

DEXTER GOSPEL CHURCH BYLAWS

(Including Doctrinal Statement and Covenant)

ARTICLE 1

NAME AND PURPOSE

SECTION 1.01 – NAME

This congregation of believers shall be known as Dexter Gospel Church. It is incorporated as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of Michigan.

SECTION 1.01 – PURPOSE

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), for such purposes including, but not limited to, the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the establishing and maintaining of religious worship; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and elsewhere.

ARTICLE 2

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT AND COVENANT

SECTION 2.01 – DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

(A) The Bible

- (1) Inspiration – The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which compose the Bible, are the inspired ("God-breathed") Word of God. They were given entirely without error. The inspiration of Scripture is complete, verbal (including each word), and inerrant (without mistakes of any kind). (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21)
- (2) Preservation – Through God's providential care, the Scriptures have been kept free from error, so that believers today have the inerrant Word of God (Psalm 12:6-7; Matthew 24:35; I Peter 1:25; Isaiah 40:8). The preferred text of the Old Testament is the Masoretic Text. The preferred text of the New Testament is the Textus Receptus, based on the Majority Text, and also known as the Ecclesiastical Text. The best translation in English from this textual base is the Authorized King James Version. We do not hold to a second inspiration of any translation, including the King James Version, nor do we believe that the King James Version is superior to the Textus Receptus, from which it came. We believe that the King James Version should be exclusively used in English.
- (3) Authority – The Bible is the believer's sole guide for faith and practice. Its teachings are for all ages, and apply to all men. While it must be interpreted as a whole (not taking parts out of context or without regard for the clarification given by other passages) (II Peter 1:20), every part of it is profitable for the believer for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (II Timothy 3:16).

(B) God

- (1) The Nature of God
 - (a) Spirit – God is spirit (not physically existing in any one place) (John 4:24).
 - (b) Personality – God possesses the characteristics of a person, including intelligence, will,

emotions, individuality, and self-consciousness. He is not merely an impersonal force. (Exodus 3:14; Genesis 6:6; Deuteronomy 6:15; Revelation 3:19)

(c) Unity – God is one entity (not a multiplicity of separate gods) (Deuteronomy 6:4).

(d) Trinity – God exists in three persons (I John 5:7). He is not merely three individuals, nor is He one individual displaying three aspects of His being. He is a Trinity, sometimes referred to as a "Tri-unity."

(2) The Attributes of God

(a) Natural Attributes – These are those attributes that God alone possesses in Himself.

(i) Omnipotent – God is all-powerful (Genesis 1; 18:14; Matthew 19:26).

(ii) Omniscient – God knows (and understands) everything (Romans 11:33; I John 3:20).

(iii) Omnipresent – God is present everywhere (Jeremiah 23:24).

(iv) Eternal – God has always existed and will always exist (Habakkuk 1:12; Psalm 90:2; Revelation 1:8).

(v) Immutable – God's nature and character do not and cannot change. He is therefore completely dependable (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17).

(b) Moral Attributes. God is love (I John 4:8), and God is holy (I Peter 1:15-16). Both of these attributes must be recognized in the study of God; to emphasize one to the exclusion of the other leads quickly to heresy. Many other attributes could be listed (righteousness, mercy, kindness, justice, etc.), but in a sense, they all flow from these two and are implied by them. The Bible is given to reveal God to man, and this was a purpose of the coming of Christ; all that is revealed of God in Scripture and in the life of Christ cannot be listed here. God's moral attributes are those that believers are called upon to imitate.

(C) Jesus Christ

(1) The Person of Christ

(a) Deity – Jesus Christ is entirely God: He is of one essence with God, has the nature of God, and possesses all of the natural and moral attributes of God (Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:8). In the Trinity, His position is that of the Son of God; however, this is a relationship, not an expression of His having a beginning in time – He is and has been eternally the Son of God (John 1:18; John 1:2).

(b) Humanity – Jesus Christ is entirely man: He possessed a human body and partook completely of the nature of man (although without the sin nature) (John 1:14; Hebrews 2:14; John 4:6; Hebrews 4:15).

(2) The Work of Christ

(a) The Life of Christ – Jesus Christ was born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:22-23; Luke 1:34-35) in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and that He might have a human nature, yet a sinless one. He fulfilled every prophecy related to His first coming and lived a perfectly sinless life so that His death could atone for the sins of others (Hebrews 4:13; Isaiah 53).

(b) The Death of Christ – A primary purpose of Christ's life was His death (Hebrews 2:14). It accomplished several things.

(i) Ransom/Redemption – Christ's death paid the ransom price to redeem mankind (Matthew 20:28; I Peter 1:18-19; I Timothy 2:6).

(ii) Propitiation – Christ's death is that which makes it possible for God to overlook and pardon the sins of believing mankind. His death was sufficient in its value for the propitiation for the sins of every human who has ever lived and will ever live (Romans 3:25; I John 2:2).

(iii) Reconciliation – Christ's death reconciles man to God, removing the enmity between God and man (Romans 5:10). One may say that God is propitiated and the sinner is reconciled (II Corinthians 5:18-20).

