

# BYLAWS - COMMUNITY COVENANT CHURCH

## ARTICLE I

### Membership

**Section 1. Purpose.** The purpose of membership is to join with other followers of Christ in building a community of worship committed to prayer, preaching and study of the Word of God, the celebration of the sacraments, and fellowship across gender, race, age, culture and class. In so doing, the membership covenants together to equip loving, giving, growing Christians to reach out with the good news of Jesus Christ - evangelizing the lost, ministering to those in need, and seeking justice for the oppressed.

**Section 2. Responsibilities.** The members of this church do covenant together by God's grace to live lives in a manner consistent with the standards of biblical teaching. This includes the support of this congregation in attendance, prayer, serving, and giving. We are to live our lives in word and deed that are an encouragement to others to know and be like Jesus Christ, while reflecting in all our relationships the servant love of our Lord, and to support the broader mission of Christ through the ECC and the Pacific Southwest Conference.

### Section 3. Procedure for Admission.

- a. Membership in the church is granted to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope through the Holy Spirit, have been baptized according to the Holy Bible, desire to live a Christian life, promise to faithfully support the mission, ministries, and policies of the church, and to share in its fellowship and obligations.
- b. Upon completion of a membership class, persons desiring to apply for membership shall submit their application to the Leadership Team. Applicants shall meet with a team appointed by the Leadership Team to give testimony to personal faith in Jesus Christ. Upon completion of such, the team shall submit its recommendations on the applications to the Leadership Team who shall notify members of the church of the recommendations. Any member objecting to or having concerns over the granting of membership to an applicant shall communicate in writing such objection or concern to the Leadership Team within 10 days after notification by the Leadership Team.
- c. Final action on applications for membership shall be taken by the Leadership Team within sixty (60) days of receiving the recommendations of the interview team. Such action may be appealed by a member at the next congregational meeting where the action of the Leadership Team may be overturned by a majority vote of members present and voting.

- d. Applicants who are received into membership of the church shall be welcomed at a service and make public confession of their Christian faith, as outlined in *The Covenant Book of Worship*.

**Section 4. Children.** Children of the church shall be nurtured under its spiritual care. They shall receive instruction in the Word of God, Christian doctrine, and the history of the church, normally using the confirmation/ discipleship material of the ECC. At age 16, they may apply for church membership as outlined under Section 3 of this article.

**Section 5. Discipline.**

- a. Discipline of members. The Leadership Team shall be responsible for admonishing members who willfully neglect their responsibilities to the church or who err in doctrine or conduct.
- b. Erring members. Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Leadership Team in writing, which shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member.
- c. After the above process has been completed, dismissal of a member remaining in gross error in doctrine or conduct may result by a two-thirds vote of all current Leadership Team members. Such action may be appealed by the member to the congregation for consideration at the next congregational meeting.

**Section 6. Withdrawal and Removal of Membership.** Any member desiring to transfer or withdraw from membership shall make such request to the Pastor or Leadership Team. Letters of transfer shall be issued by the Pastor if so requested, and the member is in good standing. The Leadership Team shall at least annually review the membership roster to determine inactivity. Those determined to have neglected their responsibilities may be approached under the process outlined in Section 5 of this article.

**Section 7. Recording.** The names of those joining and terminating membership shall be duly recorded.

**Section 8. Non-Member Friends.** Non-member friends shall be enrolled by the church as a part of its total constituency. The church and its pastors shall serve them in all of their spiritual needs and they shall be encouraged to consider this as their church home. They shall be kept informed of the activities of the church and encouraged to participate.

## ARTICLE II

### The Leadership Team

**Section 1. Purpose.** The Leadership Team, under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, shall be responsible for building, maintaining and encouraging the spiritual welfare of the congregation and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church. The Senior Pastor has primary responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the congregation as stated in Article IV, Section 5.

**Section 2. Composition.** The Leadership Team shall be comprised of not less than five nor more than nine Leadership Team members, one of whom shall be the Senior Pastor (ex-officio) who shall be deemed a voting member. The Leadership Team may appoint other pastors or church members as non-voting advisors, and may remove the same.

**Section 3. Qualification.** Any member of the church who has been attending regularly for at least one (1) year and meeting the biblical standards of character and giftedness for church leaders may be nominated and elected to the Leadership Team.

