

**CONSTITUTION**  
of the  
**NEW LIFE COMMUNITY BAPTIST**  
**CHURCH**  
***GAHANNA, OHIO***

**ARTICLE I – NAME**

This church shall be known as the New Life Community Baptist Church dba “New Life Church Gahanna” located in the city of Gahanna of the State of Ohio.

**ARTICLE II – PURPOSE**

The church shall have as its objective full obedience to the will of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Founder and Head of the Church. More specifically, the purpose of this church shall be:

SECTION 1. To exalt the Lord God (Eph 3:21). This will be carried out by maintaining public services for the worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, the edification and equipping of the saints, the conversion of sinners, and participation in missionary activities throughout the world.

SECTION 2. To equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11-12). This will be carried out by the provision of dissemination of knowledge in the fields of arts, sciences, business, and religion. To have all the powers of all non-profit religious corporations, colleges and schools. To have the power and authority to confer degrees and give scholastic recognition usually conferred by any institution in the field of liberal arts or humanities or religion in the State of Ohio.

Education purposes for which this church may engage are as follows: to engage in, foster, propagate, encourage and promote Christian and charitable interests in or without the State of Ohio or the United States, including the establishment, maintenance and operation of Christian schools, colleges, orphanages, day-care centers, homes for juveniles, youth centers, family recreational centers, hospitals, retirement communities, and any other Christian service operation in this state and throughout the world.

SECTION 3. To evangelize and disciple those who do not know Christ (Matt 28:19-20). This will be carried out by the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in accord with the Word of God and in accordance with that which includes using every means known to man, or later discovered for the dissemination of the Gospel including, but not limited to, the following methods or mediums: the spoken word; the printed or written word; radio or electronic transmission; Internet; television or like medium; and any other means now in existence or that may be developed in the future. To further this purpose, this may include the operation of foreign missions programs, evangelistic outreach programs, Christian day schools, vocational or

Bible schools; the establishment of camps, conference grounds, and counseling centers; and the training, licensing, and ordaining to the Gospel ministry those persons called of God.

SECTION 4. To elevate the moral and spiritual character of our society (Matt 5:13-16).

### **ARTICLE III - RELATION TO OTHER CHURCHES**

This church shall be fully autonomous in the government of its own affairs, exercising and retaining sole and complete control of all property, owned, leased or rented, for the furtherance of its Purpose, as stated in Article II. True Christian fellowship and cooperation with all genuine believers and congregations of believers shall be diligently sought and cherished. However, control of affairs or property of the church must never be surrendered to any other church, association, or organization, except as set forth in Article XII, Dissolution.

### **ARTICLE IV - STATEMENT OF FAITH**

SECTION 1. BIBLIOLOGY (The Doctrine of the Bible): We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the inerrant, infallible, verbally and plenary inspired, authoritative Word of God. A proper understanding of Bibliology is foundational, as the Bible is the source book for all doctrine and practice. They are to be received as the authoritative Word of God bearing an authority superior to that of the Church, or its creeds, councils, or declarations. The Holy Scriptures in their entirety, down to the very words of the original autographs, were given by divine inspiration. Inspiration was that work whereby God by His Spirit, through human writers utilizing their distinct personalities and literary styles, gave us His Word. Because of inspiration, Scripture is inerrant, infallible, completely true and reliable in all matters it addresses, free from all falsehood or deceit. Those sixty-six books, thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament, have their place in the Bible on the basis of their inspiration and were recognized and submitted to as inspired and canonical by the Church and stand as our final standard for faith and practice.

SECTION 2. THEOLOGY (The Doctrine of God): We believe there is one, and only one, living and true God and His divine nature is undivided and indivisible. There exist three eternal distinctions in the divine essence, known respectively as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal, infinite, omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, wise, immutable, sovereign, incomprehensible, inscrutable, holy, righteous and just, true, faithful, good, gracious, merciful, and loving.

