

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH RICHLAND HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH / CROSS CHURCH GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

### **Overview of the Church's Governance**

Our governance structure is based on the biblical principle that the local church is an autonomous, self-governing body of baptized believers and is accountable to God for its decisions and actions. The ultimate human authority for governance is vested in the membership in a congregational form of church governance. The Scriptures provide latitude in how a church makes leadership and administrative decisions.

Churches of our size often create a “governing group” that is delegated responsibilities and authorities under the terms of the Bylaws, while reserving to the congregation specific areas of authority such as the calling of the senior pastor, approving members, approving Committee members, budget adoption, and so forth. The name “Committee” is chosen for our governing groups due to its long-standing use in the church.

The membership delegates and entrusts to Committees all governing authority for the Church not specifically retained by the members in the Bylaws. The Committee Members serve as lay leadership elected by, and accountable to, members of the Church. From a legal perspective, the Church is organized as a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Texas. From this point of view, the Committees serve as the directors of the corporation and serve as fiduciaries for the Church.

In effect, the Church practices a collaborative leadership model of church governance. This model entrusts a team of lay leaders, called Committee Members to collaborate with the members, pastors, staff and deacons, to integrate the work of the Church.

The success of our governance structure is built upon the proper balance among three broad principles: (1) requires a high level of confidence and trust by the congregation, (2) requires the enthusiastic support of the pastors who work with the Committees, and (3) requires the objectivity, faithfulness, and integrity of the Committee Members selected. All three principles must work in harmony for our governance structure to function properly.

The work of the Committees is intended to offer several benefits to the Church resulting in:

1. Relying on the continuity, wise counsel, and sound judgment of lay leaders who work alongside the pastors on behalf of the membership
2. Strengthening the capacity of the pastors to focus primarily on prayer, preparation, and preaching
3. Creating a healthy system of checks and balances by entrusting to the Committees the objective oversight of the operations of the Church
4. Increasing stewardship of the Church's resources in order to better position the congregation to expand ministry opportunities, as God directs

The Bylaws are intended to serve as a practical and legal framework for conducting the work of the Church. Essentially the Bylaws express the members' “agreement” with the broad governing principles, direction, and expectations. The Committees implement how the principles are carried out and act in the best interest of the church. Any change in the Bylaws requires Church approval.

### **History on the Development of the Governance Structure and Bylaws**

The Church developed a significant restatement of its Bylaws in 1996 and made additional minor amendments in 1997, 1998 and 2000. Since that time, numerous changes have been made in laws governing churches in the State of Texas, operational processes and procedures and the addition of an additional campus. Church leadership has recognized the need for updating and restating the Bylaws is overdue and as a result the Long Range Planning Committee made the following recommendation in 2021:

The Long Range Planning Committee recommends the Pastor and Deacon officers appoint a committee to study and recommend to the church a revised Bylaws of the church to:

1. Reflect a name change (if approved by the Church),
2. Update for operational changes,
3. Reflect the needs of multiple campuses, and
4. Strengthen the important values of our Baptist beliefs.

As a result of this recommendation, the Pastor and Deacon Officers appointed a Bylaws Committee with the following members:

**Mark Vaughn (Chair)**  
**Daryl King**

**Kyle Burroughs**  
**Grant McCarson**

**Dottie Kearney**  
**Travis Pipkin**

The Bylaws Committee has prayed, studied, evaluated, obtained input from various sources, received legal review and counsel and has formed a recommendation for a restated Bylaws for the Church to consider.

To aid in your review of these Bylaws, which included a significant reformatting from previous versions, the Bylaws Committee has created the following summary:

Proposed Article	Previous Related Article(s)	Comments
1 – Offices	n/a	Added Article 1 covering Principal Office, Registered Office and Registered Agent
2 – Nonprofit Purposes	III – Conveyances and Other Instruments	Article 2 now includes tax exemption language and reference to statement of faith
3 – Members	I – Membership	Added Membership Expectations section
4 – Pastor	II – Church Officers and Corporate Officers	Legacy Article II separated into multiple proposed Articles (4,5,6,7, & 12) and further clarified. Modified Pastor Search Committee selection to include commensurate representation from all campuses.
5 – Church Staff	II – Church Officers and Corporate Officers	
6 – Deacons	II – Church Officers and Corporate Officers	Removed specific reference to 3 year rotation that is no longer practiced.
7 – Corporate Officers	II – Church Officers and Corporate Officers	Changed the Pastor from Chief Administrative Officer to Principal Executive Officer in Corporate Officers.
8 – Committees	III – Conveyances and Other Instruments IV – Church Committees	Further clarified standing, non-standing, and special purpose committees as well as Task Forces as needed.
9 – Ordinances	V – Church Ordinances	
10 – Church Meetings	VI – Church Meetings	No longer requiring Sunday evening services. Also made accommodations for multiple campuses.
11 – Transactions of the Church	III – Conveyances and Other Instruments	
12 – Books and Records	II – Church Officers and Corporate Officers	Separated out and expanded recordkeeping requirements
13 – Fiscal Year	VI – Church Meetings	Separated out Fiscal Year definition
14 – Indemnification	n/a	Added Article 14 on advice of legal counsel
15 – Notices	n/a	Clarified definition and process for proper Notice
16 – Amendments to Bylaws	VI – Church Meetings X – Amendments	
17 – Miscellaneous Provisions	n/a	Added Article 17 to include additional legal clarifications related to legal authorities, power of attorney, electronic signatures, etc.
18 – Emergency Bylaws and Governance	n/a	Added Article 18 to provide guidance in the event of a catastrophic event that prevents the church from meeting or prevents a quorum of deacons or committee members from meeting
19 – Minister License and Ordination	VIII – License and Ordination	
20 – Statement of Faith	n/a	Added Article 20 to include both the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000” and the “Nashville Statement”.

## **DRAFT 4-6-22**

### **Table of Contents**

<b>Article 1</b>	<b>Offices</b>
<b>Article 2</b>	<b>Nonprofit Purposes</b>
<b>Article 3</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>Article 4</b>	<b>Pastor</b>
<b>Article 5</b>	<b>Church Staff</b>
<b>Article 6</b>	<b>Deacons</b>
<b>Article 7</b>	<b>Corporate Officers</b>
<b>Article 8</b>	<b>Committees</b>
<b>Article 9</b>	<b>Ordinances</b>
<b>Article 10</b>	<b>Church Meetings</b>
<b>Article 11</b>	<b>Transactions of the Church</b>
<b>Article 12</b>	<b>Books and Records</b>
<b>Article 13</b>	<b>Fiscal Year</b>
<b>Article 14</b>	<b>Indemnification</b>
<b>Article 15</b>	<b>Notices</b>
<b>Article 16</b>	<b>Amendments to Bylaws</b>
<b>Article 17</b>	<b>Miscellaneous Provisions</b>
<b>Article 18</b>	<b>Emergency Bylaws and Governance</b>
<b>Article 19</b>	<b>Minister License and Ordination</b>
<b>Article 20</b>	<b>Statement of Faith</b>

**BYLAWS  
OF  
CROSS CHURCH DFW  
(A NONPROFIT CORPORATION)**

These Bylaws (the “Bylaws”) govern the affairs of Cross Church DFW, a nonprofit corporation (the “Church”) organized under the Texas Business Organizations Code, Chapter 22 (the “Act”). The Church does business as Cross Church.

**ARTICLE 1  
OFFICES**

**1.01 Principal Office.** The principal office of the Church in the State of Texas shall be located at 6955 Boulevard 26, North Richland Hills, Texas 76180. The Church may have such other offices, either in Texas or elsewhere, as the members may determine. The members may change the location of any office of the Church.

**1.02 Registered Office and Registered Agent.** The Church shall comply with the requirements of the Act and maintain a registered office and registered agent in Texas. The registered office may, but need not, be identical with the Church's principal office in Texas. The members may change the registered office and the registered agent as provided in the Act.

