



**SOJOURN CHURCH J-TOWN**

# **BYLAWS**

---

*GOVERNING DOCUMENTS*

May 2026

## **BYLAWS TABLE OF CONTENTS**

|           |                                          |
|-----------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Name</b>                              |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Affiliation</b>                       |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Beliefs</b>                           |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Elders</b>                            |
| <b>13</b> | <b>Elder Qualification and Selection</b> |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Licensure and Ordination</b>          |
| <b>15</b> | <b>Deacons</b>                           |
| <b>17</b> | <b>Officers</b>                          |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Lead Pastor Hiring and Removal</b>    |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Meetings of the Members</b>           |
| <b>21</b> | <b>Church Membership</b>                 |
| <b>22</b> | <b>Church Discipline</b>                 |
| <b>23</b> | <b>Fiscal Year</b>                       |
| <b>24</b> | <b>Budget</b>                            |
| <b>25</b> | <b>Voting</b>                            |
| <b>26</b> | <b>Prohibited Activities</b>             |
| <b>27</b> | <b>Mutual Interest</b>                   |
| <b>28</b> | <b>Dissolution</b>                       |
| <b>28</b> | <b>Indemnification</b>                   |
| <b>30</b> | <b>Amendments</b>                        |
| <b>30</b> | <b>Books and Records</b>                 |
| <b>31</b> | <b>Certificate of Secretary</b>          |

### *Article I*

## **NAME**

This church will be known as Sojourn Church J-Town, Inc., also hereafter referred to as “Sojourn J-Town.” This is a non-profit corporation of the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

### *Article II*

## **AFFILIATION**

Sojourn J-Town is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the universal communion of followers of Christ and for the benefit of a wider association, this church will partner with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and may voluntarily affiliate with any churches and ministries of like faith.

### *Article III*

## **BELIEFS**

### **A. THE BIBLE**

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD WROTE THE BIBLE THROUGH MEN WITHOUT ERROR. The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative,

clear, sufficient, and necessary in all matters of life for the followers of Jesus Christ. (2 Timothy 3:15-17, Psalm 19)

## **B. THE TRINITY**

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN THE TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. There is one God, infinite and unchangeable in all his attributes. He exists eternally in three person: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each of these three persons is fully and equally God, but they are distinct in persons, relationships, and roles. God desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His will and glory. (Genesis 1, John 1:11-14, Matthew 28:19)

## **C. GOD THE FATHER**

WE BELIEVE GOD THE FATHER SOVEREIGNLY RULES OVER ALL CREATION, AND PRESENTLY CARES FOR ALL THAT EXISTS. God the Father is the creator and sustainer of all things. Nothing exists without him bringing it into being, and all that happens in heaven and on earth is according to his will. Yet the Father is never the author of evil or sin, as he has given responsibility and agency to all of his creatures. (Matthew 6:9, Genesis 1:1, Psalm 115:3, Daniel 4:35, Ephesians 1:11)

## **D. JESUS**

WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE, AND ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN TO REDEEM SINFUL PEOPLE. He is the second person of the Trinity. He is fully God, eternally

begotten of the Father, and not created. He became fully human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made his dwelling among his people, tempted as we are, but without sin. His perfect life and death on the cross provide the only atonement that could satisfy the righteous requirements of God to pay for sin.

The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and is redemptive, substitutionary, and effective. Through his life and work, Jesus redeemed sinful humanity through dying a substitutionary death on our behalf and that sacrifice covers all of our sin in full. Jesus' work on our behalf was secured through his resurrection from the dead, which was the first fruit of the resurrection for those who are in Christ. Jesus Christ will make a bodily return to the earth; this imminent return is a sanctifying hope having vital bearing on the life of all Christians. (John 1:14, John 3:16, Hebrews 1:1-3).

