



PREAMBLE

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite here under the name Fellowship Church Louisville, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Fellowship Louisville do hereby organize ourselves and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the Statement of Faith and Covenant of this church

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

The name of this corporation is Fellowship Church Louisville, Incorporated (hereafter referred to as Fellowship Louisville).

ARTICLE 2 - REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT

The registered office of this corporation is at Fellowship Church Louisville P.O. Box 221528, Louisville, KY 40252. The registered agent of this corporation is Andrew Barlow.

ARTICLE 3 – TERM

This corporation shall have perpetual existence until Christ’s physical return to earth.

ARTICLE 4 – PURPOSES

1. Fellowship Louisville exists, by the grace of God, and for the glory of God, to know Christ and make him known in Louisville and to the ends of the earth.
2. We will seek to accomplish our vision through various ministries including but not limited to: corporate worship services, expository preaching, administration of the Lord’s supper and baptism, the exercise of formative and corrective church discipline, prayer, singing songs of worship, Gospel Community Groups, Bible study, counseling ministries, serving our community, educational classes for all ages, planting churches at home and abroad, and other initiatives as deemed necessary by the governing body.
3. The general purpose for which this corporation is formed is to operate exclusively for such religious, charitable, and educational purposes as will qualify it as an exempt organization under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations which qualify as tax-exempt organizations under that code.
4. This corporation will not, as a substantial part of its activities, disseminate propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; nor shall it participate or intervene (by publication or distribution of any statements or otherwise) in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
5. No part of the net earnings of this corporation will inure to the benefit of any individual or member.

ARTICLE 5 – CORPORATE AND CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

1. Corporate Membership

The Corporation shall have no members. Any action which would otherwise require approval by members shall only require approval from the Council of Elders. All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Council of Elders.

2. Congregational Membership

Nothing contained in Section 5.1 of this Article shall be construed to limit the right of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the church ministry of the Corporation as ‘members’ even though such persons are not corporate members, and no such reference in or outside of these Bylaws shall constitute anyone being a member. The Council of Elders may in specific circumstances condition its approval of matters on approval by the church membership.

ARTICLE 6 - GOVERNING BODY

The authority of this corporation shall rest in the Elders. Elders are selected, maintained and removed by the members of the corporation congregation as provided in the by-laws.

ARTICLE 7 - THE ANNUAL MEETING

A congregational meeting shall take place at least once per year.

ARTICLE 8 - BY-LAWS

The members of the corporation congregation (as outlined in Article 6 of the approved bylaws) may adopt such by-laws for the conduct of its business and the carrying out of its purposes as it may deem necessary from time to time. By-laws must be approved by the consensus of the Elders and two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for changes to the by-laws.

ARTICLE 9 – AMENDMENTS

These articles of incorporation may be amended by a consensus approval of the elders and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for amendments.

ARTICLE 10 – DISSOLUTION

No person, firm or corporation shall ever receive any dividends or profits from the undertaking of this corporation and upon dissolution of this corporation all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs will go to causes furthering the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the evangelical tradition, which have qualified for exemption under Section 501(C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. None of the assets will be distributed to any member or officer of this corporation.

ARTICLE 11 – OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

1. Officers

The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Corporation may also have, at the discretion of the Council of Elders, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this Article.

2. Election

The officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 or Section 5 of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Council of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

3. Subordinate Officers

The Council of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Bylaws or as the Council of Elders may from time to time determine.

4. Removal and Resignation

Any officer may be removed upon disqualification and removal as an Elder per Article 6, Section E of the Bylaws or whenever, in the judgment of the person or persons who appointed such officer, the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby. Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Council of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

5. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the Bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

6. Inability to Act

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Council of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Council may select.

7. Chairman

The Chairman shall be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders, shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the control of the Council of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Corporation. He shall preside at all meetings of the Council of Elders, which are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex officio member of all the standing committees of the Council of Elders and otherwise, if any, and shall have powers and duties incident to the office of Chairman and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders or the Bylaws.

8. Vice-Chairman

In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, who shall be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders, shall perform all the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall have such other powers and perform such other duties incident to the office of Vice-Chairman and as from time to time may be prescribed for him by the Council of Elders or the Bylaws.

9. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Council of Elders may order, of all meetings of the church members, the Council and its Committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the church member meetings, the Council and Committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office in the State of Kentucky the original and a copy of the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as amended to date. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept at the principal office of the Corporation, a church membership register, or a duplicated church membership register, showing the names of the members and their addresses.

10. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Corporation, “taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration...for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men” (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). He shall select “men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3) to implement and accomplish this responsibility. The Treasurer shall ensure that all financial activities and transactions are consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws as well as the Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder. The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Council of Elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Council of Elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the Chairman and the Council of Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as incident to the office of Treasurer and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders. He shall make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular Council meeting and at the regular annual meeting of church members.

The names and mailing addresses of the persons who are to serve are as follows:

Chairman – Andrew Barlow, 9812 Longwood Circle, Louisville, KY 40223

Vice Chairman – Todd Pellowe, 14818 Huntridge Circle, Louisville, KY 40245

Secretary - Lou Cohn, 7100 Highgrove Lane, Crestwood, KY 40014

Treasurer - Lee NesSmith, 110 Kratz Lane, Louisville, KY 40243

BY-LAWS OF FELLOWSHIP LOUISVILLE

ARTICLE 1 – NAME

This church will be known as Fellowship Church Louisville, Incorporated. This will be a nonprofit corporation of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the universal communion of followers of Christ and the benefit of a wider association, this church will be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state, and local expressions.

ARTICLE 2 – STATEMENT OF FAITH¹

The Triune God

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who know, love, and glorify one another. This one true and living God is infinitely perfect both in his love and in his holiness. He is the Creator of all things, visible and invisible, and is therefore worthy to receive all glory and adoration. Immortal and eternal, he perfectly and exhaustively knows the end from the beginning, sustains and sovereignly rules over all things, and providentially brings about his eternal good purposes to redeem a people for himself and restore his fallen creation, to the praise of his glorious grace.

Revelation

God has graciously disclosed his existence and power in the created order, and has supremely revealed himself to fallen human beings in the person of his Son, the incarnate Word. Moreover, this God is a speaking God who by his Spirit has graciously disclosed himself in human words: we believe that God has inspired the words preserved in the Scriptures, the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, which are both a record and a means of his saving work in the world. These writings alone constitute the verbally inspired Word of God, which is utterly authoritative and without error in the original writings, complete in its revelation of his will for salvation, sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do, and final in its authority over every domain of knowledge to which it speaks. We confess that both our finitude and our sinfulness preclude the possibility of knowing God's truth exhaustively, but we affirm that, enlightened by the Spirit of God, we can know God's revealed truth truly. The Bible is to be believed, as God's instruction, in all that it teaches; obeyed, as God's command, in all that it requires; and trusted, as God's pledge, in all that it promises. As God's people hear, believe, and do the Word, they are equipped as disciples of Christ and witnesses to the gospel.

Creation of Humanity

We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in his own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God himself declared to be very good, serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and his church. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to

¹ The Fellowship Church statement of faith closely follows the language of The Gospel Coalition. We have added more specific language to the subjects of baptism, the Lord's supper, church leadership and marriage and sexuality to reflect our biblical distinctives.

serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.

The Fall

We believe that Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness—for himself and all his progeny—by falling into sin through Satan’s temptation. As a result, all human beings are alienated from God, corrupted in every aspect of their being (e.g., physically, mentally, volitionally, emotionally, spiritually) and condemned finally and irrevocably to death—apart from God’s own gracious intervention. The supreme need of all human beings is to be reconciled to the God under whose just and holy wrath we stand; the only hope of all human beings is the undeserved love of this same God, who alone can rescue us and restore us to himself.

The Plan of God

We believe that from all eternity God determined in grace to save a great multitude of guilty sinners from every tribe and language and people and nation, and to this end foreknew them and chose them. We believe that God justifies and sanctifies those who by grace have faith in Jesus, and that he will one day glorify them—all to the praise of his glorious grace. In love God commands and implores all people to repent and believe, having set his saving love on those he has chosen and having ordained Christ to be their Redeemer.

The Gospel

We believe that the gospel is the good news of Jesus Christ—God’s very wisdom. Utter folly to the world, even though it is the power of God to those who are being saved, this good news is Christological, centering on the cross and resurrection: the gospel is not proclaimed if Christ is not proclaimed, and the authentic Christ has not been proclaimed if his death and resurrection are not central (the message is: “Christ died for our sins . . . [and] was raised”). This good news is biblical (his death and resurrection are according to the Scriptures), theological and salvific (Christ died for our sins, to reconcile us to God), historical (if the saving events did not happen, our faith is worthless, we are still in our sins, and we are to be pitied more than all others), apostolic (the message was entrusted to and transmitted by the apostles, who were witnesses of these saving events), and intensely personal (where it is received, believed, and held firmly, individual persons are saved).

