

Pebble Creek Assembly of God
Bylaws
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RECOMMENDED

Bylaws

FOR

General Council Affiliated Assemblies

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony, to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ, by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands, and to assume our share of responsibility as a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world; we, the members of this assembly, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with, and as a part of, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God; and that we do hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this assembly shall be Pebble Creek Assembly of God. This assembly's affiliation with the Assemblies of God shall be made known in its name, its advertising, and its publications.

ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES AND PURPOSES

The prerogatives and purposes of a General Council affiliated assembly shall be as follows.

A. This assembly shall have the right to govern itself and to conduct its own affairs according to the standard of the New Testament Scriptures and of the Southern Missouri District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This right shall specifically include such matters as the calling of a Pastor, the election of the Church Board, the discipline of its members, and the conducting of its own services and church program.

B. In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by its charter or by the applicable nonprofit corporation law of this state; all in accordance with its Bylaws as the same may be hereafter amended.

C. This assembly is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law. In particular, this assembly is organized exclusively for the following purposes: To establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; and to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands.

D. This assembly shall cooperate with the District Council and the General Council to extend the work and Kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council and General Council sessions through its chosen delegates and share in the support of the ministries of these bodies.

E. This assembly shall recognize that the District Council and the General Council have the authority and right to approve scriptural doctrine; also, to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and to withdraw their certificates of membership if deemed necessary.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs as herein set forth, this assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith, associated in the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

Officers of the District Council and General Council shall be recognized and respected by the Pastor and members of this assembly.

As a member of the General Council, this assembly has the right to request the assistance of both the General Council and the District Council in dealing with any of its problems, upon the request of the Pastor, a majority of the Church Board, or a petition signed by at least 30% of the voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

It is understood and agreed that this assembly shall conform its standards of membership, qualifications for deacons, and requirements for a Pastor, to those standards which are set by the District Council and General Council.

By its affiliation, the assembly, its directors, officers and members agree to submit to the authority of and be governed by the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God and the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God as now in effect or hereafter amended. Pebble Creek uses the current SMDC recommended bylaws with no changes as official bylaws.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

THE ADORABLE GODHEAD

a. Terms Defined. The terms trinity and persons, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

b. Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead. Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

c. Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11, 21; Zechariah 14:9).

d. Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; 8:17,18).

e. The Title, Lord Jesus Christ. The appellation Lord Jesus Christ, is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

f. The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us. The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us. (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

g. The Title, Son of God. Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one Person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

h. Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ. Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14, 18,29,49; 1 John 2: 22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

i. Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord. The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

j. Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son. Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead (except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2: 8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).
- b. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- e. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- f. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

a. Conditions to Salvation. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

b. The Evidences of Salvation. The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

a. Baptism in Water. The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

b. Holy Communion. The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23). Since God’s purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a.** To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b.** To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c.** To be a channel of God’s purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).

d. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).

b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).

c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:22-26; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

d. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times in order to demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Galatians 5:22-26).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) demonstrating God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Gal. 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21, 22).

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

Section 2. Holy Communion

The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Eligibility

Active voting membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who possess the following qualifications.

- A.** The applicant shall have a testimony to an experience of the “new birth.”
- B.** Approval for membership shall be preceded by baptism in water by immersion.

- C. The applicant shall be expected to manifest a lifestyle portraying a positive Christian testimony which is free from worldliness (1 John 2:15).
- D. The applicant must abstain from drinking intoxicating liquors of any kind and the use of tobacco in any form.
- E. The applicant must refrain from the sins listed in Galatians 5:19-21.
- F. The applicant must agree, and adhere to scriptural basis for divorce and remarriage (Matthew 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15-28).
- G. The applicant must indicate willingness to tithe regularly to the financial support of the church in which membership is requested.
- H. The applicant must accept the Tenets of Faith as set forth in Article IV of these bylaws.
- I. The applicant must be at least 18 years of age.
- J. The applicant has regularly attended services of, and supported this assembly with personal tithes, for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of application for membership.
- K. The applicant agrees to be governed by the bylaws of this assembly, and of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, as both may be amended from time to time.

Section 2. Procedure for Membership Recognition

Those individuals eligible for membership who shall desire to become members of this church shall make their request known to the Pastor. The Church Board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership by majority vote. Those approved for membership by the Church Board shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within thirty days before an annual business meeting or within ten days before a special business meeting.

Section 3. Pastor and Spouse

By virtue of office the Pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during the Pastor's tenure. The Pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the Pastor, subject to Article VI, Section 1.

Section 4. Transfer Members

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI (other than the attendance and support requirements), may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the Pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the Church Board.

