

**WESTSIDE CHURCH
OMAHA, NEBRASKA**

I. CONSTITUTION

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Constitution

Preamble

We, the members of Westside Church, with the mission that Omaha and the World may know Christ, declare and establish this Constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith, and to govern the Body in an orderly manner.

Article 1 Church Name and Identity

This congregation shall be known as Westside Church and is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Westside Church is based in Douglas County, Nebraska and may operate satellites in other locations. It shall be comprised of persons who have made a public profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, have been baptized by immersion as commanded by our Lord, have declared their purpose to endeavor to walk according to the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus, and have been elected to church membership. Its corporate identity shall be known as Westside Church.

Article 2 Church Purpose

Westside Church declares its purposes:

- A. To maintain regular services, both for devotional and public worship;
- B. To proclaim consistently and earnestly the Gospel message, and to urge personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord;
- C. To promote systematic Bible study, to train for Christian service, and in every possible way, to encourage life enlistment in some form of Christian ministry congruent with the spiritual gift(s) of each individual;
- D. To be a dynamic spiritual body, empowered by the Holy Spirit to share Christ through the preaching, teaching, and the living out of God's Word by cooperating with our prayers, gifts, and services to missionary and benevolent undertakings, and to establish and promote the mission that Omaha and the world may know Christ.

Article 3 Statement of Basic Beliefs

We believe in:

- A. The Holy Bible as the inspired, inerrant, infallible, and complete Word of God;
- B. The creation of mankind by the direct act of God;
- C. The incarnation and virgin birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ;

- D. The identification of Jesus Christ as the Son of God;
- E. The vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ for the sins of mankind through the shedding of His blood on the cross;
- F. The resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the tomb;
- G. The imminent and visible return of Jesus Christ in power and glory;
- H. The unique power of Jesus Christ to save mankind from sin;
- I. The new birth through regeneration by the Holy Spirit;
- J. The gift of eternal life by the grace of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

- K. Man and woman are uniquely created in the image of God. Marriage is a holy covenant in which God Himself joins one man and one woman together to love, honor and cherish one another. Only weddings consistent with this biblical view of marriage will be performed.

We also subscribe to the doctrinal statement in “The Baptist Faith and Message,” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in its most current form.

Article 4 Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in accordance with Holy Scripture, we do now, in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one Body in Christ.

We commit, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of Westside Church in knowledge, in holiness and in unity; to promote its prosperity and its spirituality; to sustain it in worship, its ordinances, its discipline, and its doctrines; to financially contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, to the expenses of the church, to the relief of the poor, and to the spread of the gospel through all nations.

We also commit to prayerfully seek to identify and faithfully fill our individual places of ministry in Westside Church; to maintain family and private devotions; to educate our children in Christian principles; to seek the salvation of our relatives, friends, neighbors, and associates; to walk worthy of our calling in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid malicious use of the tongue; to keep our testimony above reproach; and to be zealous in our efforts to fulfill our mission, “That Omaha and the World May Know Christ.”

We further commit to watch over each other in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and in distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy; to be courteous in speech; to be slow to take offense while always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the command of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover commit that when we leave Westside Church, we will as soon as possible, unite with another church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

Article 5 Polity and Relationships

Section 1 Autonomy

The governance of Westside Church shall be vested in the members, and shall not be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, but shall recognize and sustain the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Southern Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, Westside Church shall cooperate with and support the Southern Baptist Convention, the State or regional convention, and any local Southern Baptist association.

Section 2 Governance

Westside Church confesses the Lord Jesus Christ as its head, both as to the body corporate, and as to individual members. In relationship to His sovereignty, and to ensure the integrity and purity of this family, the church shall be:

A. Pastor-Led:

The senior pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the church. In this capacity, he shall be its chief administrator, and shall provide leadership in all areas of church life and ministries. The senior pastor shall be an ordained minister of the gospel, and his pastoral staff shall each be ordained or licensed as ministers of the gospel.

B. Deacon-Served:

A Deacon Council, comprised of ordained men, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, shall be sought out and elected by the membership, to whom they shall be directly responsible. They shall represent and serve the needs of the church family and shall, under the leadership of the pastoral staff, be responsible for administering the ordinances of the church.

C. Committee-Organized:

Committees shall be established in accordance with the By-Laws, to facilitate church business and ministries. Said committees shall work in cooperation with the senior pastor, and shall present reports to the Executive Council periodically and, to the membership at least annually.

D. Member-Approved:

All official actions for the church by its officers, employees, and/or its agents are subject to the implicit or explicit approval of the membership; the membership reserves the right to revoke any such action or decision.

Article 6 Church Ordinances

A. Baptism:

The ordinance of believer's baptism by immersion shall be regularly observed.

B. Lord's Supper:

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper, with all members of the Body of Christ as potential participants, shall be regularly observed.

Article 7 Establishment of By-Laws

A. Authorization:

To facilitate the accomplishment of the church mission in an orderly and efficient manner, while providing safeguards against abuse or neglect, the members shall formally adopt appropriate By-Laws.

B. Subordination:

The By-Laws shall in every instance be subordinate to, and interpreted in the light of the provisions of this Constitution.

Article 8 Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: Adoption of the Constitution and By-Laws

The adoption of this Constitution and the By-Laws shall require a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting in a church conference, provided that the Constitution and By-Laws have been published and distributed to the membership, and the agenda for such a vote is announced at least three consecutive weeks prior to the church conference. The adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws shall supersede any and all previous documents whether presented or not presented to the congregation at the time of adoption. The approval of this Constitution and By-Laws shall provide the structures and the authorization of the membership by which any and all corrections, amendments, and/or revisions to any and all legal documents shall be established including, but not limited to, the Articles of Incorporation and any and all filings with the City of Omaha, Douglas County governmental agencies, agencies of the State of Nebraska, and/or the United States government.

Section 2: Amendments to the Constitution

The Church Constitution of Westside Church, SBC, Inc. may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting in a Church Conference, provided that the amendments have been published and the agenda announced at least three (3) consecutive weeks prior to the conference. Any member of Westside Church may propose an amendment by submitting it in writing to the Executive Council. The Executive Council shall acknowledge submission of the proposed amendment at its next scheduled meeting and then determine appropriate action. As deemed appropriate, the Executive Council shall either submit a proposed amendment to the membership for action, or inform the proposing member that no action will be taken.