- (iv) Substitution – Christ's death made Him the substitute for mankind; He received the sin of man upon Himself so that man need not bear it. His life was given in exchange for ours (because of His sinless life, He did not need to die – Romans 5:12). (Isaiah 53:6; I Peter 2:24; II Corinthians 5:21)
- (v) Christ's death defeated Satan (Hebrews 2:14)
- (vi) All of the benefits of salvation and even salvation itself rest upon Christ's death on the cross. These benefits will be discussed in the section on salvation.
- (c) The Resurrection of Christ – Jesus Christ literally and physically rose from the dead on the third day following His crucifixion (I Corinthians 15:20; Mark 16:6; Luke 24:5-7, 39, 46). His resurrection is absolutely critical to Christianity, for this demonstrated Christ's victory over sin and death and God's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice. Without the resurrection, there can be no gospel and no Christian faith (I Corinthians 15). The resurrection of Christ assures several truths.
 - (i) Assurances for the believer
 - ((a)) Assurance of justification (Romans 4:25)
 - ((b)) Assurance of the intercessory work of Christ as High Priest in heaven (Romans 8:24; Hebrews 7:23-28)
 - ((c)) Assurance of his own resurrection and immortality (I Thessalonians 4:14; II Corinthians 4:14)
 - (ii) Assurances for all mankind
 - ((a)) Assurance of a resurrection (I Corinthians 15:22; note that this is a physical resurrection, not a spiritual one – this does not guarantee salvation to all, but merely resurrection to all, as in Revelation 20:12-13.)
 - ((b)) Assurance of a judgment (Acts 17:31)
- (d) The Ascension and Exaltation of Christ – Jesus Christ physically departed the earth to reside in heaven (Acts 1:9-11) and has been exalted above all others (Philippians 2:9; Ephesians 1:20-21). He has gone to prepare a place for believers (John 14:2) and to intercede on their behalf (Hebrews 9:24; 4:14-16). This assures the believer of access to God (Hebrews 4:14-16). Christ now awaits the restitution of all things (Acts 3:20-21).

(D) The Holy Spirit

- (1) The Nature of the Holy Spirit
 - (a) The Personality of the Holy Spirit – His names, characteristics, and actions show that He possesses personality – He is not simply an impersonal force (John 14:16; 16:7; I Corinthians 2:10-11; Revelation 2:7; Romans 8:26; Ephesians 4:30).
 - (b) The Deity of the Holy Spirit – The Holy Spirit is entirely God; He is of one essence with God, has the nature of God, and possesses all the natural and moral attributes of God (Acts 5:3-4; Hebrews 9:14; Psalm 139:7-10; I Corinthians 2:10-11). He is the third member of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19).
- (2) The Work of the Holy Spirit
 - (a) The work of the Holy Spirit in the world
 - (i) The universe as a whole – He was involved in creation (Psalm 33:6; Job 33:4; Genesis 1:3).
 - (ii) Humanity as a whole – He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11). Through this activity, He bears witness to the world of its need of salvation (Acts 5:32).
 - (b) The work of the Holy Spirit in believers
 - (i) He regenerates the believer (He is the One through Whom the believer is born again) (John 3:3-5; Titus 3:5).

- (ii) He indwells the believer (I Corinthians 3:16; 6:19; Romans 8:9). This indwelling takes place at the point of salvation – no one who does not possess the Spirit is truly saved (Romans 8:9).
- (iii) He seals the believer when he is saved (Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30).
- (iv) He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13).
- (v) He fills the believer (Ephesians 5:18). This does not necessarily take place at salvation, and can be lost and regained – it is thus different from the indwelling of the Spirit. This is revealed in the fact that believers are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).
- (vi) He empowers the believer for life and service (Galatians 5: 16-25).
- (vii) He gives gifts for ministry in the church (I Corinthians 12:4-31). All believers are gifted so that they can serve in the church. Some of these gifts pertained solely to the founding of the church and are no longer in operation today. These would include apostleship, tongues, and prophecy. These gifts are no longer necessary to the church because of the completion of the canon of Scripture. Apostleship ended even in New Testament times, for James was never replaced within the twelve apostles. Tongues were a sign to the unbelieving Jews (I Corinthians 14:22; Acts 2:16-18; Joel 2:28-29), and their legitimate use appears to have ended. Prophecy was used in the early church prior to the completion of the New Testament, but accurate predictive prophecy apparently ended with the giving of the book of Revelation. Thus, the modern charismatic movement with its emphasis on experience, extra-biblical revelation, and speaking in tongues is unscriptural.
- (c) The work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the Scriptures
 - (i) He is the author of Scripture (II Peter 1:20-21).
 - (ii) He is the interpreter of Scripture (I Corinthians 2:9-14).

(E) Angels

- (1) The Nature of Angels
 - (a) They are created beings (Colossians 1:16; Nehemiah 9:6).
 - (b) They are spiritual beings (Hebrews 1:13-14).
 - (c) They are powerful beings (II Peter 2:11).
 - (d) They are ranked beings (Jude 1:9; Colossians 1:16).
 - (e) They are numerous beings (Hebrews 12:22).
- (2) The Work of Angels
 - (a) Angels serve in worship in heaven (Isaiah 6: Revelation 5:11-12).
 - (b) Angels serve on earth (Psalm 91:11; I Timothy 5:21; I Corinthians 4:9; Matthew 25:31; Matthew 13:39-42; all examples of angels carrying out the work of God on earth, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament).
- (3) The Fallen Angels
 - (a) Some angels fell with Satan, apparently between the time of Genesis 1:31 and the time of Genesis 3:1. (See also Jude 1:6; II Peter 2:4.)
 - (b) The sin of these angels was apparently pride and disobedience (Jude 1:6; Ezekiel 28).
 - (c) Many are being held to await judgment (Jude 1:6)
 - (d) Others remain on earth doing the work of Satan and opposing the work of God (see all scriptural examples of demons and unclean spirits).
 - (e) Satan is a fallen angel (Ezekiel 28:12-19).
 - (i) He is the believer's adversary (I Peter 5:8).
 - (ii) He is the believer's accuser (Job 1:9-11; Revelation 12:9-10).
 - (iii) He is the originator of lies (John 8:44).

- (iv) He is the attacker of believers (Ephesians 6:12,16).
- (v) He has the support of other fallen angels not being held for judgment (Revelation 12:7-9).
- (vi) He was defeated at the cross, and that defeat will be culminated in the future (Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:10).
- (f) The fallen angels will be judged eternally (Matthew 25:41).

