

PIPE CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH BYLAWS

ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 101 - Qualifications

We acknowledge that those conditions which the Scriptures require of an individual at the occasion of his entrance into the Universal Body of Christ, as outlined in Acts 2:38-42, and which are delineated in the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship (CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE VI, SECTION B), shall be the basis for local union with this Church. The Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship contains four fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith which, when professed, qualifies an individual for Membership in Pipe Creek Community Church. The age of an applicant should be such that he is fully capable of understanding and fulfilling the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship. Voting rights are restricted to Members who are at least 17 years old.

SECTION 102 - Admission Procedure

An applicant for Membership shall be required to profess, as a minimum, belief in the fundamentals of the Christian faith contained in the Basis for the Covenant of Discipleship. This profession may be to the Board of Elders, to an appointed representative of that Board, or to the Church body at a conveniently appointed time. Upon the profession of faith, the individual should be publicly welcomed into the fellowship at a regular service of the Church on the Lord's Day.

SECTION 103 - Responsibility of Membership

Membership includes the responsibility for the various commitments of ARTICLE VI of the CONSTITUTION, the Covenant of Discipleship. In addition, it carries the responsibility for participating in and voting on all business brought before the Members.

SECTION 104- Termination of Membership in Pipe Creek Community Church

Membership may be terminated in the following ways:

- A. By Death
- B. By Request

Any Member who requests termination of Membership for any reason will be granted that request. If there are unresolved problems between the requesting Member and the Church, efforts will be made by the Elders to resolve any points at issue prior to the granting of the request.

- C. By Disciplinary Action

Should any Member of this Church be found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life, the Church reserves the right to administer scriptural forms of church discipline, as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 through the Board of Elders. Should faithful efforts by the Elders render no promise of reform or manifest no spirit of repentance on the part of the Member in question, Membership may be terminated upon unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders or 3/4 vote of the Members present at a properly called Business Meeting of the Church. A Member removed from fellowship by disciplinary action may be reinstated only by means of the normal admission procedure.

D. By Inactivity

If a Member has not participated in any of the Church worship services for a period of 6 months, their Membership will be terminated, unless the inactivity is due to health or other reasons acceptable to the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE II - OFFICERS

SECTION 201 - Elders

A. Selection

Elders shall be nominated by the body, confirmed unanimously by the Board of Elders, and approved by a 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Elder may be approved either to fill a vacancy on the Board of Elders or to add an additional Member to that Board. Elders may be removed from office upon their own request or by temporary authority granted to the Board of Elders by the Members (See SECTION 301) or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church.

B. Qualifications

Elders shall be of intellectual and spiritual maturity, with proven Christian character and sound judgment, exemplary in their conduct, effective leaders and teachers, and qualified in accordance with the guidelines of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and willing, together with their wives, to be servants of the Church. Additionally, Elders shall be Members of the Church and shall have proven themselves before the Members in lesser capacities of service. An Elder shall be ordained by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

C. Responsibilities

An Elder shall be responsible to:

1. Seek the Lord and find delight in Him:
 - a. Give adequate time to personal prayer and study in the Word.
 - b. Labor and strive after godliness (I Timothy 4:6-10).
2. Be a Pastor to one's own family first (I Timothy 3:4, 5):
 - a. Spend time together in prayer, spiritual conversation, and the Word (Ephesians 5 and 6).
 - b. Meet the needs of one's wife, in particular, deepening their intimacy and relationship together (Ephesians 5, I Peter 3:7).
3. Be an example to the believers (I Peter 5:1-3).
4. Pray for the whole Church program and for individual Members (Acts 6:4).
5. Be involved in the teaching of God's Word (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 4:11; Titus 1:9).
6. Meet with the other Elders of the Church at stated times for the purpose of prayer, discussion, examination of potential Members, making decisions related to the life of the Church, and other such duties as may be part of the responsibilities of the Board of Elders as defined in SECTION 301.