**ARTICLE 2  
NONPROFIT PURPOSES**

**2.01 Tax Exemption.** The specific purposes for which the Church is organized are to perform religious, charitable and educational activities within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”). More specifically, the Church shall be organized and operated exclusively: (a) as a church as described in Section 170(b)(1)(A)(i) of the Code, and (b) for religious, charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. The Church pledges that all its assets will be used exclusively for and are irrevocably dedicated to the Church's exempt purposes.

**2.02 Statement of Faith.** We voluntarily band ourselves together in Jesus Christ and further subscribe to the doctrinal Statement of Faith per Article 20

**ARTICLE 3  
MEMBERS**

**3.01 Management.** The Church is a sovereign and democratic Baptist church under the leadership of Jesus Christ. The Church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body but recognizes and sustains a relationship of mutual cooperation with and support among Southern Baptist churches. The membership retains unto itself the exclusive right of self-government in all

phases of the spiritual and temporal life of the Church, except to the extent the membership shall delegate responsibilities and authorities under the terms of these Bylaws, or by action of its members.

The governance and management of the affairs of the Church is ultimately vested in the body of members who compose the Church

**3.02 Members.** The Church shall have one class of members. Only individuals may become members. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of the Church. The membership shall consist of all persons whose names appear on the Church membership role.

**3.03 Reception into Membership.** Admission to membership shall be granted by completing the following steps:

- A. Make a profession of faith in Christ as personal Savior and Lord.
- B. Be baptized by immersion following your profession of faith as a symbol of that faith.
- C. Complete the New Members class offered by Church.
- D. Sign the New Members Covenant.

**3.04 Membership Expectations.** Members are encouraged to live and teach in accordance with and not contrary to the Statement of Faith per Article 20. Moreover, members should be faithful in all duties essential to the Christian life, including, but not limited to: faithfully participate in the services of the Church; be involved in a Bible Fellowship group; serve in at least one ministry in or with the Church; give regularly and cheerfully to support the Church and its ministries.

**3.05 Dues or Assessments.** No dues or assessments shall be placed on members.

**3.06 Voting Rights.** Every member is entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the Church in conference, provided the member is physically present at the meeting location.

**3.07 Termination of Membership.** Termination of membership shall be made in any of the following ways:

- A. Upon death.
- B. Upon a member's joining another church.
- C. Upon withdrawal of fellowship by the Church from a member as provided by the Holy Scriptures and more particularly in Matthew 18:15-17 and in 1 Corinthians 5.
- D. Upon request of the member.
- E. Upon being unable to locate a member for five years and lack of evidence of attendance.

**3.08 Discipline.** It shall be the practice of this Church, through its ministers and members, to make every reasonable effort to counsel and help any member who is having spiritual

problems. The body of Christ is holy due to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the headship of Christ (Colossians 1:18). Therefore, the Church must function so as to assure the maintenance of the purity of its character with respect to both morals and doctrine. (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 1:16; 2 Peter 2:4-7; 2 John 9-11)

**A. The purposes for discipline:**

1. To assure the godly character of the local Church before God and man (Acts 5:1-13).
2. To restore the offending believer (Galatians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 2:4-11).
3. To serve as a warning to others (1 Timothy 5:20).
4. To maintain order in the assembly.

**B. The attitude of the Church in administering discipline:**

1. Meekness (Galatians 6:1)
2. Humility (Galatians 6:1)
3. Impartiality (1 Timothy 5:21)
4. Love (2 Corinthians 2:4)
5. Forgiveness (2 Corinthians 2:7; Luke 17:3-4)
6. Prayer (Matthew 18:18-20)

**C. Procedure for discipline. In cases of discipline the Church shall follow the guidelines for reconciliation set out in Matthew 18. If reconciliation fails, the Church may take action according to Matthew 18 to exclude the offending member. Exclusion shall be by Pastor and majority vote of Deacons. All disciplinary proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance.**

**D. Reinstatement of excluded members. The Church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person, and by Pastor and majority vote of Deacons upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.**

<b>ARTICLE 4 PASTOR</b>
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**4.01 Senior Pastor.** (herein referred to as Pastor) We believe that Christ is head over His body, the Church, and is Chief Shepherd of the flock. We also believe that God calls men to be Pastors of local churches. Such Pastors are to model the Christian life, feed the body of Christ spiritually, and lead the Church to minister. (Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

**4.02 Qualifications.** The qualifications for Pastor are:

- A.** General qualifications found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- B.** The Pastor should be a godly man of high moral character. While both men and women are gifted for service in the Church, the office of Pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture (1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- C.** The Pastor must acknowledge and be in agreement with the Statement of Faith per Article 20.

- D. The Pastor shall be doctrinally sound, evangelistic, missions minded, and shall have a shepherd's heart.

**4.03 Responsibilities.** The responsibilities of Pastor are:

- A. The Pastor's primary responsibility is to equip the Church for the work of the ministry and the building up of the Church for the glory of God.
- B. The Pastor shall be responsible to preach at the regular services of the Church and fill the pulpit in his absence.
- C. The Pastor shall lead the Church in visiting the lost, the sick and the bereaved.
- D. The Pastor shall oversee the counseling ministry to the Church and to the community.
- E. The Pastor shall make every effort to keep himself spiritually, mentally, physically and emotionally healthy, spending his time wisely to meet the needs of his family and ministry.

**4.04 Principal Executive Officer.** The Pastor shall be the Principal Executive Officer which includes the responsibilities of:

- A. The Pastor shall oversee all of the business and affairs of the Church. The Pastor may execute any contracts, or other instruments that the members have authorized to be executed. However, the Pastor may not execute mortgages, bonds, debt instruments, deeds or contracts related to real estate or any other instruments on behalf of the Church if this power is expressly delegated to another officer or agent of the Church by the members, the Bylaws, or statutes. The Pastor shall perform other duties prescribed by the members and all duties incident to the office of Pastor.
- B. The Pastor shall be the moderator of the Church or may designate a substitute moderator.
- C. It is the responsibility of the Pastor to give final approval for employment of all Ministerial Staff and Executive Staff with the advice of the Personnel Committee, and with approval of 2/3 majority of the Church members present and voting. For Executive Staff positions a vote shall be held at every campus. For all Ministerial Staff positions, the Personnel Committee shall determine the time and place for the vote as appropriate to the position.
- D. It is the responsibility of the Pastor to give final approval for employment of all non-ministerial staff.
- E. The Pastor shall have the responsibility of giving the final decision for dismissal of any ministerial staff and executive staff after approval of the Personnel Committee.
- F. The Pastor shall have the responsibility of giving the final decision of dismissal of any non-ministerial or non-executive staff.

**4.05 Selection of the Pastor.** The candidate for the position of Pastor shall be recommended to the Church by the Pastor Search Committee. The Pastor Search Committee (PSC) shall be comprised of one member from each campus of the Church plus seven additional members.

The members shall be selected as follows:



- A. The Pastor Search Committee selection process shall be administered by the Personnel Committee.
- B. The Body of Deacons shall select from among the Body of Deacons one member from each represented campus to serve on the PSC.
- C. The Personnel Committee shall determine the relative proportion of Bible Fellowship Group (BFG) attendance (average for the previous six months) at each campus and apply that same proportion to determine the number of representatives from each campus to be included for the seven additional members of the PSC.
- D. The Personnel Committee shall then create groups (Ballot Group) from among each campus BFGs according to the same number of representatives that will be on the PSC from each campus. The Ballot Groups shall be comprised in such a manner to be representative of all age levels as determined by the Personnel Committee.
- E. Each specified Ballot Group will select three nominees from among their group to be placed on a ballot for each campus. The Personnel Committee shall determine that each nominee to be placed on the final ballots meets the qualifications for Church Committee service per Section 8.03 B. Names will not appear more than once on the final ballot. Staff and members of their households shall not be eligible.
- F. The final ballot for each campus containing three nominees from each of the Ballot Groups shall be made available to Church at least seven days prior to Church vote. Members from each campus will vote for one nominee in each Ballot Group for their respective campus. The nominee with the most votes in each Ballot Group shall be placed on the PSC along with the member from each campus selected by the Body of Deacons. The chairman of the PSC shall be selected by the elected members of the PSC.
- G. Upon selection of a candidate for the position of Pastor, the committee shall bring the candidate before the Church. The election of a Pastor shall be administered by the Personnel Committee.