SECTION 3. CHRISTOLOGY (The Doctrine of Christ): We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal, pre-existent Son of God. He appeared and ministered in the Old Testament. He became flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and was born of the virgin Mary by miraculous conception and virgin birth. He is fully God and fully man; perfect deity and humanity. He lived a sinless human life, perfect by fulfilling the divine law, and then offered Himself a sacrifice for the sins of every person. He died on the cross, shedding His blood, in full substitution and atonement for the sins of all men everywhere. He was buried, and on the third day He arose bodily from the dead, alive forevermore. He later ascended bodily into heaven where at the right hand of the Father, He now intercedes for those who believe on Him.

SECTION 4. PNEUMATOLOGY (The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit): We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit actively

ministered in the Old Testament through creation, revelation, and in a special selective manner with men. The Holy Spirit was active in all aspects of Christ's life, from His birth to His death and resurrection. The Holy Spirit today has a prime ministry in salvation as He convicts, regenerates, indwells, baptizes (this baptism occurs at salvation and is not a subsequent or second work of grace), and seals the new believers. The Holy Spirit gifts, controls, teaches, guides, assures, and prays for believers. (The exercise of miraculous sign gifts in public church gatherings is not promoted, but their exercise is not prohibited as a private practice.)

**SECTION 5. ANGELOLOGY (The Doctrine of Angels, Demons and Satan):** We believe in the existence of specially created beings called angels. These spirit beings are generally invisible and from a human standpoint they are innumerable. They possess separate personalities and bear the image of God. They are basically superior to man, yet inferior to God. There are holy, elect angels and unholy, fallen angels (demons). The elect angels minister in behalf of God to believers, the nations of the world, and to unbelievers. They also had significant ministry to Christ. The fallen angels were persuaded to do so by the fallen cherub, Satan. Satan now uses his gifts and abilities to attempt to oppose God at every level and by every possible means. The fallen angels or demons assist Satan in his scheme. Eventually, Satan and all his demons will be cast into the lake of fire.

**SECTION 6. ECCLESIOLOGY (The Doctrine of the Church):** We believe that the Church of Jesus Christ needs to be understood in two senses, namely universal and local. In the universal sense the church consists of all those during this age who have been born of God's Spirit and have therefore been baptized into the body of Christ. In the local sense, a church is a called-out living assembly of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith, organized by New Testament principles, assembling regularly together led by qualified pastors who are supported by qualified deacons, under the discipline of God's Word, the oversight of qualified elders, and the headship of Christ, observing the ordinances, with the purpose of expressing praise and glory to God by evangelizing the lost and equipping the saved.

**SECTION 7. ANTHROPOLOGY (The Doctrine of Man):** We believe that man came into being through a special creative act of God. Man is the crowning part of God's creation, in that he was created in God's image and was given dominion over the earth. Man is basically a three-part unity. He fell from his original state of holy innocence and probation through willful disobedience. As a result, God's image was marred, death was introduced to the world and the sin nature has been passed down through his posterity. All men currently fit into the three categories of being either natural, carnal, or spiritual.

**SECTION 8. HAMARTIOLOGY (The Doctrine of Sin):** We believe that sin is a deification of self, a dethronement of God, a failure to obey God's law and/or a violation of God's law. It entered the universe when Lucifer attempted to revolt against God. It entered the world when Adam and Eve disobeyed God in the Garden. All men have inherited the sin nature from Adam and all are totally depraved prior to salvation. Sin has tragic results upon others. The basis of ultimate and complete victory over sin is found in the death and resurrection of Christ.

**SECTION 9. SOTERIOLOGY (The Doctrine of Salvation):** We believe that because of sin and its results, all of mankind needs salvation. This salvation was provided potentially for all of mankind through the death of Christ on the cross. It has past, present, and future implications. All three members of the Trinity are involved in salvation. A saved person has been converted and justified as God has declared him to be righteous. The sinless Christ is his Substitute,

whereby reconciliation is made with God on behalf of man. Christ's death fully satisfied God's righteous wrath against sin, whereby man can be redeemed from the slavery of sin and the curse of law. The saved man is made alive or regenerated by God at the point of salvation. He receives the privileges of an adopted son. All this is possible through the atoning death of Christ. This atonement is sufficient, applicable, and available to all. Its benefits are for all who exercise "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." This glorious salvation is secure as it is based in the very character, promises, power, and deeds of the God-head.

