers shall annually sign a statement which affirms such person:

Has received a copy of the conflicts of interest policy,

Has read and understands the policy,

Has agreed to comply with the policy, and

Understands the organization is charitable and in order to maintain its federal tax exemption it must engage primarily in activities which accomplish one or more of its tax-exempt purposes.

Periodic Reviews

To ensure the organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and does not engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted.

The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information and the result of arm's length bargaining.

Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the organization's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and do not result in benefit, impermissible private benefit or in an excess benefit transaction.

Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in this policy, the organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

Corporate Expenditures Policy

Any form of withdrawal at or more than \$2,500.00 shall require the signatures of two officers who are also authorized signees on the bank account, one of which must be the Treasurer.

This church, with the approval of the Board of Directors, has the ability to obtain debit cards for the general checking account or credit cards in the name of the organization for organizational use. Access to these cards will be at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Spending on any debit/credit card must be reported to the treasurer or the Board of Directors along with a receipt of the spending.

- Debit/credit cards will be used only for business purposes. Personal purchases of any type are not allowed.
- No one other than the approved cardholder can use any issued card.
- Lost or stolen cards must be reported immediately.
- Each cardholder will sign a copy of this policy at the time the card is issued.

The organization will annually approve an official operating budget. The Board of Directors will create an effective process for estimating the next years' cash flow necessary to create a reasonable budget.

Digital Currency Policy

Digital Currency Acceptance Policy

1. **Acceptance Guidelines:** The church shall accept digital currency donations in accordance with IRS guidelines, treating such donations as property for Federal income tax purposes.
2. **Communication with Donors:** Donors will be made aware that our church accepts digital currency as a form of donation.

Acknowledgment of Digital Currency Donations

1. **Acknowledgment Letter:** The church shall send a letter of acknowledgment to donors of digital currency. This letter must include:
 - **Gratitude:** Express gratitude for the digital currency donation.
 - **Details of the Gift:**
 - The name of the currency
 - The exact number of coins donated
 - The precise date on which the currency was donated
2. **IRS Compliance:** The acknowledgment letter shall comply with IRS requirements for documenting donated property. A copy is attached to this policy.

Investment Strategy

1. **Development and Implementation:** The investment strategy for cryptocurrency and other marketable assets, including stock donations, may be developed and implemented by the chief officer of the church.
2. **Review and Approval:** All investment strategies must be reviewed and approved by the two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.

Transactions Involving Digital Assets

1. **Purchase, Receipt, or Sale:** The church may purchase, receive, or sell digital assets as part of its investment strategy.
2. **Board Approval:** Any transaction involving the liquidation of digital assets must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.

Management of Digital Assets

1. **Chief Officer's Authority:** The church chief officer has the discretion to decide whether to use an investment platform to hold the digital assets or to have the church maintain its own digital wallet and private keys.
2. **Security Measures:** The chief officer shall ensure that all digital assets are stored securely, whether on an investment platform or in the church's own digital wallet. Regular audits and security checks should be conducted to protect these assets.

Donated Property Policy

In the event that the church receives a donation of personal property valued at \$500 or more that does not have a useful church function, the Board of Directors will meet at a regularly called board meeting and decide how to put the property to use or dispose thereof. The church will follow the procedures outlined below:

1. We will first attempt to find an applicable use of the property.
2. The property will be evaluated and an estimated value will be established that is as close to the fair market value of that item. An attempt to sell the property at that price will be made. The monies raised from the sale of the item shall be used solely for ministry purposes.

The organization may accept gifts of real estate, including houses, condominiums, commercial properties, farmland, rental property and undeveloped land, after a thorough review of the following factors:

1. The usefulness of the property for ministry purposes.
2. The marketability of the property.
3. The existence of restrictions, reservations, easements, and/or other limitations.
4. The existence of encumbrances, such as mortgages and mechanics liens.
5. Carrying costs, such as property owner's association dues, taxes, insurance, and other maintenance expenses, and
6. Fair market value in relation to the costs and limits listed above as determined by a qualified appraisal conducted in accordance with IRS standards

Prior to the acceptance of any parcel of real property, an assessment of the potential environmental risks may be conducted. This assessment may include the following:

1. An inquiry of the present owner regarding his, her or its knowledge of the history of the property
2. A title search to determine who the prior owners might have been
3. A consultation with federal, state, and local environmental agencies to find out whether the property has any history of hazardous waste contamination: and
4. A visual inspection of the property for any evidence of environmental hazards

An environmental audit conducted by a professional service also may be required. The decision to accept gifts of real estate requires approval by the Board of Directors. The organization reserves the right to require that the donor or the donor's personal representative pay the cost, including professional fees, of any review or investigation described above as a condition of considering acceptance of the property in question.