There must be approval by at least 85% of the Church members present and voting for the call of the Pastor.

**4.06 Tenure of Service.** The Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period. If the Church finds it necessary to terminate a pastor, it shall be done in the following manner:

- A. The Church should view termination only as a last resort after every attempt to reconcile differences has been made and ample time given for the Pastor to relocate if possible. The Body of Deacons shall be responsible to see that the spirit of this bylaw is followed.
- B. The Personnel Committee with advice and counsel of the Body of Deacons must make a recommendation for termination to the Church at all Sunday worship services with reasons given for the recommendations and date, time and location for the vote. The Personnel Committee shall have the authority to place the Pastor on paid or unpaid administrative leave with the advice and counsel of the Body of Deacons.

- C. Said vote to take place with due time given for discussion before a secret ballot. This meeting shall be presided over by the Chairman of Deacons.
- D. A majority vote of those present and voting, shall constitute termination with severance to be effective immediately.

**4.07 Pastoral Vacancy.** If the Pastor is incapacitated or if the pastorate is vacant, the Body of Deacons shall be responsible for assigning the position of interim Principle Executive Officer to an individual. This person will oversee the daily activities of the Church, and will have all the responsibilities stated above in Section 4.03 and 4.04 with the following exceptions:

- A. Dismissal of any professional ministerial staff or executive staff shall be done by the Personnel Committee after the advice and counsel of the Deacon Officers.
- B. The assigning of preaching duties to current staff and/or obtaining supply-preachers will be the responsibility of a committee made up of the Personnel Committee and the Deacon Officers which may be delegated to the interim Principle Executive Officer.

**ARTICLE 5  
CHURCH STAFF**

**5.01 Staff.** The Church staff is to serve with the Pastor and under his leadership and supervision in the function of the Church. The Executive and Ministerial Staff consists of vocational personnel who function under the leadership of the Pastor in a specific area of ministry. All new Executive Staff and Ministerial positions (as determined by the Personnel Committee) must be recommended by the Personnel Committee and approved by 2/3 majority of the Church members present and voting. For Executive Staff positions a vote shall be held at every campus. For all Ministerial Staff positions, the Personnel Committee shall determine the time and place for the vote as appropriate to the position.

All other new positions must be approved by the Personnel Committee.

**ARTICLE 6  
DEACONS**

**6.01 Deacons.** Following the meaning of the word and the New Testament, Deacons are to recognize their roles as ministering servants of the Church. Deacons shall aid the Pastor and extend his ministry as requested so that the Pastor's time might be given to his duties. Deacons shall minister to the people of the Church and serve as peacemakers.

**6.02 Responsibilities.** The Body of Deacons shall assist the Pastor in any way needed and perform any ministries deemed necessary by the Church. Deacons shall:

- A. Ministry
  - 1. Attend to the welfare of the people by ministering to the widows/widowers, sick, needy and distressed according to need,

2. Contact new and prospective members,
3. Be an example to the Church in prayer, worship, Bible study, Christian character, and general Church attendance, and
4. Assist in baptism and the observance of the Lord's Supper.

**B. General Operations of the Church**

1. Provide advice and counsel to all committees on any matter which the committees are to bring before the Church (other than from Nominating Committee),
2. Provide counsel and administration during a Pastoral vacancy,
3. Recommend to the Church in regular or special business meetings such policies, practices and procedures as they deem advisable, and
4. Through its officers, participate in the appointment of the Nominating Committee and the Chairpersons of Committees according to Section 8.09 and 8.10.

**6.03 Selection.** The Deacon Officers and Pastor shall determine if new deacons are needed and administer the nomination process, evaluation, election, training and ordination of new deacons.

- A. New deacon candidates shall be nominated by the Church.
- B. The Deacon Officers and Pastor shall determine which of the qualified nominees are to be presented to the Church for ratification.
- C. After ratification by the Church, the deacon candidate shall serve as a Deacon In Training for observation and training prior to becoming a part of the Body of Deacons. They shall attend Deacons' meetings but shall not have voting rights.
- D. After serving as a Deacon In Training and upon recommendation of the Deacon Officers and Pastor, the candidate, if not already ordained, shall be ordained. Following ordination, or following the recommendation of the Deacon Officers and Pastor if the candidate is already ordained, the candidate shall be a new active deacon of the Church and begin serving on the Body of Deacons.

**6.04 Qualifications.** Deacons must be members of the Church that are "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" as stated in Acts 6:3. They, and their wives, if married, must exhibit Christian character as described in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. They must tithe to this Church. They must have already proved themselves to be an example in ministry and involvement in Church life. The Deacon must acknowledge and be in agreement with the Statement of Faith per Article 20. A man that has never before served this Church as a deacon must be a member of the Church for a minimum of one year before election, and before serving as a Deacon in Training.

**6.05 Service and Classifications.** Service and classification of Deacons shall be:

- A. The Body of Deacons shall be comprised of those deacons that are actively serving.
- B. The Auxiliary Deacons are inactive (do not participate in meetings or ministry of the Body of Deacons) and shall be those deacons who either

1. have determined they are presently unable to serve on the Body of Deacons and have requested to remain on, or be transferred, to the Auxiliary Deacons, or

- 2. have been removed from the Body of Deacons by action of the Deacon officers because of temporary lack of qualification to continue in that body.
- C. The Deacon Emeritus status may be granted men who have faithfully given exceptional service to this Church on the Body of Deacons and who are no longer able to actively serve due to age or health. This status is an honor which may be bestowed rather than an alternative to service to be chosen by the individual deacon. This status may be granted after nomination by the Deacon Officers and Pastor and approval by the Body of Deacons. Deacons that have been granted the status of Deacon Emeritus shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Body of Deacons, participate in discussions and vote. The Deacon Emeritus will hold this status for as long as his walk with the Lord meets the qualifications as outlined in these Bylaws.
- D. The Deacons in Training (as described in Section 6.03 “Selection”).

**6.06 Deacon Officers.** The Body of Deacons shall annually elect a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary from the members who will be qualified to serve. The officers shall each serve for one year or until their successor has been elected or term of office is terminated as provided herein. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings and shall perform such other duties as the Body of Deacons may authorize. The Vice Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman upon the death, absence, resignation or inability of the Chairman to perform the duties of his office. The Secretary and/or the Assistant Secretary shall record the minutes of each meeting and keep such other records as are needed. Any officer elected by the Body of Deacons may be removed by them at any time whenever in their judgment the best interests of the Church will be served. Any office shall become vacant when the holder thereof dies, resigns, becomes incapacitated or is no longer a member of the Church.

**6.07 Meetings.** The Body of Deacons shall meet regularly at such time and place as they may determine. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, the Pastor or a majority of the Body of Deacons by giving notice thereof to each member and the Pastor. The presence of at least one-half of the members of the Body of Deacons shall constitute a quorum. The vote of a majority of the deacons present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient to decide any matter before the Body of Deacons unless otherwise provided by these bylaws. Participation in meetings is restricted to active and Deacon Emeritus members of the Body of Deacons, ministerial staff and individuals invited to attend by the Deacon Chairman or Pastor.

Each deacon on the Body of Deacons shall be required to attend two-thirds of the regularly scheduled meetings of the Body of Deacons in any calendar year. Any deacon that misses over one-third of the meetings shall be subject to transfer to the Auxiliary Deacons.