The Redemption of Christ

We believe that, moved by love and in obedience to his Father, the eternal Son became human: the Word became flesh, fully God and fully human being, one Person in two natures. The man Jesus, the promised Messiah of Israel, was conceived through the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit, and was born of the virgin Mary. He perfectly obeyed his heavenly Father, lived a sinless life, performed miraculous signs, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead on the third day, and ascended into heaven. As the mediatorial King, he is seated at the right hand of God the Father, exercising in heaven and on earth all of God’s sovereignty, and is our High Priest and righteous Advocate. We believe that by his incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He did this so that in him we might become the righteousness of God: on the cross he canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciled to God all those who believe. By his resurrection Christ Jesus was vindicated by his Father, broke the power of death and defeated Satan who once had power over it, and brought everlasting life to all his people; by his ascension he has been forever exalted as Lord and has prepared a place for us to be with him. We believe that salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name given under heaven by which we must be saved. Because God chose the lowly things of this world, the despised things, the things that are not, to nullify the things that are, no human being can ever boast before him—Christ Jesus has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness, and redemption.

The Justification of Sinners

We believe that Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified. By his sacrifice, he bore in our stead the punishment due us for our sins, making a proper, real, and full satisfac-

tion to God's justice on our behalf. By his perfect obedience he satisfied the just demands of God on our behalf, since by faith alone that perfect obedience is credited to all who trust in Christ alone for their acceptance with God. Inasmuch as Christ was given by the Father for us, and his obedience and punishment were accepted in place of our own, freely and not for anything in us, this justification is solely of free grace, in order that both the exact justice and the rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners. We believe that a zeal for personal and public obedience flows from this free justification.

The Power of the Holy Spirit

We believe that this salvation, attested in all Scripture and secured by Jesus Christ, is applied to his people by the Holy Spirit. Sent by the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ, and, as the other Paraclete (advocate/counselor), is present with and in believers. He convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and by his powerful and mysterious work regenerates spiritually dead sinners, awakening them to repentance and faith, and in him they are baptized into union with the Lord Jesus, such that they are justified before God by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. By the Spirit's agency, believers are renewed, sanctified, and adopted into God's family; they participate in the divine nature and receive his sovereignly distributed gifts. The Holy Spirit is himself the down payment of the promised inheritance, and in this age indwells, guides, instructs, equips, revives, and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

The Kingdom of God

We believe that those who have been saved by the grace of God through union with Christ by faith and through regeneration by the Holy Spirit enter the kingdom of God and delight in the blessings of the new covenant: the forgiveness of sins, the inward transformation that awakens a desire to glorify, trust, and obey God, and the prospect of the glory yet to be revealed. Good works constitute indispensable evidence of saving grace. Living as salt in a world that is decaying and light in a world that is dark, believers should neither withdraw into seclusion from the world, nor become indistinguishable from it: rather, we are to do good to the city, for all the glory and honor of the nations is to be offered up to the living God. Recognizing whose created order this is, and because we are citizens of God's kingdom, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, doing good to all, especially to those who belong to the household of God. The kingdom of God, already present but not fully realized, is the exercise of God's sovereignty in the world toward the eventual redemption of all creation. The kingdom of God is an invasive power that plunders Satan's dark kingdom and regenerates and renovates through repentance and faith the lives of individuals rescued from that kingdom. It therefore inevitably establishes a new community of human life together under God.

God's New People

We believe that God's new covenant people have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem; they are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies. This universal church is manifest in local churches of which Christ is the only Head; thus each "local church" is, in fact, the church, the household of God, the assembly of the living God, and the pillar and foundation of the truth. The church is the body of Christ, the apple of his eye, graven on his hands, and he has pledged himself to her forever. The church is distinguished by her gospel message, her sacred ordinances, her discipline, her great mission, and, above all, by her love for God, and by her members' love for one another and for the world. Crucially, this gospel we cherish has both personal and corporate dimensions, neither of which may properly be overlooked. Christ Jesus is our peace: he has not only brought about peace with God, but also peace between alienated peoples. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. The church serves as a sign of God's future new world when its members live for the service of one another and their neighbors, rather than for self-focus. The church is the corporate dwelling place of God's Spirit, and the continuing witness to God in the world.

Baptism

We believe that those who have consciously put their faith in Christ are to be baptized (immersed under water) as a symbol of their union with Christ in his life, death, and resurrection. They are also to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, indicating that they have now been immersed into a Trinitarian identi-

ty with God as their Father, Christ as their Savior and older brother, and the Holy Spirit as the seal and proof of their adoption into God's family. Since baptism is reserved only for those who have consciously trusted in Christ, we will receive into membership only those who have been baptized as believers.