SECTION 10. ESCHATOLOGY (The Doctrine of the Last Things): We believe that spiritually Israel will one day return to the Lord and become a fully restored nation. Politically, Israel will spend most of her history prior to the Millennium under the sway of Gentile rulers. We believe in the pre-tribulational Rapture of the Church, in which all believers of the Church Age will be caught up by Christ to meet Him in the air. They will then be judged and rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The Church also makes up the Bride of Christ, which will be wed to Him after the Rapture at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. After the Rapture, those left on the earth will undergo the Seven Years of the Great Tribulation. This period will culminate in the wars of Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Unlike the Rapture, this is a coming battle for judgment. After that Christ will establish the Millennium. After 1000 years Satan will be loosed and will lead a revolt with the unbelieving children of the Millennium. This will result in the Great White Throne Judgment of all unsaved people. After this time the eternal new heaven and new earth will begin.

## **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1. QUALIFICATIONS AND ADMITTANCE. Membership in this church shall be open to all who are true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and who have been born again by the Word of God, through repentance of sin, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21; I Peter 1:23; Eph 2:8-9). They must also have been baptized by full immersion in water, after believing in Christ for salvation, the ordinance of baptism being a symbolic public testimony representing the death of the individual to the old life through the death of Christ, and a resurrection to a new life in Him (Romans 6:3-6).

A person received into membership by the church must also be in substantial agreement with Article IV, Statement of Faith, and make the commitments contained in Article VI, Church Membership Covenant.

In particular, he/she must believe fully in the doctrines of plenary verbal inspiration of Scripture, the Trinity, the unique deity of Christ, the atoning death and bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus, salvation by grace alone through faith in Christ and His finished work, the personal return of Jesus Christ at the end of this age, eternal life with Christ for the saved, and eternal existence in hell for the unsaved. Uncertainty or doubt in the mind of the candidate concerning other points shall be permitted provided he/she will respect the full Statement of Faith as the official position of the church and will in no way seek to oppose or undermine any portion of it. In addition, his/her professed faith in Christ should be evidenced by a manifest desire to live in a manner that is "worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him" (Colossians 1:10). Specifically, any person, age 16 and older, having repented of his/her sins, and professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and having accepted Him as personal Savior, may be received into membership by completing the membership process, which includes:

- (1) attending a membership class;
- (2) participating in an interview with the Lead Pastor or persons delegated by the Lead Pastor;
- (3) replying in the affirmative to the Membership Covenant Questions as stated in Article VI;  
and
- (4) appearing in a public presentation to the church body.

Children, and teens under the age of 16, are considered to be under the direct authority of their parents and are therefore not considered members. Once an individual reaches age 16, he/she becomes eligible for full membership provided he/she fulfills the requirements as stated above.

#### SECTION 2. MEMBERSHIP REMOVAL.

(a) Church Membership Requirements. If a member does not choose to fulfill the requirements as stated in Article VI, Church Membership Covenant, over a six-month period, the member shall be contacted to ascertain the cause. If the non-participating member desires to resume his/her membership commitments, the member will be exhorted to fulfill the requirements of membership within three months. If after three months the member shows no progress in fulfilling the requirements of membership, the member is subject to removal from membership.

(b) Grievance/Discipline Procedure. Any member who becomes opposed to the Statement of Faith or to the Membership Covenant in any substantial or open way, or who engages in conduct obviously unbecoming to a Christian (I Cor 5:9-10), or who spreads doctrinal error (I Tim 1:20; 2 Tim 2:17,18) or divisiveness (Rom 16:17), is subject to removal from membership. When such a breach of conduct or belief is brought to the attention of a fellow church member, this member shall approach the person in error according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-17. Once this course has been pursued with no evident repentance, the complaint may be heard by the Elder Board for action. If this person then gives evidence that he/she has permanently departed from the fellowship and the spiritual accountability of the elders, then this person shall have in effect removed him/herself from membership, which will be duly reflected in church records. If said person desires to retain his/her membership status, yet the Elder Board is satisfied that said member will not hear them or be reclaimed, this person may thus be removed from membership status, and shall be so notified in person or by mail. The elders may choose to present the matter to all or to an appropriate segment of the membership of the church, for purposes of church discipline and for disfellowship as outlined in Matthew 18:17. Restoration to membership shall be only after public confession and repentance in a manner determined most appropriate by the Elder Board.

