

Constitution & By-Laws

Grace Community Church

An Assemblies of God Congregation, Inc.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF
GRACE COMMUNITY CHURCH
An Assemblies of God Congregation, Inc.

Salem, Missouri

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place to worship Almighty God, our heavenly Father; to provide Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and exercise the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means both at home and in foreign lands; we, whose names appear upon the assembly roster under the above date do hereby recognize ourselves as comprising a local assembly in fellowship with and a part of the Southern Missouri District Assemblies of God, Inc. and the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this assembly shall be Grace Community Church, An Assemblies of God Congregation, Inc., of the city of Salem, State of Missouri. This assembly's affiliation with the Assemblies of God shall be made known in its name.

ARTICLE II. AFFILIATION

This assembly hereby voluntarily enters into the relationship of an affiliated assembly with the General Council of the Assemblies of God with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri and the Southern Missouri District Assemblies of God, Inc. with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri to share in the privileges and to assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

ARTICLE III. PREROGATIVES

Section 1: This assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." Ephesians 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 or personal property as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its Constitution and By-laws or as the same may be hereafter amended.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

This assembly accepts the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, to wit:

1. **The Scriptures Inspired:** The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).
2. **The One True God:** The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM,” the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 11; Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22).
3. **The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ:** The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:
 - (a) His virgin birth (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
 - (b) His sinless life (Heb. 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
 - (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
 - (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
 - (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 15:4).
 - (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1-3).
4. **The Fall of Man:** Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Gen. 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19).
5. **The Salvation of Man:** Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.
 - (a) Conditions to Salvation
Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).
 - (b) The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. **The Ordinances of the Church**

(a) Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 47; Rom. 6:4).

(b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is they symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Cor. 11:26); and in enjoined on all believers “till He comes!”

7. **The Baptism in the Holy Ghost:** All believers are entitle to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from the subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost (Mark 16:20).
8. **The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost:** The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use.
9. **Sanctification:** Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Rom. 12:1,2; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” (Heb. 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).
10. **The Church and Its Mission:** The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Assembly and the Church of the Firstborn, with are written in heaven (Eph. 1:22,23;2:22; Heb. 12:23). Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to the worshiped by man,

and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- (a) To be an agency of God evangelizing the world (Acts:1:8, Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- (b) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Cor. 12:13).
- (c) To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Eph 4:11-16; 1 Cor 12:28; 1 Cor. 14:12).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- (a) Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Heb. 2:3,4).
- (b) Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God (1Cor. 2:10-16; 1 Cor. 12,13, and 14).
- (c) Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Gal. 5:22-26; 1 Cor. 14:12; Eph. 4:11,12; 1 Cor. 12:28; Col. 1:29).

11. **The Ministry:** A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the threefold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) Worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) Building a body of saints being perfected into the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16).
12. **Divine Healing:** Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isa. 53:4,5; Matt. 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).
13. **The Blessed Hope:** The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thess. 4:16,17; Rom. 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Cor. 15:51,52).
14. **The Millennial Reign of Christ:** The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zech. 14:5; Matt. 24: 27,30; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezek. 37:21,22; Zeph. 3:19,20; Rom. 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isa. 11:6-9; Psa. 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).
15. **The Final Judgment:** There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; rev. 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth: “We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13; Rev. 21, 22).

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES

Section 1. The ordinance of Baptism by immersion in water shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins, who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls and who give clear evidence of their salvation. Matt. 28:19; Romans 6:3-5; Col. 2:12.

Section 2. The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures. Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership Eligibility. Membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who subscribe to its tenets of faith, who agree to be governed by its constitution and by-laws as herein set forth or as may be amended by the assembly and who are approved for membership by the pastor and Board of Deacons.

Section 2. Voting Membership. The legal voting membership of this assembly shall consist of all persons whose names appear on the current active membership roll together with the pastor and his wife.

ARTICLE VII. CHURCH OFFICERS, DEACONS AND TRUSTEES

Section 1. Officers. The pastor, the secretary and the treasurer shall be the designated, legal officers of this assembly.

Section 2. Deacons. There shall be a board consisting of not less than three deacons in addition to the pastor. Additional deacons may be added to the board as needed.