By-Laws

Introduction

Trusting in our Lord, Jesus Christ to bring us to that oneness of mind to which He has called us, and in accordance with the Apostle Paul's revelation of the church as one functioning "body" comprised of many unique but interdependent parts, each performing its special function for the benefit of the whole, the membership shall endeavor herein:

- A. To define the authority granted to and the responsibilities required of the various positions and entities within the church, and to establish safeguards against their abuse or neglect;
- B. To provide authority and resources for innovative, Spirit-led ministry, encouraging our spiritual leaders to seek and follow God's revealed will;
- C. To promote lay participation in ministry planning and implementation;
- D. To provide for accountability and affirmation throughout, that we may experience the joy and blessing to be known only as the body functions "in one accord;"
- E. To establish rules and procedures for facilitating the decent and orderly conduct of church business and ministries; and
- F. To provide for a reasonable distribution of the burden to be borne in carrying out the church's mission.

Article 1 Church Organization

Section 1 Members

Westside Church shall be comprised of members meeting at the Dodge Road location and approved satellite locations.

Section 2 Satellites

- A. A Satellite shall be established, upon the recommendation of the Senior Pastor, with the approval of the Executive Council and approved by vote of the members at any regular or special church conference.
- B. Separation of a satellite from Westside Church shall be by recommendation of the Senior Pastor and/or pastoral staff and approval of the Executive Council. Terms of separation shall be determined by the Executive Council after which the satellite will become independent from Westside Church.

- C. Discontinuation of a satellite shall be by recommendation of the Senior Pastor and/or pastoral staff and approval of the Executive Council. Terms of discontinuation shall be determined by the Executive Council after which the satellite shall cease to operate.
- D. Satellites shall be accredited all the benefits and responsibilities of membership in Westside Church and shall be governed by these By-Laws
- E. Satellite ministry operations shall be consistent with the rest of Westside Church but may vary based on the guidance of the Senior Pastor.
- F. Each satellite shall be represented on the Executive Council by one (1) duly elected member to serve as a member-at-large.

Article 2 Church Membership

Section 1 Admission

Anyone who trusts in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, who loves Him, and purposes to serve Him, shall be welcomed into the fellowship of Westside church in the following ways upon affirmation by the majority of the members present at a regular worship service or church conference:

- A. By Baptism: On his or her profession of faith, followed by believer's baptism by immersion and completion of the New Members Class;
- B. By Letter: Members of churches of like faith and order, having experienced baptism by immersion, upon presentation of letters of dismissal in good standing from another church; after meeting with and receiving approval from a member of the pastoral staff;
- C. By Statement: When a church letter cannot be obtained because of loss of records or similar unavoidable circumstances, applicants shall be eligible upon their own statement affirming their faith, their experience of believer's baptism by immersion, and their prior church membership; in a church of like faith and order, after meeting with and receiving approval from a member of the pastoral staff;
- D. By Restoration: The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded, by request of the excluded person, and by affirmative vote of the church upon evidence of the person's repentance and restoration.

Section 2 Termination of Membership

The policy of Westside Church shall be to remove the names of members from the church roll only in the following five manners:

- A. By Death.

- B. By Letter: Any member in good standing with the church shall be granted a letter of dismissal to any sister church of like faith, upon receipt of proper request from that church
- C. By Dismissal to Another Denomination: If a member desires to join with a church of another denomination, he may at his own request or by action of the church, receive an appropriate letter of dismissal.
- D. By Church Discipline as provided in Section 3 below.
- E. By Erasure:
 - 1. When requested in writing by the member, or
 - 2. The church elects to purge inactive names from the membership roll, which shall occur only when contact with a member has been lost for three (3) years or more, and diligent attempts at renewed contact have proven futile. It shall follow publication and discussion of the names proposed for erasure, and shall be accomplished only by vote of the membership at a designated church conference.

Section 3 Discipline

- A. It shall be the practice of this Westside Church to emphasize to its membership that every reasonable measure shall be taken to assist any troubled member. The senior pastor, pastoral staff, and deacons shall be available for counsel and guidance. When necessary, the senior pastor shall appoint a disciplinary panel of at least three (3) church officers to intervene on behalf of the church.
- B. The attitude of the members towards one another shall be guided by restoration rather than punishment. Should some serious condition exist wherein there has been a breach of God's Word in action or heretical teaching, or a member becomes an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct which would result in a liability to the general welfare of the church, the pastors and deacons shall take every reasonable measure to resolve the matter in accord with Matthew 18:11-22 and Galatians 6:1-5.
- C. Reasonable notice and an opportunity for hearing shall be provided to the member. The senior pastor shall appoint a disciplinary panel of at least three (3) designated church officers to make the decision to terminate the member's membership. Only if all attempts at restoration are unsuccessful may action be taken under Section 2.D. above.

Article 3 Church Meetings

Section 1 Lord's Day Services

The church shall offer age-appropriate Bible studies and worship services each Sunday. If attendance necessitates, additional Sunday worship services may be added at the discretion of the pastoral staff.

Section 2 Midweek Activities and Ministries

Church activities and ministries shall not be limited to Sunday. Ministries serving specific age groups and others shall be conducted throughout the week as coordinated by the pastoral staff and lay leaders.

Section 3 Regular Church Conference

- A. Regular church conferences for the transaction of church business shall be held at the Dodge Road Campus with electronic conferencing (where possible) with satellites on Sunday every quarter during the months of February, May, August and November and additional months as necessary. A meeting agenda shall be provided and minutes of the previous meeting shall be read and/or readily available. Minutes of the meetings shall be taken by the Executive Council secretary and filed for future reference. The senior pastor (or his designee) or the Executive Council may reschedule a church conference with at least ten (10) days advance notice.
- B. Notice of a regular church conference shall be announced at all regular Sunday worship services, and posted on the Internet web site, at least fourteen (14) days prior to the conference.

Section 4 Special Church Conference

- A. Special church conferences, called by the senior pastor (or his designee) or the Executive Council, for the transaction of special church business shall be held at the Dodge Road Campus with electronically conferencing (where possible) with satellite locations.
- B. Notice of a special church conference shall be announced at a regular worship service and posted on the Internet web site at least seven (7) days in advance announcing the conference's time and purpose.
- C. Discussion and action at a special church conference shall be limited to the purpose for which the conference is called. Minutes of the special church conference shall be taken by the Executive Council secretary and placed on file for future reference.
- D. Projected or printed information and documentation regarding special business matters on which a vote is required, shall be available prior to voting.