SECTION 202 - Trustees

A. Election

Trustees shall be nominated by the body, confirmed unanimously by the Board of Elders, elected by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church, and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of a minimum of three Trustees. Trustees may be removed from office upon their own request or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church.

B. Qualifications

Trustees shall be Members of the Church and men of sound business judgment and spiritual discernment whose personal lives demonstrate mature Christian experience.

C. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of individual Trustees shall be those of the Board of Trustees as defined in SECTION 302.

SECTION 203 - Deacons

A. Selection

Deacons shall be nominated by the body, confirmed unanimously by the Board of Elders, and approved by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church, and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Deacon may be recommended and approved either to fill a vacancy on the Board of Deacons or to add an additional Member to that Board. Deacons may be removed from office upon their own request, or by temporary authority granted to the Board of Elders by the Members (See SECTION 301), or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church.

B. Qualifications

Deacons shall be of spiritual discernment and Members of the Church, exemplary in their Christian character and conduct, and of good reputation in the community outside of the Church. They and their wives shall be willing to be servants of the Church in accordance with the meaning of the work as outlined in Acts 6:1-6 and shall be qualified in accordance with the guidelines in I Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall be ordained by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

C. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of individual Deacons shall be those of the Board of Deacons as defined in SECTION 303.

SECTION 204 - Treasurer

A. Election

The Treasurer shall be a volunteer, confirmed unanimously by the Board of Elders, and election by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church. The Treasurer may be removed from office upon his own request or by unanimous action of the Board of Elders or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church.

B. Qualifications

The Treasurer shall be a Member of the Church and an individual of sufficient numerical and accounting skill so as to carry out the responsibilities of the position. Whenever possible the Treasurer should also hold the biblical office of Deacon, since the accounting and administration of the Church's funds was a task given to Deacons from the very beginning of the Church (Acts 6:1-6).

C. Responsibilities

The Treasurer shall be responsible for:

1. The holding in trust of all moneys belonging to the Church in the appropriate checking, savings, or other type account.
2. The maintenance of appropriate records of all expenditures of the Church.
3. The preparation of Monthly Financial Reports for posting for the Members, and the preparation of the Year End Financial Statement and its presentation to the Members.
4. Cash disbursements:
 - a. The payment from the receipts on hand of all authorized salaries and fixed expenses, and other amounts within the designated Budget of the Church, when authorized by the appropriate Board, Committee, Officer, ministry group or individual.
 - b. The payment of amounts in excess of the Church Budget when authorized by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 605C).
 - c. The actual disbursement of funds may be delegated by the Treasurer to another individual with the approval of the Board of Elders.

D. Accountability

The Treasurer shall, in general, be accountable to the Members and specifically to the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE III - GOVERNMENT

SECTION 301 - Board of Elders

A. Membership

The Board of Elders shall be comprised of those Elders nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders, and approved by the Members (see SECTION 201).

B. Responsibilities

Collectively, the Board of Elders shall:

1. In conjunction with the Pastor, define and interpret the overall objectives and aspirations of the Church that, if attained, will produce progress toward fulfilling the scriptural purposes for its existence.
2. In conjunction with the Pastor, become aware of the spiritual needs and concerns of those in the Members, and assist in the establishment of goals for the Church based on these concerns.
3. In conjunction with the Pastor, oversee the development of strategies by the various Boards, Committees, ministry groups, and individuals using available resources to meet the goals of the Church, including all programs, ministries, meetings, and other efforts of the Church. Individual Members may be assigned as liaison to various boards for specific periods of time.
4. In conjunction with the Pastor, administer scriptural forms of Church discipline to Members as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, when a Member is found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life and in upholding the Covenant of Discipleship.
5. Act on termination of Membership as provided for in SECTION 104 of these Bylaws.
6. Obtain nominations from the body of those willing and qualified to serve as Elders, Trustees, Deacons, Treasurer or other required administrative positions.
7. Ensure all candidates for positions of Elder, Trustee, Deacon, and Treasurer are properly elected by the Members.
8. Have the authority to remove Elders, Deacons, Trustees, or the Treasurer when that authority has been granted to them by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church and when the reason for dismissal should be kept confidential. The vote of the Elders for dismissal must be unanimous, except when considering the dismissal of another Elder. In this case, the unanimous decision of all other Members of the Board of Elders is necessary for dismissal.
9. Approve expenditures by Boards, Committees, officers, and ministry groups when such expenditures are within the Budget categories previously approved by the Members, but temporarily exceed the limitations of the Church Budget (See SECTION 605C).
10. Review and approve the Annual Budget prior to its submittal to the Members.