**Section 4. Election.** Leadership Team members shall be nominated by the Nominating Team and elected by a two-thirds vote of those members voting at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose.

**Section 5. Term of Office.** Leadership Team members shall be elected for a term of two (2) years and shall not be elected for more than two consecutive terms. After at least one year off, a person may be eligible for subsequent service as a Leadership Team member, subject again to the terms stated in this Article.

**Section 6. Vacancies and Removal.** A Leadership Team member may resign. A Leadership Team member may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of congregational members voting at a meeting called for that purpose. Vacancies created by resignation or removal may be filled by appointment through the two-thirds vote of the Leadership Team. A Leadership Team member appointed to serve an unexpired term of less than half the remaining term shall not be precluded from being elected thereafter to two full consecutive terms.

**Section 7. Notification of Meetings.** All Leadership Team members shall receive a minimum three-day advance notification of any meeting, including time and place of the meeting. In emergency situations, the three-day notice may be waived by the two-thirds vote of the entire Leadership Team.

**Section 8. Quorum.** A majority of Leadership Team members shall constitute a quorum.

**Section 9. Decisions.** The Leadership Team shall strive for unanimity. Matters shall be determined by a majority vote of a Leadership Team quorum, unless on a matter in which the Constitution and Bylaws require a different percentage.

**Section 10. Organization.** The Leadership Team shall elect from among themselves a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer. Each of which officers, upon expiration of their term of office, shall continue to serve until their successor is duly elected or appointed as the case may be.

- a. **Chair.** The Chair shall preside at all business meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team. The Chair shall confer with the Senior Pastor in preparing the agenda for such meetings, and shall utilize the counsel that the Senior Pastor can give by virtue of training, experience, and calling.
- b. **Vice-Chair.** The Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair in the Chair's absence, assist in the Chair's duties, and chair the Mutual Ministry Team.
- c. **Secretary.** The Secretary shall keep and preserve the minutes of all business meetings of the church and of the Leadership Team, conduct and preserve all official correspondence as shall be delegated, and be responsible for the official seal and documents of the church.
- d. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall ensure proper policies, processes, reporting, and reviewing of all matters related to the finances of the church, including the submission of monthly financial reports to the Leadership Team.

**Section 11. Responsibilities of the Leadership Team.** In being responsible to the congregation for building, maintaining and encouraging the spiritual welfare of the church and for directing and overseeing all ministries and business affairs of the church, the Leadership team shall:

- a. present annual mission and ministry objectives to the congregation;
- b. determine Ministry Teams needed to carry out the church's mission and ministry, and appoint appropriate leadership for the Ministry Teams;
- c. approve church policies;
- d. be responsible to assure that the congregation is represented in relationships including:
  1. hiring and dismissal of staff subject to the provisions of these Bylaws. Actions shall be by two-thirds vote;
  2. a pastoral relations process by which the Senior Pastor and ministry staff are annually reviewed, providing Godly counsel or discipline as required;
  3. annual review and approval of staff compensation and compensation for new staff; and other personnel expenses for any staff member or activity;
  4. establishment of personnel policies;

5. approval of changes in staff job descriptions and approval of job descriptions for new staff positions; and
  6. maintenance of current job descriptions for all staff members;
- e. be responsible for overseeing the preparation and submission of a proposed budget for each fiscal year to the membership for approval. Upon approval of the budget by the membership, the Leadership Team shall be responsible for seeing that the budget is carried out as approved. The Leadership Team shall have the authority to appropriately adjust budget items and amounts where ministry objectives necessitate. The Leadership Team shall appoint a member of the church as financial secretary (not necessarily a Leadership Team member) who shall be authorized to receive monies on behalf of the church and shall appoint a bookkeeper (not necessarily a Leadership Team member) to disburse funds for church purposes in accordance with standard accounting procedures for non-profit organizations. The Leadership Team shall annually provide an independent report of the financial records of the church and report such findings to the congregation.
  - f. hear and respond appropriately to concerns of members;
  - g. be responsible for church discipline as outlined in Article I, Section 5 of these Bylaws;
  - h. act as the Trustees of the church for the advancement and protection of its assets. The Leadership Team shall designate those Leadership Team members and any other members of the church who shall be authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of the church;
  - i. be responsible for action on applications for membership as outlined in Article I, Section 3 of these Bylaws.