## **E. THE HOLY SPIRIT**

WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT UNITES US TO JESUS, AND EMPOWERS US TO LIVE THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is fully God, eternally proceeding from both the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit bears testimony to who Jesus Christ is and what he asks of us. He convicts the world of sin and its consequences. He regenerates by awakening us to the beauty of Jesus and bringing repentance and faith to sinful people. He leads the church to unity and love for each other. He illuminates scripture for his people and produces spiritual fruit in their lives as they follow Jesus. (Galatians 5:22-23)

## F. HUMANITY

WE BELIEVE THAT GOD CREATES ALL PEOPLE IN HIS IMAGE WITH DIGNITY AND WORTH, AND THAT HE BEAUTIFULLY DESIGNED THEM AS MALE AND FEMALE. God created every human life as sacred, full of dignity and significance. He has created all humanity as embodied creatures to live on Earth and have dominion. He invites us to fill the world with more image-bearers, and join him as he builds his kingdom.

In God's infinite wisdom, he designed two genders: male and female. He made males and females with equal dignity, complementary differences, and flourishing interdependence. While God doesn't call everyone to marriage, marriage is commissioned by God as a covenantal commitment between one man and one woman for a lifetime. The Bible describes sexual activity outside the confines of covenant marriage as a sin against God and a contributing factor to the brokenness of society (Genesis 3, Genesis 6:5, Romans 3:10-19, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11)

## G. SIN

WE BELIEVE THAT ALL PEOPLE ARE SINFUL AND THAT THE WORLD AND ALL OF ITS DWELLING IS CURSED AS A RESULT. Though created in the image of God, all people have fallen into sin and are therefore lost. Our sin alienates us from God and places us under his judgment. In our own righteousness and goodwill, humanity is without hope, and upon their death, will enter eternal darkness, in the absence of Christ's grace. Humans are affected not only by their own individual sins, but also by sins committed against them and around them. The curse of sin has corrupted the order of this world and society, which leads to

suffering, injustices, and disasters in this world. (Romans 3:23, Romans 5:12-19, Psalm 51:5, Jeremiah 17:9, Ephesians 2:1-3)

## H. SALVATION

SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO SINFUL PEOPLE BY GRACE ALONE AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. TRUE CHRISTIANS WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER. It is through our justification in Christ and regeneration of the Holy Spirit that we receive salvation and are able to enjoy life with God. Justification comes through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, and serves to make us right with God and unite us to Christ eternally. Salvation is a gift of God that we receive through our repentance and faith in Christ. Regeneration is a work of the Spirit that removes our old, sinful nature and creates in us a new nature and a desire to please God.

All genuine believers will remain Christians throughout their entire life, being protected by the power of God through faith for the experience of the fullness of their salvation as adopted children of God. We can be assured of these truths by God growing our affections for him, through his people's loving care, and by bearing fruit in our life. (Romans 3:23-25, Ephesians 2:1-10, Romans 8:1)

## I. THE CHURCH

WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS GOD'S BEAUTIFUL DISPLAY OF HIS PRESENCE AND GLORY ON EARTH. The universal church, or body of Christ, consists of all Christians in all times and in all places. The church is Christ's bride for whom he bled and died, and that he's committed to make beautiful. Our local

church is an autonomous congregation that covenants together for worship, preaching, service, fellowship, mission, and celebration of the ordinances of baptism and communion. The church's mission is to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Luke 10:27).

The local church is made up of members committed to building each other up as they pursue this God-given mission together. The church is a family of men and women who have put their faith in Christ and are fully equipped by the Holy Spirit to build up the church through the use of spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12). The church is led by qualified male elders and served by male and female deacons who are appointed by the church in partnership with the gifting of men and women of the church body.

## **J. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER**

WE BELIEVE THERE ARE TWO ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH: BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. We believe Jesus Christ has commissioned the church to practice two ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that baptism of believers by immersion in the name of the triune God symbolizes a Christian's union with Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. Those who are baptized are proclaiming to the church and the world that God has raised them from death to life through faith in Christ. The Lord's Supper, or communion, is a time for those who have put their faith in Christ to confess their sins, remember God's forgiveness, and long for Christ's return. The Lord's Supper symbolizes the breaking of Christ's body on our behalf and the shedding of his blood for our forgiveness. It should be observed regularly by the Church as they enjoy the benefits of Christ's atoning work. (Matthew 28:18-20, Romans 6:3-5, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

## K. LAST THINGS

WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE, AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER. Jesus will return to earth to judge all people, and to rule with His saints forever in the new heavens and the new earth. Those who are in Christ will be resurrected with a redeemed body, and receive the fullness of life and joy through the eternal presence of God. Those who do not trust in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins will receive everlasting bodily punishment by being banished from the presence of God in hell forever. (Matthew 24:27-44, Revelation 21-22)

