

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

My Community Church

(Approved by congregational vote – January 11, 2009)

CONSTITUTION

PREAMBLE

The New Testament teaches that the local church is the visible, organized expression of the body of Christ. The people of God are to live and serve in obedience to the Word of God and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. By the grace of God, our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ, and our faith in Him, we, the members of My Community Church, being completely dependent on the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit and the written word of God, in order to establish rules and procedures with which to administer this church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and By-laws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name under which this church is organized is:
My Community Church, Inc.

ARTICLE II – AFFILIATION

My Community Church is not affiliated with any denomination.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Qualifications for membership shall consist of:

1. Confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
2. Agreement with the Church Covenant, Statement of Faith, and Mission Statement of My Community Church, in their entirety.

3. A meeting with the Membership Committee, during which the Faith and Mission statements, Church Covenant, Water Baptism, and the Lord's Supper will be explained and questions will be welcomed.
4. Recommendation by the Membership Committee and approval by the membership.
5. Water Baptism. If a person who wishes to join My Community Church has previously been baptized and documentation is not available, My Community Church will, upon the statement by the person seeking membership that they have been baptized by immersion, accept his or her baptism upon consideration of the Elders. To those who have not been baptized, or desire baptism, it will be administered prior to or during the time the person joins My Community Church.

ARTICLE IV – SACREMENTS

Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are recognized as the two sacraments of My Community Church.

- a. **Water Baptism** will be administered by My Community Church after a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.
- b. The **Lord's Supper** shall be held twice a year. Once as determined by the membership and once as determined by the Pastor. **Foot Washings** shall be held at each offering of the Lord's Supper whenever possible.

ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT

There shall be an Annual Business Meeting of My Community Church, held at a time specified in the By-laws at which time Committee reports, including audited reports of the treasurer(s) will be made available. The elected officers and committees will begin their service after the Annual Business Meeting and serve until the next Annual Business Meeting. The Board of Elders, as defined in the By-laws of My Community Church, will conduct the affairs of My Community Church between meetings. Additional meetings may be called with proper notice as specified in the By-laws. On general matters in which no legal questions are involved, it is understood that all members in good and regular standing shall be entitled to vote, but

in matters involving titles of property or legal procedures, the laws of the state that determine the age at which members are eligible to vote shall be adhered to.

ARTICLE VI – MISSIONS

My Community Church, upon approval of the general membership, can support missions. In a case of an emergency, the Board of Elders can decide the disbursement of mission funds.

ARTICLE VII – SERVICES

My Community church shall meet Sundays for worship of God and study of His word, and at other times as designated.

ARTICLE VIII – FINANCIAL POLICY

My Community Church shall be supported by tithes and free-will offerings. Fund-raising projects are permissible, except on Sunday, but must be approved by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE IX – BUDGET

A detailed annual budget shall be prepared by the Finance Committee and approved by the membership. The Finance Committee shall be authorized to spend up to \$250.00 on community outreach and up to \$500 on operational expenses per occurrence without prior approval of the Board of Elders or the general membership.

ARTICLE X – ORDINATION

A man seeking ordination as Minister or Deacon first seeks counsel from the pastor and a letter or recommendation from him to the church. The church arranges for the candidate to fill out an application for additional credentials. The church will then convene an Ordaining Council to consider the request.

- 1. Ministers:** Upon the approval of the Ordaining Council, he is granted initial credentials (License). He must maintain an acceptable ministry at the licensed level for a minimum of two (2) years and is recommended to be at least twenty-three (23) years of age before being invited to request ordination. This is to ensure his maturity personally and professionally (“not a novice,” I Timothy 3:6). Upon his presentation of an application for ordination, he is examined again by an Ordaining Council. Upon their approval, he is ordained in a special Ordination Service.

The Ordaining Council, by written examination and oral interview shall examine the candidate upon the following points:

- The genuineness of his Christian experience
- The reality of his divine call to the ministry
- The sufficiency of his spiritual, moral, emotional, and social maturity
- The sufficiency and correctness of his understanding of Bible content and doctrine
- The adequacy of his preparation and practical abilities
- The acceptability of his knowledge of, and allegiance to, the church’s policies, covenant, and programs

Upon the approval of the council, a special service will be scheduled to present to the minister his new Ordination Certificate. Ministers from the local church as well as ministers from other churches may be invited to attend and take part in the ceremony.

Previously ordained ministers who wish to be issued a new ordination certificate will make that wish known to the local church and the church will consider the request at the next regular business meeting, or at a business meeting called for that purpose. Upon the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present, a special service will be scheduled to present to the minister his new Ordination Certificate. Ministers from the local church as well as ministers from other churches may be invited to attend and take part in the ceremony.

2. **Deacons:** Upon approval of the Ordaining Council, he is granted a Deacon Certificate. He must maintain an acceptable ministry, is recommended to be at least twenty-three (23) years of age. This is to ensure his maturity personally and professionally (I Timothy 3:6-13). Upon his presentation of an application for ordination, he is examined by an Ordaining Council. Upon their approval, he is ordained in a special Ordination Service.

