

Sojourn Community Church
Church Constitution

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

SOJOURN COMMUNITY CHURCH, INCORPORATED

The articles of incorporation of Sojourn Community Church, Incorporated are hereby amended to read as follows.

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this corporation is Sojourn Community Church, Incorporated (hereafter referred to as Sojourn).

ARTICLE II - REGISTERED OFFICE AND AGENT

The registered office of this corporation is at 930 Mary Street, Louisville, Kentucky. The registered agent of this corporation is Daniel Montgomery.

ARTICLE III – TERM

This corporation shall have perpetual existence until Christ's physical return to earth. Come Lord Jesus!

ARTICLE IV – PURPOSES

- A. Sojourn exists to glorify God by seeking to see the gospel transform everything: ourselves, our church, our city, and the world.
- B. We will seek to accomplish our vision through various ministries including but not limited to: gathering in communal worship services of celebration, administration of the Lord's supper and baptism, intimate prayer and discussion in community groups, in-depth study and discipleship of the radical life of a follower of Christ, counseling and support services, various community services, art galleries, performing arts and arts-related classes, educational services for all ages, various institutions of higher learning, retirement and nursing homes, shelters for people in need, athletic leagues, book stores, Bible institutes, and other initiatives as deemed necessary by the governing body.
- C. The general purpose for which this corporation is formed is to operate exclusively for such religious, charitable, and educational purposes as will qualify it as an exempt organization under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations which qualify as tax- exempt organizations under that code.
- D. This corporation will not, as a substantial part of its activities, disseminate propaganda or otherwise attempt to influence legislation; nor shall it participate or intervene (by publication or distribution of any statements or otherwise) in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- E. No part of the net earnings of this corporation will inure to the benefit of any individual or member.

ARTICLE V – CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP

The members of this corporation will be those persons who are duly designated as elders and deacons of Sojourn Community Church, Incorporated, and such other persons as from time to time hereafter may become members in the manner provided in the by-laws.

Section 1. Corporate Members

The Corporation shall have no members. Any action which would otherwise require approval by members shall only require approval of the Council of Elders. All rights which would otherwise vest in the members shall vest in the Council of Elders.

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Section 2. Members of the Congregation

Nothing contained in Section 1 of this Article shall be construed to limit the right of the Corporation to refer to persons associated with the church ministry of the Corporation as 'members' even though such persons are not corporate members, and no such reference in or outside of these Bylaws shall constitute anyone being a member. The Council of Elders may in specific circumstances condition its approval of matters on approval by the church membership.

ARTICLE VI - GOVERNING BODY

The authority of this corporation shall rest in the Elders. Elders are selected, maintained and removed by the members of the corporation congregation as provided in the by-laws.

ARTICLE VII - THE ANNUAL MEETING

A congregational meeting shall take place at least once per year.

ARTICLE VIII - BY-LAWS

The members of the corporation congregation (as outlined in Article VII of the approved by-laws) may adopt such by-laws for the conduct of its business and the carrying out of its purposes as it may deem necessary from time to time. By-laws must be approved by the consensus of the Elders and two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for changes to the by-laws.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

These articles of incorporation may be amended by a consensus approval of the elders and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the membership of the corporation congregation. Fifty percent of the congregation shall be considered a quorum for amendments.

ARTICLE X - DISSOLUTION

No person, firm or corporation shall ever receive any dividends or profits from the undertaking of this corporation and upon dissolution of this corporation all of its assets remaining after payment of all costs will go to causes furthering the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the evangelical tradition, which have qualified for exemption under Section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. None of the assets will be distributed to any member or officer of this corporation.

ARTICLE XI - OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

I. Officers

The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer. The Corporation may also have, at the discretion of the Council of Elders, other officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of this Article.

II. Election

The officers of the Corporation, except such officers as may be appointed in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 or Section 5 of this Article, shall be chosen annually by, and shall serve at, the pleasure of the Council of Elders. Each officer shall hold his office until he shall resign, be removed, or become otherwise disqualified to serve, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

III. Subordinate Officers

The Council of Elders may appoint, and may empower the Chairman to appoint, such other officers as the business of the Corporation may require, each of whom shall hold office for

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such period, have such authority, and perform such duties as are provided in the Bylaws or as the Council of Elders may from time to time determine.