(F) Man

(1) The Created State of Man

- (a) Man was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27).
 - (i) This sets man apart from all animals, for none of them are given this distinction.
 - (ii) This likeness is a moral, inward likeness rather than a physical likeness – God is spirit, not flesh.
 - (iii) This creation in the image of God was not entirely lost in the fall; capital punishment is instituted because of the image of God in man (Genesis 9:6).
- (b) Man was created in innocence and without a sin nature (Genesis 1:31).

(2) The Fall of Man (Genesis 3)

- (a) The nature of the fall
 - (i) Adam sinned deliberately; it was not accidental (I Timothy 2:14).
 - (ii) It was instigated by Satan – before the fall, man had no natural inclination to sin (Genesis 3).
 - (iii) It was a deliberate act of disobedience to the direct command of God; it was believing what Satan said rather than what God said. This is the nature of all sin – unbelief (Romans 14:23).
- (b) The results of the fall on mankind
 - (i) All men are sinners before God (Romans 3:9, 23; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 5:12, 16, 19).
 - (ii) The whole unsaved world is under condemnation (John 3:18).
 - (iii) Unsaved men are regarded as the children of Satan, not of God (John 8:44).
 - (iv) The entire nature of man has been damaged by sin (Ephesians 4:18; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Titus 1:15; II Corinthians 7:5; Romans 7:18).

(G) Salvation

- (1) The Provision for Salvation – God provided the means of salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ (Romans 3:24; 4:24-25; 5:9; II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 9:22). It is only by trusting Christ that any person can be saved (Acts 4:12; John 14:6); without Him, every person is already under the condemnation of God (John 3:18; Romans 1:18).
- (2) The Means of Receiving Salvation – Salvation is received by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:4-6).
 - (a) It is not through any work which man can do (including baptism or church membership).
 - (b) It is entirely the work of God.
 - (c) It is received by man through faith. This faith is attained through the hearing of the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Thus, no one can be saved simply through his sincerity, and no one can go to heaven through works. Faith comes from the Word of God, and only by trusting Christ as He is revealed in the Bible can a person be saved.
- (3) What Happens When a Person Trusts Christ for Salvation. (This list is not exhaustive, but represents clear scriptural teaching on what God does for a person when He saves him.)
 - (a) Regeneration (new birth) – When a person trusts Christ as Savior, he is "born again" (John 1:13; 3:3-7; 5:21, 24; Ephesians 2:1; II Corinthians 5:17; Titus 3:5). When he is born again, he receives new life. He is created anew, and thus has a new nature (although the old is not yet eliminated).

- (b) Justification – Justification is that act of God whereby He declares the sinner righteous based on the work of Jesus Christ (Romans 3:23-26; 4:2-8). It places man in a relationship with God and brings him into right standing with God. It gives forgiveness of sin and removes its guilt and punishment. It takes place at the moment of salvation.
- (c) Adoption – Through this act of God at salvation, a believer becomes a full-fledged adult son of God with all of the rights and responsibilities of the family of God. (Galatians 4:3-7).
- (d) Sanctification – Sanctification is separation from evil and separation to God. This work of God in the life of the believer has a three-fold sense. Positionally, the believer is sanctified at the moment of salvation (I Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10, 14). The believer is responsible to sanctify himself throughout this life on earth, progressively becoming more like Christ (I Thessalonians 4:3; II Peter 3:18) (see also the material on separation in point 3 under Other Doctrines). Final sanctification will take place either at death or at the Rapture, when the sin nature is eliminated completely (I Corinthians 15:42-54; I John 3:2).
- (e) Eternal Security – Once a person is saved, he is kept by God's power and remains secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 38-39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:4-5).

(H) The Church

- (1) The Definition of the Church – The church is a called out assembly of believers, banded together for work, worship, fellowship, and observation of the ordinances. The church is distinct both from Israel and the Kingdom, though there are overlaps between them. There are two distinct ideas of the church in the New Testament.
 - (a) The local church – This term refers to the believers in any given location. This is the meaning of most of the uses of the word "church" in the New Testament. The local church is autonomous. No ecclesiastical body can dictate the policies of this church. It has one higher authority than itself, that is Jesus Christ her Lord (Acts 5:29; 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1, 4; I Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; I Peter 5:1-4).
 - (b) The universal church ("body of Christ") – This term refers to all believers in this present age. Although it is referred to in Scripture (e.g. Ephesians 1:22-23), it is not emphasized.
- (2) The Beginning of the Church – The church began at Pentecost with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers of this age (Ephesians 1:22-23; I Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:1-47).
- (3) The Membership of the Church
 - (a) Church members must be saved (Acts 2:47).
 - (b) Church members must be scripturally baptized (Acts 2:38-41).
 - (c) Church members must practice the apostles' doctrine (Acts 2:42).
- (4) The Ordinances of the Church – The ordinances of the church are determined by the practice and command of Christ, by the practice of the apostles, and by the practice of the early church. They are also both representative of salvation.
 - (a) Baptism (Matthew 28:19-20) – Baptism is to follow salvation (it is not part of salvation), and it is to be done by immersion (Acts 8:36-38).
 - (b) The Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:17-34).
- (5) The Officers of the Church – There are two clearly defined offices in the local church, each with clearly listed qualifications. There is no New Testament justification for a hierarchy of church officials outside of the local church – church authority stops at the local level.
 - (a) Pastor/bishop/elder – These three terms refer to the same office, each describing different aspects of that office (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-4).
 - (b) Deacon (I Timothy 3:8-13).
- (6) The Work of the Church
 - (a) Glorify God (Ephesians 3:10, 21)

- (b) Evangelize the world (Matthew 28:19-20)
- (c) Edify believers (Ephesians 4:11-15)
- (d) Discipline erring believers – Church discipline works through the correction or expulsion of the one who is in error. Its object is always restoration, not simple punishment, revenge, or vindictiveness. Three reasons are given in Scripture for church discipline.
 - (i) Private offenses between individuals (Matthew 18:15-17)
 - (ii) Immorality (I Corinthians 5:1-13)
 - (iii) Heresy or false doctrine (Romans 16:17; II Thessalonians 3:6-12; Titus 3:10)