The Lord's Supper

We believe the Lord's Supper is served in commemoration of Jesus' redeeming sacrifice of Himself on the cross in our stead, for our forgiveness. The elements are emblems of His body torn for us and His blood poured out for us, and to partake of them is to remember and proclaim the merits of His sacrifice for sin until He returns. The Supper, in addition to being commemorative, looks forward to the establishment of Christ's Kingdom fully in the future. The Supper shall be served as frequently as deemed desirable by the elders and shall be served only to believing, regenerate Christians.

Church Offices

"We believe in two church offices: the office of elder and the office of deacon. The Bible entrusts the leadership of the church to a plurality of called men, variously referred to as 'elders', 'pastors' or 'overseers', who are to lead, feed, teach, protect, shepherd, and care for Christ's church. We believe that Jesus is the Head, Chief Shepherd, and Senior Pastor of his church and that elders are called to be under-shepherds who lead under Christ's authority. Elders are also to be men who are an example of Christ to the church in both word and deed. And elders will be held accountable on the last day for every soul that Christ entrusted to their care. Additionally, we believe that called and qualified men and women may serve as deacons charged with the practical care and oversight of the church's physical/ logistical needs and functions. Deacons are those who take on church-wide, corporate level practical responsibilities so as to free the elders to be able to devote themselves to the soul-care of God's people."

The Restoration of All Things

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace.

Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God. We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly. We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

ARTICLE 3 – ELDERS

The senior leadership of Fellowship Church Louisville shall be vested in a governing board of male elders/pastors, hereinafter referred to as the Council of Elders, Elders, or the Eldership, which is composed of both paid and unpaid elders/pastors who follow the leading of Jesus Christ, who is the Senior Pastor of Fellowship Church of Louisville (1 Peter 5:1–4).

- 1. The Role of Elders.** The elders (pastors) shall provide broad oversight to the ministry, financial management, and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17; Tit. 1:5-9; Jas. 5:14; and 1 Pet. 5:1-4, the elders (pastors) shall seek the mind of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the word of God as they undertake the work of shepherding God's flock, which includes the following:

1. Prayer and Scripture study (Acts 6:4)
2. Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)
3. Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4–5)
4. Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2–5)
5. Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17)
6. Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7)
7. Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
8. Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2)
9. Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
10. Praying for the sick (James 5:13–15)
11. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
12. Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
13. Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1–3)
14. Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17–31)
15. Oversee the process of church discipline (Matthew 18:15–17)

- 2. The Qualifications of Elders.** To be considered as an elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Fellowship (Acts 20:28) and be a man of the highest Christian character according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9). Following are the biblical qualifications for an elder:

1. He must be male
2. He must be above reproach – without any character defect
3. He must be able to teach – effective Bible communicator
4. He must not be a new convert – mature Christian
5. He must be the husband of one wife – this means a one-woman man who is sexually pure and devoted to his spouse.
6. He must pastor and shepherd his own children
7. He must manage his family well – provides, leads, organizes, loves
8. He must be temperate – mentally and emotionally stable
9. He must be self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
10. He must not be given to drunkenness – without addictions
11. He must not be a lover of money – financially content, upright, and generous
12. He must be respectable – worth following and imitating
13. He must be hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for evangelism
14. He must not be violent – even-tempered
15. He must be gentle – kind, gracious, loving
16. He must not be contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
17. He must have a good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

3. The Organization of Elders.

1. The Council of Elders determines the elder for preaching and vision, who shall function as the first among equals for the Council of Elders. This elder shall possess no more authority than any other elder and shall lead in humble submission to the consensus of the Council of Elders. Nevertheless, he shall carry the responsibility for providing primary leadership for the church directionally and theologically. It is the duty of this elder to help lead the Council of Elders and the rest of the church in obeying God's leading as revealed in Scripture.
2. The elders (pastors) shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder (pastor) set forth in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Tit. 1:6-9. Only men may serve as elders (pastors) in accord with 1 Tim. 2:12; 3:2. At least one-third of the elder board must consist of those who receive no financial compensation from the church. No elder (pastor) shall hold the office of deacon/deaconess during his tenure. Those elders (pastors) not receiving compensation from the church will be called "lay elders" for the purpose of this constitution, although biblically and functionally there is no difference among the elders (pastors).
3. Selection as an elder pursuant to Article 4 below confers the authority to preach, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under secular law.
4. No loan shall be made from the church to any elder. Any director who assents to the making of such a loan shall be jointly and severally liable for its repayment.