The Ordaining Council, by written examination and oral interview, shall examine the candidate upon the following points:

- The genuineness of his Christian experience
- The sufficiency of his spiritual, moral, emotional, and social maturity
- The sufficiency and correctness of his understanding of Bible content and doctrine
- The adequacy of his preparation and practical abilities
- The acceptability of his knowledge of, and allegiance to, the church's policies, covenant, and programs

Upon the approval of the council, a special service will be scheduled to present to the Deacon his new Ordination Certificate. Ministers from the local church as well as ministers from other churches may be invited to attend and take part in the ceremony.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS/CHANGES

This Constitution and By-laws may be amended at a duly organized business meeting, provided a quorum of 50% of the membership is represented, proxies included. A two-thirds (2/3) vote in the affirmative is required to pass the amendment. The text of the amendment must be provided to all members, and announced for four (4) consecutive weeks prior to the vote on said amendment.

ARTICLE XII – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- A. All financial statements shall be kept on file and made available for review by all active members of My Community Church.
- B. My Community Church, including all of its ministries, shall accept no funds, services, or benefits of any kind whatsoever from any level of government or agency thereof unless the church pays fair market value for the same.
- C. No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any person(s) from the assets, holdings, or other transactions in which My Community Church, Inc. become involved.
- D. No fees, dues or assessments shall be levied against any member of My Community Church.
- E. The fiscal year of My Community Church shall be from January 1 through December 31.
- F. In addition to other matters specifically reserved to My Community Church members, no sale, lease, mortgage, or pledge of, or the creation of a security interest in, or a lien or judgment against all or part of church property, real or personal, shall be done without prior approval of My Community Church's 2/3 vote of the membership.

ARTICLE XIII – PROPERTY AND RECORDS

Section 1 - Property: My Community Church may acquire, own, dispose of, improve, encumber, and convey property, real and personal, for church purposes, in conformity with the laws of the state where the property is situated.

Section 2 – Records: The official records of all officers of My Community Church and all its departments are the property of My Community Church, Inc. In the event of the death or resignation of the incumbent or upon the election of his/her successor, the current records of the office shall be passed on to the newly elected officer. All records other than current shall be kept in a secure repository.

ARTICLE XIV – DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of My Community Church, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Board of Elders to such other non-profit religious corporation(s) as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the Statement of Faith, and in conformity with requirements of Section 401 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

A: APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. Applicants shall request membership from the Pastor or Membership Committee.
2. Children under eighteen (18) years of age shall request membership from the Pastor or Membership Committee and be accepted into membership of My Community Church after fulfilling the qualifications of Article III and upon written consent of a parent or guardian.
3. All applicants will be provided with a copy of, and required to read and consent to, this constitution, its by-laws, and the church covenant. Further, they must affirm their agreement with My Community Church's Statement of Faith and Mission Statement. Such consent and affirmation exists when the applicant places his/her signature on the application for membership.

B. MEMBERSHIP LIST

The membership list shall be examined each year by the Pastor and the Membership Committee prior to the congregational business meeting so that My Community Church will have an updated membership list.

C. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Upon request, active members in good standing shall be granted a letter of transfer.

ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT

A. Congregational Meetings

1. The Quarterly Business Meeting shall be held the earliest convenient time after the end of each calendar quarter. No business meeting shall be held on Sundays. Notification of the quarterly meeting shall be announced at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting. All members will be notified of the

meeting time and place by any means available, including electronic and physical means.

2. The Annual Business Meeting shall be held approximately one month after the end of the last quarter and will be combined with the fourth quarter business meeting. An annual report will be published and made available at this meeting and will include reports from each of the following:
 - a. The Pastor
 - b. The Board of Elders
 - c. The chairperson or secretary of each of the various committees and organizations within My Community Church
 - d. A year-end financial report from the My Community Church treasurer(s)
 - e. A completed report from the auditor(s) of all financial records within My Community Church
 - f. Finance Committee's annual budget. These reports shall be processed in printed form and copies made available to the congregation upon request, prior to the start of the Annual Business Meeting. All written financial and departmental reports shall cover the calendar year.
3. All elections (Board of Elders, Deacons, Board of Trustees, Officers, Teachers and Committees) will be held the first business meeting following the end of the fourth quarter. Voting shall be by ballot and the member receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.
4. Special Business Meetings may be called by the Board of Elders upon notification approximately one week in advance, when possible.
5. Roberts Rules of Order shall govern all matters of church business unless changed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members present.
6. Quorum: A quorum shall consist of the membership present at any meeting, except at a meeting where the Constitution and/or By-laws are amended. (See Article XI – Amendments/Changes).