(I) Eschatology (last things/end times)

- (1) The Rapture: the return of Jesus Christ for His church
 - (a) The Rapture is imminent. It could happen at any time; there are no prophetic events placed between the closing of the canon of Scripture and the Rapture (I Thessalonians 4:15; Revelation 22:7, 12). It should therefore precede the beginning of both the Millennial Kingdom and the Tribulation.
 - (b) The Rapture will take up all believers of this age, both those dead and those alive (I Thessalonians 5:13-17).
 - (c) At the Rapture, believers will receive new bodies, made in the likeness of Christ's (I Corinthians 15:31-54).
- (2) The Tribulation (Revelation 6-18) – After the Rapture, the earth will enter into a time of unparalleled judgment from God. Many will be saved, and many others will reject Christ completely. This time of judgment will last for seven years, beginning with the signing of a peace treaty (probably with Israel) and ending with the return of Christ with His saints (in contrast to the Rapture in which He returns for His saints) (Daniel 9:27; Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5; II Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 19:11-21).
- (3) The Millennial Kingdom – In literal fulfillment of the many Old Testament promises to Israel of a literal, physical, earthly kingdom, Christ will return to earth with His saints at the end of the Tribulation and establish His kingdom. Satan will be bound for the duration of this kingdom. This kingdom will endure for a period of one thousand years, and those who have trusted Christ will reign with Him. (Revelation 20:1-6)
- (4) The Final Battle – At the end of the thousand year reign of Christ, Satan will once more be loosed. He will gather together all who reject Christ and bring them to war against Him. Satan will be defeated, and all of his armies with him. He will then be cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:7-10)
- (5) The Great White Throne Judgment – All of the unsaved of all time will be judged based on their works and cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Revelation 20:11-15).
- (6) The New Heaven and New Earth – After the Great White Throne Judgment, God will create a new heaven and a new earth, the former having passed away (Revelation 20:1). The saved will live forever in the presence of God (Revelation 21: 1 - 22:5).
- (7) The Eternal State
 - (a) Bodily resurrection – All men will be bodily resurrected, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13).
 - (b) The souls of the saved – The souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6).

- (c) The souls of the unsaved – The souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment and torment (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:11-15).

(J) Other Doctrines (matters not specifically dealt with above)

- (1) Creation and the Flood – God created the universe and everything in it in six literal, 24-hour days about six thousand years ago (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11). The fall of man resulted in the curse being placed on the earth, which explains the existence of death, disease, and every other aspect of imperfection in creation (Genesis 3). In the days of Noah, God destroyed all air-breathing land animals and humans that were not on the ark through a global, catastrophic flood (Genesis 6-9). This flood produced most of the fossils evident today, and its effects include many of the geological features of the earth. Taking the clear teaching of Scripture literally prohibits belief in theistic evolution, the Day-Age Theory, the Gap Theory, and Progressive Creationism.
- (2) Dispensationalism – Scriptures interpreted in their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life that define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these dispensations (law, church, and kingdom) are revealed in detail in Scripture. (I Corinthians 9:17; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; 3:2-10; Revelation 20:2-6)
- (3) Separation – It is the responsibility of both the believer and of the church to be separate from both the world and from false doctrine. This separation begins with the heart and mind, but is often expressed through outward practices.
 - (a) Ecclesiastical separation (separation of the church from those who hold or practice wrong doctrine) (II Corinthians 6:14-17; II John 1:9-11; Romans 16:17; II Thessalonians 3:6-12; Titus 3:10) – This especially applies to the fundamentals of the faith, those doctrines essential to salvation.
 - (b) Personal separation (I John 2:15-17; II John 1:9-11) – Personal separation includes having convictions about our own behavior. These convictions (sometimes called standards) should be beliefs based on scriptural principles (not necessarily on specific commands or prohibitions). They should be held concerning practices that are worldly in that they are in opposition to the principles expressed in the Word of God. Although standards are generally based on scriptural principles rather than commands, this does not necessarily make them merely matters of preference. We oppose using music which glorifies worldly thought and practice (music in the church in particular ought to edify the believer, not draw him closer to the world – Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16), gambling (Proverbs 1:19), and clothing which is immodest or indistinct (Deuteronomy 22:5; I Timothy 2:9). Because these are applications of principles to practices, rather than simple obedience to clear commands, there is often dispute over the exact places to draw lines. While maintaining our own integrity and opposing worldliness in our lives, we must remember to be humble and gracious to other believers. (Ephesians 4:1-3; II Timothy 2:24-26) Within the operation of the local church, in general, the higher standard should be upheld in order to prevent dispute, offense, or stumbling. (Romans 14-15)
- (4) Human Sexuality – God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. Any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, or pornography is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance.

- (Genesis 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)
- (5) Marriage – The only scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; I Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23).
 - (6) Divorce and Remarriage – God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-17), and thus divorce should never be encouraged for any reason. Divorce and remarriage is considered adultery except on the grounds of fornication (Matthew 19:3-12). Those who have been divorced or divorced and remarried may serve in the church and be used greatly of God, but they may not hold the offices of pastor or deacon (I Timothy 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).
 - (7) Abortion and Euthanasia – Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus, we oppose both abortion and euthanasia. Human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,15; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44; Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)
 - (8) Spheres of Authority – God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 2:13-14)
 - (9) Lawsuits Between Believers – Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. The church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. However, a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. (I Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

SECTION 2.02 – COVENANT

God helping us, we purpose to love the Lord our God with all our hearts, souls, strength, and minds, and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Luke 10:27).

