

# Constitution of Emmanuel Community Church – Elmira, NY

*Adopted December 5, 2004  
Amended April 26, 2015; August 9, 2015; February 23, 2021*

## Preamble

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ our Savior; in order to win men, women and children to Christ, and to spread the gospel of the grace of God to the ends of the earth and to build up believers in the faith and knowledge of Christ; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, we do hereby recognize ourselves as a local church, and adopt the following Constitution and By-Laws and voluntarily submit ourselves to be governed by them.

## Article I: Name

The name of this assembly shall be Emmanuel Community Church of the City of Elmira, State of New York.

## Article II: Prerogatives

Section 1 This church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standard of the New Testament Scriptures, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace .... until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:3, 13).

Section 2 In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate of chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its Constitution and By-Laws.

## Article III: Statement of Faith

### Section 1 **1. The Scriptures**

We believe that the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are verbally inspired by God and accept them as the written Word of God, the revelation of absolute Truth. They are inerrant and infallible in the original writings, totally sufficient, and the authoritative and normative rule and guide of all Christian life, practice, and doctrine (Ps. 19:7-11, 119; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Heb. 4:12; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

## **2. The Triune God**

We believe in the one, true, and living God. He is eternal, self-sufficient, omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent; perfect in holiness, truth, and love; having all life, goodness, and blessedness in and of Himself. In the unity of the Godhead there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are the same in substance and nature, equal in power and glory—each having the whole divine essence without this essence being divided—yet distinct in ministry. This is the very foundation of our faith, life, and fellowship with God (Exo. 34:5-7; Deut. 6:4; Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22; John 5:26; 14:16-17; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 4:4-6).

## **3. Creation and Providence**

We believe that the triune God is the Creator and Sustainer of everyone and everything. He upholds, directs, and governs all things, according to His holy will, to the end for which they were created—namely, the praise of His glory. The sovereignty of God extends over all things such that there is no aspect of reality outside of His ultimate control. God is sovereign in such a way that He is not the author of, nor guilty of committing, sin, but that His just and eternal decree is compatible with the moral accountability of all persons created in His image (Job 38:11; Ps. 33:8-11; 93:1-2; 115:3; 135:6; Prov. 16:33; 19:21; Isa. 46:9-11; Dan. 4:34-35; Rom. 11:33-36; Eph. 1:11; Rev. 4:11).

## **4. The Fall of Man**

We believe that God created man in His own image to know, love, enjoy, and glorify Him. However, man, being tempted by Satan, sinned against God resulting in not only physical but spiritual death, subject to divine wrath. Consequently, mankind is sinful by nature; depraved in mind, will, and affections; and at enmity with God, completely unable to please Him or be reconciled to Him through any merit of their own (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:17, 3:1-7,19; Rom. 1:18, 3:10-19,23, 5:12-14, 8:7-8; Eph. 2:1-3, 5:5-6).

## **5. Jesus Christ**

We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten, eternal, and preeminent Son of God, who is the Word made flesh—fully God and fully man. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life and perfect obedience, miracles, substitutionary work of atonement on the cross, bodily resurrection from the dead, ascension, and exaltation to the right hand of God (Isa. 52:13-53:12; John 1:1-18; 1 Cor. 15:3-4; Php. 2:6-11; Col. 1:15-22; Heb. 1:1-4).

## **6. The Gospel**

We believe that God, according to His goodness, wisdom, and grace, and in faithfulness to His covenant promises, sent His Son into the world for the redemption of mankind and the restoration of all things. God revealed His righteousness and demonstrated His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ fulfilled the demands of the law, shed his blood and died on the cross as a substitutionary and propitiatory sacrifice, and rose from the dead for the salvation of all who believe. This gospel is the announcement that God reigns as King through the sacrifice and exaltation of Jesus, who is the only mediator between God and man (John 10:9-11, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Rom. 5:1-21; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; 1 Pet. 2:21-24).

## **7. The Salvation of Man**

We believe that eternal life, the free gift of God, is provided by grace alone, through faith

alone in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. Anyone believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ and repenting of sin is justified before God—forgiven and declared righteous by faith—reconciled to Him, adopted as sons, and redeemed from the law of sin and death. These are the blessings of our union with Christ, the believer’s only hope in life and death (John 1:12-13; Rom. 3:21-28, 5:1-2, 8:1-4, 10:9; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 1:7-12, 2:4-9; Titus 3:3-7).