IV. Removal and Resignation

Any officer may be removed upon disqualification and removal as an Elder per Article VI, Section E of the Bylaws or whenever, in the judgment of the person or persons who appointed such officer, the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby. Any officer may resign at any time without prejudice to the rights, if any, of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party, by giving written notice to the Council of Elders, or to the Chairman, or to the Secretary of the Corporation. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of the receipt of such notice or at any later time specified therein; and, unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

V. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in the Bylaws for regular election or appointment to such office, provided that such vacancies shall be filled as they occur and not on an annual basis.

VI. Inability to Act

In the case of absence or inability to act of any officer of the Corporation and of any person herein authorized to act in his place, the Council of Elders may from time to time delegate the powers or duties of such officer to any other officer or other person whom the Council may select.

VII. The Chairman

The Chairman shall be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders, shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation and shall, subject to the control of the Council of Elders, have general supervision, direction, and control of the activities and officers of the Corporation. He shall preside at all meetings of the Council of Elders, which are to be conducted according to the scriptural principles such as set forth in Philippians 2:2-8. He shall be an ex officio member of all the standing committees of the Council of Elders and otherwise, if any, and shall have powers and duties incident to the office of Chairman and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders or the Bylaws.

VIII. Vice-Chairman

In the absence or disability of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, who shall be a person who is a member of the Council of Elders, shall perform all the duties of the Chairman, and when so acting shall have all the powers of, and be subject to all the restrictions upon, the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall have such other powers and perform such other duties incident to the office of Vice-Chairman and as from time to time may be prescribed for him by the Council of Elders or the Bylaws.

IX. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes at the principal office or such other place as the Council of Elders may order, of all meetings of the church members, the Council and its Committees, with the time and place of holding, whether regular or special, and if special, how authorized, the notice thereof given, the names of those present at the church member meetings, the Council and Committees' meetings, and the proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, at the principal office in the State of Kentucky the original and a copy of the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws, as amended to date. The Secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept at the

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principal office of the Corporation, a church membership register, or a duplicated church membership register, showing the names of the members and their addresses.

X. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall ensure the stewardship of the physical and financial resources of the Corporation, "taking precaution that no one should discredit us in our administration...for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Corinthians 8:20-21). He shall select "men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3) to implement and accomplish this responsibility.

The Treasurer shall ensure that all financial activities and transactions are consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and these Bylaws as well as the Kentucky Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Treasurer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct accounts of the properties and business transactions of the Corporation. The books of account shall at all reasonable times be open to inspection by any Elder. The Treasurer shall deposit, or cause to be deposited, all monies and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as may be designated by the Council of Elders. He shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the Corporation as may be ordered by the Council of Elders, shall render, or cause to be rendered, to the Chairman and the Council of Elders, whenever they request it, an account of all the transactions and of the financial condition of the Corporation, and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as incident to the office of Treasurer and as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders. He shall make, or cause to be made, the financial reports at each regular Council meeting and at the regular annual meeting of church members.

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BY-LAWS OF SOJOURN COMMUNITY CHURCH

ARTICLE I – NAME

This church will be known as Sojourn Community Church, Incorporated. This will be a non-profit corporation of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the universal communion of followers of Christ and the benefit of a wider association, this church will be affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state, and local expressions.

ARTICLE II – BELIEFS

The doctrinal outlook of the corporation is reflected in the following statements:

A. WE BELIEVE GOD WROTE THE BIBLE THROUGH MEN WITHOUT ERROR. The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative in all matters for the follower of Christ.

B. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. There is one God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, love, justice, goodness, and truth, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His glory.

C. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, AND ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE TO REDEEM SINFUL HUMANITY. He is True God of True God, begotten, not made. He became human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made His dwelling among us, living a full life without sin. His perfect life and death on the cross provide the only atonement that satisfies the righteous requirements of God for the sinner. The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and was redemptive, substitutionary, and efficacious. The historic fact of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead testifies powerfully to His deity, and is itself humanity's ultimate hope. Jesus Christ will make a personal and imminent return to the earth; this return is a sanctifying "hope" having vital bearing on the life of every Christian.

D. WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SUPERNATURAL AGENT IN SALVATION, BAPTIZING ALL CHRISTIANS INTO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AT CONVERSION, INDWELLING AND SEALING THEM UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN. The Holy Spirit bears persuasive testimony to the realities of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the personal, divine third member of the Godhead. He convicts the world of sin and its consequences; He brings repentance and faith to the believer; He indwells the believer with the radical life of Jesus Christ; He gives gifts to every believer for mutual service within the body of Christ; He unites each believer in the Body of Christ and seals them in that relationship; He bears the fruit of Christian character in the lives of every believer; He guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is worshipped with the Father and the Son.