### *Article IV*

## ELDERS

Sojourn J-Town shall be led by a team of qualified men, hereinafter referred to as the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders shall be composed of both paid (staff) and unpaid (non-staff) elders who follow the leading of Jesus, who is the Chief Shepherd of Sojourn J-Town (1 Peter 5:1-4). The Council of Elders will appoint one non-staff Elder to serve as the Chairman of the Council who will be responsible for working with the Lead Pastor on setting the elder meeting agenda and ensuring appropriate number of meetings and discussions are held. The Council of Elders shall meet at least one time per month.

The responsibilities of the Council of Elders include but are not limited to:

- I. Providing prayer, care, and shepherding.

- II.** Overseeing the church discipline process.
- III.** Affirming bylaw changes, annual budget, and real estate sales/purchases before going to the church membership for approval.
- IV.** Overseeing and providing accountability for the Lead Pastor.
- V.** Nominating new Elder candidates and approve Deacons.
- VI.** Complying with all legal requirements placed upon the organization and approving all legally binding resolutions.
- VII.** Affirming the strategic plan submitted by Lead Pastor or Executive Pastor.
- VIII.** Selecting officers of the church.

Service as an Elder confers the authority to preach, oversee the administration of the ordinances, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under Kentucky state law.

## **A. COMMITTEES**

For the purpose of accountability, encouragement, and efficiency, the Council of Elders will commission four teams to carry out specific work on behalf of the Elders. The committees are made up of Elders, church members, and may at times utilize third-party advisors and resources.

***I. Lead Pastor Oversight Team.*** This team is made up of a minimum of two lay Elders, one of which must be the Chairman of the Elders. They will meet with the Lead Pastor at minimum quarterly for encouragement and oversight.

***II. Human Resource Advisory Team.*** This team is commissioned by the Elders to provide input and oversight on HR policy and process for church staff, including but not limited to fair compensation, hiring and terminations, staff health, and benefits. This team will consist of non-staff Elders and lay members. The chair is appointed by the Council of Elders. All other members shall be nominated by the HR team and affirmed by the Council of Elders.

***III. Finance Advisory Team.*** This team is commissioned by the Elders to provide input and oversight on all finance processes, policies, and specific financial decisions. The Finance Team will work with the Executive Pastor to create an annual budget that will be affirmed by the Council of Elders and presented to the church membership for approval. The Finance Team will work with approved outside resources to ensure accurate accounting and reporting of resources. The chair is appointed by the Council of Elders. All other members shall be nominated by the Finance Team and affirmed by the Council of Elders.

***IV. Child Safety Team.*** This team is commissioned by the Elders to ensure the church is adhering to the Evangelical Council of Abuse Prevention (ECAP) guidelines and to recommend policy and procedure changes to the staff and Elders to enhance child safety.

## **B. ELDER TERMS**

Staff Elders can serve unlimited terms while they are employed by the church. Staff Elder terms end when their employment at the church is terminated. However, they may request to step off the Council of Elders for a season for personal reasons. Non-staff Elders will serve a three-year term. The term may be renewed one time upon approval of the remaining Council of Elders. After six years of service, a one-year period of inactivity is required before re-nomination is possible. Re-nomination for a prior Elder entails approval of existing Council of Elders and affirmation (through voting) by the members of the church at a regularly scheduled business meeting.

## **C. ELDER REMOVAL**

Elders may be removed from the Council of Elders for the following reasons (an illustrative, not exhaustive list): moral impropriety, doctrinal error, bringing reproach to the name of Christ and/or Sojourn J-Town, incompetency, disunity with the rest of the Elders, and other failure that would fall under the category of actions that demand church discipline. Removal of an Elder requires a 2/3 majority vote of the remaining Council of Elders (see Article IX for removal of the Lead Pastor). Elders may voluntarily surrender their position if personal circumstances require by submitting a letter of resignation to the Council of Elders. All changes in the Council of Elders shall be communicated to the church at the next regularly scheduled members meeting.

## **Article V**

# **ELDER QUALIFICATIONS AND SELECTION**

## A. QUALIFICATIONS

To be considered as an Elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Sojourn (Acts 20:28), exhibit the highest Christian character, demonstrate the requisite competencies of pastoral ministry, and display unity with the other Elders, according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9).