ARTICLE 4 – ELDER SELECTION

The process of becoming an elder/pastor involves at least the following steps:

1. The man must be a member in good standing who has demonstrated the calling, character, and competency of an elder.
2. A man may become an elder candidate in three ways: (1) A man indicates the desire to be an elder to an existing elder; (2) The existing elders pursue a man and recommend he pursue eldership; (2) The elders ask the congregation to make nominations.
3. Once a man has been nominated in one of the three ways listed above, the Council of Elders will give themselves to an initial season of prayer and discernment to determine whether the candidate/s should be considered for the office of elder. If no, the candidate/s will be informed and given specific reasons why they are not going to be considered. If yes, then the candidate/s will undergo a season of testing and training as deemed appropriate by the Council of Elders.
4. Upon completing the testing and training process, the candidate/s must be approved by the full council of elders without objection. If the candidate is unanimously approved, he will then be introduced to the congregation as an official elder candidate and enter into a season of congregational observation which will last between 30-90 days. During this time the congregation will be invited to express any concerns they have regarding the candidate/s qualifications, and the elders will investigate all concerns.
5. Consensus approval from the elders and a congregational affirmation, indicated by at least a three-fourths vote, are required prior to the installation of an elder
6. If the elders do not find any reason to reject the man as an official elder, a final vote of the elders shall be taken and if there are no objections to his installation from any elder, the man will be installed by

the laying on of hands, after which he shall be considered an ordained and licensed minister of the gospel.

7. Selection as an elder does not result in contract rights as an employee. All employees are “at will” and the employment relationship may be terminated without regard to such person continuing to serve as an elder.
8. A staff pastor’s position on the Council of Elders is pursuant to his employment with the church, and any voting or leadership right within the church is immediately revoked upon dismissal or if he is called elsewhere to pastor.

ARTICLE 5 – ELDER SERVICE

1. Once a man becomes an elder at Fellowship it is expected that he will continue to serve as an elder indefinitely.
2. If the elders determine that an elder needs an extended Sabbath for a season because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness, tragedy, spiritual rest), then that elder can transition to an inactive and non-voting elder for a set period of time as determined by the elders.
3. To resign from the Council of Elders, an elder must notify the Council of his decision in the form of a letter of resignation.
4. Any credible charge of moral impropriety, doctrinal error, or anything else that could displease the Lord or harm Fellowship, against an elder shall be investigated by a task force established by the Council of Elders. During the investigation, the elder in question shall not be allowed to vote on any church matters and shall be placed on temporary leave. If the elder task force finds credible evidence of wrongdoing, the elder in question shall be tried by the elders according to the criteria of Scripture (e.g., James 3:1; 1 Timothy 5:19–21). A three-fourths vote of the remaining elders is necessary in order to find an elder guilty of the charges. If such a verdict is rendered by the remaining elders, the consequences for such a finding shall be determined by the remaining elders, with any action (up to and including removal) requiring another three-fourths vote of the remaining elders. In such instance, the members of Fellowship shall be notified in writing of the process and results.

ARTICLE 6 – GOVERNANCE

1. The Council of Elders may structure and organize however it deems necessary for the sake of simplicity, clarity of communication, and efficiency of organization, according to the needs of the church and the size of the Council of Elders so long as it preserves the plurality of elders and the doctrinal and character requirements for elders articulated in this document.
2. To promote efficient handling of Council of Elders matters, the Council may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Council of Elders. The general functions of councils and committees are:
 1. To bring considered recommendations to the Council of Elders concerning ministries.
 2. To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.
3. All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Council of Elders.

ARTICLE 7 – DEACONS

1. **The Description of Deacons:** A Deacon is a male or female lead servant in the ministry of our church. The function of deacons in the New Testament is very broad, and is aimed at freeing the elders to more effectively shepherd, oversee, pray, and teach the members of the church. Deacons can do this in many ways: leading and organizing ministries within the church, attending to the physical property of the church, organizing various service teams, distributing all benevolence, and the like. The principle of the diaconate ministry is that they extend the ministry and vision of the elders in very practical ways.
2. **The Term of a Deacon:** Deacons may take sabbaticals from service as needed upon approval of the elders.
3. **The Qualifications of Deacons.**
 1. In accordance with the biblical requirements found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Deacons at Fellowship must be respectable, sincere, temperate and trustworthy. They must not be greedy or drunkards. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience, and manage their families well. Deacons will be tested to ensure that their lives qualify them for the task of service.
 2. The first Deacons in Acts 6:1-7 were “full of the Spirit and wisdom;” Fellowship’s Deacons must also demonstrate fullness of the Spirit and wisdom.
4. **The Obligations of Deacons.**
 1. To develop and meet regularly with ministry groups.
 2. To meet specific designated needs in the congregation and broader community.
 3. To provide encouragement and help to the Elders in their ministry.
5. **The Selection of Deacons.** Deacons are selected by the existing elders as various practical needs arise in the church.
6. **The Termination of Deacons.** The following are reasons for termination of service:
 1. Resignation.
 2. Continued behavior which violates the biblical qualifications for the office (requires 3/4 vote of elders).
 3. Continued agreement with doctrine that violates the doctrinal outlook of our church (requires 3/4 vote of elders).