Section 5 Routine Business

Westside Church, in conference at any regularly scheduled worship service at any of the locations, may act to receive members, grant letters of transfer, affirm members to conventions, or endorse persons for attendance at educational institutions. Minutes of the meeting shall be taken and placed on file for future reference

Section 6 Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of church business shall be those members in physical attendance at the Dodge Road location and via virtual attendance (where possible) at the satellites (or other locations as approved by the (or other locations as approved by the Executive Council).

Section 7 Church Action

- A. Except as otherwise provided in these By-Laws or Church Constitution, church action shall be by concurrence of a simple majority of members present and voting unless the rules are properly suspended to allow for a different vote requirement.
- B. All voting shall be by those physically present at the church conference at which the vote is taken, with no proxy votes.
- C. Voting results shall be binding and may not be changed or overruled except or unless reconsideration is agreed by concurrence of two-thirds (2/3) of members present and voting at a regular or special church conference.

Section 8 Multiple Session Rule

- A. When a church vote is subject to the multiple session rule, the church action shall be determined by the cumulative total vote of those members present and voting at all sessions and all locations.
- B. An announcement of church business shall to be made prior to any church conference. The announcement shall be made at all sessions of all worship services at all locations.

Section 9 Rules of Order

- A. Except as otherwise specifically provided by the By-Laws, the conduct of all church business shall follow the parliamentary authority of *Robert's Rules of Order, Revised*. The senior pastor (or his designee) shall be given the option to appoint a parliamentarian to assist in all church conferences.
- B. The moderator of the church conferences shall be the senior pastor (or his designee). The vice moderator shall be the chairman of the Executive Council.

- C. The purpose for these rules of order is to facilitate godly decision-making and to seek Holy Spirit discernment. No procedure outlined in the rules shall supersede the authority of Scripture with regard to decision-making, behavior, or attitude. If any member or group behaves in a manner inconsistent with Scripture, the moderator shall have the authority to address such a violation and request the offender(s) to leave the premises, and/or suspend the meeting. The moderator, in consultation with the Executive Council, shall establish another meeting date for the decision, should a meeting be suspended.

Article 4 Ministries

Section 1 Establishment

- A. Ministries are those programs through which the church has chosen to carry out its mission and purpose. Ministries may include the operation of auxiliary sub-organizations that are ministry focused and comply with all applicable governmental licensing.
- B. All ministries shall be under the authority of Westside Church.
- C. Ministries, in addition to those listed in Section 2 below, may be established upon requests by lay leaders and/or recommendation of the senior pastor and approval by the church membership.

Section 2 Ministry Organizations

- A. The following major ministry organizations shall be those normally authorized and supported by the church:
 - 1. Christian education and discipleship
 - 2. Worship, music, and praise
 - 3. Family enrichment and pastoral care
 - 4. Administration and operations
 - 5. Missions and outreach
 - 6. Benevolence
- B. Organizational chart

The pastoral staff shall maintain a ministry organizational chart, and appropriate documentation that defines each approved ministry's purpose, funding requirements, staffing needs, facility and equipment needs, ministry objectives, and the means of measuring effectiveness of the objectives. Reports shall be made to the Executive Council and to the Church membership at least annually.
- C. Benevolence

The purpose of the benevolence ministry is to demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus to individuals and families, especially those of our church community who are in urgent, unexpected, and unavoidable financial need. The benevolence fund is an approved designated contribution category. All designated offerings shall be used exclusively to meet the financial needs of individuals who qualify. This committee shall report to the pastor responsible for congregational care.

Article 5 Church Officers

Section 1 Officers and Qualifications

- A. Officers: The officers of this church shall be:
1. Senior Pastor
 2. Pastoral staff members
 3. Deacon Council members
 4. Executive Council members
- B. General Qualifications: The officers of this church shall:
1. Have a good report within and without the church;
 2. Regularly attend the services of the church;
 3. Demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with other church officers in the execution of the ministries of the church;
 4. Regularly and systematically support the ministries of the church through biblical stewardship.
- C. The senior pastor, pastoral staff members and Executive Council members shall serve as the directors of the corporation know as Westside Church.

Section 2 Senior Pastor

- A. Call:

A candidate for senior pastor shall be a man of faith, have a good reputation, be filled with the Spirit, and possess the spiritual qualities explained in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, I Timothy 5:17 and Titus 1:5-9.

A candidate for senior pastor shall be nominated by the pastor search committee and presented to the church membership at a specially called church conference to be held during each Sunday morning service, notice of which is given fourteen (14) days in advance. The members shall vote on the pastoral call during this church conference only after (1) the candidate has met with the pastoral staff, the Deacon Council, and standing committee members, (2) members of the congregation have had ample opportunity to interact with the candidate, (3) the candidate has

preached in all sessions of a Sunday morning service, and (4) the Personnel Committee has reached an acceptable understanding with the candidate on the terms of employment as senior pastor (the terms may not materially deviate from the church's approved range of benefits package).

An affirmative vote by secret ballot of at least 75% of the resident members present and voting at the specially called church conference shall be required to confirm the selection. The voting process shall follow the multiple session rule (Article 3, Section 8).

B. Commission:

The senior pastor shall be the shepherd, spiritual leader, and primary Bible teacher of Westside Church. He shall be ordained and/or licensed within the Southern Baptist Convention. He shall provide vision and spiritual direction for the church and shall direct the corporate worship of the church and preach the Word. He, or his designee, shall administer the church ordinances (the Lord's Supper and baptism) and shall oversee all ministries of the church and ministry assignments of the pastoral staff. He or his designee shall preside over all church conferences. He or his designee shall be a member of the Executive Council and a non-voting, ex-officio member of all standing and special committees.

He shall coordinate efforts to meet ministry needs of the church with respect to staffing, and he shall make recommendations to the Personnel Committee for creating new positions. He shall select, appoint, and if necessary terminate staff members following the policies of the personnel and Stewardship Committees.

C. Compensation:

The Personnel Committee, in accordance with established church policy shall determine the compensation of the senior pastor, including salary, benefits, vacation time, extra-church engagements, and ministry expense allowances.