7. A proxy vote will be accepted from a member, provided that the proxy bearer presents it to the Secretary prior to the commencement of the Business Meeting. The proxy must state who the bearer is, and shall be signed and dated by the member submitting the proxy. A proxy shall be valid only for the date specified on the proxy. Proxy votes are valid only for officer elections and constitution and by-laws amendments. Proxy votes are only valid on ballots for that purpose. Proxy ballots can be requested from the Secretary in person or in writing. Proxy ballots are only permitted for those members who are physically unable to attend the scheduled business meeting and must be approved by the Board of Elders.
8. In matters of church business, all active members, male and female, shall have a voice.

B. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. The Board of Trustees will be elected annually by the voting members of My Community Church. The election of Trustees shall be held on the first business meeting following the end of the forth quarter. Each Trustee shall serve a two (2) year term. Three (3) Trustees will be elected on odd number years and two (2) Trustees on even number years.
2. The physical property of My Community Church, and the day-to-day operation of such property shall be managed by the Board of Trustees.
3. To be qualified to hold the office of Trustee, an individual must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and a member of My Community Church in good standing, shall have worshipped at My Community Church on a regular basis for at least six (6) continuous months, shall support the church financially, shall agree with My Community Church's Statement of Faith, agree to abide by the by-laws and procedural rules of the church and the Board of Trustees itself.

BOARD OF ELDERS

4. The Board of Elders shall be elected by the members of My Community Church and shall include: the Pastor, Deacons, Board of Trustees, Secretary of the Church, Treasurer(s) and Sunday School Superintendent.
5. All members of the Board of Elders shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and a member in good standing of My community Church.
6. Duties and Authority:
 - a. Organize, establish and supervise committees which are necessary for the work of My Community Church.
 - b. Assist in preparation of an annual budget to be submitted at the Annual Business Meeting.
 - c. Determine the compensation to be paid all persons by My Community Church for services rendered (except the Pastor(s). {See Article V, Section E, 2, (c)}.

C. COMMITTEES

The following is a list of the standing committees, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Audit
- Membership Committee
- Financial Committee
- Missions/Outreach/Activities*
- Ad hoc committees may be appointed as needed by the Pastor and/or the congregation.

*Pastor shall be a member

D. PASTORATE

1. Qualifications of the Pastor:
 - a. Shall have a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
 - b. Shall agree with My Community Church Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and Mission Statement in their entirety

- c. Shall have the gift of pastor/teacher for equipping the saints to do the work of the Lord
- d. Shall have a wholehearted commitment to the task of evangelism
- e. Shall express a conviction of the calling of God to be the Pastor of My Community Church
- f. Shall be committed to prayer
- g. Shall be water baptized by immersion
- h. Shall be an ordained minister

2. Call of the Church:

- a. The pastoral candidates shall be interviewed by the Board of Elders and the Pastoral Committee and thereafter be recommended to the church membership.
- b. Shall be extended the call only after such recommendation and an 80% vote of the quorum at a duly called Business Meeting.
- c. Condition of Employment: The salary of the Pastor and other compensation such as social security, insurance, housing allowance and pension shall be specified in writing and made a part of the call upon which the membership votes. Likewise, such items as authorized vacation, attendance at meetings and conferences, moving expenses and other agreed upon conditions shall be addressed in the call. The call shall be in the form of a legal agreement. Changes in the initial conditions of employment are to be enacted by vote of the membership.

3. Duties:

- a. Shall assume the spiritual leadership of all areas of church life
- b. Shall attend church business meetings except when the meeting directly involves the position of the Pastor.

- c. Shall preach the Gospel and teach the Word of God at all regularly scheduled services except when, by the Pastor's request, the Pastor's absence from the pulpit is approved by the Board of Elders.
- d. Shall secure from the Board of Elders approval for persons to replace the Pastor in the pulpit in the Pastor's absence.
- e. Shall administer the sacraments, visit the sick, and conduct funeral services.
- f. Shall conduct pre-marital counseling classes.
- g. Shall perform Christian marriages between a man and woman only, according to the Holy Scriptures and at the Pastor's discretion.
- h. Shall oversee the teaching and training ministries of My Community Church and oversee the spiritual needs of the membership.

4. Accountability:

- a. The Pastor shall be accountable to the Board of elders and members of My Community Church.
- b. Terms of Service: A pastor will be called for an indefinite period of time. The Pastor's tenure of service shall terminate by the Pastor's resignation or death, or a 75% vote of the members present at a business meeting, including proxies. In the event of the Pastor's resignation, the Pastor shall give at least thirty (30) days notice. In the event My Community Church votes to terminate the Pastor's services, the Pastor shall receive thirty (30) days notice or thirty (30) days salary in lieu of such notice.

E. SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, AND OTHERS

1. Qualifications:

- a. Shall have a vital Christian testimony and demonstrate the call of God to the particular ministry in which they are serving.

- b. Shall provide a Godly example of a Christian life for My Community Church members and constituents to observe and copy.
- c. Shall be a member of, and in regular attendance at My Community Church.