SECTION 3. TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP. A member in good standing may be transferred to the fellowship of another church of like faith and order by letter of recommendation upon request by the member and/or his/her new church.

SECTION 4. PROPERTY RIGHTS. No member will have any right, title or interest in any of the property or assets of this Church, including any earnings or investment income, nor will any property or assets be distributed to any member upon its dissolution.

SECTION 5. LIABILITY OF MEMBERS. No member of this Church will be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or obligations of this Church, or subject to assessment therefore, solely by virtue of such person's status as a Member.

## **ARTICLE VI - CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT**

Because the local church is God's base for operation on this earth, it is considered to be a great privilege and responsibility to become a member of a local body. Because it is important that this body remain strong and that this church is not diluted by its additions, certain requirements must be met before any individual is publicly accepted into the membership of this church. The following membership covenant questions shall, therefore, be answered in the affirmative by all persons seeking membership with this church.

### **MEMBERSHIP COVENANT QUESTIONS**

1. Have you been born again by trusting Jesus Christ to be the complete payment for your sins and are you willing to follow Him as the Lord of your life?
2. Have you been baptized by immersion in water after that fact?
3. Are you in substantial agreement with Article IV, our Statement of Faith?
4. Have you completed our membership class?
5. Will you make New Life your regular center for small group involvement and weekend worship?
6. Will you as soon as possible find a place of regular service in this body?
7. Will you actively support this church by regular prayer and regular financial support?
8. Will you place yourself under the accountability of this church by following its God-given leadership as they follow Christ, to help you grow spiritually?

## **ARTICLE VII - CHURCH GOVERNMENT**

**SECTION 1. AUTHORITY OF CHRIST AND SCRIPTURE.** It must always be recognized that the governing rules and procedures set forth herein are not ends in themselves. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, and it is of preeminent importance to ascertain and obey His will in all decisions. Each question should therefore be considered carefully in light of pertinent Scriptures and prayer.

Because of the great amount of confusion and diversity which exists in the total body of Christ regarding the issue of church government, we firmly declare that the best basis for our conclusions on this issue must be the infallible Word of God.

### **SECTION 2. ELDER BOARD; LEAD PASTOR.**

(a) Elder Leadership. Except where specifically reserved to the members hereunder, the governance and management of the church shall be vested in and reserved to the Elder Board, serving as a "board of directors" pursuant to the Ohio Not-for-Profit Corporation Act (R.C. § 1703.01, et seq. (the "Ohio Act")). The elders shall be the final authority and are responsible for the spiritual oversight and direction of the church. (I Tim 5:17) They are to carefully and prayerfully consider issues, seeking the clear Biblical leadership of God in each case, exercising the authority bestowed on them by God and delegated to them by the congregation.

(b) Duty and Function. The Bible teaches that God supplies gifted men to serve as elders of the local church (Acts 14:23, 20:28; Titus 1:5; I Peter 5:1-3). In Scripture, the oversight and shepherding of the local church was always designated to a plurality of elders (Acts 11:30;

14:23; 15:2; 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17-28; 21:18; Phil 1:1; 1 Thes. 5:12, 13a; 1 Tim 4:14; 5:17-19; Heb 13:7, 17, 24; Jas 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1, 2). The Elder Board is responsible for the spiritual leadership of the church, serving under the Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:1-4).