If the senior pastor's services are terminated by his or the church's desire, with or without cause, he may be compensated, at the discretion of the Personnel Committee consistent with personnel policy.

D. Continuance:

The senior pastor shall be called to serve an indefinite term. Should he or the church choose to terminate his services, either party shall provide a minimum of a one-month notice in writing to the other party.

Grounds for termination of the senior pastor shall require a serious violation of Scripture, or dereliction of his shepherding responsibilities, or gross negligence. Such a charge shall require the formal action of the

congregation based on the presentation of witnesses. The Personnel Committee shall be charged with establishing a protocol by which such action may be taken, and the protocol for such an action shall be clearly published within a personnel handbook.

E. Care of the Pulpit (When the Senior Pastor Position is Vacant):

When the senior pastor position is vacant, it shall be the responsibility of the Deacon Council, in cooperation with the pastoral staff, to nominate an interim senior pastor to provide leadership to the staff and pastoral care for the congregation on a temporary basis. Within thirty (30) days of the nomination, the Deacon Council shall seek affirmation of the candidate for interim senior pastor from the members. The decision shall be by majority vote, by written ballot at a regularly scheduled or specially called church conference. The Deacon Council in cooperation with the pastoral staff shall insure that the pulpit is filled when either the senior pastor position or an interim senior pastor position is vacant.

The interim senior pastor shall serve as the shepherd and shall assume all the duties of the senior pastor until such time as the congregation calls a senior pastor. The Personnel Committee shall establish the protocols for an interim senior pastor's work agreement.

If an interim senior pastor should become a candidate for the senior pastor position, he shall step aside from the interim senior pastor responsibilities until his candidacy is resolved.

If after one (1) year from the affirmation by the congregation as interim senior pastor, by a majority vote of the Executive Council, the interim senior pastor may be required to be re-affirmed by the church membership.

Section 3 Pastoral Staff

A. Creation of Position:

1. As required by ministry demands or as needed to facilitate continued growth in order to fulfill the church's mission statement, the church shall create and fill additional pastoral staff positions.
2. The creation of an additional pastoral staff position shall require the recommendation of the senior pastor, the Personnel Committee, and the Executive Council, and an affirmative vote of the membership at a church conference.

B. Confirmation of Position:

The senior pastor, in consultation with the Personnel Committee and the pastoral staff, shall conduct a search for an appropriate candidate to serve on the pastoral staff. A candidate for a staff pastor position shall be a man

of faith, have a good reputation, be filled with the Spirit, and possess the spiritual qualities described in 1 Timothy 3:2-7, I Timothy 5:17 and Titus 1:5-9. The senior pastor shall have the authority to select his staff, and the Personnel Committee shall establish the policies regarding employment and compensation.

C. Continuation of Position:

A staff pastor shall serve an indefinite term of service at the will of the senior pastor. In the event that termination becomes necessary, the senior pastor shall work closely with the Personnel Committee in following the termination procedures adopted in the personnel polices and procedures manual.

D. Communication of Position:

1. Each member of the pastoral staff shall be under the supervision of the senior pastor or his designee, and under this supervision shall carry out the duties of his ministry description, which shall be provided him by the senior pastor and the Personnel Committee at or prior to the time of his employment (and subject to revision from time to time).
2. To the extent a staff pastor's ministry networks with the respective responsibilities of other officers, the standing committees, or the Executive Council, he shall keep these entities fully apprised of his activities, and shall work in full cooperation with those responsible to ensure harmony and good communication to the church family.

E. Compensation of the Position:

The Personnel Committee, in accordance with established church policy shall determine the compensation of all staff pastors, including salary, benefits, vacation time, extra-church engagements, and ministry expense allowances.

If a staff pastor's services are terminated by his or by the church's desire, with or without cause, he may be compensated, at the discretion of the Personnel Committee consistent with personnel policy.

Section 4 Deacon Council

A. Servants

The office of deacon is one of two offices of the church recognized in the New Testament (Philippians 1 and 1 Timothy 3). The primary task of the deacon is to serve the needs of the church, promote love and unity amongst the members, and uphold the pastor's leadership and authority.

B. Qualifications:

Deacons shall be men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom and meet the New Testament qualifications listed in I Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall have been a member of Westside Church for at least one (1) year before being elected to the office, or have been ordained previously to the office of deacon by Westside Church or another church of like faith and order.

C. Membership:

The Deacon Council shall establish procedures for identifying and selecting potential candidates. The candidates shall be reviewed and approved by the Deacon Council and the pastoral staff before being extended an invitation to participate in a Deacon Council approved training program. Candidates for the office of Deacon shall successfully complete the training program and participate in an interview process established by the Deacon Council. Candidates for the office of Deacon must receive an affirmative vote of at least three-fourths (3/4) of the Deacon Council interviewing panel before presentation to the church membership. Affirmation of the candidate for the office of Deacon by the church shall be by a majority vote of the church members present and voting at a church conference.

D. Term of Service:

The term of service shall begin at ordination and continue indefinitely. A leave of absence from the Deacon Council may be requested by submitting such request in writing to the chairman of the Deacon Council. Grounds for granting a leave of absence may include personal reasons or professional obligations.

If a deacon's commitment to service or his character are brought into question he may be asked to take a leave of absence or resign from the Deacon Council at the discretion of Deacon Council chairman and/or deacon officers. The Deacon Council and the pastoral staff shall be duly notified.

E. Organization and Duties:

- 1 The Deacon Council shall annually elect a chairman, two vice chairmen, a secretary, and other necessary officers to serve a one year term beginning on October 1st. The chairman shall preside over all Deacon Council meetings and shall serve as a member of the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all Deacon Council meetings.

- 2 A deacon officer may be recalled by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of a quorum present at any regular or special meeting of the Deacon Council with at least a 14 day prior notice.
- 3 The Deacon Council shall meet at least quarterly and more often if necessary. The deacon officers or the senior pastor may call a special Deacon Council meeting at any time when all parties have been duly notified.
- 4 A quorum for the transaction of all business shall be those deacons in attendance at a properly called meeting.
- 5 A written ballot on any matter of business shall be taken, upon the request of the senior pastor, the chairman, or any three (3) deacons.
- 6 The Deacon Council shall seek the highest spiritual good of the church, and provide leadership in church ministries as requested by the senior pastor and the pastoral staff.
- 7 The Deacon Council shall assist in administering the ordinances of the Lord's Supper, baptism, and such other duties as are generally applicable to the office.
- 8 The Deacon Council shall pray regularly for the church and the pastoral staffs, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and encourage others to identify with the local body of believers.