### **8. The Holy Spirit**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is a divine person, coeternal with and proceeding from the Father and Son. He is the primary Agent in the new birth, given irrevocably to all who truly believe by regenerating, sealing, and dwelling in their hearts. He comforts, convicts, teaches, sanctifies, illuminates Scripture, and guides the Church into a right understanding and rich application of the truth of God’s Word, producing His fruit in their lives (Eze. 36:26-27; John 3:3-8, 14:16-18, 15:26; 16:7-15; Rom. 5:5; 8:9-17; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 1:13-14).

### **9. The Sanctification of Believers**

We believe that sanctification is a continual process, beginning at salvation, of separation from evil and dedication unto God in the life of a true believer, whereby he daily presents his body as a living sacrifice, identifying with Christ’s death and resurrection, being led by the Spirit, and transformed by the renewing of his mind (Rom. 6:1-8:17, 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 2:19-20; Eph. 2:10; Col. 3:1-17; 1 Pet. 1:14-16).

### **10. The Empowering of the Spirit**

We believe that the Holy Spirit desires to continually fill every believer with boldness and power to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and imparts His gifts for the edification of the body and the work of ministry in the world. Believers should likewise earnestly seek to be filled, controlled, and yielded to the Spirit continually. We believe the gifts are available today and are to be eagerly desired and practiced in submission to the Spirit speaking through the Scriptures (John 7:37-39; Acts 1:8, 2:37-47, 4:29-31; Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:7-16; 5:18).

### **11. The Church and its Mission**

We believe that God graciously chooses and preserves for Himself a community united by faith who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together. A visible church of Christ is a local congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the fellowship of the gospel, that observes the ordinances of Christ, and whose only scriptural officers are Elders and Deacons. This body of believers proclaims the gospel, makes disciples of all men from all nations, and prefigures Christ’s kingdom by the quality of their life together and their love for one another (Matt. 16:15-19; John 17:20-25; Eph. 2:19-22, 4:11-16; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Pet. 2:5, 9-10).

### **12. The Ordinances of the Church**

We believe that the ordinances of water baptism and communion (the Lord’s Supper), instituted and commanded to be observed by Jesus Christ, are visible signs for His body that we are bound together as a covenant community of faith. By our participation in them, the Holy Spirit more fully declares and seals the promises of the gospel to us. We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a prerequisite to the privileges of church membership

and the Lord's Supper (Matt. 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 2:38-41; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Col. 2:11-12).

### **13. The Sanctity of Human Life:**

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life (Gen. 1:26-27, 9:6; Job 31:15; Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; Luke 12:6-7).

### **14. Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. At the same time, we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Gen. 1:26-27, 2:18-25; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 12:28-31; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11, 18, 7:2-5; Eph. 5:22-33; Heb. 13:4).

### **15. The Consummation**

We believe in the glorious return of the Lord Jesus—our blessed hope, the resurrection of the dead, the translation of those alive in Christ, the judgment of the righteous to eternal life and the wicked to eternal punishment, and the fulfillment of Christ's kingdom in the new heavens and the new earth to the praise of His glory (Matt. 25:31-46; John 5:28-29; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; Rev. 20-22).

Section 2 This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our sincerely held religious beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the Elders are the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application for Emmanuel Community Church.

## **Article IV: Membership**

Individuals shall be eligible to membership in this church who give evidence of personal living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and have been baptized as believers, who voluntarily subscribe to its Statement of Faith, who agree to uphold the commitments set forth in its membership Covenant, who agree to be governed by its Constitution and By-Laws, and who complete an application for membership.

Persons desiring to become members of this local church shall make the fact known by

submitting an application for membership to the Elders, who shall examine the applicant according to New Testament standards. The Elders, with unanimous consent, shall then present the names of those who apply for membership with their recommendation to the members for subsequent approval by vote. The names of those accepted for membership shall be inscribed in the membership roll of the church. This shall constitute the voting membership of the church.

## **Article V: Government**

Section 1 The biblical offices in the church shall be Elders (Pastors) and Deacons, but final earthly authority is vested in the assembled congregation. In addition, our church recognizes the possibility of other administrative positions to serve at the behest of the elders. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 There shall be a Lead Pastor of the church who shall also serve as President of the corporation and shall act as Chairman of all the business of the church. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an Elder and the Lead Pastor.