The Elder Board serves as protectors and guardians of the deposit of truth entrusted to the church (II Tim 1:14; Titus 1:9), and oversees the equipping and preparation of God's people for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:11-13). Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Elder Board shall oversee the worship, teaching, evangelistic and prayer ministries of the church, which are led by the ministry leadership staff. The Elder Board, serving as the directors of the corporation, shall be responsible for the appointment of officers as provided herein.

The Elder Board shall effectuate its decisions on all matters authorized herein by majority vote of the total number of elders present at any duly-called meeting of the Elder Board. Special meetings shall require at least 5 days, and no more than 45 days, notice of the date, time, place and purpose(s) of such meeting, conveyed to each elder in a manner to be determined by the Elder Board. Quorum for all meetings of the Elder Board shall be a simple majority of the total number of Elder Board members. Unanimity will be sought on all decisions affecting the overall direction of the church.

(c) Individual Roles. Each of the men on the Elder Board may serve in specialized roles according to their individual gifts and callings in order to best meet the needs of the church. Elders may be paid full-time or part-time, in accordance with their responsibilities as staff, or they may be non-staff members of the church and serve in a lay/voluntary capacity. Scripture teaches the financial remuneration for such leaders (1 Tim 3:17-18; 2 Tim 2:6; Gal 6:6), although this may not be substantial.

(d) Composition; Number of Elders; Qualifications. The Elder Board shall consist of at least five persons, who shall have the qualifications set forth herein and in By-Law I. The Lead Pastor of the church who is approved as such by the members (by at least two-thirds majority vote of the members present at any duly-called regular or special meeting) shall be a member of the Elder Board, *ex officio*. At least four (4) other members of the Elder Board shall be nominated by the serving elders and approved by the members of the church at a special or regular meeting of the members, by at least two-thirds majority vote of the members present. Unless the members shall determine otherwise, the Lead Pastor shall serve as chairman of the Elder Board.

(e) Lead Pastor. One man shall serve as Lead Pastor/Elder, the selection of which shall be approved by a three-fourths vote of the members present. He shall continue as Lead Pastor/Elder until his resignation, death, or removal from office as described in Section 2(f) of this Article. This man shall serve as church moderator and oversee the paid and volunteer church staff. He shall also be responsible for the preaching ministries of the church, as he labors in the Word and doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17). In the event of a vacancy of this office, the Elder Board shall appoint from among themselves a man to serve as interim Lead Pastor and moderator of the church. They shall also recommend to the members, for approval, a Research Team involving at least one elder, one member of church staff, and at least three members-at-large. This team shall select their own chairman and operating procedure, research all necessary avenues for the replacement of the Lead Pastor, and present their recommendations to the members.

(f) Election and Recall. Additions to the Elder Board shall be recommended by the current elders and each member of the Elder Board shall be approved by the members by a three-fourths

vote of the members present at a duly called regular or special meeting. These men shall each evidence the Biblical elder qualifications (Titus 1:6-9; 1 Tim 3:1-7), demonstrate the ability to spiritually reproduce (2 Timothy 2:2-5), heartily agree to the Articles of the Constitution, and believe that God has truly led and gifted them to fulfill this office. They shall also exhibit a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, as gained through formal Bible training or avid and prolonged personal study. They shall also exhibit the qualifications outlined in By-Law I of this constitution. Each man shall continue in his office until his resignation or death or until the members, by three-fourths majority vote of the members present at a duly called special meeting for this specific purpose only, remove him from office. Such a meeting may be called by the Elder Board or upon written petition of one-third of the active members.

### SECTION 3. DEACONS.

(a) **Duty and Function.** The elders may appoint qualified deacons in accordance with the ministry needs of the church. A deacon is a servant in the church and must be an individual of mature Christian character and witness, fulfilling the Biblical qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 with an exemplary moral life and reputation in the community. In accordance with the teachings of Scripture, the deacons shall not function as a ruling board, but they are to assist the elders and serve the congregation in the various ministries and programs of the church according to their abilities and giftings.

(b) **Term of Service.** The term of service shall be ongoing, based on favorable periodic review of need by the Elder Board.

(c) **Selection.** Deacons shall be selected and appointed by the Elder Board for a specific role in service to the congregation.