Section 5. Junior Membership

Junior membership shall be available for young people under 18 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, meet the scriptural standards for membership as specified in these bylaws, and are approved by majority vote of the Church Board. When the junior member reaches the age of 18, they must then apply for adult membership and meet the same standard of membership as an active member at the time they apply.

Section 6. Associate Members

The Church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve associate members by a majority vote. Eligibility for associate membership is available to any person who is a member in good standing of an Assemblies of God church in another community, who is in this community on a temporary basis, and who intends to return to his or her home church. Associate members shall be entitled to all the privileges of active members, except that they shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be eligible for any of the offices described in Article VII of these Bylaws.

Section 7. Honorary Members

The Church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve honorary members by a unanimous vote of the members present. Honorary membership is available to any member who has left the church indefinitely, (District officers, missionaries, evangelists, Armed Forces, and those who have distinguished themselves in Christian service, etc.). Such membership shall have an inactive status unless activated by the Church Board. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. Removal of such membership shall be determined by a majority vote of the Church Board.

Section 8. Inactive Membership

Active voting members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of two consecutive months or more, or who cease to contribute regularly to its support as determined by the Church Board for a period of two consecutive months, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the assembly through its Church Board.

Section 9. Discipline

A. Grounds. Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible. Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:15-20; Luke 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17. The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing sinful behavior. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any member of the Assembly is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith of this assembly. The discipline of Pastors is administered by the District Presbytery.

B. Procedure. Should any member of this church, in the opinion of the Church Board, fall below the standard of membership as stated in Bylaws Article I. Membership, Section 1, in faith or practice, or should their spirit become contentious and discordant to the well-being of the church the following procedure, based on Matthew 18:15-18, shall be followed.

(1) The Pastor and/or a designated member of the Church Board shall make every reasonable effort to contact the person and resolve the matter.

(2) If the first step does not resolve the matter then the Church Board shall attempt to meet with the member in an effort to resolve the matter.

(3) If the first and second steps do not resolve the matter then the Church Board may, at its discretion upon a majority vote, take one of the following two actions.

(a) Place the person's membership on probation for a specific or indefinite time. The member may be restored from such inactive status to the active membership in the same manner.

(b) Dismiss the person from membership in the church. The disciplined or dismissed member shall have the right within 30 days of such action to appeal to the membership in a special business meeting called for that purpose. Such appeal shall be in writing and addressed to the Church Board. The decision of a majority of the voting members present at such a meeting shall be final.

C. Resignations. Members who are under discipline by this assembly forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this assembly. Resignations from membership are possible only by those members in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT

Section 1. The Church Board

A. In general. The government of this assembly shall be vested in the Church Board which shall consist of the Pastor and at least three deacons, to the extent that such authority is not limited by "District supervision" as provided for under Article XIII, Section 8, Subsection I, of the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God.

B. Qualifications of Church Board members. See qualifications for pastors and deacons (Article VII, Sections 2 and 3. of these Bylaws).

C. Duties of Church Board

- (1) The Church Board shall have general charge and management of the affairs, funds, and property of the assembly. The Church Board shall have the authority to carry out the purposes of the assembly according to its charter and these Bylaws.
- (2) The Church Board shall act in the examination of applications for membership and in the administration of discipline.
- (3) For so long as the church is temporarily without a Pastor, the remaining members of the Church Board shall be empowered to select a temporary chairman of the Church Board.
- (4) The Church Board shall elect a secretary from among its members.
- (5) The Church Board shall elect a treasurer from among the active voting members who meet the qualifications for such office.

Section 2. Officers

A. In general. There shall be a president, secretary, and treasurer. The Pastor, by virtue of office, shall be the president and chairman of the Church Board. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held simultaneously by the same individual.

B. Qualifications

- (1) **Pastor.** The Pastor shall be in good standing with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, holding a current fellowship card, and a member in good standing of the District Council.
- (2) **Secretary.** The secretary shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least one year immediately preceding election to office, and shall currently support the church with tithes, and shall have a cooperative spirit and be faithful in attendance at church services.
- (3) **Treasurer.** The treasurer shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least one year immediately preceding election to office, and shall currently support the church with tithes, and shall have a cooperative spirit, and be faithful in attendance at church services.

C. Duties of Officers

(1) Pastor

- (a) The Pastor shall be the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct its activities.

(b) The Pastor shall be recognized as a member of the Church Board, president of the assembly, and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the Church Board.

(c) The Pastor shall provide for all services of the assembly and shall specifically arrange for all special meetings, conventions, and revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without the Pastor's approval.