ARTICLE 8 - MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

ANNUAL MEETING: Once a year, the elders will hold an annual meeting and will inform the congregation at least two weeks before the meeting. The elders may call other meetings of the congregation, as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE 9 - MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

1. Any person desiring to become a member of Fellowship Louisville must:
 1. Make a personal confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and show evidence of regeneration.
 2. Be baptized (or have been baptized) in a Gospel-believing church.
 3. Participate in any current membership classes.
 4. Be interviewed by an elder.

5. Agree to submit to the doctrinal outlook of our church as expressed in our Statement of Faith, and speak to the elders about any convictions against anything contained therein.
 6. Sign and agree to uphold the commitments expressed in our Membership Covenant.
2. **Voting Privileges:** Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation, but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters specifically set forth in these Bylaws or that the Council of Elders chooses to submit to the church membership for affirmation and approval. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are: (1) In good standing; (2) At least 18 years of age; (3) Not under any disciplinary action. All matters shall be determined by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the constitution and by-laws.
 3. **Associate Membership –** Persons who are currently members of other churches, yet through a temporary relocation have routinely been in attendance at Fellowship, will be encouraged to pursue Associate Membership. Qualifications are identical to regular membership, except that home church membership must be retained. The duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for others members except that: (1) When absent from the Louisville area for an extended period of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our church services; and (2) while encouraged to participate in our members meeting, associate members may not hold the office of elder.
 4. **Termination of Membership:** Members shall be removed from the roll for the following reasons:
 1. Death.
 2. Transfer of membership to another church. A letter is needed from the church to which you have transferred in order to properly remove you from the membership rolls.
 3. Withdrawal of Membership. In order to properly withdraw from membership, a written letter of intent is required with explanation of reasons submitted to the Council of Elders.
 4. Dismissal by Church Discipline as outlined below in Article 10.
 5. **Restoration of Members:** Members who have been dismissed as a result of church discipline shall be restored at the recommendation of the Council of Elders by a two-thirds vote of the congregation according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8.

ARTICLE 10 – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

1. **The Definition of Church Discipline.** Fellowship Louisville understands church discipline to be God’s gracious plan (1) to form, shape, and correct his people (2) who have covenanted together in church membership (3) through the application of his word to all aspects of life (4) so that they might reflect the image of Jesus and bring glory to God.
2. **Informal and Formal Discipline.**
 1. Informal discipline refers to the everyday “teaching and warning” that ought to mark the normal Christian life (Col 1:28-29). Informal discipline is inherent in the preaching, teaching, gospel community groups, and other ministries of the church.
 2. Formal discipline refers to the intentional and intensified process that is set in motion when an individual is unresponsive to more informal discipline (Matt 18:15-17; 1 Cor 5:1-13; Titus 3:10-11). The shift from informal to formal discipline occurs when a Christian, having been confronted with their sin, displays an unwillingness to turn from that sin. The process will culminate in the eventual removal of the individual from membership if, despite the warnings and pleadings of the church, the individual refuses to repent of their sin. Yet it is vital to remember that the goal of corrective discipline is always the salvation of the straying sinner and the glory of God.

