



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
16999 E. 23rd St. S.
Independence, MO 64057
(816) 229-1611

BYLAWS

1) Preamble

We have assembled as a local body of believers in Jesus Christ and have established these Bylaws to help govern the business and administrative needs of this church body. As we have grown in size, our needs have changed and we therefore have established this latest version of the Bylaws, replacing the September 6th 2009 version in its entirety, to serve as the governing document for the areas addressed herein. One major change is in the area of church governance. The Senior Pastor is hereby commissioned with the responsibility and authority to wisely uphold and carryout these Bylaws in accordance with their purpose until such time that either changes to this version or a new version is adopted through the process outlined in this document.

2) Membership Defined

Church membership shall be extended to all who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and upon their profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ have followed Him in baptism by immersion. They must also desire to fellowship with this local church and recognize this church as their spiritual home, have regular attendance, invest themselves in the ministry of the church, and supports the church with their tithes, offerings and sacrificial giving.

Only a registered member of Grace and Truth Baptist Church will be eligible to have access to the Church ByLaws.



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3) Discipline of a Member

Church members are expected to live a life that would be consistent with biblical teachings (1st Corinthians 5, 2nd Corinthians 2). In some cases, action contrary to the scriptures places a self-inflicted condition in the spirit of humility after examining themselves. If restitution is not achieved, then termination of the member will occur. The objective of church discipline is to restore an individual to fellowship within the Church and to glorify God. Confession, repentance, forgiveness and restitution must occur to restore fellowship and membership in the church (1st Corinthians 5, 2nd Corinthians 2, Matthew 18:15-20).

4) Removal from Membership

Members can be removed through (a) voluntary withdrawal provided the Member is in good standing; (b) death; (c) as a result of the disciplinary process; or, (d) and approval by the Senior Pastor if a Member absents themselves from the Church for a period greater than (1) year.

5) Formal Dispute Resolution

The Church is committed to glorifying God and maintaining unity through peacemaking and reconciliation, preserving marriages, protecting children, Biblical counseling, confidentiality, accountability, and church discipline.

Disputes brought against a Member or brought against the Church shall be resolved through Biblical mediation or arbitration rather than civil litigation whenever possible. Members shall submit to the process addressed in (Matthew 18:15-20 & 1 Corinthians 6:1-8).

6) Government

We believe the New Testament teaches the absolute autonomy of the local church and that it is to govern itself as the Word of God instructs, free from outside authority and control (Matthew 16:18, Romans 13:1) within the guidelines of Federal and State laws.



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7) **Ordination**

The Church will consider setting-apart through Ordination, a duly qualified man in accordance with the Senior's Pastor's Nomination and the church voting process as outline in section (A:7) of the ByLaws, in accordance with the guidelines of Scripture (Acts 13:1-3).

8) **Revocation**

The Church reserves the right to revoke an ordination when it is determined there has been a moral failure or termination of employment due to conduct. The decision to rescind or extend ordination shall be at the recommendation of the Senior Pastor and followed by a vote from the church membership.

- a. The Senior Pastor will call an 'Revocation of Ordination' Business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the Church from the pulpit at least four Sundays and not less than one week prior to said meeting.
- b. Posting of this notice into the Church Bulletin in the cadence as described above, will satisfy the notification requirement.
- c. All active members of the church must be invited to the meeting where the voting will take place.
- d. Only active church members in good standing that are legal adults are allowed to participate in the voting.
- e. At least 75% of the church membership must be present at the time of the voting.
- f. A majority of Corporate Officers and Corporate Directors are to be present.
- g. Of the voting members present, an 85% majority is required to pass the vote.



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9) Licensing

The Senior Pastor has full authority to provide a 'Certificate of License' to a duly qualified man to preach the Gospel as he may have opportunity, and to exercise his gifts in the works of the ministry.

- a. A Certificate of License is not an Ordination.
- b. A Certificate of License holder is not considered a Corporate Officer position, Staff or any other type of leadership role or position of authority within the church.

10) Positions within the Church

All official positions held within the church must be held by members of the church in good standing, proven faithfulness in giving, serving and attendance.