***I. Calling.*** An Elder possesses a godly ambition to serve in the office of Elder. This aspiration comes from the Holy Spirit, who establishes leaders in the church (Acts 20:28). This internal sense of divine calling must be confirmed by the Elders and members of Sojourn J-Town.

***II. Character.*** An Elder exhibits the character qualities as detailed in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9. These qualities include being a mature Christian above reproach, a good husband (if married), and a good father (if he has children), temperate, self-controlled, without addictions, respectable and respected by others, and gentle and kind rather than contentious. While still sinful and needing to repent of sin when his life does not manifest these qualities, an Elder must exhibit these characteristics in increasing measure.

***III. Competencies.*** An Elder demonstrates the requisite competencies for this office, including the ability to teach (cherishes sound doctrine for himself, is able to communicate sound doctrine to others, and is able to refute false doctrine), lead (carry out governing responsibilities), pray (for all church matters, especially for the sick), and shepherd (exercise church discipline, protect the members, and provide stellar examples of faithfulness and obedience for members to follow).

**IV. Chemistry.** An Elder displays good chemistry with his fellow Elders so that they are united in theological vision, core values, philosophy of ministry, and brotherhood.

## **B. ELDER SELECTION**

To be selected as an Elder, the following process is followed: assessment of calling, character, competencies, and chemistry; successful completion of the Elder-in-training process; approval by the Council of Elders; and affirmed (through voting) by the members of the church; installation as an Elder at Sojourn J-Town. The Lead Pastor becomes an Elder at the beginning of his employment by the church. In the case of hiring an Elder from outside of Sojourn J-Town, the investigation, interview, and due diligence carried out by the Elders doing the hiring constitutes the above process. However, the individual would still be presented to the membership and affirmed (through voting) as an Elder by the members of the church. All other staff or non-staff pastors must go through the Elder selection process.

Service as an Elder confers the authority to preach, oversee the administration of the ordinances, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under state law.

## **Article VI**

# **LICENSURE AND ORDINATION**

## A. LICENSURE

The Council of Elders may grant permission for licensing, in accordance with IRS regulations and the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, to the following individuals:

- Ministry Staff: Male or female full-time employees who provide direct ministry services, as defined by their job descriptions. Ministry Staff are eligible for a minister's housing allowance according to state and federal tax laws. Licensure remains ongoing unless canceled by the Council of Elders.

## B. ORDINATION

The church shall have authority to ordain any of its members who give evidence of divine call to ministry. Ordination is considered to be lifelong, unless there is good cause to terminate an ordination.

## *Article VII*

# DEACONS

Deacons are qualified men and women who serve Jesus Christ by serving the many ministries of Sojourn J-Town. These ministries include, but are not limited to, community groups, children's ministries, mercy ministries, women's ministries, men's ministries, missions, connect ministries, worship and arts ministries, and care ministries. Because this office is not one of authority in areas of teaching and leading, both males and females may serve as Deacons. (Female Deacons are not in violation of Paul's prohibition in 1 Tim. 2:12.)

## **A. QUALIFICATIONS**

To be considered as a Deacon, the individual must meet the qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. They must be of sound doctrine and character, not duplicitous in speech so as to deceive people, without addictions, a good husband or wife (if married), a good father or mother (in the case of having a family), faithful, and full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3). A Deacon is first tested for the competency to serve as a lead servant and, having been found blameless in life and ministry, is installed in this office.

## **B. SELECTION**

To be selected as a Deacon, the following process is followed: nomination by a ministry leader; assessment of the above qualifications and passing the test of service; successful completion of the Deacon-in-training process; approval by Council of Elders; installation as a Deacon of Sojourn J-Town.

## **C. TERMS**

Deacons can serve a three-year term. The term may be renewed one time upon approval of the Council of Elders. After six years of service, a one-year period of inactivity is required before re-nomination is possible.

## **D. REMOVAL**

A Deacon shall be dismissed from office in the following instances (an illustrative, not exhaustive list): moral impropriety, doctrinal error, bringing reproach to the name of Christ and/or Sojourn J-Town, incompetency, disunity with the rest of the Deacons and Elders, and any other failure that would fall under the category of actions that demand church discipline.