- 3. The Purposes of Church Discipline.** The purposes of church discipline should be:
1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Heb. 12:1-11; Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 6:1);
 2. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (1 Cor. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20; Heb. 10:24-25);
 3. To purify and protect the church from sin, false teachers, and division (1 Cor 5:6; Eph 5:27; 1 Tim 1:20; Tit 3:10-11)
 4. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (Matt. 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:10-14); and
 5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (Deut. 5:11; John 15:8; Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 2:12).
- 4. The Reasons for Church Discipline.** There are general categories of offenses described in Scripture as resulting in formal church discipline. These include: Divisiveness (Titus 3:9-11, Romans 16:17-18, Hebrews 13:17); Scandalous immorality (1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10, Exodus 20:12-17); idleness (2 These 3:6-15); and rejecting core doctrines of the Christian faith (1 Timothy 1:19-20, 6:3-5, 2 John 9-11). Yet, Matthew 18:15-17 teaches that the discipline process is initiated whenever “sin” is committed and then escalates when one displays a refusal to repent.
- 5. The Process of Church Discipline.** The process of church discipline in the New Testament is varied depending on the nature of the situation. Below are the three processes Fellowship Louisville will follow. A more detailed description of the process can be found in the document entitled “Redemptive Church Discipline.”
1. *The Normative Process (Matthew 18:15-17)* - This process should be considered the standard procedure and will be applied in the vast majority of cases. Each step in the process may involve multiple conversations over a period of time:
 - i. Private confrontation of sin. If they refuse to listen...
 - ii. Involve select others in the confrontation. If they refuse to listen...
 - iii. Tell the church and have the entire church confront the person. If they refuse to listen...
 - iv. Remove the person from membership and treat them as an unbeliever.
 2. *Dealing with False Teaching and Those Causing Division (Tit 3:10-11)* – In cases where a member is actively causing division in the body, Paul instructs elders to issue two warnings, and then if the person does not repent, to excommunicate them.
 3. *Dealing with Heinous Public Sins (1 Cor 5:1-13)* – Some sins are so dangerous to the sinner and the church members, and so defame the name of Christ and the reputation of the church in the community, that they require immediate excommunication.
- 6. The Subjects of Church Discipline.** Members of Fellowship Louisville and all others who regularly attend who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Council of Elders, shall be subject to appropriate church discipline which they have impliedly (through regular attendance) or expressly (through signing the membership covenant) consented to honor prior to engaging in the conduct triggering the disciplinary action.
- 7. The Elders and Church Discipline.** If an individual has followed the first two steps outlined in Matthew 18 (Step 1 – Seek private reconciliation; Step 2 – take one or two others), and yet the one confronted still refuses to repent, the Council of Elders should be brought in at this point to lead the way forward regarding steps 3-4. Note: Elders will not entertain anonymous accusations. The person accused of sin has the right to face and answer his or her accusers. Any charges against an Elder must be supported by two or more witness (1 Timothy 5:19) as well as be provided in writing. Once the elders are brought into the situation they will follow the basic steps outlined below:

1. *Investigation:* The elders will begin a formal investigation. This investigation will involve interviewing all parties involved up to this point to gain an accurate understanding of the situation. After appointing one of the elders to lead the investigation, the elders shall seek to compile a chronology of events that details: (1) The specific accusation being brought against the offender, (2) a basic account of all meetings conducted to date, (3) the individual accounts of the accusers and the accused, and if possible, (4) a group interview with both accusers and accused. All meetings/conversations/emails/etc. conducted in step three will be documented. If the charges are proven false, then appropriate exhortation will be given to the parties so that reconciliation can occur. If the charges are proven (whether by confession or by witnesses), admonition is to be initiated.
2. *Admonition:* Admonition includes a description of how the unacceptable behavior violated the Scriptures and what must replace it; a gathering of a select, intentional community to journey with and minister to the offender over a specified period of time; and a warning that public admonition (Matt. 18:17b) or removal from membership could follow if repentance and subsequent changes in heart attitude and action does not result by God's grace. If repentance and satisfactory changes occur, the Elders may discontinue further disciplinary efforts. Other disciplinary measures, short of removal from membership, may include limitation of social associations and ministry opportunities.
3. *Tell the Church:* If the offender refuses to respond with repentance to the admonitions and pleadings of the elders and others involved, the elders will then inform the full membership of the church during a member's meeting. In this meeting the elders will detail all necessary information, teach about the biblical prescriptions for church discipline, and call the members to pray for, seek out, warn, and plead with the unrepentant person to turn back to Christ. The elders will determine on a case-by-case basis how long this part of step three will last. If repentance occurs at this time, the elders will form a plan to publicly restore this person at a members meeting.
4. *Removal from Membership.* If the offender refuses to listen to the entirety of the church membership, he/she shall be excommunicated from the membership of the church at a normal or specially called member's meeting by a two-thirds congregational vote. During this meeting (1) a basic history of the offender/offenses will be recounted, (2) the congregation will vote on the offender's removal from membership (3) the members will be instructed about the corporate actions Fellowship Louisville will take toward the offender, and (4) the members will also be instructed about their responsibility and conduct toward the disciplined individual.
5. *Note:* If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-17 and begins attending another church, the Elders are obliged to inform the new church of the offender's status. If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-17, such withdrawal shall not cancel the Elders' authority to complete the appropriate disciplinary action.

8. The Results of Church Discipline. According to Matthew 18:17, the excommunicated individual is to be treated as a "Gentile and tax collector," which in Jesus' day were considered *both* unbelievers and traitors. Paul says elsewhere that we are to have nothing to do with those under church discipline.