**Section 12. Unity.** Action by the Leadership Team shall be taken in such manner as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

### ARTICLE III

#### Ministry Teams

**Section 1. Purpose.** Ministry Teams shall be formed as required to implement the varied ministries of the church.

**Section 2. Establishment.** Ministry Teams shall be established by the Leadership Team to implement specific ministries. The configuration of Ministry teams shall be reviewed regularly by the Leadership Team, in consultation with the church staff, in accord with the church's purpose, strategies, and objectives for mission and ministry.

**Section 3. Duties.** The duties of Ministry Teams shall be to:

- a. Meet as required to plan and execute specific mission and ministry objectives.
- b. Recruit and train ministry personnel.

- c. Define and provide the necessary materials required for ministry.
- d. Submit annually to the Leadership Team proposed budgets and objectives for the forthcoming year and manage consistent with approved budgets.
- e. Report as requested to the Leadership Team.

**Section 4. Leadership.**

- a. The leader of a Ministry Team shall be approved by the Leadership Team in consultation with the pastor(s). The team leader will serve as liaison to the Leadership Team to provide reports and information when requested, and to forward requests to the Leadership Team when necessary.
- b. Ministry Team members may be selected by the Ministry Team leader. The Leadership Team may remove a Ministry Team member.
- c. Each Ministry Team shall organize itself as required to perform its ministry.
- d. The Leadership Team may appoint one of its members to be an ex-officio member of any Ministry Team, who may also serve as that Ministry Team's leader.

**ARTICLE IV**

**Pastoral and Ministry Staff**

**Section 1. Purpose.** Pastoral and additional ministry staff servant-leadership positions are created to help the congregation fulfill Christ's purposes in the world and among its members.

**Section 2. Pastoral Qualifications.** Pastors of the Church shall meet the qualifications for character, giftedness, and call set forth in the Holy Bible. The Senior Pastor shall be an ordained pastor in good standing with the ECC. Other pastors shall be credentialed by the ECC in accordance with their qualifications and duties. A pastor shall be a member of the Church by virtue of the call to serve the church.

**Section 3. Call of the Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall be called at a regular or special congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two weeks in advance. The Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a Pastoral Search Team. This Team shall be elected by the membership at a congregational business meeting. It shall be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members, including the Leadership Team Chair or alternate by congregational vote. It shall work closely with the Superintendent of the Pacific Southwest Conference. The Senior Pastor shall be called by written ballot with a two-thirds vote of members present and voting required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time.

**Section 4. Call of Additional Pastors and Credentialed Ministry Staff.** Additional staff members to hold ministerial credentials shall be called at a congregational business meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced at least two weeks in advance. The

meeting shall include the budget implications of the proposed position. The Leadership Team will recommend one candidate for a call, and the vote shall be by written ballot, with two-thirds vote required for call. The Leadership Team may establish the Pastoral Search Team, and/or may serve as the Search Team. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time unless otherwise noted at the time of call.

**Section 5. Duties of the Senior Pastor.** The Senior Pastor shall preach and teach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, provide missional leadership, and faithfully carry out pastoral work, which is the spiritual oversight of the church. The Senior Pastor shall direct the church staff, providing counsel, encouragement, and Christian discipline so as to assist in the accomplishment of objectives for each staff member. All staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor shall be a voting ex-officio member of all ministry teams and committees and in such capacity shall strive to establish and accomplish objectives and strategies in conjunction with the mission and purpose of the church.

**Section 6. Duties of Additional Pastors and Ministry Staff Members.** Additional pastors and ministry staff members shall carry out specific areas of ministry under the direction of the Senior Pastor. They may be designated by the Leadership Team to be the leader or member of one or more Ministry Teams.

**Section 7. Cooperation.** The pastor(s) shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the ECC, and the Pacific Southwest Conference.

**Section 8. Resignation of a Pastor or Ministry Staff Member.** A pastor or ministry staff member may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to the Leadership Team. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, six weeks notice should be observed.

**Section 9. Charges Against a Pastor.** Charges against a pastor shall be submitted in writing to the Leadership Team and the Conference Superintendent, charging a pastor on such matters as indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the ECC. The Superintendent shall confer with the ECC Executive Minister of the ordered ministry. These two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules and Regulations of the Board of Ordered Ministry of the ECC regarding discipline, prior to further action by the church. A pastor or staff member credentialed by the ECC may be suspended by the ECC during this process.