C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Elder business shall be as determined by that Board. The Chairman shall be elected by a majority of the Elders unless otherwise designated by that Board.

D. Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet as and when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact Members of the Board. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board Membership.

E. Authority

Based on the Scriptures and ARTICLE IV of the CONSTITUTION, the administration of authority in the Church is given by the Holy Spirit to the Elders who are to administer God's authority and be responsible for His will being put into practice. The Board of Elders, therefore, shall have the authority to interpret this Constitution and Bylaws and implement actions consistent with it.

SECTION 302 - Board of Trustees

A. Membership

The Board of Trustees shall be comprised of a minimum of three Trustees nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders and elected by the Members (See SECTION 202).

B. Responsibilities

In general, it shall be the duty of the Board of Trustees to hold in trust all deeds to Church property. Specifically, the Board of Trustees shall act as directed by the Church in areas involving the buying, selling, mortgaging, leasing, or renting of real property.

C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Trustee business shall be as determined by that Board. The Board of Trustees shall be accountable to the Board of Elders and to the Members.

D. Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall meet if and when necessary to conduct its business.

SECTION 303 - Board of Deacons

A. Membership

The Board of Deacons shall be comprised of those Deacons nominated by the Body, confirmed by the Elders, and approved by the Members (See SECTION 203).

B. Responsibilities

The Deacons shall assist the Board of Elders and the Pastor and be responsible for the various service ministries of the Church. Specifically, the Board of Deacons shall:

1. Provide leadership to the Members as an example of a mature Christian.
2. Become aware of the physical needs of those in the Church and the community at large, and develop and implement methods of meeting those needs.
3. Distribute money from the Benevolence Fund consistent with biblical guidelines and procedures established by the Board of Deacons.

4. Devise and implement effective biblical methods of collecting the gifts of the Lord's people. This includes the counting and depositing of money collected in Church offerings or received by other means.
5. Assist the Members in an understanding of biblical financial management, stewardship, and giving and seek ways to develop in the Members the grace of liberality and Christian financial freedom.
6. Assist in the preparation and distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper, as required.
7. Assist in baptismal services, as required.
8. Appoint persons to and dismiss persons from administrative positions, paid or unpaid, other than Elder, Trustee, Deacon, and Treasurer. For paid positions, appointment should occur only after budget approval by the Members.
9. Oversee the care and upkeep of all Church property including necessary utilities, improvements, repairs, minor alterations, and general maintenance, with the delegation of responsibilities as required.
10. Maintain adequate property and liability insurance coverage for all Church property and facilities.

C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Deacon Business shall be as determined by that Board. A Chairman shall be selected by the Board of Deacons. The Chairman's responsibilities are to oversee meetings and to act as Spokesman for the Board to the Members, the Board of Elders and others as appropriate. The Board of Deacons shall be accountable to the Board of Elders and to the Members. If it is impossible for any reason to secure Deacons, the responsibilities of their office shall fall upon the Board of Elders.

D. Meetings

The Board of Deacons shall meet when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact Members of the Board. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board Membership.

E. Authority

The Board of Deacons shall have the authority to expend funds consistent with their responsibilities and within the limitations of the Church budget.