(d) As chairman of the Church Board, the Pastor shall be a member of the nominating committee for the selection of deacon nominees. The Pastor shall privately interview those nominated, ascertaining their eligibility and availability to serve as deacons.

(e) The Pastor should conduct a training class at least once a year on the responsibilities of the Church Board, deacons, trustees, secretary, treasurer, and other church leaders. Such training course shall be based upon the scriptural directives for church leadership and the church bylaws.

(f) The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

(2) Secretary

(a) The secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Church Board and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly.

(b) The secretary shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of the secretary's duties.

(c) The secretary shall be the custodian of all legal documents.

(d) The secretary shall file such annual corporation reports with the secretary of state as may be required by state law.

(e) The secretary shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Church Board.

(3) Treasurer

(a) The treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly that are committed to them, subject to the supervision of the Church Board. The treasurer shall deposit all funds in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Church Board, in the name of the assembly. All checks issued on behalf of the church must be signed by the treasurer and one additional officer authorized by the Church Board.

(b) The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall present a report for each regular meeting of the Church Board, and shall present an annual report to the assembly in its annual business meeting.

- (c) The treasurer shall assist the assembly in acquiring and maintaining available tax exemptions under state and local law.
- (d) The treasurer shall provide a record of all identified giving to each donor at least annually.
- (e) The treasurer shall be the custodian of all the financial records of the church.
- (f) The treasurer shall be amenable to the Pastor and the Church Board.

Section 3. Deacons

The deacons shall be persons of mature Christian experience and knowledge, be filled with the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4, not be entangled in their marriage relations, except when the divorce occurred prior to conversion; or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9); or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:10-15), and meet the requirements as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6. Deacons shall be at least 23 years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least one year. They shall currently support the church with their tithes and offerings, have a cooperative spirit, and regularly attend church services. All Church Board members are chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in a supportive role to the Pastor, according to Acts 6. No credentialed minister shall serve as a deacon in any assembly. No credentialed minister's spouse may serve as a deacon in any assembly in cases where that credentialed minister serves in a leading or supporting pastoral role.

Section 4. Fiduciary Duties

The law imposes several fiduciary duties on officers, deacons, and trustees, including the duties of due care and diligence, loyalty, avoidance of self-dealing, expending designated contributions for the purposes specified, and not commingling personal and corporate funds.

Section 5. District Intervention

Should irreconcilable differences arise between the Pastor and other members of the Church Board or members of the church body, destroying unity and the successful ministry of the local assembly, intervention from the District may be requested by the Pastor, a majority of the Church Board members, or a petition signed by not less than 30% of the voting members. Upon such invitation, an investigating committee appointed by the District Superintendent from among the Executive Presbytery and including the Sectional Presbyter shall investigate such differences and, upon a two-thirds majority vote of the committee, declare the church under District supervision. The term "District supervision" means that the investigating committee has the authority to (1) suspend the Constitution and/or Bylaws of the church, (2) direct the Pastor to resign, (3) suspend the board invested with the authority to manage the affairs of the church, (4) remove individual members from the board of the church, (5) re-classify the church as a District Council affiliated church, or (6) appoint a temporary Church Board of directors invested with the authority to manage both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of the church until such strife will cease.

If the Pastor is also the Sectional Presbyter, the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall be a member of the investigating committee in the Pastor's place.

When district officers receive such requests for intervention, it is recommended they first verify that scriptural principles of reconciliation, such as those found in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19, have been reasonably attempted by the requesting party in situations involving interpersonal conflict.

ARTICLE VIII. ELECTIONS, VACANCIES, AND REMOVALS

Section 1. Elections

A. Pastor

(1) The Pastor shall be nominated by the Church Board. Recommendations may be made to the Church Board by any member of the assembly.

(2) The Pastor shall be elected to serve for one or more years or for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at time of election.

(3) Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Balloting shall be on only one applicant at a time.

(4) A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election. In the case of a Pastor's being considered for reelection, only a majority vote is necessary.

(5) When voting on a pastoral candidate, a vote may be conducted at the conclusion of the last service in which the candidate is ministering.

(6) In the event either the Pastor or any other member or members of the assembly shall challenge the validity of an election, the validity of the election shall be arbitrated by the District Executive Presbytery or its designees, and the decision of the arbitrators shall be final.

B. Secretary

The secretary shall be elected by the Church Board from among its members. The term of office shall be one year, and the secretary may serve consecutive terms.

C. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected by the Church Board from among the active voting members of the assembly. The term of office shall be one year, and the treasurer may serve consecutive terms.

