

# FELLOWSHIP *City* CHURCH

## THE CONSTITUTION OF FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH

### ~~I. Purpose of Constitution:~~

- ~~1. To provide a legal framework for the existence and governing of the local church organization.~~
- ~~2. To provide a procedure for adding and deleting members of the organization.~~
- ~~3. To provide a procedure for the members to appoint leaders.~~

### II. General Philosophy:

- ~~In line with our concept of developing a church structure which is flexible enough to meet the changing needs and environment around us, the constitution should be limited to the above purposes only.~~ In alignment with our vision of developing a church structure that remains flexible to adapt to changing needs and environments, this Constitution should reflect this adaptability.
- Leaders should be elected based on spiritual qualifications only - not because they have secular qualifications for a specific leadership position. For example, an Elder should not be elected exclusively because of his financial, real estate or teaching experience. ~~This one group of Elected~~ leaders would then appoint people for specific functions from among themselves or from the general congregation, as needed.
- Bylaws**, church programs, leaders other than the one elected group, control procedures, committees, etc., should be formed by the elected leaders through an “operating guideline” approach, which should be communicated to the membership, but which can be changed by the leaders as needs change.
- Regular and candid communication between the congregation and the leaders (in both directions) should be encouraged by reports to the congregation, written communication, and by cascading discussion through small groups.

### III. Name and Incorporation:

The name of this ~~religious nonprofit~~ organization shall be FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH dba FELLOWSHIP CITY CHURCH. ~~This church shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Ohio, and its stated purpose is to provide a place of worship for its members, to receive and disburse gifts and bequests, and to do all things necessary or incidental to carrying on such purposes. (moved to Section III)~~

The principal office of the Church shall be located in Chagrin Falls, Geauga County, Ohio. The Board of Elders (board of directors) of the Church shall have full power and authority to change any office from one location to another, either in Ohio or elsewhere. The Church shall comply with the requirements of the Law and maintain a registered office

and registered agent in the State of Ohio. The Board of Elders may change the registered office and the registered agent as provided in the Law.

III. Authority:

This church shall be subject to the direction of Jesus Christ as His will is expressed in the Bible. Its stated purpose is to provide a place of worship for its members, to receive and disburse gifts and bequests, and to do all things necessary or incidental to carrying on such purposes. (moved from previous section)

A Board of Elders shall be the governing body of this church in seeking and interpreting the desire of the Lord for the organization. The Elders shall be diligent in serving and communicating with the membership and shall be sensitive to the needs and desires of the church body.

IV. Doctrinal Statement:

1. There is one God, creator of heaven and earth, eternally existent in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) the same in essence and equal in attributes. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-6; 1 Timothy 2:5; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
2. This triune God has revealed Himself in the Bible which He inspired. As originally written, the Bible is inerrant and complete. (2 Peter 1:20-21; Isaiah 55:10-11; Luke 24:27; Proverbs 30:5-6; John 17:17; Revelation 22:18-19)
3. Jesus Christ in the flesh was both God and man, born of a virgin, and sinless. He died as a penalty for our sins and was raised from the dead bodily on the third day. Later He ascended to the Father's right hand in heaven, where He is head of the church and intercedes for believers, and from where He is coming again, personally and imminently. (John 1:1, 14; Colossians 2:9; Philippians 2:6-8; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18, 22-23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22; Isaiah 53:5-6; Romans 5:8; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Luke 24:39; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 1:3; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; John 14:3; Revelation 22:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17)
4. The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin, convinces them to believe in Jesus Christ, and converts those who believe. He makes them new creatures in Christ, incorporates them into the body of Christ (the Church), seals and indwells them until the day of redemption. When Christians acknowledge their own inadequacy and by faith yield to His control, He gives them power for victorious living and service. (John 16:8-11; John 15:26; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Titus 3:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:16; Galatians 5:22-23; Romans 8:13-14; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22)
5. A Christian is one who acknowledges he is a sinner, has repented of his sin, believes that Jesus Christ died as the only atonement for his sin, and has received Him by faith into his life to be Savior and Lord as the only way into reconciliation with God. To know God in this way is to have eternal life. (Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-9; Acts 3:19; Luke 24:46-47; John 14:6; Romans 5:8-9; Hebrews 9:22; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10;