ARTICLE IV - STAFF

SECTION 401 - PASTOR

A. Selection

1. Pastor Search Committee

a. Formation

In the event of a Pastor vacancy in this Church, a Pastor Search Committee shall be established as an ad hoc Committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be comprised of those Elders desiring to serve on the Committee and any two Members of the Church elected by the Members. If fewer than three Elders serve on the Committee, additional Members shall be elected so that the Committee has at least five Members.

b. Responsibilities

In general, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor Search Committee to review and select candidates to be presented before the Church. This shall involve:

- (1) The establishment of criteria to be considered in making initial contacts with prospective candidates.
- (2) The making of inquiries as to the availability of prospective candidates.
- (3) The review of information as to the prospective candidate's educational training, experience in Christian service, personal and spiritual reputation, doctrinal views, and conditions under which they would consider a call from the Church.
- (4) The scheduling of candidates for exposure to the Church including speaking at services.
- (5) The consideration of candidates for formal presentation to the Church for the purpose of voting on calling the candidate.

When possible or desirable the Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to select a candidate who has received some sign or signs of approval from another evangelical church body or organization (such as examination, ordination or letters of recommendation). The Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to seek the aid of the Pastors and Elders at Pipe Creek Community Church in examining doctrinal and spiritual matters of a Pastoral candidate.

c. Authority

The Pastor Search Committee shall have the authority to expend funds in the pursuit of their responsibilities consistent with the Church budget.

2. Calling of Candidates

After a candidate has spoken at services of the Church and met with the Pastor Search Committee, the Committee shall meet to consider whether to formally present the candidate to the Church for the purpose of a Members vote. The unanimous vote of the Pastor Search Committee is required for formal presentation to the Church whereupon a vote shall be taken by the Members at a Business Meeting of the Church. A Pastor may be called by 3/4 of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church (See SECTION 501.C.3).

B. Term of Service

A Pastor will be called for an indefinite period of time. The Pastor's tenure of service shall terminate by his resignation or death or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church. In the event of the Pastor's resignation, he may give up to thirty days notice; in the event that the Church votes to terminate the Pastor's services, he shall receive thirty days notice or thirty days salary in lieu of such notice.

C. Conditions of Employment

The salary of the Pastor and other compensation such as Social Security, insurance, housing allowance, and pension shall be specified in writing and made a part of the call upon which the Members votes. Likewise, such items as authorized vacation, attendance at meetings and conferences, moving expenses, and other agreed upon conditions shall be addressed in the call. The call shall be in the form of a legal agreement. Changes in the initial conditions of employment are to be enacted by 3/4 vote of the Members.

D. Qualifications

The qualifications for Pastor shall be the biblical standards for the office of Elder (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). In addition, the Pastor shall be ordained by the Board of Elders through the laying on of hands and shall be a Member in this Church during his term of service. Additional qualifications shall be as determined by the Pastor Search Committee.

E. Responsibilities

Pastors shall:

1. Minister to the Members through the regular preaching and teaching from the Scriptures, giving himself to prayer and the spiritual growth of the Church.
2. Oversee and hold ultimate responsibility for the Church's observance of its ordinances and ceremonies, e.g., baptisms, communion, funerals, weddings, child dedications.
3. Supervise paid staff functions. Part of this function will be to determine vacations, sick days, and other work-related leave.
4. Counsel with Teachers, Elders, Deacons, and other ministers of the Church.

F. Outside Ministries

Involvement by the Pastor in ministries, work, or other endeavors outside of the Church and its Ministries shall be reported to the Board of Elders.

G. Authority and Limitations

The Pastor shall have the authority to interpret the Scriptures to the Members consistent with the Doctrinal Statement of Faith of the Church.

SECTION 402 – Maintenance and Grounds Keeping Positions

These positions:

- A. Will be hired, if needed, by the Board of Deacons acting in concert with the Board of Elders, provided funding (budget) has been approved.
- B. Can be removed by resignation, death, majority agreement by the Board of Deacons, or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church.
- C. Will be supervised by of the Board of Deacons.