Social Media & Communication Policy

Purpose

This policy aims to guide staff in their use of social media and email to protect the church's reputation, ensure professional communication, and provide clarity around personal and official statements.

Scope

This policy applies to all church staff, volunteers in leadership roles, and anyone who represents the church in an official capacity.

1. Public Statements

1.1 Official Statements:

- Only authorized personnel (e.g., the senior pastor, communications director) may make public statements on behalf of the church on social media or other platforms.
- Official statements must reflect the church's mission, values, and doctrine and be approved by the senior pastor or communications director.

1.2 Personal Opinions:

- Staff members may express personal opinions but should include a disclaimer somewhere in their post or on their page such as: "The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of Bell City Church." This does not apply to the Senior Pastor as his views should align with the direction of Bell City Church.
- Avoid making statements that could be interpreted as representing the church unless explicitly authorized.

1.3 Sensitive Topics:

- Refrain from publicly debating sensitive topics (e.g., politics, theology) in a way that might compromise the church's unity or mission.

1.4 Addressing Disagreements:

- Social media must not be used to publicly call out, admonish, or reprimand individuals, including congregants, staff, or volunteers.

- Disagreements or conflicts should be handled privately, with grace, and preferably in person or through appropriate church channels.
-

2. Use of Social Media by Staff Members

2.1 Personal Accounts:

- Staff members are encouraged to use personal accounts responsibly and in a way that upholds the church's values.
- Avoid sharing confidential church matters (e.g., pastoral care issues, financial discussions) on personal accounts.

2.2 Professional Conduct:

- Do not post content that could harm the church's reputation, including offensive language, discriminatory remarks, drug usage, and/or images that conflict with the church's values.
- Maintain a tone of respect and kindness in all interactions.

2.3 Social Media for Ministry Purposes:

- Ministry-related social media pages should be approved and monitored by the communications director or Senior Pastor.
 - Ministry pages must not share private information.
-

3. Staff Email Usage

3.1 Official Use Only:

- Church-provided email accounts are to be used exclusively for official church business.
- Personal or non-work-related use of church email accounts is prohibited. (e.g. non-church related newsletters or subscriptions)

3.2 Security:

- Do not share login credentials for church email or social media accounts.
 - Report any suspected breach of email or social media accounts immediately to church leadership or the designated IT representative.
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4. Accountability and Social Promise

We share a responsibility to protect our church culture by committing to the following Social Promise. All staff, ministry leaders and Board members agree to:

4.1 Communication:

- Show honor, dignity, and respect in all communication.
- Attempt to speak in a tone that is patient, polite, and is not intentionally antagonistic
- Bring clarity to communication by sharing information, asking questions, being open to change, and responding with understanding instead of sarcasm.

4.2 Gossip:

- Eliminate gossip. Gossip is defined as saying something negative about someone to someone else who is not part of the problem or solution.

5. Resolving Disagreements

When a disagreement occurs, follow these steps:

Step 1: Approach the person one-on-one, always assuming the best.

- Example: "You probably didn't mean to offend me, but..."

Step 2: Bring a fellow ministry leader to address the person if the issue persists.

- Example: "I tried to talk to them myself, but the issue wasn't resolved."

Step 3: Involve a staff member, senior pastor, or board member to mediate a conversation if the issue remains unresolved.

- Example: "I brought someone with me, but the issue still wasn't resolved."

Step 4: If no resolution is possible, church leadership may decide to separate one or both parties from the church or staff.

- Example: "One or both of us might not be a good fit for this organization anymore."

6. Escalating Serious Issues

The following concerns should bypass the above process and be reported directly to Senior Leadership:

- Harassment
- Abuse
- Discrimination
- Theft

7. Consequences of Policy Violations

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment (if employed) or termination of volunteer role.

Acknowledgment and Review

Staff members must review and sign this policy annually. Regular updates may be made to address new challenges or platforms.

Date Approved:

Reviewed By:

Weapons Usage Policy

Purpose

This policy is established to ensure the safety and security of all members and visitors of the church by regulating the presence of firearms on church premises.

Per Ohio **Rev. Code § 2923.126(B)**, even individuals with concealed carry permits may not carry a concealed handgun onto the premises of any church, synagogue, mosque or another place of worship, unless the place of worship posts or permits otherwise. Therefore, if not posted on the property or in a bulletin, a permittee would need to inquire with the leadership of the place of worship for permission to carry.