**6.08 Termination of Deacon.** The office of a deacon shall terminate upon:

- A. His death;
- B. His resignation;
- C. His removal from such office by a majority vote of Deacons;
- D. His joining another church.

**6.09 Deacon Officers and Pastor Responsibilities.** The Deacon Officers along with the Pastor shall:

- A. Nominate deacon officer candidates for the next year or to fill a vacancy. Members of the Body of Deacons may also nominate deacon officer candidates.
- B. Determine if new deacons are needed, and administer the nomination process, evaluation, election, training and ordination of new deacons.
- C. Appoint a Church Nominating Committee of at least nine members.
- D. Appoint chairpersons of all committees from among the respective committee members.
- E. Approve messengers to attend conventions or associations on behalf of the Church.

<b>ARTICLE 7 CORPORATE OFFICERS</b>
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**7.01 Principal Executive Officer.** The Pastor shall serve as Principal Executive Officer and shall oversee all of the business and affairs of the Church. The Pastor may execute any contracts or other instruments that the members have authorized to be executed. However, the Pastor may not execute mortgages, bonds, debt instruments, deeds or contracts related to real estate or any other instruments on behalf of the Church if this power is expressly delegated to another officer or agent of the Church by the members, the Bylaws, or statutes. The Pastor shall perform other duties prescribed by the members and all duties incident to the office of Pastor.

**7.02 President.** The office of President and Chairman of the Body of Deacons shall be held by the same person. In addition to his duties as Chairman of the Body of Deacons, the President's only other authority in the capacity of President shall be the power to execute instruments and agreements for mortgages, bonds, debt instruments, deeds or contracts related to real estate or any other instruments on behalf of the Church if this power is expressly delegated by the members, the Bylaws, or statutes when the execution thereof has been authorized as provided by these Bylaws.

**7.03 Vice-President.** The office of Vice-President and Vice Chairman of the Body of Deacons shall be held by the same person. In addition to his duties as Vice Chairman of the Body of Deacons, the Vice-President's only other authority in the capacity of Vice-President shall be the power to perform the duties of the President upon the death, absence, resignation, or inability of the President to perform the duties of his office.

**7.04 Secretary.** The Offices of Secretary and Secretary of the Body of Deacons shall be held by the same person. In addition to his duties as Secretary of the Body of Deacons, the Secretary's only other authority in the capacity of Secretary shall be the power to execute on behalf of the Church such instruments and agreements as may be required by the Church when the execution thereof has been authorized as provided in these Bylaws.

**7.05 Assistant Secretary.** The Office of Assistant Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Body of Deacons shall be held by the same person. In addition to his duties as Assistant Secretary of the Body of Deacons, the Assistant Secretary's only other authority in the capacity of Assistant Secretary shall be the power to execute on behalf of the Church such instruments and agreements as

*Bylaws of Cross Church DFW as adopted on*

may be required by the Church when the execution thereof has been authorized as provided in these Bylaws.

**7.06 Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall be the Church Business Administrator. The Treasurer may or may not be a Deacon, but must be a member of the Church. The Treasurer shall maintain a system of accounting that is consistent with sound business principles and faithful stewardship. The Treasurer shall:

- A. Have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Church.
- B. Receive and give receipts for moneys given to the Church from any source.
- C. Deposit all moneys in the name of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as provided in the Bylaws or as directed by the Finance Committee.
- D. Write checks and disburse funds to discharge the obligations of the Church.
- E. Maintain the financial books and records of the Church.
- F. Prepare financial reports and provide regular reports to Church leadership and the Church.
- G. Provide for a periodic audit of the church financial records.
- H. Supervise the development of an annual budget for the Church and submit it to the Finance Committee for consideration.
- I. Perform other duties as assigned by the Pastor or by the Finance Committee.
- J. If required by the Finance Committee, give a bond for the faithful discharge of his or her duties in a sum and with a surety as determined by the Finance Committee.
- K. Perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer.

**7.07 Assistant Officers.** The members may appoint one or more assistant officers.

**7.08 Compensation.** Unless expressly authorized by the Body of Deacons, the officers provided for in this Article shall receive no salary or compensation for their services as officers. However, the Business Administrator may receive salary or compensation for service as Business Administrator according to Personnel Committee recommendation.

<b>ARTICLE 8 COMMITTEES</b>
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**8.01 General.** Church committees and ministry teams are established and exist to support the mission, ministry, and operations of the Church. While the ultimate authority for governance of the Church is vested in the members in a congregational form of church governance, the members have chosen to delegate substantial authority to committees established by the Church. The members have retained the following authority exercised by Church vote and no Committee shall have authority for:

- A. Calling and dismissing the Pastor and other staff according to these bylaws.
- B. Nominating deacons.
- C. Electing or removing committee members.

- D. Adopting, amending or altering the Church's Certificate of Formation or Bylaws.
- E. Approving the Church's annual budget.
- F. Purchasing, selling or encumbering all real property, land and buildings.
- G. Relocating the principal office of the Church.
- H. Authorizing the sale, lease, exchange, or mortgage of all or substantially all of the property and assets of the Church.
- I. Borrowing money other than that which is consistent with the approved annual Church budget.
- J. Establishing a new Church campus or merge or consolidate with an existing church.
- K. Authorizing the voluntary dissolution of the Church and the related distribution of the assets of the Church.
- L. Revoking proceedings for the voluntary dissolution of the Church.

Committees shall not take any action outside the scope of authority delegated to it by the Church.

**8.02 Establishment of Committees.** The Church shall authorize such committees as are necessary to carry out its mission including those committees specified in these Bylaws. The Committee members shall be elected by a majority of the Church members present at a business meeting.

**8.03 Membership of Committees.**

- A. Members for Standing and Non-Standing Committees shall be recommended to the Church prior to March 31 of each year by the Nominating Committee. Church members may suggest nominations to the Nominating Committee by January 31 of each year by submission through the Pastor's office. Other Special Purpose Committees may be recommended to, and approved by the Church as needed. All Committee chairpersons shall be appointed by the Deacon Officers and Pastor from among the Committee members.
- B. All committee members shall:
  1. Be members of this Church for at least two years.
  2. Be an active participant in the Church and have demonstrated a commitment to the mission, objective, and values of the Church.
  3. Have demonstrated a consistency in stewardship with the tithe through the Church as a minimal level of giving.
  4. Reflect and have demonstrated spiritual maturity, godly wisdom, and a committed faith that evidences the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
  5. Meet additional requirements as stated in the Committee Manual.
- C. Members of Standing and Non-Standing Committees shall be elected for a three-year term with one-third rotating off each year. In the event a Committee member is unable to complete a full term, a replacement member may be elected to complete the vacated term. Members of Special Purpose Committees shall be elected for the duration of the length of existence of the Special Purpose Committee.
- D. The Pastor shall serve as ex-officio member of all committees.

- E. The Pastor may assign a member of the staff to be available for advice and assistance for each committee with no voting privileges.
- F. The members shall serve upon election to a committee and until replacement members have been elected.
- G. Members should recuse themselves from voting if there is a conflict of interest and abide by the Church's Conflict of Interest policy as established by the Finance Committee.

**8.04 Standing Committees.** The following list of committees shall be standing committees with duties and responsibilities specified in the Committee Manual.

- A. Finance.
- B. Personnel.
- C. Properties.
- D. Long-Range Planning.

**8.05 Non-Standing Committees.** The Nominating Committee shall also establish other Non-Standing Committees as deemed necessary for the proper management, oversight or operation of the Church. Any Non-Standing Committee shall continue until such time as the Nominating Committee determines the committee is no longer necessary.

**8.06 Special Purpose Committees.** A Special Purpose Committee may be established for a particular purpose and will be discontinued once the particular purpose is completed.