Therefore, as we seek to follow Christ (John 10:27):

We will endeavor to walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil (Ephesians 5: 15-16); to walk not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful (Psalm 1:1); to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul (I Peter 2:11); to love not the world which passes away (I John 2:15-17); and to put away from us all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice (Ephesians 4:31)

We will endeavor to continue in brotherly love (Hebrews 13:1); to pray for one another (James 5:16); to be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven us (Ephesians 4: 32); to do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially other believers (Galatians 6:10); and to remember them which have the rule over us, who speak unto us the Word of God (Hebrews 13:7).

We will endeavor to grow in the Lord by studying (II Timothy 2:15) and searching the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11); to give of our means to the work of the Lord as God has prospered us (I Corinthians 16:2), not grudgingly or of necessity, but cheerfully (II Corinthians 9:7); to be faithful in worshiping and serving God together (Hebrews 10:25); and to heed the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), seeking the salvation of our families, acquaintances, and all others (II Peter 3:9).

We will endeavor to maintain a Christian environment in our homes by bringing up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4) and teaching them daily from the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 11:18-19).

And, when we remove from this place, we will endeavor, as soon as possible, to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word (Hebrews 10:25).

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 3.01 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Any person, who professes faith in Jesus Christ and His shed blood, giving evidence of a change of heart by life and testament and adopts the Doctrinal Statement and Covenant of the church, may upon recommendation by the board of deacons be received into membership by a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- (A) By baptism (immersion) at this local church following a profession of faith as a believer in Christ Jesus as personal Savior;
- (B) By letter of transfer from another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
- (C) By testimony of faith, having been baptized by immersion in another Bible-believing church of like faith and practice; or
- (D) By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon majority vote of the voting members after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant).

SECTION 3.02 – PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church may only exercise voting privileges in those areas that are defined and limited by these Bylaws. Members may not vote to initiate any church action, except as provided in Sections 6.03 and 6.04.

(B) This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and the direction of the pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the board of deacons. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be

determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The pastor shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The board of deacons shall give counsel and assistance to the pastor as requested by him.

(C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may be treated as a trespasser at the discretion of the pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the board of deacons).

(D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church and committee meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date. Minutes pertaining to personnel matters and church discipline are exempt from this provision and are not subject to inspection or copy.

- (1) A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church.
- (2) The church may impose a reasonable charge, including the costs of labor and material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

(E) A member may attend any committee or board of deacons meeting except those pertaining to matters of personnel or church discipline, but may only have input at the discretion of the chairman.

SECTION 3.03 – DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER

(A) There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the pastor and the board of deacons. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Doctrinal Statement and violations of the Covenant. If the pastor or a deacon is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the discipline committee. The pastor and deacons shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.

(B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders the spiritual growth and testimony of an individual in the local church or the body as a whole, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.

(C) If reconciliation is not reached, one or two other members, including a deacon and/or pastor, are to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.

(D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the discipline committee, as the church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.

(E) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B), (C), and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon a majority vote of the voting members present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action. The member subject to disciplinary action is not entitled to vote on his/her own discipline.

(F) No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless a reasonable effort has been made to follow the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C).

(G) If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, members of the church should have no social contact with him, and any contact from that point forward (except by family members) must be for the sake of restoration. Persons placed under church discipline must immediately return any property belonging to the church.

(H) The procedures provided in this section are based on Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:1-13; II Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; I Thessalonians 5:14; II Thessalonians 3:6, 10-15; I Timothy 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

SECTION 3.04 – TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.03 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

SECTION 3.05 – AUTOMATIC TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

(A) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastor and board of deacons.

(B) No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.

(C) The membership of an individual will automatically terminate upon his or her death.

(D) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the pastor and board of deacons.

(E) This section shall be independent of the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in Section 3.03.

SECTION 3.06 – AFFILIATED CO-LABORER

Those desiring fellowship, accountability, and opportunities for service with this assembly on a temporary basis but who maintain active membership in a like body of believers elsewhere, may be granted affiliated co-laborer status with this church. The affiliated co-laborer may be eligible to serve in certain capacities determined by the pastor and board of deacons, and may attend fellowship events granted for members. In no way, however, does this affiliation grant membership or the rights of membership to the individual(s) so granted. Affiliated co-laborers shall not be entitled to hold any office, vote in or have any say in any church matter, and shall not be counted for quorum purposes. A person wishing to become an affiliated

co-laborer with this assembly must request so of the pastor, who will, in consultation with the board of deacons if necessary, decide if affiliated co-laborer status may be granted to the individual. If the pastor so determines, the person may be granted such upon a majority vote of the church membership at any public service or church administration meeting.

ARTICLE 4 CHURCH GOVERNMENT

SECTION 4.01 – GOVERNMENT

The government of this church under the headship of Christ and the leadership of the Holy Spirit is vested in its voting membership and shall conform to the congregational form of church government, whose vote shall be final as provided in other articles of the Bylaws. By action of the church in electing its officers, the immediate direction of the church shall be committed to those officers as provided in the Bylaws. No ecclesiastical body can dictate the policies of this church.

SECTION 4.02 – CHURCH OFFICERS

The church officers are pastor, deacon, church clerk, financial secretary and church treasurer. One person may hold two or more offices, except that the church treasurer and financial secretary may not be the same person, and the pastor may not hold any other office. Officers of the church (other than pastor, Section 4.06) must be elected by a majority of the present, voting members at a regular church administration meeting. The pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to a majority confirmation vote by present, voting church members at any regular or special church administrative meeting.

SECTION 4.03 – DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the pastor shall serve as president of the corporation; the church clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation; the church treasurer shall serve as treasurer of the corporation; and the chairman of the board of deacons shall serve as vice president of the corporation.

SECTION 4.04 – ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICE

(A) The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Doctrinal Statement set forth in Article 2. All church officers, upon request of the pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Doctrinal Statement.

(B) Only men 21 years of age or older shall be eligible to hold the office of pastor or deacon. A qualified individual must be a member for at least one year before holding the office of deacon.