Authorized Firearm Carriers

1. **General Congregation Members:** General members of the congregation regardless of having a valid state-issued permit/license to carry a concealed firearm must first obtain the permission of church leadership by submitting the request in writing. If permission is granted, the member may carry a concealed firearm on church premises at any time.
2. The Board reserves the right to revoke or refuse the right at any time.
3. No Congregation Member will be allowed to open carry at any time.
4. No Children's Ministry volunteer will be allowed to carry regardless of prior approval.

Prohibition for Unauthorized Carriers

1. **General Congregation and Visitors:** No firearms are allowed on church premises for general members of the congregation and visitors who do not have specific permission from church leadership, regardless of whether individuals have a valid state-issued permit/license to carry a concealed firearm.

Communication

1. **Notification:** Per Ohio **Rev. Code § 2923.126(B)**, even individuals with concealed

carry permits may not carry a concealed handgun onto the premises of any church, synagogue, mosque or another place of worship, unless the place of worship posts or permits otherwise. Therefore, if not posted on the property or in a bulletin, a permittee would need to inquire with the leadership of the place of worship for permission to carry.

As such the church leadership may choose whether to post or not post notices at entrances or other locations, solely at the discretion of the Board of Directors.

2. **Accessibility:** A copy of this policy shall be made readily available to all members and visitors upon request. The policy will also be included in the church's records book.

Enforcement

1. **Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the church leadership, including the Board of Directors and the Security Committee, to enforce this policy. Any individual found in violation of this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

2. **Incident Reporting:** Any incident involving firearms or violations of this policy must be reported immediately to the church leadership. An incident report shall be completed and kept on file with the secretary of the Board of Directors.

Amendments and Revisions

1. **Policy Changes:** The Board of Directors may review and amend this policy from time to time as deemed necessary. Any changes to this policy must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.

This policy is established to ensure the safety and security of all members and visitors of the church by regulating the presence of firearms on church premises.

Authorized Firearm Carriers

1. **General Congregation Members:** General members of the congregation who have a valid state-issued permit/license to carry a concealed firearm on church premises must first obtain the permission of church leadership by submitting the request in writing and including a copy of their permit/license to be kept on file with the Church Security Committee. If permission is granted, the member may carry a concealed firearm on church premises at any time.

Prohibition for Unauthorized Carriers

1. **General Congregation and Visitors:** No firearms are allowed on church premises for general members of the congregation and visitors who do not have specific permission from church leadership, regardless of whether individuals have a valid state-issued permit/license to carry a concealed firearm.

Communication

1. **Notification:** The church leadership shall ensure that this policy is communicated clearly to all members of the congregation, staff, and visitors. This includes posting notices at all entrances and other prominent locations within the church premises.

2. **Accessibility:** A copy of this policy shall be made readily available to all members and visitors upon request. The policy will also be included in the church's records book and on the church's website.

Enforcement

1. **Responsibility:** It is the responsibility of the church leadership, including the Board of Directors and the Security Committee, to enforce this policy. Any individual found in violation of this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately.
2. **Incident Reporting:** Any incidents involving firearms or violations of this policy must be reported immediately to the church leadership. An incident report shall be completed and kept on file by the Security Committee Chair.

Training and Compliance

1. **Firearms Training:** Church Security Committee Members who are authorized to carry firearms must undergo mandatory firearms training. This training should include, but is not limited to:
 - Firearms Safety Rules
 - Weapons handling in and around crowds
 - Movement, platform, and weapons handling principles
 - Situational Awareness
 - Scenario-based Exercises
2. **Documentation:** All training shall be documented and filed with the Security Committee Chair.

Amendments and Revisions

1. **Policy Changes:** The Board of Directors may review and amend this policy from time to time as deemed necessary. Any changes to this policy must be approved by a two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors.
2. **Incorporation of Changes:** Once adopted, any amendments to this policy shall be recorded in the church's records book and shall be considered as automatically incorporated by reference into the church's bylaws.

Legal Compliance

1. **Compliance with Laws:** This policy is designed to comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws regarding the prohibition and regulation of firearms on church premises. The church shall consult with legal counsel to ensure ongoing compliance with these laws.

By adopting this policy, the church aims to create a safe and secure environment for all who enter its premises, fostering a space for worship, fellowship, and community while ensuring that firearms are handled only by authorized and trained individuals.