**SECTION 4. VOTING.** All active members of the church 16 years of age and older shall have an equal voice in decision-making on matters reserved for the members hereunder or pursuant to the Ohio Act when exercised through a vote at regular or special business meetings, except for matters involving purchase or sale of property (when subject to a vote of the members by the Elder Board, in its discretion), in which case only members of legal age (18 or older) may vote. If any member is unable to be present but desires to vote on some question to be considered at the meeting, that member may cast an absentee ballot, which will be made available by church ministry staff prior to the meeting. Inactive members on probationary status shall not be eligible to vote. A quorum shall not be required so long as the membership has been duly notified of the date, time and purpose of the business meeting in accordance with Section 5 of this Article. Unless otherwise specified herein, all questions and elections are to be decided by majority vote of the members present at a duly-called special or regular meeting, after seeking the Lord's will in prayer.

**SECTION 5. BUSINESS MEETINGS.** Special business meetings may be called by the Elder Board, or by written petition of one-third of the active members. Public notice shall be given in weekend celebrations at least two consecutive weeks in advance, stating in general terms the business to be transacted. The Lead Pastor or his designee shall preside as moderator at business meetings. Meetings may (but are not required to) be conducted in accordance with the parliamentary procedures set forth in *Robert's Rules of Order*. In general, approval of elders, the establishment or modification of major policies (as determined by the elders at their discretion), approval of the annual budget, and other questions of major interest and importance, need to be presented for congregational approval at a business meeting in the manner described above.

Matters of lesser importance may be handled by the Elder Board, officers of the church, or ministry leadership staff, in accordance with their prescribed responsibilities and delegated authority. However, in event of doubt arising concerning the proper disposition of such matters, the members shall have the right to review and rescind any such decision (by three-fourths majority vote of the members present at any duly-called special or regular meeting), unless it has previously delegated responsibility for such decision to the official, team or board concerned. Nothing in this Constitution shall preclude the scheduling of regular, special, or annual business meetings at the close of weekend celebrations, or conducting votes by mail, email, or other electronic means.

**SECTION 6. ANNUAL MEETING.** An annual business meeting shall be held each year at a date and time determined by the Lead Pastor, at which time the annual budget shall be voted upon.

**SECTION 7. STAFF.** Ministry leadership staff shall direct the day-to-day ministries and operations of the church under the oversight of the Lead Pastor, who shall be responsible for all staff hiring decisions. These decisions are viewed as extremely important, and as such will be preceded by much prayer, research, and affirmation by existing ministry staff.

## **ARTICLE VIII - CHURCH OFFICERS**

**SECTION 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS.** While the Word of God is clear that the church is to be overseen a plurality of elders, in accordance with state and legal requirements for nonprofit corporations, provision shall be made for the offices of president, treasurer, and secretary. All officers should view themselves as servants of the church and should labor with deep humility and love, always seeking the best interests of the congregation according to the will of God. These officers shall be appointed and have the functions outlined in this Article.

**SECTION 2. AUTHORITY AND OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS.** Unless and until modified by the Elder Board, the officers of the church will be president, secretary, and treasurer, and any other officers appointed in accordance with this article, provided however, that all such officers shall serve at the will, and under the oversight, of the Elder Board. The Elder Board may appoint other officers, including one or more vice-presidents, one or more assistant treasurers, and one or more assistant secretaries, as it deems desirable and prudent. The officers have the authority to perform the duties prescribed by the Elder Board. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person.

**SECTION 3. APPOINTMENT AND TERM OF OFFICE.** The officers of the church will be appointed by the elders at an annual meeting of the Elder Board, which shall occur for such purposes within ten (10) days after the annual church business meeting in each year. If the appointment of officers is not held at such meeting, such appointment will be held as soon as convenient. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Elder Board. Each officer will hold office until his or her successor has been duly appointed, unless removed in accordance with Section 4 of this Article.

**SECTION 4. REMOVAL.** Any officer appointed by the Elder Board may be removed by the Elder Board whenever in its judgment the interests of the church would be best served. Any removal will be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the officer so removed.