(C) All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the pastor in order for them to commence or continue in their offices. If an office holder is not approved by the pastor, the congregation may override the pastor's decision by a 75% majority of the voting members present at that business meeting.

(D) Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position. Affiliated co-laborers with this ministry are not eligible for such election or appointment.

SECTION 4.05 – TERMS OF OFFICE

(A) The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of 60 days notice, or less by mutual consent. The severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular or special church administration meeting by following the procedures outlined in Section 6.04, provided notice of the meeting shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to the meeting. A two-thirds majority of the voting members present and voting shall be required to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01(D).

(B) The term of service for all offices and positions in the church, except the pastor and deacons, shall be one year, at the expiration of which the officers may be re-elected or re-appointed. The deacons shall serve for a term of two years arranged so as to expire alternately.

(C) A vacancy occurring in any office or board, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting by a majority vote of voting members present.

(D) All elected and appointed officers shall serve in their respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.

(E) Members of the board of deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other board members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.

SECTION 4.06 – CALLING A PASTOR

Upon the resignation, death or dismissal of the pastor, the church shall seek a candidate who subscribes to the Doctrinal Statement, Covenant, and Bylaws of this church, and whose life aligns with the qualifications of a pastor as described in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The church shall abide by the following guidelines for calling a pastor:

(A) The board of deacons shall select a pulpit committee to consist of at least two deacons and at least three other church members. The congregation must approve the committee by a simple majority of the voting members present. The pulpit committee shall interview potential candidates and will only consider men who completely subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement and Covenant contained herein;

(B) Prior to being announced to the congregation as a formal candidate, any man being considered for pastoral candidate must preach at least one Sunday service. Thereafter, upon a majority vote of the board of deacons, the pulpit committee may formally announce the candidate to the church, after which the candidate must preach at least two regularly scheduled services and be available for a church-wide question/answer time prior to being voted upon by the congregation;

(C) Notice from the pulpit must be given two consecutive Sundays prior to a formal candidate's preaching services, and two consecutive Sundays prior to the church congregational vote;

(D) The candidate must be elected as pastor by a 75% majority vote of voting members present. The pulpit committee will only present for consideration to the church one candidate at a time, and an up or down vote must be cast prior to consideration of other potential candidates.

SECTION 4.07 – ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of January at the annual church business meeting. The pastor and board of deacons, with congregational input, shall serve as a nominating committee for all general elections.

SECTION 4.08 – PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF STAFF

(A) Subject to congregational budgetary approval, and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor may hire associates and assistants to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities.

(B) All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor who has the sole authority to dismiss the same.

(C) No member of the pastoral staff, employee, or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Doctrinal Statement.

(D) Employment decisions shall be handled by the pastor in consultation with the board of deacons.

SECTION 4.09 – INTERIM PASTOR

(A) In the event the position of pastor becomes vacant for any reason, the board of deacons has the responsibility and authority, taking into consideration the then current financial resources of the church and the expected length of the vacancy, to select an interim pastor until the position of pastor is again filled. The interim pastor shall be selected using the same criteria that would be used in selecting a pastor, such as adherence to the Doctrinal Statement.

(B) The interim pastor shall have all the responsibilities and authorities of the pastor. However, since this position is of limited duration, any policy or operational changes in the church (including, but not limited to, hiring and firing decisions) shall require the prior approval of a majority of the board of deacons.

ARTICLE 5 DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS

SECTION 5.01 – THE PASTOR

(A) The pastor of this church is never to be looked upon as a hired man. Neither is he to be a lord over God's heritage, but he is to shepherd and feed the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit has made him an overseer. The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall oversee the administration of the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership. He shall perform such other duties as generally appertain to such a position. He shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry God has given him.

(B) All meetings for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated meetings, shall be under the control of the pastor, who shall be able to determine the appropriateness of practices as well as persons permitted to use the church property.

(C) The pastor shall be responsible to fill the pulpit for each regularly scheduled church service as well as any special services. In the event of his absence, he (or the chairman of the board of deacons in the case of a vacancy in the office of pastor or where the pastor is ill and unable to perform his duties) shall be responsible to invite speakers from within the membership or outside the church to preach in a manner consistent with the beliefs articulated in the Doctrinal Statement.

(D) The pastor shall be responsible, in coordination with the board of deacons, to establish mandatory safety and security procedures for all ministries and programs.

(E) The pastor shall be an ex-officio, voting member of the board of deacons and all committees of the church.

SECTION 5.02 – THE BOARD OF DEACONS

(A) Meetings of the board of deacons shall be called by the pastor as the need arises. Should the pastorate become vacant the meetings shall be called by the chairman of the board. The board of deacons shall assist the pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the church services, and in performing all other work of the church. The board of deacons is responsible for making preparations to observe church ordinances and shall consider applications for church membership and affiliated co-laborers. They shall disburse benevolence funds in cooperation with the pastor and shall assist him in visitation and all other evangelistic efforts of the church. The board of deacons shall assist the pastor in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries. If the pastor is unavailable or the office of pastor is vacant, the board of deacons shall provide the pulpit supply and choose a moderator for church meetings. Upon the death, resignation, or dismissal of the pastor, the board of deacons shall select a pulpit committee (Section 4.06(A)).

(B) Following the annual church administration meeting, the board of deacons shall assemble and elect, from their own number, a chairman, a vice chairman, and a secretary.

(C) The pastor and the board of deacons shall constitute the board of directors of the corporation. The board of directors shall exercise only the following specific powers, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a duly called church administration meeting:

- (1) To purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;
- (2) To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, lease, assign, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, and to mortgage, pledge, or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages, or pledges; and
- (3) To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation. In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, all assets will be distributed among the church's missionaries.
- (4) All powers of the directors shall be compatible with the laws of the state of Michigan.