D. Deacons

Deacons shall be nominated by a nominating committee appointed by the Church Board, and they shall be elected by a majority vote of those active voting members present at an annual business meeting of the assembly at which an election is to be conducted. Active voting members may recommend nominees to the nominating committee, however nominations for deacon shall not be accepted from the floor during any business meeting. Deacons shall be elected for a term of one or more years, and shall hold office until the annual business meeting at which their successor is elected. Deacons may not serve more than six consecutive years. The terms of deacons shall be rotated appropriately.

Section 2. Vacancies and Removals

A. Pastor

When a vacancy in the office of the Pastor shall occur, an interim Pastor shall be appointed by the Church Board until a Pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Article VIII, Section 1, A, of these Bylaws.

When a Pastor's credentials are withdrawn by the District or General Council, the Pastor's term of office shall be automatically terminated.

Should a special business meeting be called as provided for in Article IX, Section 3, of these Bylaws, for the purpose of voting on a Pastor before their term expires, a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting shall be required to remove the Pastor from office. If a Pastor is removed under such action, severance pay shall be given as provided in Article XI, Section 3, C, of these Bylaws.

B. Secretary and Treasurer

The office of secretary and treasurer shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of the officer's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

C. Deacons

The office of deacon shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of a deacon's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

D. In General

Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the Pastor) may be terminated by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at a special business meeting called for the limited purpose of the removal of such member from the office or position of leadership which he or she holds.

The Pastor may remove a person from a position of leadership if such person fails to be amenable to the Pastor or the Church Board. This action shall be initiated by the Pastor and ratified by the Church Board. In the case of the removal of a deacon by the Pastor and Church Board, such decision may be appealed to the congregation.

E. Filling Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of secretary, treasurer, or deacon may be filled by appointment of the Church Board for the unexpired term.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings for Worship

Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under direction of the Pastor or the Church Board if there is no Pastor.

Section 2. Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be presented. This meeting shall be held by the end of February of each year. The time and place shall be announced by the Pastor. Notice of the date, time, and place of each annual business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on the two Sunday mornings immediately preceding the time set for the meeting, or by First Class mail. In the case of notification by mail, the date of mailing shall be not more than 40 days or less than five days in advance of the date of the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings of the assembly may be called by the Pastor, or by a majority of the Church Board, or by a petition signed by not less than 30% of the active voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services and financially supported this assembly with their tithes for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted. Petitions pertaining to the business affairs of the church shall be submitted to the Pastor or the secretary of the Church Board. A petition pertaining to the status of the Pastor shall be directed to the District Superintendent who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the assembly. No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any twelve month period. Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting, or by mail. In the case of notification by mail, the date of mailing shall be at least five days in advance of the date of the meeting. No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the assembly.

Section 4. Parliamentary Order

All business meetings of the church shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.

Section 5. Voting Constituency

A. Qualifying of voters. The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present (Article VI, Section 1).

B. Transfer members. Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership (Article VI, Section 4).

C. Members under process of discipline. No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9).

D. Absentee voting. Absentee ballots may be accepted in business meetings of the assembly from active voting members who are unable to attend by reason of illness, infirmity, workers on duty, or those out of town for valid reasons. Absentee ballots shall be qualified if the following conditions are met.

(1) The ballot shall consist of a printed ballot form that has been provided by the assembly and shall be sealed in an envelope with the voter's signature on the outside.

(2) The ballot shall denote the decision or position being voted on with the vote listed thereafter.

(3) The ballot shall be in the hand of the Pastor, church secretary, or deposited in the church office, 24 hours prior to the convening of the business meeting. Such ballot may be delivered by mail, or by a person.

(4) The Church Board shall check all absentee ballots to see whether they are qualified. If so, they shall be counted on each vote taken on the decision or position being considered in that meeting on the original proposition.

(5) If the validity of an absentee ballot is in question, the active voting members present shall make the final decisions as to its validity.

(6) Absentee ballots shall not be accepted for meetings called for the removal of officers or other church leaders.

Section 6. Quorum

One-fourth of the active voting members of this assembly shall constitute a quorum.

Section 7. Order of Business

The recommended order of business for the annual business meeting of this assembly shall be as follows:

- A. Devotional;
- B. Reading of previous minutes;
- C. Report of treasurer;
- D. Report of committees;
- E. Unfinished business;
- F. Election of officers;
- G. New business; and
- H. Adjournment.

Section 8. The Church Board

The Church Board shall meet monthly for the transaction of business for the assembly, time and place to be announced by the Pastor. Additional meetings of the Church Board may be called by the Pastor. A majority of the board members must be present to constitute a quorum.