A. The Senior Pastor:

- 1) The qualification for Senior Pastor shall be consistent with those stated in (1st Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and 1st Peter 5:1-4).
- 2) His responsibilities:
 - a. These generally fall into the following areas: Preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, administration, financial planning/management and stewardship, business operations and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.
 - b. There shall be only one Senior Pastor on staff at Grace and Truth Baptist Church.
 - c. The position of Senior Pastor is a paid Staff position.
 - d. He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.
 - e. The Pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.
 - f. Acts as the additional signature authorization on church business and banking needs.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
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- 3) There shall be only one Senior Pastor and, if necessary, as determined by the Senior Pastor, other Associate Pastors.
- 4) While the Bible does not command a plurality of elders (overseers) for the local Church, it is permissible and advisable for the leadership of a local church to be provided by more than one pastor (Deacon/Elder).
- 5) The qualification for Pastors, Deacons and Elder's is given in (1st Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and 1st Peter 5:1-4).
- 6) The Senior Pastor (only) may nominate a Man to be an Associate Pastor.
- 7) That nomination will be followed by a Church Business meeting which will be called for the church members to vote on the Senior Pastor's Nomination of the Associate Pastor candidate.
 - a. The Senior Pastor will call an Associate 'Pastor Nomination' Church Business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the Church from the pulpit at least four Sundays and not less than one week prior to said meeting. Posting of this notice into the Church Bulletin in the cadence as described above, will satisfy the notification requirement.
 - b. All active members of the church must be invited to the meeting where the voting will take place.
 - c. Only active church members in good standing that are legal adults are allowed to participate in the voting.
 - d. At least 75% of the church membership must be present at the time of the voting.
 - e. A majority of Corporate Officers and Corporate Directors are to be present.
 - f. Of the voting members present, an 85% majority is required to pass the vote.
 - g. If an 85% majority vote is not obtained, the candidate shall not be selected.
 - h. It will be at the discretion of the Senior Pastor, to determine if the nomination process to select a new/different candidate will take place.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
16999 E. 23rd St. S.
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8) Terms of Service:

- a. There shall be a mutual contract/agreement between the Pastor and the church
- b. The Senior Pastor shall serve until the relationship with the church is terminated by either his request or that of the church.
- c. In either case at least (90) days; notice shall be given, and he is to be given at least ninety (90) days; of paid compensation or any bonuses due him. However, his services end immediately, which means he is to turn in all property belonging to the church.
- d. In the event the Pastor leaves his office, either voluntarily or involuntarily, the Pastor's office will be shared by two previously
- e. appointed (by the Pastor) and the Associate Pastor, Elders or Deacons positions if staffed.
- f. The interim, shared pastoral arrangement will continue for a period of six (6) consecutive months.
- g. The previously selected two persons will select a Nominee for Senior Pastor prior to (60) sixty days from the date of the Senior Pastor's term date.
- h. They will call a 'Senior Pastor Nomination' Church Business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the Church from the pulpit at least four Sundays and not less than one week prior to said meeting.
- i. Posting of this notice into the Church Bulletin in the cadence as described above will satisfy the notification requirement.
- j. All active members of church must be invited to the meeting where the voting will take place.
- k. Only active church members in good standing that are legal adults are allowed to participate in the voting.
- l. At least 75% of the church membership must be present at the time of the voting.
- m. A majority of Corporate Officers and Corporate Directors are to be present.
- n. Of the voting members present, an 85% majority is required to pass the vote.
- o. If an 85% majority vote is not obtained, the candidate shall not be selected, and may not be nominated again.
 - The Senior Pastor nomination process shall repeat itself until a New and Different candidate is identified.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
16999 E. 23rd St. S.
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- 9) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church without an agreement from specific Church Corporate officers who are the Finance Officer(s).
- 10) It shall be their function to sign any, and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church capital property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the Corporate Officers for and on behalf of the church
- 11) The Senior Pastor can serve as a Corporate Officer.

B. Associate Pastors

1) Terms of Service

- a. External ordained Pastors will not be recognized or referred to as a Grace & Truth Baptist Church Pastor.
- b. A Grace & Truth Baptist Church Associate Pastor may be nominated by the Senior Pastor after being an active church member in good standing for at least five (5) years.
- c. The Associate Pastor Position is not considered as a paid staff position.
- d. While the Bible does not command a plurality of elders (overseers) for the local Church, it is permissible and advisable for the leadership of a local church to be supported by more than one pastor. The qualification for a Pastor is given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and 1st Peter 5:1-4.
- e. The Senior Pastor (only) may nominate a Man to be an Associate Pastor.
- f. The nomination must be followed by a Church Business meeting which will be called for the church members to vote on the Pastor's Nomination of the Associate Pastor candidate. Refer to the church voting process as outline in section (A:7) of the ByLaws, in accordance with the guidelines of Scripture (Acts 13:1-3).