SECTION 403 - Other Paid Staff Positions

These positions:

- A. Will be hired by the Pastor after unanimous approval by the Board of Elders, provided funding (budget) has been approved.
- B. Can be removed by resignation, death, unanimous agreement by the Elders (except when the person being considered for removal is an Elder), or by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church (see SECTION 501.C.3).
- C. Will be supervised by the Pastor.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

SECTION 501 - Regular Meetings

A. Sunday Services

The Church shall meet regularly each Sunday for worship of the Triune God, for edification and discipleship through the Word of God, for fellowship among those in the Body of Christ that they may minister to spiritual needs, and as a witness to the community. The conduct of these meetings shall be the responsibility of the Pastor.

B. Ministry Teams

1. Structure of Ministry Teams

All Members are encouraged to participate in a Ministry Team. The number of Ministry Teams, their structure, and leadership shall be determined by the Board of Elders.

2. Purpose of Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams take on the responsibilities of the Church that require the coordinated efforts of small groups of Members. These teams perform acts, coordinate, plan, assist, and provide the manpower for various ministries defined by the Board of Elders. Examples include Benevolence, Fellowship, Building and Grounds, Ushering and Greeting, Planning and Building, Evangelism, Flower arrangements, Prayer, Missions, Communion and Historian.

3. Meetings

Each Ministry Team shall meet when and as necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact Members of the Ministry Team.

3. Membership of Ministry Teams

The term of office for all Team Members shall be determined by the Board of Elders. Team Members must be Members of the Church and are elected by the Church. Each team will have a chairperson elected from within the Team

C. Business Meetings of the Church

1. Notification of Meetings

All Business meetings of the Church shall be published in the Church Bulletin at least one Sunday prior to the meeting, and by announcement at least one Sunday morning prior to the meeting. Such announcement shall state the time, the place of the meeting, and the nature of the proposed business. The requirement for a one-week notice may be waived by the unanimous vote of the Board of Elders in cases of emergency.

2. Moderator

The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall either act as Moderator or appoint another Elder to act as Moderator at all Business Meetings of the Church. In his absence, another Elder shall function in that capacity.

3. Quorum

Those Members who attend a Business Meeting of the Church shall constitute a quorum for that meeting with the exception of business addressing the following items: changes in the status of the organization, its Constitution, or its Bylaws, the buying, selling, mortgaging, leasing or long-term renting of Church real property, the call, selection, or termination of the Pastor, and the termination of Church staff. In the case of the exceptions noted above, a quorum shall consist of 40% of the Church Members.

4. Transaction of Business

The transaction of business at any Business Meeting of the Church shall require a majority vote of Members present, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws. Votes may be cast only by Members who are present at a Business Meeting of the Church since discussion and/or amendments made to a motion may change a vote cast in absentia. The Board of Elders shall always have the authority to request the reconsideration of any vote.

5. Minutes

Official minutes of all Business Meetings of the Church shall be recorded. Minutes from the previous Business Meeting of the Church shall be read and approved at each meeting.

6. Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order is to serve as guidance relative to parliamentary rules of procedure for all Business Meetings of the Church.

ARTICLE VI - FINANCES

SECTION 601 - Financial Policies and Goals

We believe that the way an organization handles itself in the financial area is a reflection of its integrity in every area. Luke 16:11 teaches that the person who is untrustworthy in handling money cannot be trusted to handle spiritual riches either. Likewise, if we are trustworthy in the use of monetary riches, then God will be able to entrust spiritual riches and blessings to us as a church (Luke 16:10). Therefore, we have established the following financial policies and goals to guide us in proper stewardship of God's monetary riches:

- A. This church and ministry belong to God. It is neither a monument to anyone's ego nor a legacy to anyone's memory. The ministry does not bear anyone's name. The buildings are not dedicated to anyone, but Jesus Christ. The Pastor, Elders, and other Members are merely stewards and fellow servants in the work of the Kingdom.
- B. The Lord has apparently chosen to place His mantle of approval on this ministry called Pipe Creek Community Church. Nevertheless, He gives and sometimes takes away. The "church" of Jesus Christ is the people of God. God's people will never cease to exist. But this particular ministry may. If He ever closes the doors to this work, we will accept His leading and yield the outcome to Him. Until then, we will devote every ounce of energy to the task at hand.
- C. One of the ways we can discern the Lord's will regarding the continuation of our work is through the financial support He sends (or does not send) from His people. Therefore, during lean times, we will make our obligations known--but we will not squirm, scratch, or claw for contributions. We will never resort to what we consider to be disrespectful and dishonorable methods of raising funds, even when the need is serious. Nor will we attempt to motivate giving from a false sense of guilt or compulsion, since this robs God's people of the opportunity to give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- D. We consider the contributions we receive to be "blood money"--like the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4) we will view each contribution as a sacrificial gift from Christian people who love God. Our obligation, therefore, is to spend that money conservatively and wisely. Every penny will be stretched as far as possible to serve the needs of the ministry and the extension of Christ's kingdom.
- E. We believe God wishes to use Pipe Creek Community Church as a financial channel to help needy individuals and to support other evangelical ministries. Therefore, we will not spend money upon nonessential Church personnel, programs, or facilities. Instead, we will strive toward the goal of giving 10% of our income to ministries and individuals outside of the regular Church program (i.e. Sunday school program, Pastor's salary, building projects, utilities, etc.).
- F. When we make a purchase, we will pay the invoice within 30 days if possible. Overdue bills are a sorry testimony to the world. We do not intend to use the vendor's money.
- G. We will not spend more money than we receive. Careful budgeting and monitoring of our resources will permit us to reduce our expenses for programs and services before disbursements exceed income. Deficit spending is not God's will for this church.
- H. The Scriptures teach "The borrower is a slave to the lender" (Proverbs 22:7). So we might be free to act, minister, and give as we are led by the Lord, it is our goal to remain financially free from debt, as much as possible. If debt is incurred, we will work to repay the obligation as soon as possible.
- I. The Pastor will not be the primary fundraiser.
- J. Satan delights in bringing disrepute to God's work through sins of greed, embezzlement, and ill-gotten gain. Therefore, we will seek to elect and confirm leadership that is free from the love of

money (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Timothy 3:3), and we will conform to acceptable accounting procedures to assure ethical monetary practices.

- K. To summarize, we will try to remember always that Jesus Christ is our possessor and our dispossessor. He ordained and blessed the establishment of Pipe Creek Community Church. It belongs entirely to Him. Therefore, we will cradle it lovingly in our hands, attempting not to crush it through self-centeredness, ignorance, or church politics.

SECTION 602 - Accounts

The Financial Accounts shall be established by the Board of Elders through the Annual Church Budget. This Budget shall be approved by the Members and maintained by the Treasurer. Accounts may be established for non-budgeted funds collected for Church approved activities or events.

SECTION 603 - Offerings

A. Regular Offerings

Regular offerings shall be taken at Sunday Services and other special meetings as determined by the Board of Elders. Undesignated offerings shall be applied to the Annual Budget (General Fund).

B. Special Offerings

Special offerings shall be specifically identified as to their purpose and shall either be taken separate from regular offerings or provision made for the separating of special offerings from regular offerings by means of an identification procedure.

C. Designated Offerings

At the discretion of the individual, offerings or portions thereof may be designated, but only to specific budget categories in the Church Budget or to Christian causes approved by the Elders. If tithes and offerings are not sufficient to meet all Budget Commitments, then the Treasurer can apply designated funds towards the Annual Church Budget when approved by the Board of Elders. This procedure does not apply to funds designated to non-budgeted accounts as specified in SECTION 602.

D. Accounting of Offerings

The amount of funds received in tithes and offerings shall be communicated to the Members by means of regular financial statements. Funds received in special offerings shall be communicated to the Members on the Sunday morning following the offering. Offerings shall be counted in the presence of two or more people appointed by the Treasurer.

SECTION 604 - Financial Statements

Financial statements shall be prepared by the Treasurer. Financial statements shall conform to business standards and be comprehensive in nature including the identification of receipts and disbursements by account for the period covered and comparisons made to the Annual Church Budget figure for those same accounts and period. Financial statements shall be made available to the Members.