1. The following outlines the actions Fellowship Louisville will take toward those excommunicated:

- i. Removal from membership
 - ii. Removal from the Lord's Supper
 - iii. Possible removal from Sunday services
 - iv. Removal from gospel community groups
 - v. Removal from all church social functions
2. The following explains how members are to interact with those under discipline:
- i. *Pray* - continually that God would grant them repentance and restoration
 - ii. *Interact redemptively, not socially* - The elders of Fellowship Louisville ask that the *only social interaction* members have with the individual under discipline be focused on their need to repent and turn back to Christ. We want members to refrain from eating, recreating, or any casual socializing with the individual under discipline (1 Cor 5:4-13).
3. Details of how to interact with family members under discipline are explained in Appendix 5 of the document entitled "Redemptive Church Discipline."
- 9. Restoration:** If and when the person removed from membership repents, restoration begins. Restoration is a process that restores an offender to the full privileges that were withdrawn during excommunication. This will only occur if the Elders are satisfied that full repentance is a reality and re-induction is affirmed by a two-thirds majority congregational vote. If restoration occurs, the Elders will explain the duties of all members relative to the restored person (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

10. Other Important Details About Church Discipline

1. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Council of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee thereof), a member, a regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises or at church functions for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.
2. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Council of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee thereof), the names of any members who have not attended a worship service or Small Group meeting at or under the leadership of Fellowship Louisville for a consecutive period of six months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.
3. The methods described here also cover any and all disputes or claims arising from or related to church membership covenant, doctrine, policy, practice, counseling, and discipline, including claims based on civil statute or for personal injury. By joining this church, all members agree that these church discipline methods shall provide the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its agents, and they waive their right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency.

ARTICLE 11 - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be September 1 – August 31.

ARTICLE 12 – BUDGET

A budget will be created by the Council of Elders and presented to the congregation either in a members meeting or via letter or email. Members will be given at least two weeks to interact with the elders about the specifics of the budget before the budget goes into effect. The budget may be amended in three ways: reallocation, adjustment for growth, and expansion.

1. Reallocation

1. The budget may be amended by reallocation of funds from one account to another upon approval by the elders so long as the total change in funds does not exceed 5% of the annual budget. This change does not require congregational approval.
2. Elders must approve reallocation of funds by a majority vote.
3. Reallocation of funds which exceeds 5% of the annual budget requires both approval by the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote at a members' meeting. 50% of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.

2. Adjustment for growth

1. The budget may be amended if giving exceeds the amount estimated in the annual budget. Adjustment for growth allows the elders to expand the budget so that what is given can be distributed to various budget items in proportion to the excess giving.
2. Elders must approve adjustment for growth by majority vote.
3. Adjustment for growth does not require congregational approval.

3. Expansion

1. The budget may be amended for the expansion of ministry need. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Expansion of a budget for a ministry that has grown in its need for resources.
 - ii. Addition of a new budget item, such as a new ministry or staff member.
2. Expansion for budget items less than 5% of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and does not require congregational affirmation.
3. Expansion for budget items greater than 5% of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote either at a members meeting or by online voting. 50% of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.

ARTICLE 13 – VOTING

Those admitted to church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members of the Corporation, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Corporation, or rights to vote on its disposal, except any vote specifically provided in these Bylaws or as specifically provided by the Council of Elders. Said property of the Corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

1. Congregational voting shall occur in the following instances:

1. Changes in the budget exceeding 5% of the annual budget.
2. Affirmation of elder candidates from within Fellowship Louisville.
3. Affirming any pastoral hire from outside of Fellowship Louisville.
4. Purchases of land and real estate.
5. Amendments to the constitution and by-laws.

2. A quorum shall be necessary only in the case of the rejection of a budget, elder, or purchase of land or real estate. A quorum is not necessary for a vote of affirmation. If a vote is taken resulting in the rejection of one of these items, an attendance record is to be taken. If the number of members present is less than 50% of all the membership, the elders are to communicate in writing to all members the result of the vote, and within 45 days, a time for either:
 1. A second vote on the same issue, with the goal to have a quorum present at that meeting.
 2. A membership meeting to present an alternative (in the case of a budget).

ARTICLE 14 – EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

The corporation will not discriminate in employment policies for reasons of race, religion, or sex, except in those situations that are in clear disagreement with Scripture.

ARTICLE 15 - RULES OF ORDER

The current edition of Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these by-laws.

ARTICLE 16 – AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended, revised, added to, repealed, or rescinded only by a majority vote of the church membership.

ARTICLE 17 – COMPENSATION

No compensation shall be paid to elders unless a resolution authorizing such remuneration shall have been adopted by the corporation before the services were rendered. The elders have the freedom to hire assistants or office staff without seeking congregational approval, but the congregation should be informed of such decisions. All staffing costs are reflected in the annual budget.