**8.07 Task Force.** The Pastor may appoint a Task Force for studying, evaluating, implementing or advising related to one or more particular issues. Any action that would require Church approval would be required to be reviewed and approved by the most appropriate elected Committee.

**8.08 Deacon Advice and Counsel.** All business of each Committee (other than Nominating Committee) to be brought before the Church shall first be brought before the Body of Deacons for their advice and counsel.

**8.09 Nominating Committee.** During the first quarter of each year, there shall be a Nominating Committee of nine members appointed by the Deacon Officers and Pastor. It shall be the duty of this Nominating Committee to nominate members for all Committees unless otherwise provided by these Bylaws. The Nominating Committee shall take into consideration appropriate representation from each campus of the Church.

The Nominating Committee shall also approve a Committee Manual describing the responsibilities and duties of each committee. Provisions of these bylaws shall supersede the Committee Manual.

**8.10 Chair.** All Committee chairpersons shall be appointed from the Committee members by the Deacon Officers and Pastor. Normally the chairperson of a Standing Committee shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.



**8.11 Notice of Meetings.** Written, printed or electronic (such as videoconference, email, telephone and internet or other suitable electronic communication system) notice of a committee meeting shall be delivered to each member of a committee not less than one (1) day before the date of the meeting. The notice shall state the place, day, and time of the meeting, and the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called.

**8.12 Remote Meetings.** Committees may meet or conduct business by any remote communications technology including videoconference email, telephone, internet or other suitable electronic communication systems.

**8.13 Quorum.** One half of the number of members of a committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the committee. The committee members present at a duly called or held meeting at which a quorum is present may continue to transact business even if enough committee members leave the meeting so that less than a quorum remains. However, no action may be approved without the vote of at least a majority of the number of committee members required to constitute a quorum. If a quorum is present at no time during a meeting, the chair may adjourn and reconvene the meeting one time without further notice.

**8.14 Actions of Committees.** Committees shall try to take action by consensus. However, the vote of a majority of committee members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be sufficient to constitute the act of the committee unless the law or the Bylaws require the act of a greater number. A committee member who is present at a meeting and abstains from a vote is considered to be present and voting to determine the act of the committee.

**8.15 Compensation.** Committee members may not receive salaries or compensation for their services as Committee members.

**8.16 Rules.** Each committee may adopt rules for its operation consistent with the Bylaws, Committee Manual or with rules adopted by the members.

<b>ARTICLE 9 ORDINANCES</b>
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**9.01 Baptism.** This Church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

- A. Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
- B. The Pastor, or whoever is authorized by the Pastor, shall administer baptism.

**9.02 Lord's Supper.** Utilizing the two symbolic elements of bread and the fruit of the vine, the Church shall regularly observe the Lord's Supper. In accordance with the spirit of 1 Corinthians 11:28, those present are urged to examine themselves as to Christian conversion and as to an obedient Christian walk. The Pastor, or whoever is authorized by the Pastor, shall administer the Lord's Supper.

**ARTICLE 10  
CHURCH MEETINGS**

**10.01 Worship Service.** The Church shall meet regularly for worship, Bible study, prayer, praise, preaching, instruction, and evangelism. These meetings will be open for all members of the Church and others who choose to attend. The Church reserves the right to remove any person deemed to be disruptive, which is determined by a Church Officer. The Pastor, or someone designated by him, shall give direction to these services.

**10.02 Business Meetings.** Business meetings shall be held as needed but at least annually for the purposes of adopting a Church operating budget and election of Committee members. Business meetings may be held by giving advance notice by written or oral announcement at a Sunday worship service at all campuses. Business meetings may be called by Pastor, Majority of Deacon Officers or by Standing Committees. Only items that have been recommended for a member vote by a committee, the Deacon Body, or the ministerial staff may be presented for a vote at a Business Meeting. Any new business or recommendations by members will be referred to the appropriate Committee for consideration.

**10.03 Quorum.** The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting. Passage of business matters shall be by majority vote of those present in-person and voting unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws.

**10.04 Townhall Meeting Provision.** The Townhall Meeting Provision shall apply to the adoption of a significant item of business that requires a significant amount of shared information and which would require additional consideration and evaluation by the recommending committee for any proposed amendments to the item of business. This Provision requires that the recommending committee share the recommendation to the Church in writing prior to the Business Meeting. An informational Townhall Meeting, or multiple Townhall Meetings, will also be called for members to receive the detailed information, make suggestions for amendments, additions to, or deletions from the recommendation. The member suggestions will be referred to the recommending committee for review, evaluation and consideration which may amend the recommendation prior to the Church Business Meeting. Amendments shall be disclosed at the Business Meeting and the Church shall vote on the matter without further discussion or floor amendments.

The Townhall Meeting Provision shall be used for the approval of the annual Church budget.

**10.05 Parliamentary Rules.** The members may adopt rules for parliamentary procedure appropriate for the circumstances.

**10.06 Moderator.** The Pastor shall serve as moderator of all Church meetings. He may also designate an alternate moderator as required.

**ARTICLE 11**

## TRANSACTIONS OF THE CHURCH

**11.01 Contracts.** The members may authorize any officer or agent of the Church to enter into a contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church. This authority may be limited to a specific contract or instrument, or it may extend to any number and type of possible contracts and instruments.

**11.02 Deposits.** All funds of the Church shall be deposited to the credit of the Church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories that the Finance Committee selects.

**11.03 Gifts.** The Finance Committee may accept on behalf of the Church any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the general purposes or any special purpose of the Church.

**11.04 Loans and Related Parties.** The Church shall not make any loan to a Finance Committee member or officer of the Church.

**11.05 Affiliated Transactions.** No contract or transaction between the Church and one or more of its Committee members or officers who have a financial interest, shall be void or voidable solely for this reason, if the Church Conflict of Interest policy has been adhered to.

**11.06 Prohibited Acts.** As long as the Church is in existence, and except with the prior approval of the members, an officer or committee member of the Church shall not:

- A. Do any act in violation of the Bylaws or a binding obligation of the Church.
- B. Do any act with the intention of harming the Church or any of its operations.
- C. Do any act that would make it impossible or unnecessarily difficult to carry on the intended or ordinary business of the Church.
- D. Receive an improper personal benefit from the operation of the Church.
- E. Use the assets of this Church, directly or indirectly, for any purpose other than carrying on the business of this Church.
- F. Wrongfully transfer or dispose of Church property, including intangible property such as goodwill.
- G. Use the name of the Church (or any substantially similar name) or any trademark or trade name adopted by the Church, except on behalf of the Church in the ordinary course of the Church's business.

**ARTICLE 12**  
**BOOKS AND RECORDS**

**12.01 Required Books and Records.** The Church shall keep correct and complete books and records of account. The Church's books and records shall include:

- A. A file-endorsed copy of all documents filed with the Texas Secretary of State relating to the Church, including, but not limited to, the Certificate of Formation, and any articles of amendment, restated articles, articles of merger, articles of consolidation, and statement of change of registered office or registered agent.
- B. A copy of the Bylaws, and any amended versions or amendments to the Bylaws.
- C. Minutes of the proceedings of the members and committees having any of the authority of the members. Such minutes shall be maintained per the direction of the Executive Pastor.
- D. A list of the names and addresses of the officers, and any committee members of the Church.
- E. A financial statement showing the assets, liabilities, and net worth of the Church at the end of the three (3) most recent fiscal years.
- F. A financial statement showing the income and expenses of the Church for the three (3) most recent fiscal years.
- G. All rulings, letters, and other documents relating to the Church's federal, state, and local tax status.
- H. The Church's federal, state, and local information or income tax returns for each of the Church's three most recent tax years.