Section 3. Secretary/Treasurer.

Section 4. Trustees. There shall be no less than two trustees. The pastor, secretary and the treasurer shall be considered trustees by virtue of their office. Additional trustees may be selected as needed. They are to be appointed by Pastor and Deacons.

ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings for public worship shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday) and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Pastor and Deacons.

Section 2. There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly at which time the ratification of Deacons shall be held and the reports of church officers and departments shall be presented. This meeting shall convene during the first quarter of each year.

Section 3. Special business meetings may be called when agreed upon by the majority of the Board of Deacons or by petition having been signed by 40% of the active membership of the assembly. Said petition shall be placed in the hands of the pastor or the secretary of the Board of Deacons.

Section 4. Any meeting at which the dissolution of this Assembly or its merger with another Assemblies of God congregation or its withdrawal from affiliation with the Assemblies of God is discussed shall not be considered a duly called meeting unless the District officary has been invited to be present.

Section 5. Board of Deacons. The pastor shall meet with the Board of Deacons regularly at a time and place agreed upon by the pastor and the Deacons.

ARTICLE IX. DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

Section 1. Christian Education. A Christian Education Department that includes a Sunday School program shall be created and its activities conducted as a branch of the church program.

Section 2. Other Departments. This assembly shall in a genuine and determined manner endeavor to create a Children's Department, a Youth Department, a Men's Ministries Department, a Women's Ministries and a Senior Adult Ministry with their activities being conducted as branches of the church program. Other departments and committees may be established as need arises.

ARTICLE X. FINANCES

All funds for the maintenance and outreach of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions of tithes and offerings by members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons and shall be disbursed by the treasurer under their direction (Mal. 3:10; Luke 6:38, 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-8).

ARTICLE XI. PROPERTY

Section 1. Holding of Property. All property, real or personal, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the name of the assembly with the Pastor, the secretary and the treasurer acting as the authorized and duly constituted agents of the assembly.

Section 2. Purchase of Real Estate and Construction of Facilities. No property shall be purchased nor facilities constructed without approval of at least two-thirds of the congregational vote at a regular or special meeting which has been called for consideration of the same, unless the purchase or construction is in an amount that does not exceed \$50,000. (Fifty thousand dollars).

Section 3. Disposing of Property. No real property of the assembly shall be sold, mortgaged or otherwise alienated without authorization of at least two-thirds of the vote of the congregation at a regular or special business meeting which has been called for consideration of the same unless the disposal or mortgage exceeds \$50,000. (Fifty thousand dollars).

Section 4. Certification. In the event of approval to purchase property, construct facilities, or to sell, lease, mortgage or otherwise alienate property the Pastor and the secretary of the assembly shall certify that the same has been duly authorized and approved by the Board of Deacons. Such certification shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

Section 5. Property Rights and Reversion. Because of the present doctrinal beliefs and organizational structure of the Assemblies of God, if in the event this assembly ceases to function as an Assemblies of God church or severs its affiliation as described in Article II, all property, real or personal, shall revert to the Southern Missouri District Assemblies of God, Inc. presently located at Springfield, Missouri. The Southern Missouri District Assemblies of God shall have full authority to use or dispose of the proceeds at its discretion. In the event property of this assembly is sold or leased, proceeds derived therefrom shall be used by the Southern Missouri District Assemblies of God in furthering the gospel of Christ.

ARTICLE XII. DISTRICT SUPERVISION

If at any time the active membership of this assembly falls below twenty in number or there are not at least three men who are active members and qualified to serve as Deacons in addition to the Pastor, this assembly shall become a district supervised church upon request of the congregation or upon declaration of the District Executive Presbytery.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting membership of the assembly in attendance at any regular or special business meeting called for that purpose provided due notice of the proposed change shall have been given at all services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the time of said business meeting. It shall be

understood that this provision for amending the Constitution does not apply to Article IV—
Tenets of Faith, which stands unless amended by the General Council.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. MEETINGS

Section 1. Quorum

- (a) Congregational Meetings. One fourth of all members attending a duly called meeting shall constitute a quorum, providing all have been duly notified as specified in this Constitution and By-laws.
- (b) Board of Deacons Meetings. No meeting of the Board of Deacons shall be considered official and no record shall be kept of its proceedings and decisions unless a majority of the members are present to constitute a quorum.
- (c) Departments and Committees. No meeting of any departmental or other committee of the assembly shall be considered official and no record shall be kept of its proceedings and decisions unless one-half or more of the members are present to constitute a quorum.