Colossians 2:6; Luke 6:46; Acts 4:12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Romans 5:10; John 17:3; 1 John 5:11-12; John 10:28)

6. The local church is God's vehicle for developing spiritual maturity, responsible freedom, ~~and~~ fellowship among Christians, and equipping them to relate the Gospel to the world. (Ephesians 4:11-13; Colossians 1:28; Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 8:9; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 2:2)
7. Satan is the primary adversary of God, of His work, and of His people, but is always under the controlling restraint of God. (Swapped #8 and #7) (1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; Revelation 12:9-10; Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Luke 22:31-32; Revelation 20:10; Colossians 2:15; Romans 16:20; Matthew 4:1; 2 Corinthians 11:14)
8. There is a resurrection of both the Christian and the non-Christian: the Christian unto the resurrection of life and the non-Christian unto the resurrection of eternal damnation. (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Philippians 3:20-21; Revelation 20:6; Revelation 20:12-15; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Matthew 25:46; John 11:25-26; Revelation 21:3-4)

#### VI. Membership:

Candidates who are willing to make a written confession of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and accept the Constitution of this church may ~~apply~~ ~~be nominated~~ for membership ~~by~~ to the Elders. They then may be accepted with an affirmation ~~by the Elders~~ and ~~receive a welcome message from the Elders or a Staff member~~ ~~at their introduction at a worship service.~~

Members may nominate to the Elders and vote for candidates to fill the Lead Pastor and Elder positions. Members are encouraged to engage in activities designed to fulfill the church's mission, vision, and values.

Membership may be terminated at the member's request, ~~or~~ for reasons of inactivity, or by exclusion in accordance with Scripture. Termination by resignation will be effective upon receipt of the resignation. Termination by inactivity will be ~~evaluated periodically by church staff based upon evidence from multiple sources which shall be determined by the Board of Elders. effective upon the completion of one year of non-attendance at the public meetings of the congregation. (After a minimum of six months of non-attendance, the individual will be placed on an inactive non-voting membership list and will be notified of that action.)~~ Termination for any other reason shall be ~~recommended~~ determined by the Elders. ~~and determined by a majority of the membership present at any business meeting if a quorum is present. A quorum of members at a business meeting shall constitute 25 percent of the active membership.~~ A former member may apply for reinstatement, subject to an Elder vote.

## VI. Officers:

There shall be a minimum of two official ~~positions~~ offices in the church: ~~Senior~~ Lead Pastor and Elder. The ~~Senior~~ Lead Pastor shall hold the position of Elder in addition to his other responsibilities.

When the ~~senior~~ lead pastorate is vacant, the Board of Elders shall nominate an individual as ~~Senior~~ Lead Pastor and he shall be elected by a ~~majority 2/3~~ vote of the membership ~~present at a business meeting if a quorum is present~~.

The Board of Elders shall consist of ~~as many as are deemed necessary by the Elders~~. at least three (3) persons as required by the Law. The number of Elders may be increased or decreased by the Board of Elders pursuant to this Constitution. The number of Elders may not be decreased to less than three (3) persons.

New Elders shall be nominated from the church membership by the Elders ~~on the basis of~~ based on their spiritual qualifications only (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3; Acts 20:28). Nominations may also be made by individual church members by submitting the name of a ~~Fellowship member~~ to the Elders no later than three weeks prior to the election. The ~~Elder-approved~~ list of nominations must be finalized, published, and distributed to the current active membership two weeks before ~~the Annual Meeting or business meeting at which~~ the election will be held. Voting will be conducted by written and/or electronic ballot ~~proxy and votes cast by members at the meeting, and with~~ results announced at the meeting. Elders shall be elected by a majority vote of those voting ~~(including those members present and by proxy votes) at the Annual Meeting, or business meeting called for such a purpose~~.