**Section 10. Dismissal.** The dismissal of a pastor or ministry staff member should be undertaken only after avenues of remediation have been pursued.

- a. **Dismissal of the Senior Pastor.** The dismissal of the Senior Pastor shall be by congregational vote at a special meeting called for that express purpose. Such an agenda item cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other

- meeting. The congregational meeting for such a vote may be called by the two-thirds action of the Leadership Team, or through the request of the congregation accomplished by a petition for such a meeting signed by 20% of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The Senior Pastor shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to dismiss the Senior Pastor.
- b. **Dismissal of Additional Pastors and Ministry Staff.** Additional pastors and ministry staff called by the congregation may be dismissed by the two-thirds vote of the Leadership Team. A meeting to overturn the action of the Leadership Team may be called through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition signed by 20% of the membership. The quorum for such a meeting shall be 50% of the membership. The grounds for dismissal shall be presented. Members shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The pastor or ministry staff member in question shall be allowed to speak to the matter. The vote shall be by written ballot. A majority vote of members present and voting is necessary to overturn the action of the Leadership Team.

## ARTICLE V

### Teams

#### Section 1. Nominating Team.

- a. **Composition.** The Nominating Team shall consist of one Leadership Team member designated by the Leadership Team, the Senior Pastor or staff member designated by the Senior Pastor, and at least two members at-large elected by a majority of the members voting at a congregational meeting. The Leadership Team shall designate one of the team members to serve as Chair of the Nominating Team.
- b. **Term.** The terms of the member from the Leadership Team shall be at the pleasure of the Leadership Team. The at-large members shall serve two-year terms. The initial terms of the at-large members shall be alternated so that at least one at-large member shall be elected each year.
- c. **Quorum.** A majority of members shall constitute a quorum of the Nominating Team.
- d. **Responsibilities.** The Nominating Team shall be responsible for nominations to fill the offices of Leadership Team, the at-large members of the Nominating Team, the at-large members of the Mutual Ministry Team, and any other positions assigned to it either by the Leadership Team or congregation.
- e. **Nominating procedure.** Any member of appropriate character, giftedness, and call may be considered for any position. The office of Leadership Team

member shall be nominated by the Nominating Team. The candidates for the office of at-large members of the Nominating Team shall be nominated.

- f. **Unity.** Actions by the Nominating Team shall be taken in such manner as to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

**Section 2. Pastoral Search Team.** The Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a Pastoral Search Team. The nominee shall meet the criteria set out in Article IV, Section 2 of these Bylaws. This team shall be elected by a congregational business meeting. It shall be representative of the congregation and have five to nine members, including the Leadership Team chair. It shall work closely with the Superintendent of the Pacific Southwest Conference.

**Section 3. Mutual Ministry Team.**

The Mutual Ministry Team shall work toward a vital, healthy, mutually beneficial relationship between the congregation and the pastors and ministry staff. The Mutual Ministry Team shall have four main areas of responsibility and shall meet with the pastors and staff at least quarterly:

- a. Care and encouragement for the pastors, ministry staff, and their families;
- b. Receiving the perspectives and concerns of each pastor and ministry staff member relative to the congregation and ministry;
- c. Communicating the perspectives and concerns of the congregation to each pastor and ministry staff member relative to that person's ministry; and
- d. periodic review of personal and church goals.

The Mutual Ministry Team shall be made up of the Vice Chair (who shall chair this team), two at-large members elected by the congregation at a duly called business meeting, and other members deemed necessary by the Mutual Ministry Team. Elected at-large members shall serve a two year term and may succeed themselves.

**Section 4. Other Special Teams.** The Leadership Team or the congregation may establish a team to address a specific task. The team shall report back to the body which formed it unless otherwise instructed by its founding body. The team shall terminate upon the completion of its task.

## ARTICLE VI

### Congregational Meetings

**Section 1. Annual Meeting.** An Annual Meeting shall be held as near the first of the fiscal year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting, written progress reports shall be submitted by the pastor(s), ministry staff, officers, and ministry teams. Reports on an independent review of financial records shall be submitted by the Treasurer for the church and each of its organization. Election for Leadership Team members, at-large

members of the Nominating Team and at-large members of the Mutual Ministry Team shall be held. The church budget shall be submitted for action.