Section 5 Corporate Officers and Trusteeship

- A. The chairman and the secretary of the Executive Council shall serve as the corporate officers for the church. Corporate officers shall have the responsibility of signing all corporate documents and submit not-for-profit corporation legal reports.
- B. The Executive Council shall have the authority to hold in trust the title to all the real estate of the church, but shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer this real estate except by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the membership at a properly called church conference.
- C. The corporate officers shall execute any and all contracts, deeds, negotiable instruments, and/or other legal indentures that require such action by the Executive Council but only when so directed by action of the church membership.
- D. In the event that the corporation would be required to dissolve, the Executive Council shall serve as the trustees of the corporation in order to liquidate and distribute assets to other Southern Baptist ministries.

Section 6 Fiduciary Responsibility & Financial Accountability

- A. It shall be the fiduciary responsibility of all church officers to protect and steward the assets of the church.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the Stewardship Committee to insure that the disbursements of any and all church funds are within the established budgets of the church. The Stewardship Committee shall notify the membership of any non-budgeted disbursements of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) or higher.
- C. The church fiscal year shall begin on January 1 of each year and conclude on December 31 of the same year.
- D. The church's financial records shall be reviewed or audited by an independent public accounting organization each year.

Section 7 Hold Harmless

A Director or an Officer of the Corporation is not liable on the Corporation's debts or obligations and a Director or an Officer is not personally liable in that capacity, for a claim based upon an act or omission of the person performed in the discharge of the person's duties, except for a breach of duty of loyalty to the Corporation, for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or knowing violation of the law, or for a transaction from which the person derives an improper personal benefit. If this limitation of liability is too broad, then the above provision shall be enforced to the fullest extent as provided by law. If Nebraska law is hereafter changed to permit further elimination or limitation of the liability of Directors or Officers for monetary damages to the Corporation, then the liability of such Director or Officer of the Corporation shall be eliminated or limited to the extent then permitted. The Directors or Officers of the Corporation have agreed to serve in their respective capacities in reliance upon the provisions of this Section.

Section 8 Indemnification

The Corporation shall indemnify Directors, Officers and lay volunteers of this Corporation, and each Director or Officer of this Corporation who is serving or who has served at the request of this Corporation, as a Director, Officer, partner, trustee, employee, or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, or other enterprise or employee benefit plan to the fullest extent possible against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, penalties, fines, settlements and reasonable expenses, actually incurred by such Director or Officer of this Corporation or as a Director, Officer, partner, trustee, employee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust, other enterprise or employee benefit plan except that the mandatory indemnification required by this Section shall not apply (i) to a breach of such Director's or Officer's duty of loyalty to the Corporation, (ii) for acts in violation of the law, (iii) for a transaction from which such Director or Officer derived an improper personal benefit or against judgments, penalties, fines and settlements arising from any proceeding by or in

the right Corporation, or against expenses in any such case where such Director or Officer shall be adjudged liable to the Corporation.

Article 6 Committees

Section 1 Introduction and General Provisions

To assist Westside Church in the execution of its many responsibilities and to

Actively involve the membership in manifesting its gifts; committees; both standing and special shall be created.

- A committee shall be a group of church members assigned a specific area of ministry service or administrative responsibility by the membership or the senior pastor. A committee shall be established when it is determined that it is the most effective method of accomplishing the mission of the church.
- B. Committees, in addition to those established by or existing at the time of the adoption of these By-Laws, may be established or dissolved upon recommendation by the Executive Council, after review by the senior pastor and upon approval by the church membership.
- C. Two types of committees shall be established by these By-Laws to carry out continuing and temporary assignments.
 - 1. Standing Committees: These committees shall function throughout the year and carry out their responsibilities from year to year. The standing committees shall have a defined mission and objectives requiring on-going activity.
 - 2. Special Committees: These committees shall be convened for a unique, temporary assignment and shall be dissolved when their assignment is completed.

Section 2 Standing Committees

The following standing committees shall be created to facilitate the decent and orderly conduct of church business and ministries:

A. Executive Council:

Membership: The Executive Council shall consist of the chairmen of the Deacon Council, Personnel Committee, Stewardship Committee, Properties Committee, Nominating Committee and Missions Committee; two (2) members selected at-large from the Dodge Road membership and one (1) member selected at-large from the membership of each satellite; and the senior pastor. At large members shall not be serving on any other standing committee and no alternates shall be selected for the at-large positions.

Officers: The members of the Executive Council shall elect a chairman and secretary. The representative chairman from the Deacon Council and the senior pastor shall not be eligible to hold either of these offices. During the term of office, the chairman and secretary shall also serve as the corporate officers for the church.

Term: The length of term for the representatives from the Deacon Council, Personnel Committee, Stewardship Committee, Properties Committee, Nominating Committee and Missions Committee shall be one year. The length of term for the at-large representatives shall be two years. In the event of a vacancy in an at-large representative position, the Nominating Committee shall propose a replacement. For Dodge Road, one at-large representative's term shall end each year.

Meetings: The Executive Council shall meet at least once during each quarter of the year.

Duties: The primary duty of the Executive Council shall be to facilitate open lines of communication between all committees, the pastoral staff, and the congregation. Additional duties and responsibilities shall include:

1. The Chairman of each standing committee shall provide a written report to the Executive Council at least two weeks prior to the Executive Council's quarterly meeting.
2. The secretary for the Executive Council shall maintain written minutes of all meetings and church conferences as well as maintain a log of meeting minutes for all other standing committees which shall be kept on file in the church office.
3. The Executive Council shall have the authority to resolve any conflicts between standing or special committees.
4. The Executive Council shall insure that an annual report is presented to the membership that includes membership data, committee reports, a financial statement, and a proposed budget.
5. When requested by any committee member, the Executive Council shall have the authority to consider the removal of a committee member from his/her position. After receiving a written request from a committee member, the Executive Council shall vote first as to whether or not they will hear the reason(s) for the recommended action. In order to hear the recommendation seventy-five percent (75%) or more council members [eight (8) members or more] must vote in the affirmative. Once this action has been taken the Executive Council may hear the recommendations. Following deliberation, a committee member may be removed from his/her position by a majority vote of the Executive Council. The chairman of the Executive Council shall send written notice to the committee

member that is removed from his/her position within five business days of the decision.