Section 2. Announcement of Meetings

- (a) Congregational Meetings. All regular and special business meetings of the assembly shall be announced at services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the meeting, or by first class mail. In the case of the latter, the date of mailing shall be not more than 40 days or less than 5 days in advance of the date of the meeting. An explanation as to the purpose of each meeting shall be included in said announcements.
- (b) Board of Deacons Meetings. All Board of Deacons members shall be notified of each Board meeting except in cases where illness, absence from the area or some other emergency makes it impractical.

Section 3. Minutes. Accurate minutes shall be kept of all Congregational Business Meetings, Board of Deacons Meetings, and Trustees Meetings. Said minutes shall be made a permanent part of the assembly's records and shall be kept in a safe place at the church except in instances when such is unsafe and impractical and a different location is agreed upon by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.

Section 3. Parliamentary Order

All business meetings of the church shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of ROBERTS' RULES OF ORDER NEWLY REVISED.

Section 5. Voting Constituency.

- (a) Qualifying of voters. The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present and who are 18 years of age or older.
- (b) Transfer members. Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership.
- (c) Members under process of discipline. No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed.
- (d) Absentee voting. Absentee ballots may be accepted in business meetings of the assembly from active voting members who are unable to attend by reason of illness, infirmity, workers on duty, or those out of town for valid reasons. Absentee ballots shall be qualified if:
 - (1) The ballot is sealed in an envelope with the voter's signature on the outside; on a printed ballot form that shall be provided by the assembly.
 - (2) The ballot shall denote the decision or position being voted on with the vote listed thereafter.
 - (3) The ballot shall be in the hand of the pastor, church secretary, or deposited in the church office, 24 hours prior to the convening of the business meeting. Such ballot may be delivered by mail, or by a person.
 - (4) The church board shall check all absentee ballots to see whether they are qualified. If so, they shall be counted on each vote taken on the decision or position being considered in that meeting on the original proposition.
 - (5) If the validity of an absentee ballot is in question, the Pastor and Deacons shall make the final decisions as to its validity.
 - (6) Absentee ballots shall not be accepted for meetings called for the removal of officers or other church leaders.

Section 6. Order of Business

The regular order of business for the annual business meeting of this assembly shall be as follows:

- (a) Devotional
- (b) Reading of previous minutes
- (c) Report of treasurer
- (d) Report of committees
- (e) Unfinished business
- (f) Election of officers
- (g) New business
- (h) Adjournment

ARTICLE II. DUTIES OF THE PASTOR, BOARD OF DEACONS AND TRUSTEES

Section 1. THE PASTOR

- (a) The pastor shall be considered to be spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct all of its activities.
- (b) He shall be the president of the corporation.
- (c) He shall act as chairman of all business meetings of the assembly and of all meetings of the Board of Deacons, or the Board of Trustees.
- (d) He shall be an ex officio member of all departmental or other committees.
- (e) He shall provide for all services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions and revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly or at any of its functions without his knowledge and approval.
- (f) He shall invite all assistant or associate pastors as well as any other salaried personnel to serve the assembly. They shall be directly responsible to the pastor who shall assign their responsibilities and privileges and determine their length of employment. None of these positions shall be filled or vacated by congregational vote or action of the Board of Deacons. The pastor shall consult with the Board of Deacons regarding all changes in personnel, duties and salaries.

Section 2. **LEGAL OFFICERS OF THE ASSEMBLY.** The pastor, the secretary and the treasurer shall act as legal officers and trustees for the assembly in the holding and conveying of property and in the signing of all legal instruments and documents.

Section 3. THE BOARD OF DEACONS.