SECTION 605 – Annual Church Budget

A. Preparation

The Annual Church budget shall be prepared by the Church Treasurer with the aid of a committee appointed by the Board of Deacons. It shall be unanimously approved by the Board of Elders and approved by 3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church. The Annual Church Budget shall be based on God-given challenges, the previous receipt and disbursement record, growth experienced during the previous year and anticipated in the coming year, and other factors that affect the expenditures of the Church. Input should be obtained from the various Boards, Committees, Officers, ministry groups, or individuals relative to their particular areas of ministry.

B. Submittal and Approval

A copy of the Annual Church Budget as prepared shall be made available to the Members at least one week prior to the Budget approval meeting. Upon approval of the final Budget at this Business Meeting of the Church, copies shall be made available to the Members.

C. Use and Implementation

The Annual Church Budget shall serve as a guide for the expenditure of funds in all areas of the Church's ministry. Expenditures in excess of the Budget by Boards, Committees, Officers, ministry groups, or individuals require the prior approval of the Board of Elders or the Members. These excess expenditures may be approved by the Board of Elders as long as they are consistent with the needs of the Church, the recent financial position of the Church, and the extent of funds on hand. Items not addressed or identified in the Annual Church Budget require the approval of the Members, regardless of amount.

D. Budget Oversight Committee

The Church finances shall be reviewed quarterly by a committee of at least three people, one of whom shall be an Elder. This committee will be selected by the Board of Elders on an annual basis. This committee will review all financial records and ensure that the books are balanced, make any recommendations to the Board of Elders and make a report available to the Members through the Church Bulletin. The Treasurer will provide all pertinent documents required by the committee.

ARTICLE VII - ORDINANCES AND CEREMONIES

SECTION 701 - Baptism

Water baptism is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of a believer to new life. Baptism will be practiced as indicated below.

A. Baptism of Believers

A person who has made a profession of faith in Christ and who earnestly desires to lead an obedient life and who has never been baptized will be encouraged to be baptized. Such a person should present himself before the Pastors, the Board of Elders, and/or the Members to profess his faith and request baptism. If a person becomes a Christian who has previously been baptized, a second baptism is not required. If, however, he earnestly desires to be robotized, he may present himself before the Pastors, the Board of Elders, and/or the Members to profess his faith and request baptism.

B. Administration of Baptism

Baptism services shall occur as and when scheduled by the Pastor(s). The Pastor(s) may perform the baptism or designate another person to perform the baptism. They shall be assisted by Deacons or others as required.

SECTION 702 - Child Dedication Ceremony

A. Parent's and Members' Commitment

Those parents who wish to make a commitment to raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord may make a public statement of this fact by vowing to:

1. Express their faith that although their children are born sinful and rebellious toward God, He has promised to save them through faith in Jesus Christ even as He has saved us, and acknowledge that God's means of saving their children is primarily through the Christian home, and
2. Believing these promises, promise to lead a Godly life before their children and encourage them to follow their example, pray with and for their children that God will save them, train them in the nurture and discipline of the Lord and His Word, and impress on their children the need they have of a Savior and the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

In the dedication service, the Pastor or Elder shall ask the following questions to the parents:

1. Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?
2. Do you claim God's covenant promises in his (her) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his (her) salvation, as you do for your own?
3. Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon God's grace, that you will endeavor to set before him (her) a godly example, that you will pray with and for him (her), that you will instruct him (her) in the teachings of the Christian faith, and that you will strive, by all means of God's appointment, to bring him (her) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Then he shall ask the Members:

Do you as Members undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of their child?

B. Administration of the Dedication Ceremony

Dedication Ceremonies shall occur as and when scheduled by the Pastor(s) who are responsible for the Dedication Service.