Section 3 Elders (Pastors)

- A. Oversight of the ministries and resources of the church shall be vested in a plurality of Elders consisting of a Lead Pastor and at least two other men serving as either Staff Elders or Lay Elders (i.e., a pastor not in the regular pay of the church). The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.
- B. In keeping with the principles set forth in the Scriptures, especially Acts 6:1-6; 20:17-35; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-18; Titus 1:5-9; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, they shall undertake the responsibility of shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Section 4 Deacons

- A. There shall be a Board of Deacons, the number of which shall vary as the church has need.
- B. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Deacons shall support the Elders' ministry of the Word and administration of the church by caring for the physical needs of its members and facilities, and by working to maintain the unity of the church.
- C. One member of this Board shall serve as Treasurer and one shall serve as Secretary; both positions may be filled by the same person.
- D. In compliance with the Not-For Profit Corporation laws of New York, the Deacons shall serve as the Trustees of this Corporation.

## **Article VI: Amendments**

This Constitution or subsequent By-Laws may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the church who are in attendance at any regular or special meetings called for that purpose by the Elders, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made at all the services on at least two Sundays preceding the time of such meeting.

# By-Laws of Emmanuel Community Church – Elmira, NY

*Approved November 9, 2004  
Amended April 26, 2015; August 9, 2015; September 25, 2016; February 23, 2021*

## **Article 1: Membership**

Section 1 Requirements - Each candidate for membership in this church shall be expected to:

- A. Complete a membership class, pending approval of the Elders.
- B. Meet with the Elders, giving testimony to their salvation and acceptance of the Statement of Faith, Covenant, and Constitution and By-Laws of this church.
- C. Follow the Scriptural command to be baptized in water by immersion in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).
- D. Live out the gospel in community by adhering to the biblical commitments set forth in the membership Covenant of this church (Article 1, Section 2).

Section 2 Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and upon our profession of faith in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His grace alone, sincerely and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ, to make known the glory of God and the preeminence of Christ by proclaiming the truth of the gospel in the power of the Spirit.

We will walk together in brotherly love, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and encourage one another to grow in love and good works, growing ourselves in faith, study of the Word, prayer, and fellowship.

We will meet with one another consistently, pray for ourselves and others regularly, edify one another with our speech, rejoice with those who rejoice, and endeavor to bear each other's burdens and sorrows.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, humbly and gently confronting and receiving correction from one another in accordance with a New Testament understanding of church discipline and restoration.

We will endeavor to nurture and admonish those in our care, to walk purposefully yet carefully in this world, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to seek, by a pure and loving example, the salvation of our family and friends.

We will work together to sustain the worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines of this church, contributing cheerfully and regularly to the support of its various ministries and expenses, the relief of the poor and afflicted, the making of disciples, and the spread of the Gospel to all nations by giving of our time, talents, and treasure.

We will submit to the Word of God as the all-sufficient authority in our lives and in His church, and to the leadership of this church, who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for the members of this body by teaching the Word to us and modeling the character of Christ before us.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

### Section 3 Acceptance

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be unanimously recommended by the Elders and accepted by a majority vote of the members present at any Members' Meeting, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### Section 4 Responsibilities - Members shall be expected to participate in the life of the church by:

- A. Regularly attending its Lord's Day gatherings and Members' Meetings.
- B. Faithfully observing its ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- C. Voting on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership, and on all other matters submitted to the congregation's vote.

### Section 5 Discipline

- A. The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor. 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1)
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. This discipline is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11.
- C. Any member of this church who practices or affirms a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Elders, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline.
- D. Discipline can include admonition by the Elders or congregation, and may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church.
- E. The members of this church further knowingly and voluntarily agree that a member cannot voluntarily withdraw or resign his or her membership in the midst of the discipline process, and may only voluntarily withdraw or resign his or her membership if they are not the subject of a discipline proceeding at the time or only after a disciplinary process, of which they are the subject, has been concluded as determined unanimously by the Elders.

### Section 6 Termination

- A. The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death. The church may also do so after he or she has voluntarily resigned for the purposes of joining another church.