## *Article VIII*

# OFFICERS

## A. STATE-REQUIRED OFFICERS

The Council of Elders shall serve as the Board of Directors and shall designate the following state-required officers:

*I.* President, who is also the Chairman and Lead Pastor

*II.* Vice President

*III.* Secretary of the corporation

*IV.* Treasurer of the corporation

## B. OTHER OFFICERS

The Board of Directors may also choose other officers and agents as it deems necessary. Any number of offices may be held by the same person, except that the office of President and Secretary or President and Treasurer may not be held by the same person.

## C. OFFICER FUNCTION

All officers are to function in line with the Statement of Faith, Core Values, and Mission Statement of this church.

## D. THE PRESIDENT

- I.** The office of President is filled by the Lead Pastor of the church.
- II.** The President shall be the presiding officer for Sojourn J-Town and shall, subject to the provisions of these Bylaws:
  - a.** Have general and active management of the affairs of Sojourn J-Town and have general supervision of its officers, agents, and employees. The Lead Pastor has the sole right to hire and terminate staff with affirmation of the Council of Elders.
  - b.** Preside at all meetings of the Board of Directors.
  - c.** Perform those other duties distinct to the office of President and as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Board of Directors.
- III.** The President's term is indefinite.
- IV.** The President shall chair an annual Sojourn J-Town members business meeting that includes a report of the financial state of the church.

## **E. THE SECRETARY**

- I.** The Secretary of the corporation shall be selected annually from among the active Board of Directors during the first meeting of the year. The term of office shall be for one year, and may be successive.

**II.** The Secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings of the church and the Board of Directors. Execution of these duties may be fulfilled personally or delegated as agreed upon by the Board of Directors.

**III.** The Secretary shall be custodian of all legal documents and shall be authorized to sign all official and legal documents, to conduct church correspondence where required, and to perform any other functions as are customary or as may be directed by the Board of Directors.

## **F. THE TREASURER**

**I.** The Treasurer of the corporation shall be selected annually from among the active Board of Directors during the first meeting of the year. The term of office shall be for one year, and may be successive.

**II.** The Treasurer's duties may be delegated to a bookkeeper or accountant, and shall include being the overseer and custodian of all church funds, which shall be deposited into bank accounts as designated by the Board of Directors.

**III.** The Treasurer shall be authorized to sign checks and make disposition of funds as may be required in the accurate conduct of church business under the supervision of the Board of Directors and consistent with this or any other provision of these Bylaws.

**IV.** The Treasurer, or a designee, shall give a financial report to the Board of Directors at its regular meeting and help prepare reports that may be given to the church.

**V.** The Treasurer shall perform any other functions that may be customary or as may be directed by the church or the Board of Directors.

**VI.** The Board of Directors may delegate all the duties of the Treasurer to others following consultation and consensus.

## **G. REMOVAL OF OFFICERS**

Removal of officers for good and sufficient cause shall be by action of the Board of Directors, and reported to the church members. No officer shall be removed from office until positive effort has been made to assist that officer in correcting the problem, except in the case of gross moral, civil, or criminal misconduct, in which case removal will be immediate.

## **H. RESIGNATIONS OF OFFICERS**

Resignations of officers shall be in writing to the President, effective on the date specified in the resignation or as determined by the Board of Directors. (The resignation of the President shall be in writing to the Board of Directors.)

## **Article IX**

# **LEAD PASTOR HIRING AND REMOVAL**

The Council of Elders is responsible for hiring the Lead Pastor. When hiring a new Lead Pastor, the Council of Elders will appoint a committee to conduct a pastoral

search and present recommendations to the council. Upon approval by the Council of Elders, the candidate will be brought to the church members for approval.

The Lead Pastor may be removed from his position with a 90% majority vote of the remaining Council of Elders.

### *Article X*

## **MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS**

The Council of Elders shall hold a minimum of two member meetings per year. The Elders are required to submit an annual budget to the church members for approval before the start of each fiscal year (currently July 1). The Elders may call other meetings of the members as deemed necessary.

### *Article XI*

## **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

Church membership is an important and formal process based on a confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. There are both privileges and duties associated with church membership. These are outlined in the Sojourn Church J-Town Membership Covenant.