Section 9. Membership Roll

The Church Board shall review the list of active voting members at least annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the board immediately preceding the annual business meeting, and compile a current list of active voting members.

ARTICLE X. DEPARTMENTS

This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and ministries as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and ministries shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Pastor and Church Board, and the Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

ARTICLE XI. FINANCES

Section 1. In General

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions, tithes, and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Church Board and shall be administered by the Treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

Section 2. Handling of Offerings

All offerings shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the church building. An offering receipts form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering, with one copy going to the treasurer and the other copy given to the Pastor. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving. All funds shall be deposited in federally insured accounts, or any other account approved by the Church Board, in the name of the assembly.

Section 3. Pastoral Remuneration

A. The Pastor shall be remunerated for pastoral services by a salary, a percentage of tithes and offerings, or by other means agreed upon by the Church Board and the Pastor. The Church Board shall review the Pastor's remuneration at least annually.

B. The Pastor shall be given consideration by the Church Board for expenses incurred by attendance at District Councils, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church as determined by the Church Board.

C. In the event a Pastor is removed from office by a vote of the active voting membership of the church, or shall fail to be sustained by a vote of the active voting membership at the end of a term, he/she shall be given a minimum of two months regular or average remuneration as severance pay, except in the case of moral failure.

D. In the event of the death of the senior Pastor of a church, a benefit of compassion shall be given to the surviving spouse departing from and not continuing in the pastorate of that church. This benefit shall be the beginning of consideration and should not be limited to the following provisions. An extension of two months salary, weekly or in one sum, and benefits from the church being pastored at that time shall be provided, with further consideration urged and appreciated. Church owned housing or housing allowance shall also be provided for two months, with further consideration urged and appreciated.

E. Minister's Retirement. It is recommended that each church contribute an amount equal to 5% or more, in accordance to applicable legal limitations, of the minister's compensation to the minister's MBA Retirement account with a minimum contribution of \$50.00 each month. This should be in addition to the minister's regular compensation. A letter will be sent by the District Executive Secretary in November of each year to each church to be read to the Church Board reminding them of this recommendation and encouraging their compliance.

Section 4. Benevolence Fund

A benevolence fund shall be established by this assembly for the exercise of its religious and charitable purposes. Suggestions by donors for fund disbursements shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. The administration of this fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Church Board. Donors making contributions to the benevolence fund will receive a church receipt for their contributions.

ARTICLE XII. PROPERTY

Section 1. Title

All property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name.

Section 2. Purchases and Sales of Real Property

All purchases, sales, mortgages or other encumbrances of real property shall be authorized by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership who are in attendance and voting at a regular or special meeting of the assembly.

Section 3. Discontinuation of Church Services

Should this assembly cease to maintain a weekly worship service for a period of three months under the direction of a leader duly authorized by and in good standing with the District Council, it shall be dissolved and its properties disposed of according to Article XII, Section 5, of these Bylaws.

Section 4. Disaffiliation

Title to all real property now owned or hereafter acquired by the assembly shall be held in trust in favor of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, both of Springfield, Missouri. In the event that the assembly shall be divided over doctrinal or any other issues, or shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God, all property of the assembly shall remain with those members, whatever their number, desiring continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adhering to its Statement of Fundamental Truths. The determination of which group of members desires continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental Truths shall be arbitrated by the District Presbytery of the Southern Missouri

District Council of the Assemblies of God, and its decision shall be final and binding. If all of the members of the assembly shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God for doctrinal or any other reasons, then all of the property of such assembly shall revert to said District Council and shall be used by the District as an Assemblies of God church if possible, and if not possible, the District may sell the property and apply the proceeds in any manner consistent with its stated purposes.

Section 5. Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the assembly, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any other individual. The Church Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the assembly, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the assembly by conveying the same to the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, for the purposes of the assembly, and provided that said District Council at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax law. Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

Articles III, XII, and XIII, of these Bylaws may be amended only by the affirmative vote of one-hundred percent (100%) of the active voting members present at any annual or special business meeting called for the exclusive purpose of amending these Bylaws. Article IV of these Bylaws is not subject to amendment. The remaining Articles of these Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members present at an annual or special meeting of the assembly. All proposed amendments are subject to the following conditions: (1) the proposed amendment is consistent with the Bylaws of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God; (2) the proposed amendment shall have been first submitted to the Church Board for consideration; and (3) written notice of the proposed amendment is mailed (by regular mail) by the authority of the Church Board to the last known address of each voting member at least ten days before the date set for the meeting at which the proposed change will be considered. This written notice requirement applies to both annual and special meetings, and is in addition to any other applicable notice requirements for said meeting.