- (a) The Board of Deacons shall serve in an advisory capacity under the oversight and guidance of the Pastor in the routine management of the assembly.
- (b) They shall assist the pastor in the ministry of the assembly's ordinances.
- (c) They shall participate in the examination of applicants for membership in the assembly.
- (d) They shall, with the Pastor, revise all membership rolls of the assembly at least annually according to Article V, Section 7.
- (e) They shall assist the Pastor in the administration of discipline toward members of the assembly.

- (f) In the event the assembly is temporarily without a Pastor the Board of Deacons shall be empowered to provide for its own chairman from its membership in order to transact business for the assembly.

Section 4. THE SECRETARY

- (a) The secretary shall keep minutes of official meetings of the Board of Deacons, the annual congregational business meeting and special business meetings of the assembly.
- (b) He shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly.
- (c) He shall be the custodian of all legal documents.
- (d) He shall perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his duties.

Section 5. THE TREASURER

- (a) The treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly which are committed to him. He shall deposit all funds at such a time and in such a manner as agreed upon by the Pastor and Board of Deacons in a responsible bank in the name of the assembly and shall disburse the same by check as authorized by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
- (b) The Pastor, Treasurer, and Secretary of the Board of Deacons or designee shall be authorized to sign checks. Two signatures shall be required.
- (c) The treasurer or Board of Deacons or their designee shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements. He shall make an itemized report at the regular meeting of the Board of Deacons and a summarized report to the assembly at its regular business meetings or at such times as requested by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons.
- (d) Accounts of the assembly shall be audited under the direction of the pastor and Board of Deacons.

Section 6. THE TRUSTEES

- (a) The Trustees shall be responsible for the maintenance and repair of all real and person property of the assembly.
- (b) They shall meet for the discharge of their duties as necessity may demand at the call of the Pastor who shall act as chairman of the Trustees.

ARTICLE III. ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND VACANCIES

Section 1. The Pastor.

- (a) The pastor shall be elected to serve for one or more years or for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at time of election.
- (b) The names of candidates for the pastorate shall be secured from the district officary with thoughtful consideration given to suggestions from the congregation.
- (c) The Board of Deacons shall interview candidates for the pastorate after which they shall nominate one for presentation in an election at an annual or special business meeting of the assembly called for that purpose.
- (d) Secret ballots shall be cast in all elections for a pastor. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast by the active members present shall be required to constitute an election.
- (e) In the event a pastor has serious charges preferred against him or his ministry has ceased to be effective, power is vested in the Board of Deacons to ask for his resignation at any of its regular meetings. If such resignation is refused, the pastor shall not be considered vacant until the action of the Board of Deacons has been confirmed by a majority vote of the active members present at a meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall be presided over by the district officary. In the event of a pastor's removal from office a report shall be made to the district office.
- (f) When a vacancy in the pastorate occurs the Board of Deacons shall arrange supply ministries in the consultation with the District Superintendent until a pastor is elected.

Section 2. The Board of Deacons

- (a) They shall be nominated by members of the congregation.
- (b) Deacons shall be appointed by the Pastor and Board of Deacons.
- (c) They shall be ratified by a majority of the active members present at the annual business meeting.
- (d) Their term of office shall be for three years from the time of ratification. They may be eligible to succeed themselves in office, if nominated and ratified according to the Constitution and By-Laws.
- (e) The secretary and the treasurer shall be selected by the Board of Deacons from among their membership or from the membership of the congregation and be ratified by congregational vote. The term shall be for one year.

- (f) If the Board of Deacons has less than seven members serving on the Deacon Ministry, they shall not be related to one another or the pastor, i.e. in-laws, children, or siblings.

Section 3. The Trustees

- (a) The Pastor, secretary, and treasurer shall serve as Trustees by virtue of their office.
- (b) Additional Trustees may be appointed as needed by the Pastor in consultation with the Board of Deacons.
- (c) Their term of office shall be for one year.