SECTION 5. VACANCIES. A vacancy in any office, whether due to death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise may be filled by the Elder Board for the unexpired portion of the term.

SECTION 6. FUNCTIONS OF OFFICERS. The following officers shall serve at the discretion of, and under the direction of, the Elder Board, as provided herein:

- (a) President. The president will be the chief executive officer of the corporation. The president may sign, with any other officer duly authorized by the Elder Board, deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments, the execution of which has been authorized by the Elder Board, except in cases where the signing and execution of instruments has been expressly delegated to the Elder Board by this Constitution, or to some other officer or agent of the church by law. The president will perform all other duties generally incident to the office of president and prescribed by the Elder Board.
- (b) Vice-president. One or more vice-presidents may be appointed by the Elder Board to assist the president or to preside in his absence.
- (c) Treasurer. The treasurer shall be responsible for oversight of financial recordkeeping and reporting for the church, all bank and investment accounts, and policies and procedures relating to all aspects of processing receipts and issuing disbursements. This individual shall have adequate financial and business knowledge and experience so as to qualify for the position.
- (d) Secretary. The secretary shall be responsible for keeping a careful and complete set of minutes for all Elder Board and church business meetings; and see that all notices are duly given in accordance with this Constitution or as required by law.

## **ARTICLE IX - FINANCIAL POLICIES**

SECTION 1. PROCEDURE. This church shall follow “faith” principles with reference to funds needed for the support of its ministries, looking to the Lord to supply the needs through His people in the church. This is not intended, however, to preclude the use of fundraising activities to provide financial assistance for individuals or teams participating in church-sponsored short-term mission trips or for other ministry activities. The amount of any individual’s contributions shall not be disclosed to other members. Church administration shall keep a record of individual contributions, insofar as identifiable when made, and furnish statements of total contributions to all givers of record following the end of each calendar year.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL OFFERINGS. Special offerings may be taken for designated purposes as approved by the Lead Pastor or Elder Board.

SECTION 3. BUDGET. Money received shall be disbursed in accordance with the budget, which shall be prepared annually by the ministry leadership staff, a final draft of which shall be presented to the Elder Board for its approval, following which it shall be made available to members in order for them to vote on the budget in accordance with Sections 4, 5 and 6 of Article VII, Church Government. The budget should include all items of anticipated expense, including but not limited to, staff salaries, payments of rents, leases, and/or principal and interest on buildings and furnishings, operating and program expenses, etc., as well as approved mission projects. At least 10% of all contributions to the General Operating Fund shall be budgeted for Missions & Outreach. The fiscal year shall be from August 1 to July 31, but may be changed by approval of the Elder Board.

SECTION 4. SALARIES. Salaries, wages and benefits for all paid staff, except the Lead Pastor, shall be set by the Lead Pastor and his staff, as designated by him. The salary and benefit package of the Lead Pastor shall be approved by the Elder Board in conjunction with its annual performance review of the Lead Pastor.

## **ARTICLE X - ORGANIZATIONS**

The church shall establish, partner with, or sponsor such supplementary organizations as approved by the Lead Pastor under the authority of the Elder Board. In general, all such organizations must be directly contributory to the purpose of the church.

## **ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS**

The Statement of Faith, Articles of this Constitution, and By-laws may only be amended by a three-fourths vote of the membership in attendance at a duly called business meeting, and that only after careful consideration of all viewpoints and much prayer. Proposed amendments shall first be approved by the Elder Board, then made available to all members for their review and consideration before formal action is taken as described above. Changes to text that are primarily grammatical or editorial in nature may be approved by the Elder Board provided these changes do not substantively alter or revise the meaning or intent of these Articles or By-Laws.

## **ARTICLE XII - DISSOLUTION**

No part of the net earnings of the church shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member, director, or officer of the church, or any individual. No donor, member, director, or officer of the church, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the church assets. Upon dissolution, the church shall distribute its assets to one or more 501(c)(3) religious organizations conducting evangelical Christian ministries as determined by the Elder Board then serving.