SECTION 5.03 – CHURCH CLERK

The church clerk shall:

(A) Certify and retain at the office of the church, the original Bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alterations to the Bylaws, minutes of meetings, the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination and license; and deliver such documents to successor upon leaving office;

(B) Keep minutes of all church administration and board of deacons meetings (unless a separate secretary of the board of deacons has been elected or appointed), including the time and place of holding, the notice given, and the names of those present (unless a church-wide meeting), and an accurate record of all church business approved at each meeting. A copy of these minutes shall be kept as a permanent record of the church and shall be made available at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law and pursuant to these Bylaws (Section 3.02(D)).

(C) Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law; see that reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed;

(D) See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the chairman of the board of deacons.);

(E) Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year;

(F) Serve as the secretary of the corporation and be a member in good standing.

SECTION 5.04 – FINANCIAL SECRETARY

(A) The financial secretary shall oversee the collection, counting, and depositing of church funds. At least two church members designated by the board of deacons shall be present when funds (cash and checks) are being counted.

(B) As soon as possible after the deposit amount has been determined and giver information finalized, the funds shall be placed in the designated financial institution's night depository. A copy of the deposit form shall be forwarded to the treasurer.

(C) Giver information shall be used to update individual member giving records. As soon as practicable after January 1, but no later than January 31, the financial secretary will prepare and distribute, on a confidential basis, individual giving records for the previous calendar/fiscal year. Giving records shall be securely maintained in electronic form on a computer located in the church financial office, password protected.

(D) The board of deacons may appoint a member to assume the duties of the financial secretary in the absence of a financial secretary until an election can be held.

SECTION 5.05 – TREASURER

(A) The treasurer shall act as the keeper of church funds, maintaining the church's ledger by entering deposits and writing checks to pay church obligations. All check generation entries shall be done in the presence of another individual authorized by the board of deacons to sign checks. Invoices and other payment media shall be examined by both, and checks matched to the media for accuracy, and the signatures of both shall appear on the checks.

(B) As soon as possible after the end of each month, once the statement from the financial institution has been obtained, the church's account shall be reconciled, accounting for all deposits, paid, and outstanding items (done in the presence of another authorized check-signer).

(C) The treasurer shall prepare a cash flow report for presentation to the board of deacons and congregation at the regular meetings, and shall prepare for the board of deacons a budget showing year to date actual financial activity against budget.

(D) Prior to the beginning of the fiscal year, the treasurer shall prepare a budget for the following fiscal year and present it to the board of deacons for approval.

(E) The board of deacons may appoint a member to assume the duties of the treasurer in the absence of a treasurer until an election can be held.

SECTION 5.06 – ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor, the associate pastor(s) of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

SECTION 5.07 – DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS

(A) The church clerk and treasurer shall prepare written reports of their work for the annual church administration meeting.

(B) All officers shall surrender all records in their possession to the church clerk at the close of their terms of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept on the church premises.

(C) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the Bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term, at the discretion of the pastor under consultation with the board of deacons.

ARTICLE 6 MEETINGS

SECTION 6.01 – MEETINGS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer.

SECTION 6.02 – MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

(A) The annual church administration meeting, for the election of officers and the transaction of other business, shall be held on the fourth Sunday of January. A quorum shall consist of the members present. Public notice of the meeting shall be given from the pulpit for two successive Sundays immediately preceding the meeting.

(B) The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling.

(C) For any meeting under this article, the moderator, at his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be

determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, at his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, at his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.02(C) and treat the person as a trespasser.

SECTION 6.03 – SPECIAL MEETINGS

(A) The pastor (or board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Sections 4.06 and 4.05(A), respectively.

(B) Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

SECTION 6.04 – MOTIONS

(A) Members who desire that a certain motion be made or subject matter be discussed during an annual, quarterly, or special business meeting should file a written recommendation with the pastor and board of deacons at least two weeks prior to the set meeting. The church leadership will then consider the proposal and, after consultation with the member filing the recommendation, proceed according to their conscience and what they understand to be in the best interests of the church.

(B) If the church leadership does not desire to bring the motion before the church, they may attempt to resolve the issue with the member bringing the motion. If the member is unsatisfied with their solution and still desires to have the motion brought before the church, the leadership will have one month to present the motion to the church at a regular or special business meeting.

(C) Any matter brought up by a member at a business meeting may be tabled at the discretion of the moderator to be addressed at a special meeting within one month.

SECTION – 6.05 FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1 and end December 31.

ARTICLE 7 EDUCATIONAL MINISTRIES

SECTION 7.01 – PURPOSE

The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To help fulfill this responsibility of imparting biblical truth and furthering the Great Commission, this church shall establish and maintain an educational program (or Sunday School program) for the purpose of winning souls to Christ, and teaching Bible doctrine, godly worship, and biblical Christian living. To this end, the church shall engage in educational ministries in keeping with the following dictates.

SECTION 7.02 – STAFF MEMBERSHIP

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

SECTION 7.03 – AGREEMENT WITH DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of the church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Doctrinal Statement or who adopts or lives a lifestyle inconsistent with the beliefs and practices of the Doctrinal Statement of this church, whether in or out of the classroom.

SECTION 7.04 – TEACHING

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief that conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

ARTICLE 8 ORDINATION AND LICENSING

SECTION 8.01 – ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS

(A) Any male member who meets the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 may be considered for ordination as a minister of the Gospel. Candidates for ordination must be members of this local assembly or one of its mission churches. No other persons may be ordained by this church.

(B) The candidate must affirm his unequivocal adherence to the Doctrinal Statement set forth in Article 2 of these Bylaws. His doctrinal position on matters not specifically addressed in the Doctrinal Statement must be based on the Scriptures.

SECTION 8.02 – REVOCATION OF ORDINATION

(A) Should a minister ordained by the church be found living a life unbecoming a servant of the Lord or preaching and teaching contrary to the Word of God, the pastor may call a council to hear the charges and the minister's defense.