- B. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (Article 1, Section 6) upon the unanimous recommendation of the Elders and upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.
- C. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent.

Section 7 Notification

When a member is removed from the active membership, said individual will be notified in writing of their removal.

## **Article 2: Meetings**

Section 1 Worship Services

Meetings for public worship shall be held each Sunday and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Elders.

Section 2 Board Meetings

- A. The Elders shall meet as necessary for the pastoral oversight of the church.
- B. The Board of Deacons shall meet as necessary for the transaction of routine business of the church.
- C. A quorum, which shall consist of more than one-half (50%) of the total number of Elders or Deacons, shall be present to conduct business at their respective meetings.

Section 3 Members' Meetings

- A. Beginning in the month of February of each year, the church shall hold quarterly Member's Meetings. The date and time of these meetings shall be announced at every public meeting of the church for two weeks immediately prior to the Members' Meeting in question.
- B. Members' Meetings shall proceed according to a reasonable order, and the members present shall constitute a quorum to conduct general business (for special circumstances, see Article 2, Section 5).
- C. Motions shall be adopted upon the agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the matter, unless stated otherwise in these By-Laws.
- D. The church, duly assembled in a Members' Meeting, shall be responsible to:
  - Elect officers.
  - Receive applicants into membership.
  - Recognize the termination of membership due to death, transfer of membership, or voluntary resignation.
  - Exercise church discipline.
  - Approve the church budget (at the first Members' Meeting of each year).
  - Hear or receive reports from the officers and ministry leaders of the church.
  - Take any other action deemed necessary or desirable.

#### Section 4 Special Meetings:

- A. A special Members' Meeting may be called by the Elders for any purpose. One may also be called at the written request, submitted to the Elders, of one-fourth (25%) of the membership in good standing.
- B. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at every public meeting of the church for two weeks immediately prior to the date of such meeting.
- C. In the event of a written request from the members, the Elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

#### Section 5 Quorum for Special Circumstances – A quorum of two-thirds (66%) of the membership in good standing is required to conduct any of the following business:

- A. Election of Elders
- B. Termination of membership as a result of church discipline
- C. Amendments to the Constitution or By-Laws

### **Article 3: Election of Officers**

#### Section 1 Elders

- A. The Elders shall at any Members' Meeting present to the church a list of nominees to the office of Elder. For a period of at least one month (four weeks), the church shall consider whether such nominees are qualified for the office.
- B. If any member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that member shall express such concern to the Elders, who may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the Elders no later than two weeks prior to the relevant Members' Meeting.
- C. When a period of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall present a final list of nominees to the church at a Members' Meeting, who shall vote on each of the nominees by secret ballot. A two-thirds vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute a valid election. Having received the approval of the church, these men shall be received as gifts of Christ to his church and set apart as Elders.
- D. Lay Elders shall be reaffirmed by vote of the church triennially, and having served two consecutive three-year terms, shall not be eligible for re-election for one year. If there is not a sufficient number of qualified men to satisfy the triennial cycle of affirmation and rest, the church may reaffirm those currently serving as Elders for an additional three-year term.
- E. The Lead Pastor and Staff Elders shall not be subject to any term limits.

#### Section 2 Lead Pastor

- A. The Lead Pastor shall be nominated by the Pulpit Committee of the church (Article 6, Section 1) and the same basic process of electing an Elder shall be followed (Article 2, Section 1)
- B. The Pulpit Committee shall seek men to fill the pulpit who may or may not be considered potential candidates. They shall conduct whatever interviews they deem necessary to determine whom they may wish to move to the level of candidature.
- C. The church then must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and

ministerial gifts of any candidate for the position of Lead Pastor.

- D. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and the position of Lead Pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a Members' Meeting.

### Section 3 Deacons

- A. The Elders shall at any Members' Meeting present to the church a list of nominees to the office of Deacon. For a period of at least one month, the church shall consider whether such nominees are qualified for the office.
- B. If any member believes one or more of the nominees to be unqualified, that member shall express such concern to the Elders, who may on the basis of that advice remove names from the list of nominees. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the Elders no later than two weeks prior to the relevant Members' Meeting.
- C. When a period of one month has elapsed, the Elders shall present a final list of nominees to the church at a Members' Meeting, who shall vote on each of the nominees by secret ballot. A majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute a valid election. Having received the approval of the church, these men shall be received as gifts of Christ to his church and set apart as Deacons.
- D. Their term of office shall be for three years.