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
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C. Associate Pastor - Qualifications

- 1) A truthful and honest man of Good Report. Must demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family and public life. (1 Timothy 3:8-12).
- 2) Full of the Holy Ghost. (Galatians 5:22-23).
- 3) Full of Wisdom, not a Novice. The Associate Pastor should be well versed in the scriptures (able to teach) and have a living and working knowledge of biblical principles taught in Discipleship.
- 4) Must be from among the membership with at least five (5) years of active membership. (1 Timothy 5:22)
- 5) The Associate Pastor must be a member in good standing and proven as an able minister to the congregation and the community.
- 6) The Associate Pastor is able to lead his family, meeting the criteria described in (1 Timothy 3:1-13).
- 7) Does not sow discord, Submits to The Senior Pastor's Leadership.
- 8) Proven faithfulness in giving and attendance.
- 9) The Associate Pastor's wife should be an active participating member in good standing, does not sow discord, of good report, submits to the Leadership of the church, proven to meet the criteria described in 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:3-5
- 10) The Associate Pastor and his wife will work closely with the Senior Pastor and his wife as good trusting partners.

D. Associate Pastor - Duties

- 1) Associate Pastor Duties (Acts 6:1-3): As Designated by the Senior Pastor
 - a. The Associate Pastors/Elder/Deacons will serve as counsel to assist the Senior Pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
 - b. Assist the Senior Pastor in ministering to the members.
 - c. Seek to solve any fellowship program of the church.
 - d. Assist the Senior Pastor in administering the church ordinances and other duties as assigned.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
16999 E. 23rd St. S.
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- e. A committed Christian leader and partner of the Senior Pastor; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.
 - f. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, the Associate Pastor shall serve as an advisory member to designated organizations, departments, and committees of the church.
 - g. The associate Pastor's wife will hold no positions of authority within the church unless approved and designated by the Senior Pastor.
- 2) Terms of Service:
- a. There shall be a mutual contract/agreement between the Associate Pastor the church.
 - b. Associate Pastors shall serve until the relationship with the church is terminated by either his request or that of the Senior Pastor. In either case, at least sixty (30) days; notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.
 - c. In the event the Associate Pastor leaves his office, either voluntarily or involuntarily, when applicable and appropriate, the Senior Pastor will follow the Associate Pastor Nomination process as outlined in (A:7) of the ByLaws.
- 3) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church.
- 4) They shall have no signatory authority for any church documents or church business.
- 5) They shall have no power or authority to nominate any individuals or any positions within the church either Volunteers or paid/nonpaid staff.
- 6) The associate Pastor's wife will hold no positions of authority within the church unless approved and designate by the Senior Pastor.
- 7) The Associate Pastor shall have no authority to call or organize a meeting or communicate information or provide direction to the church membership without permission and approval from the Senior Pastor.



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E. Deacons/Elders:

- 1) Terms of Service
 - a. The Senior Pastor (only) may nominate a Man to be an Elder or a Deacon
 - b. External Deacons/Elders will not be recognized as a Grace & Truth Baptist Church Deacon/Elder.
 - c. A Grace & Truth Baptist Church Deacon/Elder may be nominated only by the Senior Pastor after being a church member for at least five (3) years.
 - d. There shall be a mutual contract/agreement between the Deacon/Elder the church
 - e. Deacon/Elder shall serve until the relationship with the church is terminated by either his request or that of the Senior Pastor. In either case, at least (1) weeks' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

- 2) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church.
- 3) They shall have no signatory authority for any church documents or church business.
- 4) They shall have no power or authority to nominate any individuals or any positions within the church either Volunteers or paid/nonpaid staff.
- 5) The Deacon/Elder's wife will hold no positions of authority within the church unless approved and designate by the Senior Pastor.
- 6) The Deacon/Elder shall have no authority to call or organize a meeting or communicate information or provide direction to the church membership without permission and approval from the Senior Pastor.
- 7) The Elder/Deacon and his wife will work closely with the Senior Pastor and his wife as good trusting partners.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
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F. Deacon/Elder - Qualifications

- 1) A truthful and honest man of Good Report.
- 2) Must demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family and public life. 1 Timothy 3:8-12
- 3) Full of the Holy Ghost. Galatians 5:22-23
- 4) Full of Wisdom, not a Novice.
- 5) Come from among the Grace and Truth Baptist Church membership.
- 6) The Deacon/Elder should be a member in good standing and proven as a servant to the congregation and community.
- 7) Able to lead his family well, meeting the criteria as described in (Timothy 3:1-13).
- 8) Does not sow discord, submits to Pastoral Leadership.
- 9) Proven faithfulness in giving and attendance.
- 10) The Deacon/Elder's wife should be an active participating member in good standing, does not sow discord, of good report, submits to the Leadership of the church, proven to meet the criteria described in (1Timothy 3:11 & Titus 2:3-5).