SECTION 703 - The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is symbolic of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) and the resulting fellowship of believers (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17). Participation in the Lord's Supper shall be open to all Christians who genuinely confess their sinful state and indicate their repentant spirit and dependence upon Christ as Savior and Lord (1 Corinthians 11:27-32). The Lord's Supper shall be

administered weekly at Sunday Service. Any Christian may administer the Lord's Supper who has been previously approved by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 704 - The Ordination Ceremony

Upon confirmation by the Board of Elders and approval by the Members, Candidates for Pastor, Elder, and Deacon shall be ordained to Christian ministry at a public service of the Church containing exhortation from the Word of God, questions posed to the Candidate, the laying on of hands, and prayer (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:22). The Church shall take the responsibility for encouraging and assisting those whom it has ordained (1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13; Hebrews 13:17).

The following questions shall be asked of the Candidate by a Pastor or Elder:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God without error in the original writings, the only rule of our faith and practice?
2. Do you acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer and Head of His Church and are you willing to submit to His Lordship?
3. Have you been motivated as far as you know your own heart to seek the office of Pastor/Elder/Deacon from love of God, obedience to God's call and to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ?
4. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?
5. Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in your personal and family life, as well as in the public duties of your office, endeavoring to walk as an example before the people of God?
6. Are you ready now to take the responsibilities of Pastor/Elder/Deacon?

For Elders and Pastors the following question shall be asked of the Members, which should signify an affirmative answer by holding up their right hands:

Are you ready to submit to the spiritual leadership of this man?

Following affirmative answers to these questions, the Board of Elders (in the case of a Pastor Candidate), or the Board of Elders and Deacons in the case of a Deacon Candidate, shall lay their hands upon the Candidate and prayer shall be offered. An Elder shall then say:

I now pronounce and declare that _____ has been regularly confirmed, approved, and ordained to the office of Pastor/Elder/Deacon, agreeable to the Word of God, and according to this Church's Constitution and Bylaws, and that as such he is entitled to all encouragement and honor in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 801 - Procedures

These Bylaws may be amended at any Business Meeting of the Church provided:

1. That such amendments are proposed by either boards, committees, Officers, ministry groups, or Members of Pipe Creek Community Church,
2. That such proposed amendments have been made available to the Members in written form on the two consecutive Sunday Services preceding the meeting in which action on the amendments is to be taken.
3. That notice of the time and place of the Meeting has been indicated in the above written notification, has been announced, or has been acknowledged in the Church Bulletin on at least two Sundays preceding the Meetings;
4. That the affirmative vote for amendment shall not be less than 3/4 of the votes cast by the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church (See SECTION 501.C.3).

SECTION 802 - Exclusion

No amendment to these Bylaws shall be permitted which infringes upon the Constitution of the Church.

DEFINITIONS

APPROVE - A distinction is made in these Bylaws between approving and electing Officers. Those Officers that are approved by the Members are Elders and Deacons. The Officers elected by the Members are Trustees and the Treasurer. The procedure of approval and election are the same (3/4 vote of the Members present at a Business Meeting of the Church), but there is a conceptual distinction which seems to be important to preserve.

The offices of Elder and Deacon are made a part of the Church by the Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-13). On the other hand, the offices of Trustee and Treasurer are man-made positions set up by the Church so things might be done decently and orderly. Secondly, according to the Scriptures, a person who undertakes the office of Elder or Deacon is first called or elected by God to that office (Acts 20; 28). In this sense then, the Church Members does not make the person an Elder or Deacon by election, but rather approves or agrees with God that the person is indeed called to an office that God Himself has already given to that individual.

BODY OF CHRIST - The visible Church of Jesus Christ; all Christians still living, no matter what local church or denomination they may be a part of.

CHURCH - In almost every case in these Bylaws, Church refers to this particular local Church called Pipe Creek Community Church of Pipe Creek Texas. Where Church is used to refer to the Christian Church, the entire Body of Christ, this is made clear by either the context or use of the term "Christian Church".

MEMBERS - A Member of Pipe Creek Community Church as per ARTICLE I of these Bylaws.

BENEVOLENCE FUND - A specific fund established by the Annual Church Budget and administered by the Board of Deacons for the purpose of sharing our monetary resources with those in financial or material need.