### Section 4 Secretary/Treasurer

The Deacons shall select one or two of its members to fulfill the duties of the Secretary and Treasurer.

## **Article 4: Qualifications of Officers**

### Section 1 Elders shall:

- A. Satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- B. Demonstrate a pastoral calling on their life by their conduct, ministry, and character.
- C. Have received training for the work of pastoral ministry.
- D. In accordance with 1 Timothy 2:12 and 3:2, women shall not serve as Elders.

### Section 2 The Lead Pastor shall:

- A. Satisfy all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of an Elder.
- B. Be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the fulltime ministry of the Word and pastoral oversight.
- C. Have a proven, successful record of relevant ministerial experience.  
~ OR ~
- D. Be a graduate of a reputable Evangelical Bible School, College, or Seminary.

### Section 3 Deacons shall:

- A. Satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- B. Exhibit the attitude of a servant to the church body.
- C. Have been members of the church for at least one year.

- D. Be a man of good report, being known in the community as a person of honesty and responsibility with regards to his personal and business affairs.

Section 4 The Treasurer shall:

- A. Satisfy all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of a Deacon.
- B. Have a familiarity with the principles of bookkeeping and accounting.
- C. Be familiar with automated accounting methodologies.

## **Article 5: Responsibilities of Officers**

Section 1 Elders shall:

- A. Shepherd the flock of God by devoting themselves to prayer and ministry of the Word—exemplifying a godly pattern of conduct and leading by Christlike example, teaching and encouraging sound doctrine, admonishing and protecting the church from error, and equipping the membership for the work of ministry and mission.
- B. Plan and oversee all public worship services of the church and administration of the ordinances.
- C. Arrange for all special meetings. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the church without the approval of the Elders.
- D. Maintain an accurate record of the membership, examine and instruct prospective members, and oversee the process of church discipline.
- E. Examine, and recommend candidates for all offices and positions.
- F. Recognize and train men who are discerning a call to pastoral ministry.
- G. Oversee the work of the Deacons and other agents of the church.
- H. In consultation with the Treasurer, oversee the preparation of an itemized budget.
- I. Provide for the appointment and employment of such persons as they shall deem necessary for the conduct of the program of the church.
- J. Approve additions, deletions or modifications of any church services, departments or ministries.

Section 2 In addition to the responsibilities of an Elder, the Lead Pastor shall:

- A. Be the President of the corporation.
- B. Be an ex-officio member of all departments and committees.
- C. Act as Chairman of the Elders, the Board of Deacons, and all Members' Meetings, or designate another officer of the church to act as such.
- ✎ Be primarily responsible for the preaching and teaching of the Scriptures

Section 3 Deacons shall:

- A. Fulfill all the duties of their office in cooperation with the Elders.
- B. Be responsible primarily to administer the physical and benevolent concerns of the church as well as its business affairs.
- C. Be responsible for the physical and fiscal protection, maintenance, and cleanliness of the church property.
- D. Take responsibility for seeing that the sick, the sorrowing, the aged, and the infirm receive physical and spiritual comfort.
- E. Receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, and report from time to time on the use of such funds to both the Elders and the church.

- F. Serve in any other specific capacities as the church has need.
- G. Organize themselves however they determine and establish committees of members to assist them, under the direction of the Elders, to best fulfill their responsibilities.
- H. Be empowered to act on behalf of the church in all matters involving sale or transfer of church property.
- I. Approve and authorize signatories for the church checking account(s).
- J. Approve and authorize all aspects of tenancy for those living in church-owned property.

Section 4 The Secretary shall:

- A. Keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Board of Deacons and of the Member's Meetings of the church.
- B. Perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of duties.
- C. Deposit all legal documents in a secure location as authorized by the Deacons.

Section 5 The Treasurer shall:

- A. Oversee payment of all bills incurred by the church upon authorization by the Deacons.
- B. Ensure that all offerings are counted by two authorized persons who shall convey the same to the treasurer.
- C. Deposit, or designate other person(s) to deposit, all funds into a bank authorized by the Deacons, in the church's name.
- D. Maintain an accurate, itemized accounting of receipts and disbursements.
- E. Make a report at the regular business meetings of the church and the Deacons.
- F. Be authorized to use high grade interest-bearing investments under direction of the Deacons.
- G. Oversee the maintenance of and adherence to the church budget.