### *Article XII*

## **CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

God involves His church in every aspect of His redemptive work. This holds true even when God disciplines His children out of His love for them so they can share in His holiness (Hebrews 12:4–11). In what is commonly referred to as church discipline, God invites His church to participate with Him as He carries out His loving, redeeming discipline. God carries out His discipline in and through the body of Christ (Matthew 18:15–20).

Church discipline makes membership meaningful - members and leaders care about one another and commit to encouraging each other to follow Christ, enabling the church to enjoy life with God and participate in His mission.

## A. PURPOSE

Church discipline has four broad purposes:

- I.* Restoring relationships
- II.* Removing wickedness
- III.* Renewing God's people
- IV.* Revealing God's love and glory

## B. PEOPLE

Church discipline involves members who refuse to seek and obey God as well as those who seek to encourage them to turn back to Jesus Christ for mercy and forgiveness (Isa. 55:1–7). God's discipline is accomplished as the people of God

seek to fight the good fight of faith together as a community of believers (1 Tim. 6:12).

## C. PROCESS

Jesus offers a general process for church discipline in Matthew 18:15–20. God’s discipline expands (involving more people, to include Elders) and escalates (involving increasing efforts of warnings, telling the church, and removal). The Elders oversee church discipline as they seek to shepherd the church. See the Philosophy of Ministry Document for more details on church discipline.

### *Article XIII*

## FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of Sojourn J-Town shall be July 1–June 30.

### *Article XIV*

## BUDGET

On an annual basis, the Council of Elders must submit a budget to the members for approval (see Article X). During the course of the fiscal year, the Elders may need to make amendments to the approved budget.

The following are guidelines for making such amendment:

***I. Adjustment to accommodate giving actual vs. budget.*** The Elders may increase or decrease the budget if giving exceeds or falls short of the amount estimated in the annual budget. The Elders may make such amendments and member approval is not required.

***II. Adjustment to accommodate ministry needs.*** The Elders may increase the budget for expanding the scope of ministry up to 5% of the originally approved annual budget. Increases in excess of 5% to the annual budget must be approved by a majority vote of the members.

***III. Reallocation of the budget.*** The budget may be amended by reallocating funds from one primary fund to another (e.g., transferring staffing dollars to missions funds) by the Elders up to 5% of the annual budget. Reallocation of funds that result in a change of greater than 5% must be approved by a majority vote of the members.

## **Article XV**

# **VOTING**

Those admitted to church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute corporate members, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon Sojourn J-Town, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of Sojourn J-Town, or rights to vote on its disposal, except any vote specifically provided in these Bylaws or as specifically provided by the Council of Elders. Said property of Sojourn J-Town is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

Members must be notified of meetings where voting will occur at least 14 days in advance of the meeting. While most voting will be in person at a members meeting, the Council of Elders reserves the right to conduct an electronic vote from time to time. A quorum is not necessary for a vote of approval. A simple majority of members voting is required for a vote of approval. However, a quorum shall be necessary only in the case of the rejection of any of the instances listed below.

If a vote taken on one of the instances below results in a rejection, an attendance record is to be taken. If less than 50% of the church membership was present, the Council of Elders is to communicate the results of the vote in an email and set a date for another members meeting, within 45 days to either vote on the same issue (with the goal to have a quorum present) or to present an alternative proposal.

Member voting shall occur in the following instances:

#### **A. BUDGET AFFIRMATION**

Affirmation of the annual budget and significant increases to the budget arising from increased ministry needs or significant reallocation of funds which exceed 5% of the existing annual budget. (See Article XIV)

#### **B. ELDER AFFIRMATION**

Affirmation of Elder candidates as presented by the Council of Elders.

#### **C. LEAD PASTOR HIRING AFFIRMATION**

Affirmation of hiring of a Lead Pastor as presented by the Council of Elders. Candidates must be affirmed by three-fourths' majority vote of members.

## **D. PURCHASE AND/OR SALE OF LAND AND REAL ESTATE**

## **E. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS**

### *Article XVI*

## **PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES**

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

### *Article XVII*

## **MUTUAL INTEREST**

### **A. BEHAVIOR**

The behavior of anyone in fellowship with Sojourn J-Town is of common interest to the Council of Elders and members (Galatians 6:1). Further, Sojourn J-Town requires every Elder, Deacon, staff member, and church member to adhere to a lifestyle consistent with the doctrines of Sojourn J-Town as taught in the Bible.