**Section 2. Other meetings.** Other meetings may be called by the Leadership Team or by written requested signed by 10% of the membership, unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws.

**Section 3. Notification of meeting.** All meetings shall be announced in accordance with the Constitution and these Bylaws.

**Section 4. Conduct of meeting.** The Chair of the Leadership Team or such other person as may be designated by the Leadership Team in the Chair's absence shall serve as Chair of any meeting of the membership.

**Section 5. Voting.** Each member, and only members, shall be entitled to cast one vote on any matter at hand at any meeting of the membership. Such votes must be cast in person. Vote by proxy shall not be allowed. All votes shall be by written ballot. The Chair of the meeting may call for open balloting where no objection is raised. Members must be 16 years or older to vote.

**Section 6. Quorum.** Twenty percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for the annual meeting, with a minimum of 20 members. Unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws, ten percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum for any other meeting, with a minimum of 20 members. In the absence of a quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned for two weeks from the date of the failed quorum upon no less than seven days written notice to the membership of the adjourned meeting. At the reconvened meeting, with or without a quorum, any matter that appeared on the adjourned meeting agenda may be transacted.

**Section 7. Rules of order.** All congregational meetings of the church and of any other teams or organizations shall be conducted according to the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, subject to the provisions of this Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 8. Final voice.** The congregation reserves for itself final authority in any matter of its choice. A member may advance an item to the agenda of a congregational meeting by the majority vote of the membership at that meeting, providing that the item is not in conflict with other provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws. An item brought to the agenda in this way shall be decided by a majority vote of the membership, unless the item requires a different percentage as outlined elsewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws, in which case that percentage shall be used.

## ARTICLE VII

### Assets

**Section 1. Title.** The congregation shall hold title to its own assets.

**Section 2. Acquisition.** Assets acquired through budgetary provisions do not need additional congregational approval. Assets acquired beyond budgetary provisions, particularly land or facility acquisition, require the approval of the congregation by a two-thirds vote.

**Section 3. Disputed Assets.** In the event of schism within the church, in which there are competing claims to the assets by various factions of the membership, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by the Constitution and Bylaws, as determined by the Executive Board of the Pacific Southwest Conference.

**Section 4. Assignment of Assets.** No action for the sale or transfer of assets may be taken when the closure of the church is under consideration without the prior approval of the Pacific Southwest Conference Executive Board. In the event the congregation votes to cease, or to continue upon leaving its affiliation with the ECC and the Pacific Southwest Conference, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of the ECC and the Southwest Conference, shared equally for the furtherance of the mission of both in that region, primarily through church planting.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Closure

**Section 1. Action Needed.** The congregation may terminate its existence by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a congregational meeting called for that purpose.

**Section 2. Meeting Provisions.** The decision on whether to close the church cannot be a part of, or added to, the agenda of any other meeting. The congregational meeting for such a vote may be called by the Leadership Team or through the request of the congregation, accomplished by a petition for such a meeting signed by 20% of the membership.

**Section 3. Notification.** All members of record must be notified of the meeting through the first class mail at least two weeks in advance to the member's address of record.

**Section 4. Quorum.** The quorum for such a meeting shall be all members of record who are present at the meeting.

**Section 5. Asset Distribution.** Upon the vote to close, the assets of the congregation shall be transferred according to Article VII, Section 4 of these Bylaws.

**Section 6. Collaboration.** Should congregational attendance stand below 25, the executive board of the Pacific Southwest Conference may appoint a voting ex-officio member to the Leadership Team.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Amendments**

**Section 1. Procedure.** These Bylaws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the membership present and voting at a duly called meeting for that purpose. A proposed amendment to the Bylaws must be presented in writing to the membership not less than ninety days prior to the meeting called for the purpose of voting on bylaws changes. Article VII (Assets), Sections 3 and 4, Article VIII (Closure) and Article IX (Amendments) may only be amended with the prior approval of the executive board of the Pacific Southwest Conference.

These Bylaws were adopted at the Annual Meeting, May 22, 2011 replacing the Bylaws last revised November 2, 1997