**12.02 Inspection and Copying.** Any member or officer of the Church may inspect and receive copies of all books and records of the Church required to be kept by the Bylaws. Such a person may inspect or receive copies if the person has a proper purpose related to the person's interest in the Church and if the person submits a request in writing. Any person entitled to inspect and copy the Church's books and records may do so. A person entitled to inspect the Church's books and records may do so at a reasonable time no later than required by Internal Revenue Regulation after the Church's receipt of a proper written request. The Officers may establish reasonable fees for copying the Church's books and records by members. The fees may cover the cost of materials and labor, but may not exceed the Internal Revenue Service guidelines for providing copies. The Internal Revenue Service requires that copies be made available to the legitimate, requesting public. The Church shall maintain a file containing all documents required by the Internal Revenue Service to be made available to the public.

**ARTICLE 13**  
**FISCAL YEAR**

**13.01 Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the Church shall begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and end December 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

**ARTICLE 14**  
**INDEMNIFICATION**

**14.01 When Indemnification is Required, Permitted, and Prohibited.**

- A.** The Church shall indemnify a trustee, officer, committee member, employee, or agent of the Church who was, is, or may be named defendant or respondent in any proceeding as a result of his or her actions or omissions within the scope of his or her official capacity in the Church. For this Article, an agent includes one who is or was serving at the request of the Church as a trustee, officer, partner, venturer, proprietor, partnership, joint venture, sole proprietorship, trust, employee benefit plan, or another enterprise. However, the Church shall indemnify a person only if he or she acted in good faith and reasonably believed that the conduct was in the Church's best interests. In the case of a criminal proceeding, the person may be indemnified only if he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that the conduct was unlawful.
- B.** The termination of a proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent does not necessarily preclude indemnification by the Church under Section 14.01 A.
- C.** The Church shall not indemnify a person who is found liable to the Church or is found liable to another based on improperly receiving a personal benefit. A person is conclusively considered to have been found liable concerning any claim, issue, or matter if a court of competent jurisdiction has adjudged the person liable and all appeals have been exhausted.
- D.** The Church shall pay or reimburse reasonable expenses incurred by a trustee, officer, committee member, employee, or agent of the Church in connection with the person's appearance as a witness or other participation in a proceeding involving or affecting the Church when the person is not a named defendant or respondent in the proceeding.
- E.** In addition to the situations otherwise described above, the Church may indemnify a trustee, officer, committee member, employee, or agent of the Church to the extent permitted by law. However, the Church shall not indemnify any person in any situation in which indemnification is prohibited by the terms of Section 14.01 C., above.
- F.** Before the final disposition of a proceeding, the Church may pay indemnification expenses permitted by the Bylaws and authorized by the Church. However, the Church shall not pay indemnification expenses to a person before the final disposition of a proceeding if the person is a named defendant or respondent in a proceeding brought by the Church or the person is alleged to have improperly received a personal benefit or committed other willful or intentional misconduct.
- G.** If the Church indemnifies a person under the Bylaws, the person may be indemnified against judgments, penalties (including excise and similar taxes), fines, settlements, and reasonable expenses (including attorney's fees) actually incurred in connection with the proceeding. However, if the proceeding was brought by or on behalf of the Church, the indemnification is limited to reasonable expenses actually incurred by the person in connection with the proceeding.

#### **14.02 Procedures Relating to Indemnification Payments.**

- A.** Before the Church may pay any indemnification expenses (including attorney's fees), the Church shall specifically: (1) determine that indemnification is permissible, (2) authorize indemnification, and (3) determine that expenses to be reimbursed are reasonable, except as provided in Section 14.02 C., below. The Church may make these determinations and decisions by any one of the following procedures:
1. Majority vote of a quorum consisting of Finance Committee who, at the time of the vote, are not named defendants or respondents in the proceeding.
  2. If such a quorum cannot be obtained, by a majority vote of a committee of the Finance Committee, designated to act in the matter by a majority vote of all Finance Committee, consisting solely of two or more Finance Committee members who at the time of the vote are not named defendants or respondents in the proceeding.
  3. Determination by special legal counsel selected by the Finance Committee by vote as provided in Section 14.02 A 1. or 14.02 A 2., or if such a quorum cannot be obtained, and such a committee cannot be established, by a majority vote of all Finance Committee members.
- B.** The Church shall determine whether indemnification is permissible using the same process by which the Church authorizes indemnification and determines that expenses to be reimbursed are reasonable. However, if the determination that indemnification is permissible is made by special legal counsel under Section 14.02 A 3., above, then the authorization of indemnification and determination of reasonableness of expenses shall be made in the manner specified by either Section 14.02 A 1. or Section 14.02 A 2., above.
- C.** A provision contained in the Certificate of Formation, the Bylaws, or a resolution of members that requires the indemnification permitted by Section 14.01, above, constitutes sufficient authorization of indemnification even though the provision may not have been adopted or authorized in the same manner as the determination that indemnification is permissible.
- D.** The Church shall pay indemnification expenses before final disposition of a proceeding only after the Church determines that the facts then known would not preclude indemnification and the Church receives a written affirmation and undertaking from the person to be indemnified. The determination that the facts then known to those making the determination would not preclude indemnification and authorization of payment shall be made in the same manner as a determination that indemnification is permissible under Section 14.02 A., above. The person's written affirmation shall state that he or she has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification under the Bylaws. The written undertaking shall provide for the repayment of the amount paid or reimbursed by the Church if it is ultimately determined that the person has not met the requirements for indemnification. The written undertaking shall be an unlimited general obligation of the person, but it need

not be secured, and it may be accepted without reference to financial ability to make repayment.

## ARTICLE 15 NOTICES

**15.01 Notices.** Any notice required or permitted by the Bylaws to be given to an officer, member or a committee member of the Church may be given in any manner allowed by the Act. If mailed, a notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail addressed to the person at his or her address as it appears on the records of the Church, with postage prepaid and in a sealed wrapper.

If notice is served by facsimile or electronic message, the person giving notice shall retain records sufficient to prove actual delivery to the appropriate number or email address. A person may designate his or her preferred notice method (facsimile or electronic message) and shall provide all necessary information regarding the same by giving written notice to the Secretary of the Church. Without a preference designation, the person serving the notice shall give notice by electronic message.

**15.02 Signed Waiver of Notice.** Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the Act or the provisions of the Certificate of Formation or the Bylaws, a waiver in writing signed by a person entitled to receive a notice shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of the notice. A waiver of notice shall be effective whether signed before or after the time stated in the notice being waived.

**15.03 Waiver of Notice by Attendance.** The attendance of a person at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of the meeting unless the person attends for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

## ARTICLE 16 AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS

**16.01 Amendments.** The Bylaws may be revised or amended at any business meeting by a two-third (2/3) majority vote of the members present and voting. The proposed revision or amendment shall have been submitted to members of the Church in writing at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the meeting. Any Standing Committee may make a recommendation for revision or amendments. In addition, the Deacon Officers and Pastor may appoint a Bylaws Committee to study and make recommendations to the Church for amendment. If a Committee makes a recommendation, then the Townhall Meeting Provision shall be used to approve the recommendation.

**ARTICLE 17**  
**MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

**17.01 Legal Authorities Governing Construction of Bylaws.** The Bylaws shall be construed following the laws of the State of Texas. All references in the Bylaws to statutes, regulations, or other sources of legal authority shall refer to the authorities cited, or their successors, as they may be amended from time to time.

**17.02 Legal Construction.** If any Bylaw provision is held to be invalid, illegal, or unenforceable in any respect, the invalidity, illegality, or unenforceability shall not affect any other provision and the Bylaws shall be construed as if the invalid, illegal, or unenforceable provision had not been included in the Bylaws.

**17.03 Headings.** The headings used in the Bylaws are used for convenience and shall not be considered in construing the terms of the Bylaws.

**17.04 Gender.** Except for the Pastor and Deacons, wherever the context requires, all words in the Bylaws in the male gender shall be deemed to include the female or neuter gender, all singular words shall include the plural, and all plural words shall include the singular.