G. Deacon/Elder- Duties (Acts 6:1-3):

- 1) Deacon /Elder Duties (Acts 6:1-3): As designated by the Senior Pastor
 - a. Deacon/Elders assist the pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
 - b. Assist the Pastor(s) in serving the members.
 - c. Seek to solve any fellowship program of the church.
 - d. Assist the Pastor(s) in administering the church ordinances.
 - e. A committed Christian leader and partner of the pastor; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.
 - f. In the absence of the Senior Pastor, an Elder or Deacon, appointed by the Senior Pastor, shall serve as an advisory member to designated organizations, departments, and committees of the church.
 - g. A Deacon/Elder cannot hold a position of a Pastor.
 - h. A Deacon/Elder cannot serve as a Corporate Officer.



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H. Additional Church Personnel:

- 1) This church can employ or call church personnel as needed and additional members shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor and perform church duties and responsibilities as the Senior Pastor identifies the need.
- 2) Can hold any other position within the church as designated and approved by the Senior Pastor.
- 3) Can serve as a Corporate Officer, as designated by the Senior Pastor, Director of Operations/Administration and the Finance Officer

I. Staff & Volunteer positions

- 1) The Senior Pastor has ultimate selection and termination decision authority over nonpaid volunteer, administrative, operations and other unpaid positions across all areas of church business operations, administrative roles, service and ministry roles.
- 2) The Revocation process will be followed for unpaid positions such as Associate Pastors, Deacons/Elders.

J. Corporate Officers

- 1) All corporate positions must be held by members of the church in good standing and are appointed or voted in positions at the Senior Pastor's discretion.

K. President:

- 1) The president shall be appointed by the Pastor as a custodian of administrative and corporate information for the church.
- 2) Provides direction and support to the other Corporate Officers.
- 3) Responsible to ensure the Bylaws are upheld and followed.
- 4) Leads the Church Business Meetings.



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- 5) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church without approval of the Senior Pastor and Finance Officer and Directors.
- 6) This is a Corporate Officer position.
- 7) If the Office of the President is vacant, The Senior Pastor while in active employment status with the church, will assume and perform all authority, roles, tasks, actions and responsibilities listed under the President, until such time that office of the President is filled.

L. Secretary:

- 1) The church secretary shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor as custodian of the church records. They shall keep a formal record of Church business meetings and will preserve all documents, letters, and other papers important to the church.
- 2) May assist the Treasurer in financial tracking and monitoring, when authorized by the Senior Pastor and Financial Office
- 3) It shall be their function to coordinate, facilitate, and maintain proper records for all required Church meetings.
- 4) This is a Corporate Officer position, however with limited engagements and access, oversight and signatory authority over any church documents without approved permission and authority from the Senior Pastor.
- 5) The Secretary shall have no authority to call or organize any meetings or communicate information or provide direction to the church membership without permission and approval from the Senior Pastor.
- 6) Typical roles performed by the secretary may be delegated to various other persons (only) upon the direction and approval of the Senior Pastor and the Director of Church Operations/Administration.



Grace and Truth Baptist Church
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M. Finance Officer/Treasurer

- 1) The church treasurer shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church.
- 2) They are the primary signature authorization on church banking needs.
- 3) They shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
- 4) He shall keep, always, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render an annual summary report of these accounts to the church as required.
- 5) Shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.
- 6) Shall be responsible for preparing and providing an annual record of financial giving contribution statements to contributing/qualifying members and visitors.
- 7) Annual giving records will only be provided to members/visitors with contributions of \$2000 or more. Giving records for amounts under \$2000 may be provided upon request of the member.
- 8) The treasurer's report shall be audited at least every three years by a third-party organization or one year following a change in the Financial Officer position.
- 9) The Treasurer shall also serve as an Officer of the Corporation.
- 10) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church without a specific approval by the Senior Pastor and the President.
- 11) It shall be their function to sign any, and all-legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church capital property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the Officers for and on behalf of the church as designated with approval by the Senior Pastor and the President.
- 12) This is a Corporate Officer position.