### **B. VALUE OF CHILDREN**

Sojourn J-Town holds a commitment to the protection and safety of children spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Because we believe children are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27), it is imperative that we aid in the protection and safety of any and all children who are within our care.

### **C. RIGHT TO REFUSE SERVICE**

Sojourn J-Town reserves the right to refuse service to any individual, whether member or not, that is not submitting their lifestyle to this scriptural mode of conduct. This refusal would include services, benefits, and any use of church assets.

### *Article XVIII*

## **DISSOLUTION**

Sojourn J-Town may be dissolved by a three-fourths' majority vote of the Council of Elders. Dissolution also requires affirmation by a majority member vote (see Article XV). In the event of dissolution, all outstanding debts will be retired, including any severance of current employee(s) granted by the Council of Elders. The remaining church property (or properties), both real and personal, and all proceeds therefrom, shall be given without cost to one or more like-minded churches and/or non-denominational, evangelical, or tax-exempt religious organizations. The Council of Elders shall choose the recipients.

### *Article XIX*

## **INDEMNIFICATION**

### **A. POWER TO INDEMNIFY**

Sojourn J-Town has the power to indemnify (including the power to advance expenses to) its Elders, officers, employees, and agents made a party to a proceeding, provided, however, that no such indemnity shall indemnify any such Elder, officer, employee, or agent from or on account of:

- I.** Acts or omissions of such Elder, officer, employee, or agent finally adjudged to be intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law.
- II.** Conduct of the Elder, officer, employee, or agent finally adjudged to be in violation of Kentucky law.
- III.** Any transaction with respect to which it was finally adjudged that such Elder, officer, employee, or agent personally received a benefit in money, property, or services to which such person was not legally entitled.

## **B. INSURANCE**

Sojourn J-Town may purchase and maintain insurance, at its expense, to protect itself and any Elder, officer, employee, agent, or any person who, while as an Elder, officer, employee, or agent of Sojourn J-Town, is or was a director, officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, employee benefit plan, or other enterprise against any expense, liability, or loss, whether or not Sojourn J-Town would have the power to indemnify such person against such expense, liability, or loss under the Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act.

## **C. REPEAL OR MODIFICATION**

Any repeal or modification of this Article shall not adversely affect any right of any person existing at the time of such repeal or modification.

## **D. SEVERABILITY**

If any provision of this Article or any application thereof shall be invalid, unenforceable, or contrary to applicable law, the remainder of this Article, or the application of such provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it is held invalid, unenforceable or contrary to applicable law, shall not be affected thereby and shall continue in full force and effect.

### *Article XX*

## **AMENDMENTS**

Sojourn J-Town Bylaws may be altered, amended, or repealed by the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the Council of Elders, in addition to the majority vote of church members as required in Article XV.

### *Article XXI*

## **BOOKS AND RECORDS**

Sojourn J-Town shall keep correct and complete books and records of account including, but not limited to, the following:

### **A. ARTICLES AND BYLAWS**

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws shall be kept indefinitely.

### **B. LISTS OF PERSONS**

Lists of members, Elders, and officers shall be kept current.

### **C. MINUTES**

Meeting minutes shall be kept for a minimum of three years.

#### **D. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL RECORDS**

Complete financial books, records of account, and legal documents shall be maintained for such a length of time as required by law and/or deemed appropriate by the Council of Elders. Records shall be available to be inspected on the church premises by any active member for reasonable purposes at any reasonable time. Requests to view records must be made to the Council of Elders.

#### **E. ABUSE RECORDS**

#### **F. INSURANCE COVERAGE AND CLAIMS**

#### **G. WORKER SCREENING/APPLICATIONS**

## CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I certify that I am the duly elected and acting secretary of Sojourn Church J-Town, Inc., and that the forgoing bylaws constitute the bylaws of Sojourn Church J-Town. These bylaws were duly adopted by a three-fourths' vote of the Council of Elders and a major of the church membership on May 20, 2026.

---

DATE

---

NAME

---

SIGNATURE

---

TITLE