(B) The reviewing council shall consist of the board of deacons and ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the hearing of the charges and the minister's defense.

(C) Upon a recommendation by a majority vote of the council, the church will then vote whether or not to revoke the minister's ordination certificate.

SECTION 8.03 – LICENSE

(A) Those who desire to prepare for the gospel ministry may be issued a license to preach by this church after the pastor and board of deacons have examined the candidate's divine call and qualifications.

(B) The pastor and the board of deacons may license an associate or assistant pastor as a preliminary step to ordination at a later date.

(C) A license to the ministry shall be considered the equivalent to ordination, but shall be considered probationary in nature. It is expected that the licensed minister will be considered for ordination within four years of being licensed.

ARTICLE 9 INDEMNIFICATION

SECTION 9.01 – ACTIONS SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful. This determination of good-faith intent shall be made (a) by a majority vote of the pastor and deacons who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; or (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested deacons so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion and by a majority vote of the voting members of the church.

SECTION 9.02 – TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the board of deacons in the specific case, so long as the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent agrees to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

SECTION 9.03 – EXTENT OF INDEMNIFICATION

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION 9.04 – INSURANCE

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

ARTICLE 10 COMMITTEES

SECTION 10.01 – STANDING COMMITTEES

The pastor (or the board of deacons if the office of pastor is vacant) shall appoint standing committees as

he deems appropriate and shall designate a chairperson and the membership for each standing committee except when otherwise specifically provided in these Bylaws.

SECTION 10.02 – SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The board of deacons, in its discretion, may create special committees to provide the board with advice and information regarding matters submitted to the committee by the board for consideration.

Nominations for special committee members shall be made by the pastor, board of deacons, or such persons as they shall appoint to make such nominations. The members of the committee shall be chosen by a majority vote of the board of deacons and shall serve solely at the pleasure of the board of deacons. The special committee shall be subject to the control and direction of the board of deacons at all times.

SECTION 10.03 – ACTIONS OF COMMITTEES

Committees, whether standing or special, have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation. Their primary function is to research and recommend. Committees shall make available upon request all records and materials to the pastor or board of deacons, who shall have the right to overrule any plans or decisions made by the committee. Each committee shall have a secretary that keeps minutes of each meeting and shall timely submit the minutes to the pastor and church clerk to be filed with church records. If deemed appropriate by the pastor and board of deacons, the committee secretary, in conjunction with the chairman, shall submit an annual report to the church of the decisions and plans of the committee.

ARTICLE 11 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

SECTION 11.01 – DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. All contributions to these funds shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature and shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the pastor and the board of deacons. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 1.02.

SECTION 11.02 – PAYMENT APPROVAL

(A) Other than emergency events, any unbudgeted financial commitment greater than \$5,000 requires approval by the voting church members.

(B) Any individual payment larger than \$2,500 requires approval by the board of deacons.

SECTION 11.03 – REIMBURSEMENT

When personal funds are used for the purchase of goods and services for the church, reimbursement may be requested by submitting an Accountable Reimbursement form (available in the church office) with all original receipts and documentation. Payment will be made by check.

ARTICLE 12 BINDING ARBITRATION

SECTION 12.01 – SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters between themselves which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bring any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

SECTION 12.02 – NOTICE OF ARBITRATION

In the event of any dispute, claim, question, or disagreement arising out of or relating to these Bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement as befits Christians and in accord with Matthew 18:15-17. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interest not to disgrace the name of Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions, or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 12.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 12.04, below.

SECTION 12.03 – LIMITATIONS ON ARBITRATION DECISIONS

(A) Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline, as outlined under Section 3.03, were followed.

(B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 4.05, 4.08, or 5.07 were followed.

SECTION 12.04 – ARBITRATION PROCEDURES

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and the board of deacons.

ARTICLE 13 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

SECTION 13.01 – PURPOSE

The purpose of this conflict of interest policy is to protect the church'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 church or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state or federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

SECTION 13.02 – DEFINITIONS

(A) Interested person: Any director or officer who has a direct or indirect financial interest.

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

- (1) An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement,
 - (2) A compensation arrangement with the church or with any individual or entity with which the church has a transaction or arrangement, or
 - (3) A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the church is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.
 - (4) 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 board of directors decides that a conflict of interest exists.
- (C) Compensation: Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial.
- (D) Board: The term “board” refers to the board of directors of the church.

SECTION 13.03 – PROCEDURES

(A) 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 considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

(B) After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, including any presentations by and discussion with the interested person, he shall leave the board meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest involving the transaction or arrangement is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists by a majority vote.

- (1) The board shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.
- (2) After exercising due diligence, the board, committee, or disinterested person shall determine whether the church 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.
- (3) If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the board shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the best interests of the church, 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.

(C) If the board has reasonable cause to believe a potentially interested person has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the potentially interested person of the basis for such belief and afford the potentially interested person an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

(D) If, after hearing the potentially interested person’s response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the board determines the potentially interested person has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

SECTION 13.04 – RECORDS OF PROCEEDINGS

(A) The minutes of the board 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 board’s decision as to whether a conflict of interest in fact existed.

(B) The minutes of the board also shall contain 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.

SECTION 13.05 – COMPENSATION

A voting member of the board who receives compensation, directly or indirectly, from the church for services rendered may not vote on matters pertaining to that member's compensation.

ARTICLE 14 AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be revised or amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit for at least two consecutive Sundays, and at least fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

Proposed amendments or changes must be made available to voting members for review at least one week prior to the meeting at which the vote to amend the Bylaws will be taken.

ADOPTION

These Bylaws were adopted by a majority vote of the voting members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These Bylaws supersede any other bylaws, motions, and policies previously adopted by Dexter Gospel Church.

Date

Church Clerk