A chairman and vice chairman of the Board of Elders shall be elected by the Elders at their first meeting after ~~the Annual Meeting Elder elections~~. The Chairman shall be a Board member other than the ~~Lead~~ Pastor.

~~A Senior~~ The ~~Lead~~ Pastor or an Elder may be removed from office by resignation, termination by the Board of Elders, or by a ~~majority 2/3~~ vote of the membership ~~at a business meeting if a quorum is present~~.

An Elder (other than ~~Senior~~ Lead Pastor) may not serve for more than three consecutive years. He must have one year off before he can be nominated to serve again. However, in the instance when an Elder feels led and desires to have a second consecutive term, he may do so, if duly nominated and elected. That Elder ~~would be expected to~~ must take a year off ~~following his sixth year on the Board~~ after his second term.

If an Elder resigns, it is the prerogative of the Board to appoint a replacement Elder for the remainder of the vacated term. This Elder must be an Elder who has served previously, but who is not on a mandatory one-year break.

Other church officers may be appointed by the Board in accordance with the ~~“Operating Guidelines”~~ by-laws of the church.

The ~~Senior-Lead~~ Pastor, members of the Board of Elders, and all paid pastoral staff members must either be members prior to their appointment (Elders) or become members within a reasonable time of their hiring (~~pastors~~).

#### VIII. Business Meetings:

An Annual Meeting must be called by the Board of Elders ~~during the first quarter of the~~ ~~once~~ a year. A notice of this meeting and agenda must be distributed by the Board of Elders to all members via the publications of the church at least 30 days prior to the meeting. The Chairman of the Board or his designate shall chair all business meetings.

Other meetings may be called at any time by the Board of Elders at its own volition or at the written request of 10 percent of the membership. If Elders are being elected or the Constitution is being amended, 30 days notice is required.

~~A quorum of members at a business meeting shall constitute 25 percent of the active membership.~~

Members not present at a business meeting may record their votes ~~electronically or in writing (“absentee ballots”)~~ to be delivered to the meeting on any resolution that has been published prior to the meeting, including election of Elders. These votes must specifically state what is being voted on and must be signed and dated. These votes will be added to the votes of the members present at the business meeting. ~~These absentee ballots will be considered part of the quorum.~~ Members may not vote by proxy.

#### VIII. Amendments to the Constitution:

This constitution may be amended by a ~~majority~~ 2/3 vote (electronic or in writing) of the membership at a business meeting ~~if a quorum is present. If recommended changes and a proxy are mailed in advance to members, a quorum would be determined by members present at the meeting plus votes cast by written proxy.~~

#### IX Residual Authority of the Board of Elders

All matters not covered in this Constitution, including the ~~operating guidelines~~ by-laws of the church, shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders.

#### XI. Dissolution:

~~Dissolution means the complete disbanding of the Church so that it no longer functions as a church or as a corporate entity. Upon the dissolution of the Church, its property shall be applied and distributed as follows: (1) all liabilities and obligations of the Church shall~~

be paid and discharged, or adequate provision shall be made therefore; (2) assets held by the Church upon condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance, which condition occurs by reason of the dissolution, shall be returned, transferred, or conveyed in accordance with such requirements; (3) assets received and not held upon a condition requiring return, transfer, or conveyance by reason of the dissolution, shall be transferred or conveyed to one (1) or more domestic or foreign corporations, societies, or organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law), and are engaged in activities substantially similar to those of the Church; this distribution shall be done pursuant to a plan adopted by the Board of Elders; and (4) any assets not otherwise disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Church is then located, for such purposes and to such organizations as said court shall determine, provided such organizations are in agreement with the Church's basic form of government.