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N. Directors:

- 1) Directors shall be appointed by the Pastor to be stewards of the church property, business administration, church operations, ministries and service areas.
- 2) Directors provide oversight, input, direction and vision in Church Business meetings.
- 3) Assists the Corporate officers and Pastors to ensure the bylaws are upheld and followed.
- 4) They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any capital property of the church without approval of the Senior Pastor, President and Finance Officer.

O. Volunteers/Paid Staff/Officers/Directors and the President

- 1) Grace and Truth Baptist Church will follow the Missouri 'Employment-At-Will Doctrine'. This means that both the employer and employee can terminate their employment relationship at any time and for any reason, as long as: No employment contract has been broken, **and** in accordance with guidelines provided in the ByLaws where appropriate.
- 2) The Senior Pastor has ultimate selection and termination decision authority over both volunteer and paid staff positions across all areas of church business operations, administrative roles, service and ministry roles.
- 3) Volunteers/Paid Staff are subject to an approved Background Check and must consent to the Grace and Truth Baptist Church Confidentiality Policy.



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P. Meetings of Church Membership

- 1) The Senior Pastor and the President both shall have the sole authority to call a meeting of Church Membership whether in whole or specific groups of the membership as he deems appropriate, and while he (Senior Pastor) is an active employee of the Church.
- 2) The Senior Pastor himself or person he may designate shall establish the agenda and serve as moderator of such meetings.
- 3) Members may raise issues for discussion and/or consideration at a designated time during a regularly scheduled meeting of Church Membership.
- 4) A quorum consists of Members present. Voting by proxy or in absentia is not allowed.
- 5) A Business Meeting for the Church Membership shall occur at least once each year.
- 6) For an issue to be considered for a vote, it must first be submitted in writing to the Senior Pastor and the President for approval to be placed on the agenda for the voting process. It must have a first motion followed by a second motion, from two different Members.
- 7) Only active members in good standing that are legal adults who are present at the meeting may participate in the voting.
- 8) A 75% favorable vote from those who are present at the meeting is required for approval of all issues considered for a vote.
- 9) Voting will normally be by public acclamation unless a secret ballot is called for by the President.
- 10) Meetings of Church Membership must be communicated at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting date, by at least two different forms of communication.
- 11) Pulpit announcements and Posting in the Church Bulletin will satisfy the notification requirement



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Q. Meetings for Church Administration

- 1) The annual Church Business meeting shall be held in the first quarter of the year, at which time regular Church administration business shall be considered and the current “state of the union” of the church will be reviewed and its future plans.
 - 2) All Corporate and pastoral positions are to be present.
 - 3) Additional Church Business meetings may be held throughout the year as deemed necessary by the Pastor or by specific corporate officer as designated by the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will present the outcomes at designated church services.
 - 4) If the office of Senior Pastor is vacant or he is the subject of possible disciplinary actions, in accordance with the ByLaws, the President, and Financial Officer may call a Church Business meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the Church from the pulpit at least two Sundays and not less than one week prior to said meeting.
 - 5) Bible conferences and missionary conferences may be held at the Senior Pastor’s discretion and approval.
- A.** Voting in the church will always be handled in a standard format as directed by the Senior Pastor.
- (1) All active members of church must be invited to the meeting where the voting will take place.
 - (2) Only church members that are legal adults will be allowed to participate in the voting.
 - (3) A majority of Corporate Officers and Corporate Directors are to be present.
 - (4) Of the voting members present, a majority as outlined in the Bylaws (A:7) is required to pass the vote.



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R. Financial Policies

- 1) The church operates financially on a physical year; January 1st and ends on December 31st.
- 2) A summary of financial records, excluding personal information, are available for review by any church member upon request.
- 3) Any questions a member may have regarding finances should be directed to the Financial Office/Treasurer of the church.
- 4) Capital expenditures excluding church operating and administrative expenses (including the exclusion of day-to-day ministry and missions' projects) will be presented to the church members at the Annual Business Meeting for their awareness.
- 5) Annual giving records will only be provided to members/visitors with contributions of \$2000 or more. Giving records for amounts under \$2000 may be provided upon request of the member.

S. ByLaws Amendments

- 1) These ByLaws may be altered, suspended or amended at a Church Leadership Meeting consisting of Specific Corporate officers such as The Senior Pastor, The Finance Officer(s) and the Director of Church Operations/Administration.
- 2) The Officers will then communicate at least fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting date, by at least two different forms of communication, to inform the church that an Amendment(s) have been made to the ByLaws.
- 3) Pulpit announcements and posting in the Church Bulletin will satisfy the notification requirement. Members may obtain a copy of the amended changes for their review and discussion at the meeting.