6. The Executive Council shall establish a process to implement an annual performance review of the senior pastor by a subgroup of the Executive Council. The chairman of the Personnel Committee will share the results of this review with the Personnel Committee.

B. Personnel Committee

Membership: The Personnel Committee shall consist of six (6) members. The senior pastor shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Personnel Committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the Personnel Committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall preside over the committee and serve on the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings.

Term: The length of term for each committee member shall be three (3) years with two members rotating off the committee each year. Alternates shall serve for one (1) year if they do not fill a vacancy.

Meetings: The Personnel Committee shall meet at least once during the first or second month of each quarter of the year.

Duties: This primary duty of the Personnel Committee shall be to assist the church in matters relating to employed personnel:

1. Its work shall include such areas as determining staff needs employment, salaries, benefits, and personnel services. All members of this committee shall have ready access to all personnel records.
2. The Personnel Committee shall compile and maintain a personnel handbook of policies and procedures, and shall report in accord with these By-Laws.

C. Stewardship Committee

Membership: The Stewardship Committee shall consist of six (6) members. The senior pastor or his designee shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Stewardship Committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the Stewardship Committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall preside over the committee

and serve on the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings

Term: The length of term for each committee member shall be three (3) years with two members rotating off the committee each year. Alternates shall serve for one (1) year if they do not fill a vacancy.

Meetings: The Stewardship Committee shall meet at least once during the first or second month of each quarter of the year.

Duties: The primary duty of the Stewardship Committee shall be to assist the church in matters relating to finance including:

1. On a timely basis, prepare and submit to the church membership for approval an inclusive fiscal year budget, indicating by line item the amount needed or sought for all local and worldwide expenses. The fiscal year of the church shall run concurrently with the church year, which begins January 1, and ends December 31.
2. This committee shall have the general oversight of the financial affairs of Westside Church, and shall compile and maintain a financial handbook including policies and procedures. Said handbook shall include protocols that include bonding for the handling, safekeeping, and transportation of funds, providing for both the maximum security of the funds and the safety of those funds in the Stewardship Committee's possession or control. It shall set forth procedures to ensure confidentiality of the contribution records of individuals.
3. The Stewardship Committee shall annually, not later than its May meeting, engage an independent certified public accounting firm to review or audit the financial statements of the church. The Stewardship Committee shall review the audit and report its results to the Executive Council. A summary report of the audit shall be available to the church membership.
4. The Stewardship Committee shall report in accordance with requirements of these By-Laws.

D. Properties Committee

Membership: The Properties Committee shall consist of six (6) members. The senior pastor or his designee shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Properties Committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the Properties Committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall preside over the committee and serve on the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings.

Term: The length of term for the each committee member shall be three (3) years with two members rotating off the committee each year. Alternates shall serve for one (1) year if they do not fill a vacancy.

Meetings: The Properties Committee shall meet at least once during the first or second month of each quarter of the year.

Duties: The Properties Committee shall have the primary responsibility of maintaining the church property and will oversee facility improvements

1. The Properties Committee shall maintain a detailed list of all church properties and assets indentified with model and/or serial number, where applicable.
2. Working with the staff and the Stewardship Committee, the Properties Committee shall prepare an annual budget for short-term and long-term capital projects and improvements
3. It shall keep a properties handbook that establishes policies and procedures for the operation and maintenance of the properties and facilities of the church.

E. Nominating Committee

Membership: The Nominating Committee shall consist of six (6) members. The senior pastor or his designee shall serve as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Nominating Committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the Nominating Committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall preside over the committee and serve on the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings.

Term: The length of term for the each committee member shall be three (3) years with two members rotating off the committee each year. Alternates shall serve for one (1) year if they do not fill a vacancy.

Meetings: The Nominating Committee shall meet at least once during the first or second month of each quarter of the year.

Duties: It shall be the responsibility of the Nominating Committee to receive and review nominations for all standing committees which shall include: the Personnel Committee, the Stewardship Committee, the Properties Committee, the Nominating Committee, Missions Committee and at-large members for the Executive Council. It shall establish a committee handbook including policies and procedures to insure timely nominations for all vacancies. The Nominating Committee shall also serve to advise the senior pastor with the appointment of individuals serving on

special committees. When necessary, the Nominating Committee shall recommend individuals to serve on a pastor search committee.

F. Missions Committee

Missions are those ministry activities that involve people serving beyond the doors of the church building for the purpose of assisting in humanitarian work and spreading the gospel message.

Membership: The Missions Committee shall consist of six (6) members who have shown an interest and passion for missions by their involvement in local, national or international mission efforts. The senior pastor or his designee shall serve as a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Missions Committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the Missions Committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The chairman shall preside over the committee and serve on the Executive Council. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings and submit quarterly reports to the Executive Council.

Term: The length of term for each committee member shall be three (3) years with two members rotating off the committee each year. Alternates shall serve for one (1) year if they do not fill a vacancy.

Meetings: The Missions Committee shall meet at least once during each quarter of the year and more often as necessary to oversee all mission activities of the church.

Duties: The Missions Committee shall have responsibility for all mission activities including but not limited to envisioning, developing, funding and promoting mission opportunities.

1. Its work shall include establishment of an annual budget and approval of all mission activities.
2. The Missions Committee shall insure that distribution of all mission funds is connected with the ministries of Westside church and/or have the direct involvement of members and/or attenders.
3. Financial support of mission activities not directly coupled with Westside lay or staff involvement shall be limited to one (1) year.
4. The Missions Committee shall compile and maintain a handbook of policies and procedures, and shall report in accordance with these By-Laws.

Section 3 Pastor Search Committee

Membership: The pastor search committee shall consist of six (6) members of which no more than two members may be active deacons. All six (6) committee members shall be active, continuous resident members of Westside Church for at least one (1) year; at least five (5) members of the committee shall be active continuous resident members of Westside Church for three (3) or more years. Any person selected to serve on the pastor search committee who serves as a chairman of any committee or the Deacon Council shall step aside from other leadership responsibilities in order to serve on the pastor search committee. Two (2) alternates shall be selected to fill committee vacancies.