**17.05 Seal.** The members may provide for a corporate seal.

**17.06 Power of Attorney.** A person may execute any instrument related to the Church by means of a power of attorney if an original executed copy of the power of attorney is provided to the Secretary or Treasurer of the Church to be kept with the Church records.

**17.07 Parties Bound.** The Bylaws shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the officers, committee members, employees, and agents of the Church and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors, and assigns except as otherwise provided in the Bylaws.

**17.08 Electronic Signatures.** To the fullest extent permitted by the Act and other law, including the Texas Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, electronic signatures (such as e-mail) of Board members, officers, committee members, and any member, as between each other or each of them and the Church, shall constitute the valid signature of the person for purposes of obtaining consents or other matters prescribed by these Bylaws, unless the individual submits a prior written refusal to conduct any or certain transactions by electronic means.

**ARTICLE 18**  
**EMERGENCY BYLAWS AND GOVERNANCE**

**18.01 Emergency Defined.** An “emergency” exists for the purposes of this Article if the members could not meet or a quorum of any committee established by these Bylaws or a quorum



of Deacon Body cannot readily be obtained because of some catastrophic event, as reasonably determined by the Deacon Body.

**18.02 Modifications in an Emergency.** In the event of an emergency, the Deacon Body shall act in good faith and in the best interest of the Church and in doing so may: (i) modify lines of succession to accommodate the incapacity or unavailability of any member, member of the Deacon Body, committee member, officer, employee or agent; (ii) relocate the principal office, designate alternative principal offices or regional office, or authorize officers to do so; and (iii) take any action deemed necessary or appropriate by the Deacon Body, including any action that, in the absence of an emergency, would require a vote of the members.

**18.03 Notice and Quorum in an Emergency.** During an emergency, notice of an applicable meeting only needs to be given to those individuals whom it is practicable, and such notice may be given in any reasonable manner, including by publication, written or verbal, such as on the Church's website or social media accounts or by radio, and with any amount of notice that is reasonable, as determined by the Deacon Body. One or more officers of the Church present at a Deacon Body meeting called under these emergency procedures may be deemed Deacon Body for that meeting.

**18.04 Action in an Emergency.** Corporate action taken in good faith during an emergency binds the Church and may not be the basis for imposing liability on any member, Deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church on the ground that the action was not authorized. Any action taken will be published or announced to the members within a reasonable time after the action is taken and in any reasonable manner as described in Section 15.01. The Deacon Body may also adopt emergency bylaws or procedures, subject to amendments or repeal by the members, which may include provisions necessary for managing the Church during an emergency. The emergency bylaws shall remain in effect during the emergency and shall be revoked after the Deacon Body have deemed that the emergency has ended or after the conditions of emergency in Section 18.01 no longer exist.

<b>ARTICLE 19</b> <b>MINISTER LICENSE AND ORDINATION</b>
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**19.01 To the Gospel Ministry.** From time to time the Church shall license or ordain to the gospel ministry men who have shown evidence of divine call in their lives.

- A. Gospel Ministry License.** A license to preach the gospel shall be issued upon recommendation of a council of ordained ministers convened by the Pastor to examine the candidate.
- B. Gospel Ministry Ordination.** A man may be ordained to the gospel ministry following the recommendation of the Body of Deacons or Pastor. Upon recommendation, the Pastor shall convene a council of ordained ministers and deacons to examine the candidate. His life, doctrine, and call shall be examined in light of I Timothy 3:1-7 and other applicable Scriptures. At the ordination service a body of all ordained men present shall be formed to receive the recommendation of the examining council. Upon acceptance of the examining council's report, the

Church shall vote to proceed with the ordination.

- C. **Gospel Ministry Limits and Revocation.** The licensing or ordination of this Church is valid for the lifetime of the minister. However, the Church reserves the right to withdraw upon majority vote of a licensing or ordination council convened by the Pastor any license or ordination it has issued should the life of the minister cease to bear those qualities required for such recognition.

**19.02 To the Deacon Ministry.** From time to time the Church shall ordain Deacons for service.

- A. **Deacon Ordination.** Upon the recommendation of the Deacon Officers and Pastor the Church shall ordain the unordained Deacons as soon as convenient following their service as a Deacon in Training. At the ordination service, a body of ordained men present shall lay hands on the candidate and ordain them to the Deacon ministry.
- B. **Deacon Limits and Revocation.** The ordination of this Church is valid for the lifetime of the Deacon. However, the Church reserves the right to withdraw the ordination upon majority vote of Deacons should the life of the Deacon cease to bear those qualities required for such recognition.

## ARTICLE 20

### STATEMENT OF FAITH

We affirm the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God and the basis for our beliefs. The Church accepts and affirms The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in the year 2000 and also accepts and affirms the Nashville Statement adopted in the year 2017:

#### **Baptist Faith & Message 2000**

##### **I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

[Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.](#)

##### **II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including

*Bylaws of Cross Church DFW as adopted on [REDACTED]*

the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

[Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.](#)

### **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

[Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5; 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.](#)

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour, and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

[Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.](#)

### **III. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

[Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.](#)

### **IV. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

[Genesis 3:15](#); [Exodus 3:14-17](#); [6:2-8](#); [Matthew 1:21](#); [4:17](#); [16:21-26](#); [27:22-28:6](#); [Luke 1:68-69](#); [2:28-32](#); [John 1:11-14,29](#); [3:3-21,36](#); [5:24](#); [10:9,28-29](#); [15:1-16](#); [17:17](#); [Acts 2:21](#); [4:12](#); [15:11](#); [16:30-31](#); [17:30-31](#); [20:32](#); [Romans 1:16-18](#); [2:4](#); [3:23-25](#); [4:3ff.](#); [5:8-10](#); [6:1-23](#); [8:1-18,29-39](#); [10:9-10,13](#); [13:11-14](#); [1 Corinthians 1:18,30](#); [6:19-20](#); [15:10](#); [2 Corinthians 5:17-20](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [3:13](#); [5:22-25](#); [6:15](#); [Ephesians 1:7](#); [2:8-22](#); [4:11-16](#); [Philippians 2:12-13](#); [Colossians 1:9-22](#); [3:1ff.](#); [1 Thessalonians 5:23-24](#); [2 Timothy 1:12](#); [Titus 2:11-14](#); [Hebrews 2:1-3](#); [5:8-9](#); [9:24-28](#); [11:1-12:8,14](#); [James 2:14-26](#); [1 Peter 1:2-23](#); [1 John 1:6-2:11](#); [Revelation 3:20](#); [21:1-22:5](#).

## **V. God's Purpose of Grace**

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

[Genesis 12:1-3](#); [Exodus 19:5-8](#); [1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22](#); [Isaiah 5:1-7](#); [Jeremiah 31:31ff.](#); [Matthew 16:18-19](#); [21:28-45](#); [24:22,31](#); [25:34](#); [Luke 1:68-79](#); [2:29-32](#); [19:41-44](#); [24:44-48](#); [John 1:12-14](#); [3:16](#); [5:24](#); [6:44-45,65](#); [10:27-29](#); [15:16](#); [17:6,12,17-18](#); [Acts 20:32](#); [Romans 5:9-10](#); [8:28-39](#); [10:12-15](#); [11:5-7,26-36](#); [1 Corinthians 1:1-2](#); [15:24-28](#); [Ephesians 1:4-23](#); [2:1-10](#); [3:1-11](#); [Colossians 1:12-14](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:13-14](#); [2 Timothy 1:12](#); [2:10,19](#); [Hebrews 11:39-12:2](#); [James 1:12](#); [1 Peter 1:2-5,13](#); [2:4-10](#); [1 John 1:7-9](#); [2:19](#); [3:2](#).

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation.