Section 4. Vacancies

- (a) Any vacancy on the Board of Deacons, the Board of Trustees or any department or committee of the assembly may be filled by the Board of Deacons at any of its regular or special meetings.
- (b) Vacancies in any office of the assembly, its departments or committees may be declared by action of the Pastor and the Board of Deacons at any regular or special Board of Deacons meeting. Grounds for such action shall be:
 - (1) Unscriptural conduct
 - (2) Doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith
 - (3) Incompetence in office
 - (4) An attitude of insubordination which is out of harmony with the principles and purposes of the church
 - (5) Resignation
 - (6) Death
 - (7) For any other good and sufficient reason

Section 5. Blank ballots shall not be included in the determination of any election or vote result.

ARTICLE IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PASTOR, DEACONS AND TRUSTEES

Section 1. The Pastor shall be an ordained minister of the Assemblies of God in good standing. A lesser credential may be considered if strong recommendation is given from the District Superintendent.

Section 2. Deacons

- (a) Deacons shall be men of mature Christian experience and knowledge who shall as closely as possible meet the requirements for deacons as set forth in Acts 6:1-4; 1 Tim. 3:8-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

- (b) They shall be active members of the assembly.
- (c) They shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and shall have been active members of the assembly for at least six months.
- (d) They shall pay their tithes into the church and shall be faithful in attending the services.
- (e) They shall not hold ministerial credentials.

Section 3. Trustees may be selected from the active membership of the assembly.

ARTICLE V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

- (a) Persons desiring membership in this assembly shall study the Constitution and By-laws of this assembly. They shall also complete an application for membership and present it to the pastor or the church secretary. They shall attend membership class for orientation.
- (b) The Pastor and Board of Deacons shall determine their qualification for membership according to the standard for membership.
- (c) Upon approval for membership by the pastor and Board of Deacons the secretary shall inscribe their name on the assembly roster.
- (d) Persons desiring to transfer their membership to this assembly from another Assembly of God shall study the Constitution and By-laws. A letter of transfer may then be received from their former assembly. Upon approval for transfer by the Pastor and Board of Deacons the secretary of the Board of Deacons shall inscribe their name on the assembly roster.
- (e) All new members shall be publicly recognized in a regular Sunday service of the assembly.

Section 2. THE STANDARDS OF MEMBERSHIP ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- (a) An evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (the new birth). John 1:12-13; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:18-25.
- (b) Approval for membership shall be preceded by baptism in water by immersion.

- (c) An evidence of a consistent Christian life. Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13-14; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1-2, 15: 1 John 1:6-7; Gal. 5:19-21.
- (d) To fully subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in the Constitution and By-laws adopted by the assembly.
- (e) The applicant has regularly attended services of, and supported this assembly with his tithes, for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of application for membership.
- (f) The applicant is at least 18 years of age.
- (g) The applicant agrees to be governed by the bylaws of this assembly, and of the Southern Missouri District Council of the Assemblies of God, as both may be amended from time to time.

Section 3. CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

- (a) Active Membership
 - (1) Active members shall be at least eighteen (18) years of age.
 - (2) They shall have met the standards for membership as outlined in Section 2 and shall have been received as members according to Section 1.
 - (3) They shall enjoy voting privileges in all business meetings of the assembly.
- (b) Junior Membership
 - (1) Junior members shall be open to those under the age of eighteen (18).
 - (2) They shall have met the standards for membership as outlined in Section 2 and shall have been received as members as outlined in Section 1.
 - (3) Junior membership in this assembly shall not carry voting privileges in any of the assembly business meetings.
- (c) Honorary Membership
 - (1) Active members who are engaged in the ministry of the gospel or who are enrolled in training for the same and are unable to regularly attend the services of the assembly shall be placed on the Honorary Membership Roll.
 - (2) Active members who are serving a tour of duty in the armed forces of our country and are unable to regularly attend the services of this assembly shall be placed on the Honorary Membership Roll.
 - (3) Active members who by reason of advanced years of physical disability are unable to regularly attend the services of this assembly shall be placed on the Honorary Membership Roll.
 - (4) Honorary members may be reinstated to active membership by regular attendance at the services and by making the desire known to the pastor.
 - (5) Honorary membership in this assembly shall not carry voting privileges in any of the assembly business meetings.