Officers: The members of the pastor search committee shall elect a chairman and secretary. The secretary shall maintain written minutes of all committee meetings. The chairman of the pastor search committee shall not be a chairman of any other church committee or the Deacon Council.

Term: The length of term for all committee members shall be until such time that the office of senior pastor has been filled, at which time the committee shall dissolve. If after one (1) year from the appointment of the pastor search committee a senior pastor has not been approved by the voting church membership, the Executive Council by majority vote may require the existing pastor search committee to be re-affirmed by a majority vote of the church membership. Alternate committee members shall be provided information regarding the search process at the discretion of the pastoral search committee.

Meetings: The pastor search committee shall meet as necessary and the chairman shall provide timely and periodic reports, both written and verbal, to the Executive Council and the church membership.

Duties: It shall be the responsibility of the pastor search committee to conduct the search to fill the vacant senior pastor position. The committee shall have the authority to consider as many candidates as deemed reasonably necessary by soliciting recommendations from church members, Southern Baptist pastors, leaders, officials, and other appropriate sources. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to nominate and recommend to the church membership a man for the office of senior pastor. In fulfilling this duty only one candidate shall be considered at a time. Sufficient funds shall be made available to the pastor search committee for expenses incurred in the official search process including attending worship services led by senior pastor candidates. As necessary, the work of this committee shall be confidential. Procedures for the candidacy visit, extending a senior pastor call, and establishing a compensation package for the senior pastor are defined under the Senior Pastor in Article 5, Section 2. The pastor search committee shall have no additional authority other than is herein granted.

Section 4 Committee Charter and Oversight

- A. Each committee shall have a charter that describes its ministry, mission, manpower requirements, methods of program administration, funding requirements, materials, and measurements of effectiveness.
- B. The Executive Council shall have general oversight responsibility to ensure the viability of the committee process to achieve effective ministry implementation, but shall have no supervisory authority over the work of any other committee.

Section 5 Standing Committee Membership

- A. Qualifications and Election:

So that standing committees may best represent the conscience of the church membership, the following requirements for committee membership are set forth.

The membership for standing committees and the pastor search committee, including alternates, shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee to the church membership for approval, after all of the following have occurred:

1. Each candidate shall be reviewed by the Nominating Committee and pastoral staff.
2. Each candidate shall be an active resident member of the church for at least one (1) year.
3. No church member shall serve on more than one (1) standing committees concurrently.
4. Pastoral staff or other church staff may serve in a non-voting, *ex-officio* advisory capacity to a standing committee, when appointed by the senior pastor.

The Nominating Committee shall present to the congregation a ballot with sufficient names to fill all vacancies and all alternate positions. (If one vacancy exists, the ballot shall include two names; if two vacancies exist, the ballot shall include four names; if three vacancies exist, the ballot shall include five names.) Those individuals who receive the greatest plurality of votes in each election shall serve in the designated office. Those individuals receiving the least votes shall serve as the alternates in the order of total votes received.

- B. Size:

The Executive Council shall consist of chairman of the Deacon Council; chairman of the personnel, stewardship, properties, nominating and

Missions Committees; two (2) at-large members from Dodge Road and one (1) at-large member from each satellite; and the senior pastor. All standing committees shall have six (6) members plus two (2) alternates exclusive of any *ex officio* member(s). The pastoral search committee shall have six members (6) plus two (2) alternates without *ex-officio* members.

C. Term of Office and Rotation:

The standing committee membership year shall be from January through December. A term on a standing committee shall be for three (3) years, except due to early rotation. After a three (3) year term of service, there shall be one (1) year of ineligibility for service on that committee.

Membership on all standing committees shall be on a rotation basis, with one third (1/3) of the committee members being replaced each year. The term of the at-large members of the Executive Council shall be two (2) years. The term on a special committee or the pastor search committee will vary according to the charter of each committee.

Using the three (3) year rotation model, one third (1/3) of all standing committee members shall be transitioned each year during the first three years after this Constitution and By-Laws are approved by the membership. This transition plan shall insure stability for the church and its officers. Each standing committee existing at the time of ratification of the Constitution and By-Laws shall determine the expiration dates for its members so that this rotation can be implemented.

D. Vacancies:

The Nominating Committee shall fill committee vacancies that occur during the calendar year by appointing the first alternate followed by the second alternate if necessary (except as otherwise outlined in Appointment of Alternates).

E. Appointment of Alternates:

When a vacancy occurs on a standing committee, the chairman of the committee with the vacancy shall notify the chairman of the Nominating Committee in writing within thirty (30) days of the time that the vacancy occurred. Whenever a vacancy occurs during the first nine months of the year the first alternate shall be immediately contacted by the chairman of the Nominating Committee and be appointed to the committee for which he/she had been approved.

If a vacancy occurs on a standing committee during the final quarter of the term of the departing committee member, it shall be the decision of the committee with the vacancy to determine if the vacancy shall be filled. At no time shall a committee operate with fewer than five (5) members even during the final quarter of the year.

F. Term of Alternates:

The term of an alternate not appointed to a standing committee is for one year. When an alternate is appointed to a committee he/she shall serve the remainder of the term of the person being replaced.

Section 6 Standing Committee Officers

Each committee shall elect annually a chairman and secretary. The committee members shall elect a new chairman or secretary if a vacancy occurs with one of these offices.

Section 7 Operations and Coordination

A. Responsibilities:

1. Each committee shall prepare a work plan or program for the year, consistent with ministry needs and its mission.
2. Each committee shall propose internal policies and procedures for the effective implementation of its mission. These guideline, policies, and procedures shall be codified into operational handbooks. Annually, the Executive Council and pastoral staff shall cooperatively review the operational handbooks.
3. All guidelines, policies, and procedures (handbooks) established by the standing committees created by these By-Laws shall be on file for review by the church membership.
4. All committees shall prepare quarterly reports for the Executive Council and the pastoral staff. These reports shall include observations regarding compliance with committee guidelines and policies and procedures handbooks, and any recommendations for changes thereto.

B. Meetings: All committees shall meet at least quarterly and keep minutes of all meetings.

C. Coordination:

1. Each committee shall consult, through its chairman or staff pastor *ex officio* member, any and all other committees that may be affected by a contemplated action, prior to any action being taken.
2. Any committee recommendations requiring church approval shall be reviewed with the Executive Council prior to church action. In addition, if such action requires non-budgeted funds, the

Stewardship Committee shall review it before presentation to the Executive Council.