## **Article 6: Vacancies & Removals**

Section 1 Elders

- A. An Elder shall be removed from office upon resignation, death, or the vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any Members' Meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-21.
- B. No accusation shall be brought against an Elder except on the testimony of at least two members in good standing. The matter shall then be taken to the other Elders and Deacons for investigation and resolution. If still unresolved, the Elders may then present the matter to the congregation for final decision.
- C. If the Lead Pastor desires to resign, three months' notice shall be given to the Elders and Deacons in writing, unless waived by mutual consent.
- D. Lay Elders may choose to take a leave from active service due to personal, family, or job-related situations that warrant such a leave. Reinstatement to active service is by mutual agreement between the individual and the Elders.

Section 2 Deacons

- A. A Deacon shall be removed from office by a unanimous decision of the Elders, or

- upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any Members' Meeting.
- B. In the event a diaconate position becomes vacant, the Elders may appoint a person to fill that position and assume its responsibilities, until such time as some person can be duly recognized by the church as a Deacon.
  - C. Deacons may choose to take a leave from active service due to personal, family, or job-related situations that warrant such a leave. Reinstatement to active service in the diaconate is by mutual agreement between the individual and the Elders.

## **Article 7: Committees**

### Section 1 Pulpit Committee

- A. There shall be a pulpit committee comprised of the Elders and Deacons, plus any representatives from the various ministries of the church whom they deem necessary.
- B. The Pulpit Committee shall seek out and recommend a candidate for the office of Lead Pastor, following the constitutional provisions on elections (Article 2, Section 2).
- C. Once selected, the Pulpit Committee shall continue to serve until the committee's responsibilities are discharged, or the committee itself is discharged by the Elders.

### Section 2 Ad Hoc Committees

- A. Committees with a specific charge or focus may be created by the Elders or the Board of Deacons.
- B. Members of Ad Hoc Committees will be appointed by, and act solely in an advisory capacity to, the office responsible for creating the Committee.
- C. The duration of service will be until the particular focus or charge has been resolved, or until the office responsible for creating the Committee dissolves the Committee.

## **Article 8: Departments & Ministries**

Section 1 The church shall provide for the establishment and support of various departments and ministries as the needs of the work may require.

Section 2 All departments shall be subordinate to the church, and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole.

Section 3 All departments shall be under the general supervision of the Elders.

Section 4 The Lead Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all departments and committees.

Section 5 No person who is not a member of this church shall lead any ministry, hold any office, or serve in the employment of the church.

## **Article 9: Finances**

- Section 1 All funds and gifts received shall be used to promote the work, ministry, and needs of the church. No monies shall be collected by individuals, boards, committees or ministries of the church for any cause without the consent of the Elders.
- Section 2 The Deacons shall have oversight of collecting all funds and gifts and ensuring their accurate banking, under the supervision of the Treasurer.
- Section 3 The Elders, after consultation with the Deacons, shall present to the church an itemized budget for approval at the first Members' Meeting of each year.
- Section 4 The Deacons shall determine all salaries and shall have general oversight in all financial matters in every department of the church.
- Section 5 The Lead Pastor and Staff Elders shall be given regular and adequate financial support, the amount and manner of which shall be determined by the Deacons.
- Section 6 No department or ministry shall obligate itself to any indebtedness without the Board's approval of the Deacons.
- Section 7 The church shall provide for regular monthly missions contributions as finances are available.
- Section 8 All gifts specifically designated to the support of a particular ministry shall be applied to that ministry

## **Article 10: Marriage Policy**

- Section 1 Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Emmanuel Community Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman.
- Section 2 The Elders of Emmanuel Community Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman.
- Section 3 The facilities and property of Emmanuel Community Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

## **Article 11: Facility Use Policy**

- Section 1 Requests for the use of Emmanuel Community Church's facilities shall be restricted to members of the church and organized groups that are part of the ministry, organization, or sponsored activities of the church.

- Section 2 Facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's Constitution and By-Laws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings (2 Cor. 6:14; 1 Thess. 5:22).
- Section 3 This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart for the worship of God (Col. 3:17).
- Section 4 The Lead Pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.