[Matthew 16:15-19](#); [18:15-20](#); [Acts 2:41-42,47](#); [5:11-14](#); [6:3-6](#); [13:1-3](#); [14:23,27](#); [15:1-30](#); [16:5](#); [20:28](#); [Romans 1:7](#); [1 Corinthians 1:2](#); [3:16](#); [5:4-5](#); [7:17](#); [9:13-14](#); [12](#); [Ephesians 1:22-23](#); [2:19-22](#); [3:8-11,21](#); [5:22-32](#); [Philippians 1:1](#); [Colossians 1:18](#); [1 Timothy 2:9-14](#); [3:1-15](#); [4:14](#); [Hebrews 11:39-40](#); [1 Peter 5:1-4](#); [Revelation 2-3](#); [21:2-3](#).

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

[Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.](#)

### **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

[Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.](#)

### **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

[Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.](#)

### **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

[Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.](#)

### **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

[Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.](#)

## **XII. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

[Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.](#)

## **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

[Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.](#)

## **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

[Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.](#)

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

[Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; ; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; ; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.](#)

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

[Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.](#)

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**



God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

[Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; ; 13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.](#)

### **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

[Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.](#)



# NASHVILLE STATEMENT

A COALITION FOR BIBLICAL SEXUALITY

*“Know that the LORD Himself is God;  
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves...”*  
-**Psalm 100:3**

## **Preamble**

Evangelical Christians at the dawn of the twenty-first century find themselves living in a period of historic transition. As Western culture has become increasingly post-Christian, it has embarked upon a massive revision of what it means to be a human being. By and large the spirit of our age no longer discerns or delights in the beauty of God’s design for human life. Many deny that God created human beings for his glory, and that his good purposes for us include our personal and physical design as male and female. It is common to think that human identity as male and female is not part of God’s beautiful plan, but is, rather, an expression of an individual’s autonomous preferences. The pathway to full and lasting joy through God’s good design for his creatures is thus replaced by the path of shortsighted alternatives that, sooner or later, ruin human life and dishonor God.

This secular spirit of our age presents a great challenge to the Christian church. Will the church of the Lord Jesus Christ lose her biblical conviction, clarity, and courage, and blend into the spirit of the age? Or will she hold fast to the word of life, draw courage from Jesus, and unashamedly proclaim his way as the way of life? Will she maintain her clear, counter-cultural witness to a world that seems bent on ruin?

We are persuaded that faithfulness in our generation means declaring once again the true story of the world and of our place in it—particularly as male and female. Christian Scripture teaches that there is but one God who alone is Creator and Lord of all. To him alone, every person owes glad-hearted thanksgiving, heart-felt praise, and total allegiance. This is the path not only of glorifying God, but of knowing ourselves. To forget our Creator is to forget who we are, for he made us for himself. And we cannot know ourselves truly without truly knowing him who made us. We did not make ourselves. We are not our own. Our true identity, as male and female persons, is given by God. It is not only foolish, but hopeless, to try to make ourselves what God did not create us to be.

We believe that God’s design for his creation and his way of salvation serve to bring him the greatest glory and bring us the greatest good. God’s good plan provides us with the greatest freedom. Jesus said he came that we might have life and have it in overflowing measure. He is for us and not against us. Therefore, in the hope of serving Christ’s church and witnessing publicly to the good purposes of God for human sexuality revealed in Christian Scripture, we offer the following affirmations and denials.

**Article 1**

WE AFFIRM that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife, and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and his bride the church.

WE DENY that God has designed marriage to be a homosexual, polygamous, or polyamorous relationship. We also deny that marriage is a mere human contract rather than a covenant made before God.

**Article 2**

WE AFFIRM that God’s revealed will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage.

WE DENY that any affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual intercourse before or outside marriage; nor do they justify any form of sexual immorality.

**Article 3**

WE AFFIRM that God created Adam and Eve, the first human beings, in his own image, equal before God as persons, and distinct as male and female.

WE DENY that the divinely ordained differences between male and female render them unequal in dignity or worth.

**Article 4**

WE AFFIRM that divinely ordained differences between male and female reflect God’s original creation design and are meant for human good and human flourishing.

WE DENY that such differences are a result of the Fall or are a tragedy to be overcome.

**Article 5**

WE AFFIRM that the differences between male and female reproductive structures are integral to God’s design for self-conception as male or female.

WE DENY that physical anomalies or psychological conditions nullify the God-appointed link between biological sex and self-conception as male or female.

**Article 6**

WE AFFIRM that those born with a physical disorder of sex development are created in the image of God and have dignity and worth equal to all other image-bearers. They are acknowledged by our Lord Jesus in his words about “eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb.” With all others they are welcome as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and should embrace their biological sex insofar as it may be known.

WE DENY that ambiguities related to a person’s biological sex render one incapable of living a fruitful life in joyful obedience to Christ.

**Article 7**

WE AFFIRM that self-conception as male or female should be defined by God’s holy purposes in creation and redemption as revealed in Scripture.

WE DENY that adopting a homosexual or transgender self-conception is consistent with God’s holy purposes in creation and redemption.

**Article 8**

WE AFFIRM that people who experience sexual attraction for the same sex may live a rich and fruitful life pleasing to God through faith in Jesus Christ, as they, like all Christians, walk in purity of life.

WE DENY that sexual attraction for the same sex is part of the natural goodness of God’s original creation, or that it puts a person outside the hope of the gospel.

**Article 9**

WE AFFIRM that sin distorts sexual desires by directing them away from the marriage covenant and toward sexual immorality— a distortion that includes both heterosexual and homosexual immorality.

WE DENY that an enduring pattern of desire for sexual immorality justifies sexually immoral behavior.

**Article 10**

WE AFFIRM that it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness.

WE DENY that the approval of homosexual immorality or transgenderism is a matter of moral indifference about which otherwise faithful Christians should agree to disagree.

**Article 11**

WE AFFIRM our duty to speak the truth in love at all times, including when we speak to or about one another as male or female.

WE DENY any obligation to speak in such ways that dishonor God’s design of his image-bearers as male and female.

**Article 12**

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ gives both merciful pardon and transforming power, and that this pardon and power enable a follower of Jesus to put to death sinful desires and to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ is insufficient to forgive all sexual sins and to give power for holiness to every believer who feels drawn into sexual sin.

**Article 13**

WE AFFIRM that the grace of God in Christ enables sinners to forsake transgender self-conceptions and by divine forbearance to accept the God-ordained link between one’s biological sex and one’s self-conception as male or female.

WE DENY that the grace of God in Christ sanctions self-conceptions that are at odds with God’s revealed will.

**Article 14**

WE AFFIRM that Christ Jesus has come into the world to save sinners and that through Christ’s death and resurrection forgiveness of sins and eternal life are available to every person who repents of sin and trusts in Christ alone as Savior, Lord, and supreme treasure.

WE DENY that the Lord’s arm is too short to save or that any sinner is beyond his reach.

### Scripture References\*

Gen. 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-24; Ex. 20:14; 20:17; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Dt. 5:18, 21; 22:5; Jdg. 19:22; 2 Sam. 11:1-12:15; Job 31:1; Ps. 51:1-19; Prov. 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; Isa. 59:1; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 5:27-30; 19:4-6, 8-9, 12; Acts 15:20, 29; Rom. 1:26-27; 1:32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18-20; 7:1-7; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 5:24; Eph. 4:15, 20-24; 5:31-32; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 1 Tim. 1:9-10, 15; 2 Tim. 2:22; Titus 2:11-12; Heb. 13:4; Jas. 1:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:11; Jude 7

\* Scripture texts are not a part of the original document but have been added subsequently for reference

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**CERTIFICATE OF CHURCH SECRETARY**

I hereby certify that I am duly elected and acting Secretary of said Church and that the foregoing Bylaws, comprised of \_\_\_\_\_pages, constitute the Bylaws of said Church as duly adopted by the members at a meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_.

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ [Signature]

\_\_\_\_\_ [Typed Name]

Secretary of the Church