Section 8 Special Committees

- A. Special committees shall be created to meet unique needs of the church not requiring sustained service by a committee.
- B. Each committee shall be given a specific mission and time frame of performance.
- C. The committee shall make recommendations to the pastoral staff or Executive Council as appropriate to its purpose.
- D. Unless otherwise prescribed in these By-Laws, the committee members shall be appointed by the senior pastor.

Article 7 Support Staff

- A. Westside Church shall employ such support staff, as needed, by action of the Personnel Committee.
- B. All employees shall work in cooperation with the senior pastor and/or his designee.
- C. The personnel handbook shall apply to all employed personnel; and where necessary, the personnel handbook shall address requirements, policies, or procedures for volunteers representing a ministry organization.

Article 8 Lay Volunteers

- A. Opportunity and Optimization:

Ministry and training opportunities shall be provided for the special gifts, callings, and talents of lay members of Westside Church, as deemed appropriate by the senior pastor and pastoral staff.

- B. Recruitment and Orientation:

Unless otherwise provided in these By-Laws, lay volunteers shall be appointed and supervised by the appropriate staff pastor designated by the senior pastor.

- C. Protecting the Membership and Guests:

The church staff shall take appropriate steps to screen all paid and volunteer workers in order to protect members and guests – especially protecting those who are not of majority age.

Article 9 Historical Archives and Records Retention

It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Council and the pastoral staff to maintain historical archives and retain appropriate records for the church. These records shall include membership lists, annual reports, and other documentation that would assist leaders in understanding the historical development of the church.

Minutes for all committee meetings, council meetings (executive and deacon), and church conferences shall be available for review by the church members. A copy of the annual budget(s), financial report(s), and financial audit report(s) shall also be available for review by church members upon request

Article 10 Ballot Processes in Decision Making

When paper ballots are used during church conferences, it shall be the responsibility of the moderator to establish appropriate safeguards to insure that only members vote, and that members vote only once.

It shall be the responsibility of the moderator to appoint a team of not less than five (5) individuals to count the ballots and declare the decision of the church membership.

Article 11 Implementation

If, at the time this document is adopted or any future revision to this document is adopted and becomes effective, and the terms of elected officers, committee members or others are found to be in conflict with these By-Laws:

- A. The terms of service shall be adjusted by the Nominating Committee, with due consideration for the preferences of those affected.
- B. Nine (9) months or more (from the effective date of the revision) shall be regarded as a year of service. Less than nine (9) months shall be disregarded.
- C. In those instances where more than fifty percent (50%) of an elected group's members (committee or council) have been rendered technically ineligible to serve beyond the current year, an orderly rotation shall be established as in A. above, providing for at least fifty percent (50%) of the members to have at least one (1) year tenure.

Article 12 Licensing and Ordaining

Section 1 Eligibility

Any present or former member of Westside Church now serving in ministry at another location who by his piety, zeal, and aptness to preach and teach, gives evidence that he is called of God to the work of the ministry, after examination by the senior pastor and Deacon Council as to his Christian experience, and by affirmation of a majority of the members present at a regular church conference,

may be licensed by Westside Church to the Christian ministry. Licensure is viewed as a temporary permit for ministry under the authority of Westside Church.

Section 2 Pastoral Ordination

When a member or former member of Westside church is called to serve Westside Church or a church of like faith and order, and it shall have made written request for ordination for the individual, Westside Church shall consider the request. Church members present at a regular church conference, by a majority vote, shall decide the request and if approved direct the senior pastor to assemble an examination council of ordained ministers of the gospel of like faith and order to perform the formal evaluation of the candidate. The senior pastor shall then present the recommendation whether or not the church should ordain the member or former member into the gospel ministry in the name of, and in the presence of Westside Church. Ordination shall be viewed as permanent recognition and authorization for gospel ministry.

Section 3 Deacon Ordination

If Westside Church shall, at a church conference, elects a member (or members), not previously ordained to the office of deacon, the senior pastor shall be authorized and directed to establish an ordination ceremony. Participants shall include ordained and licensed ministers of the gospel of like faith and order, deacons of this church, and visiting deacons of like faith and order; they shall perform the ceremony of ordination in the name of, and in the presence of the church membership.

Article 13 Use of Buildings, Facilities, and Equipment

A. Purpose:

The use of all Westside Church property is for the purpose of worship, evangelism, Christian education, world missions, and the development of Christian character and life. Any use of these facilities shall reflect this purpose, and shall glorify God.

B. Conduct:

All people using the buildings shall show reverence and respect. Conduct shall be in keeping with the occasion. Social activities shall be confined to areas provided for this purpose. There shall be no tobacco, or any alcoholic beverages anywhere in the building(s).

C. Schedules:

In order to avoid conflict, all use of facilities and equipment shall be arranged with the church office.

Article 14 Legal Counsel

No attorney shall be retained to represent the church in any matter, without prior consent of the Executive Council; or, with regard to any major matter, without prior consent of the church membership.

No litigation shall be initiated without the prior approval of a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members voting at a regularly scheduled or specially called church conference. The nature of the subject matter and the time of the vote shall have been announced at least fourteen (14) days in advance.

The above shall not be interpreted to preclude the procurement of legal advice by a church organization, when such advice is necessary and appropriate, and falls within the scope of that organization's authority and approved budget.

Article 15 Appeal Process

Any member experiencing a hardship due to the exercise of these or any other church policies and/or procedures shall be extended the privilege of counseling with a church officer. If it is deemed necessary, the member and the officer may request a hearing before an appropriate group of officers to seek relief.

Article 16 Charge

The senior pastor and Executive Council are charged with the responsibility to assure that all official church authority is exercised in compliance with the Church Constitution and these By-Laws.

Article 17 Amendments

The By-Laws of Westside Church may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) affirmative vote of the members present and voting in a regularly scheduled or specially called church conference, provided that the amendment has been published and the agenda announced at least three consecutive weeks prior to the meeting. Any member of Westside Church may propose an amendment by submitting it in writing to the Executive Council. The Executive Council shall acknowledge submission of the proposed amendment and then determine appropriate action. The Executive Council shall either submit the proposed amendment to the membership for action, or inform the proposing member that no action will be taken.