## **BY-LAW I –ELDER QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

The following is a detailed description of the criteria by which a man shall be considered ordination as an elder. It is important that a proven record of faithfulness be established in these areas (Luke 16:10, 16:12; I Corinthians 4:2; I Timothy 1:12).

SECTION 1. QUALIFICATIONS: He shall qualify according to the biblical requirements of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. A detailed interpretation and exposition of these qualifications shall be on record in the permanent church files and shall be available for consideration and study by any interested candidates.

SECTION 2. REQUIREMENTS:

- a. He shall exhibit a consistent daily habit of personal devotions and walk with God.
- b. He shall display proven discipleship capabilities and must be already involved in personally evangelizing and discipling others.
- c. He shall be known as a man of prayer.

- d. He shall demonstrate a strong commitment to the tenets of Article VI, Membership Covenant, as well as By-Law III, Church Leadership Expectations.
- e. He shall display a willingness to sacrifice the necessary time in order to attend required meetings for the effective function of the Elder Board.
- f. He shall also display his strong commitment to the additional in-depth Bible study necessary for the maintenance of an effective ministry as an elder.

## **BY-LAW II – LICENSING AND ORDAINING**

**SECTION 1 - LICENSING.** Any ministry leader who, in the judgment of the Elder Board gives evidence by his/her Christian life, zeal, and gifts and abilities, that he/she is called of God to the work of a particular ministry, and after having given testimony of such before the elders, may be given a license for ministry holding with it the spiritual responsibilities as well as the legal benefits provided.

**SECTION 2 - ORDINATION.** Any man possessing the scriptural qualifications and training for ordination, and giving evidence that he is called of God to pastoral ministry, may be considered for ordination. The Elder Board shall call an examination council including at least four ordained pastors (including those who have been requested by the candidate), to examine his qualifications for pastoral ministry. After receiving a favorable report and recommendation for ordination from this council, ordained members of the council shall proceed with the ordination process as determined by the Lead Pastor.

## **BY-LAW III – CHURCH LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS**

The following expectations shall be established for anyone who serves in a ministry leadership capacity. These expectations are established in order to insure that the individuals involved in the leadership of the church display a stable commitment to this ministry and accept the high responsibility of their position.

1. Must be an active member of New Life in good standing (per Article V, Membership)
2. Should display a strong commitment to a daily devotional habit of Bible study and prayer.
3. Should display a burden for people by personally sharing his/her faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Should be a giver “of record” toward the financial needs of New Life Community Baptist Church. Ten percent of one’s gross income is considered to be a good guideline for giving. Any church leader whose giving to the ministry of the church is questionable should reconsider his/her role as a leader.
5. Should be dependable in his/her involvement in celebrations, small groups, and training sessions. A pattern of absence from these without reasonable cause could jeopardize one’s role as a church leader and/or restrict one from becoming a church leader.
6. Should display a flexible, humble, cooperative spirit. Focus must continually be given to the high responsibility of leadership rather than the privileges and titles attached thereunto. An attitude of servitude should be evident in all meetings and in the fulfillment of responsibilities.

7. Should display a record of willingness to address murmuring and complaining Biblically, facing offenders frankly and fairly, and then standing loyally with the majority of leaders in their decision.

#### **BY-LAW IV – CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

No elder, officer, or ministry leadership staff of the church shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation with the church. Each elder, officer, or ministry leadership staff shall disclose any personal interest which he or she may have in any matter pending before the church, and shall refrain from participating in any decision on such matter.

Any elder, officer, or ministry leadership staff of the church who also serves as an officer, board member, committee member, or staff member of a client organization, vendor, or supplier of the church shall identify his or her affiliation with such agency or business. Further, in connection with any action specifically directed to that agency or business, he or she shall not participate in any decisions affecting that agency or business, and the decision must be made and/or ratified by other elders, officers or ministry leadership staff, as applicable.

Elders, officers, and ministry leadership staff shall be prohibited from utilizing any confidential information for personal or private solicitation purposes at any time during the term of their affiliation with the church.