(d) Inactive Membership

- (1) Active members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, who cease to contribute of their means to its support, who may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries, who shall be under charges of misconduct or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful and worldly practices shall be transferred to the inactive membership roll.
- (2) All transfers from the active membership roll to the inactive membership roll shall be made at the discretion of the pastor and the Board of Deacons.
- (3) The standing of inactive members shall be determined by action of the Pastor and Board of Deacons at least annually.

Section 4. Changes in Category of Membership

- (a) Any change in category of membership made by the Pastor and the Board of Deacons shall be recorded in minutes of the board meeting in which the change was determined.
- (b) Any member whose membership category is changed shall be notified by the secretary of the Board of Deacons in writing with a copy of said notification kept as a part of the permanent records of the assembly.

Section 5. Discipline of Members

- (a) Removal of a name from any category of membership for disciplinary reasons by the Pastor and Board of Deacons shall be recorded in minutes of the board meeting in which the action was taken.
- (b) A member whose name is removed from any category of membership for disciplinary reasons shall be notified of the same in writing by the secretary of the Board of Deacons with a copy of said notification kept as a part of the permanent records of the assembly.
- (c) An active member whose name has been removed from the membership roll may appeal to the pastor and Board of Deacons for reconsideration for their action. A Junior or Honorary member whose name may be removed shall not have the right of appeal and action by the Pastor and Board of Deacons shall be final.
- (d) In the disciplining of members, the following principles shall be observed: Matt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Thess. 3:6-15.

Section 6. Resignation and Transfer

- (a) Members in good standing who may wish to sever their relationship with this assembly may do so by submitting a written request to the Pastor or secretary of the

Board of Deacons. The secretary of the Board of Deacons shall then remove their names from the membership roll.

- (b) Members in good standing who may wish to transfer their membership to another Assembly of God may apply to the Pastor or secretary of the Board of Deacons for a Letter of Introduction (transfer) which shall be granted by approval of the pastor and Board of Deacons. The secretary of the Board of Deacons shall then remove their names from the membership roll.

Section 7. Revision of Membership Roll

- (a) The secretary of the Board of Deacons shall be authorized to remove from the membership rolls all names of those who have become deceased during the year.
- (b) The Pastor and Board of Deacons shall review annually all inactive members and make disposition regarding them.
- (c) All membership rolls shall be revised at least annually.

Section 8. Procedure for Membership Recognition

Those individuals eligible for membership who shall desire to become members of this church shall make their request known to the pastor. The church board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership by majority vote. Those approved for membership by the church board shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within thirty days before an annual business meeting or within ten days before a special business meeting.

Section 9. Pastor and Spouse

By virtue of the office, the pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during the pastor's tenure. The pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the pastor.

ARTICLE VI. DEPARMENTS AND AUXILIARY MINISTRIES

Section 1. Relationship to the Assembly

- (a) All departments, auxiliaries and committees shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole.
- (b) They shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and the Board of Deacons with the pastor being an ex officio member of all departments, auxiliaries and committees.

- (c) The Pastor and Board of Deacons shall in consultation with the various departments, auxiliaries and committees determine all their policies and programs.

Section 2. Relationship to the District. All departments and auxiliaries shall as much as possible cooperate with and participate in the programs and policies of their equivalent departments on the district level.

Section 3. Any other ministries such as Youth Ministry, Men's Ministries, Women's Ministries, Senior Adult Ministries, Hospitality Ministries, Music Ministries, Evangelism Ministries, Pastoral Care and Visitation Ministries, etc., shall operate with directors appointed by the Pastor and they shall be amenable to and operate under the jurisdiction of the Board of Deacons.

ARTICLE VII. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The regular order of business for the annual meeting of the assembly shall be as follows:

1. Devotional
2. Reading of previous minutes by secretary
3. Report of secretary
4. Report of treasurer
5. Report of departments and ministries
6. Unfinished business
7. Ratification of officers
8. New business
9. Adjournment

ARTICLE VIII. AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote of the active members of the assembly in attendance at any regular or special business meeting called for that purpose provided due notice of the proposed change shall have been given at all services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the time of said business meetings.

*All scripture references in the Tenets of Faith are from the Authorized Version, King James.

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