E. WE BELIEVE ALL HUMANS ARE SINFUL AND IN NEED OF SALVATION. SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO HUMANS BY GRACE ALONE, AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL

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FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. A TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER. God has created every person in the image of God, but we have fallen into sin, and are therefore lost; only through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit can we obtain salvation and spiritual life. All humans are sinners and face the judgment of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and only those who place faith in Jesus Christ and initiate a relationship with God on the basis of the work of Christ are delivered from the wrath of God toward sin required by His holy character. Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are said by Holy Scripture to be justified, regenerated, redeemed, and adopted into the divine family as co-heirs with Christ of all the blessings of the Godhead. We proclaim that all persons must consciously repent of their sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

F. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE. HE HAS CREATED THEM UNIQUELY FEMALE AND MALE. All humans are created in God's image; therefore all human life is sacred. In creating humans as male and female, God communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, equality of personhood and importance and a distinction in role and authority.

G. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS A SPIRITUAL ORGANISM MADE UP OF ALL BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE FOR ALL TIME. All Christians in all times and in all places have been united into a single body by an operation of God. This resultant union is called the Body of Christ, the Universal Church.

H. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RECOGNIZE BELIEVERS BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. Christ commanded that all Christians band together in assembly for instruction, worship, service, and fellowship. These assemblies are called local churches. As a local church, Sojourn embraces the rich and vibrant traditions of the Universal Church. Only those who are members of the Universal Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances to be observed by the local church in the present age. These ordinances are not to be regarded as means of salvation.

I. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER. All people will be resurrected to give account of their lives before God. The believer in Christ will be resurrected to everlasting blessedness and joy in the presence of God. The unbeliever will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

J. We hold these truths in humble conviction.

ARTICLE III – CORE PASSIONS

1. The Gospel – This is our central passion, from which the others flow. Because the Gospel changes everything. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel..." Romans 1:16

2. The Bible - Because the Bible is the source of our spirituality. "These are the scriptures that testify about me [Jesus]." John 5:39

3. The Church - Because the Church is God's new community, made possible by the Gospel. "The church of God, which he bought with his own blood..." Acts 20:28

4. Loving Louisville - Because the Gospel changes our attitude towards our city and our world. "The love of Christ compels us." 2 Corinthians 5:14

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5. Humility - Because the Gospel gives us an honest view of ourselves. "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 1 Peter 5:5

6. Prayer - Because we must. "Lord, teach us to pray." Luke 11:1

7. Renewal - Because the Gospel renews our everyday lives (homes, jobs, neighborhoods, education, politics, media and the arts). "Whatever you do, work hard, as for the Lord and not for men." Colossians 3:23

ARTICLE IV – ELDERS

The senior leadership of Sojourn Community Church shall be vested in a governing board of male elders/pastors, hereinafter referred to as the Council of Elders or the Eldership, which is composed of both paid and unpaid elders/pastors who follow the leading of Jesus who is the Senior Pastor of Sojourn (1 Peter 5:1-4).

A. QUALIFICATIONS

To be considered as an elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Sojourn (Acts 20:28) and be a man of the highest Christian character according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

1. Relation to God

- a. A man – masculine leader
- b. Above reproach – without any character defect
- c. Able to teach – effective Bible communicator
- d. Not a new convert – mature Christian

2. Relation to Family

- a. Husband of one wife – one-woman man, sexually pure
- b. Pastors and Shepherds his children
- c. Manages family well – provides for, leads, organizes, loves

3. Relation to Self

- a. Temperate – mentally and emotionally stable
- b. Self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
- c. Not given to drunkenness – without addictions
- d. Not a lover of money – financially content and upright

4. Relation to Others

- a. Respectable – worth following and imitating
- b. Hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for evangelism
- c. Not violent – even-tempered
- d. Gentle – kind, gracious, loving
- e. Not contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
- f. Good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

Additionally, he must competently and consistently accomplish the biblical duties of an elder/pastor which include:

1. Prayer and Scripture study (Acts 6:4)
2. Ruling/leading the church (1 Timothy 5:17)

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3. Managing the church (1 Timothy 3:4-5)
4. Caring for people in the church (1 Peter 5:2-5)
5. Giving account to God for the church (Hebrews 13:17)
6. Living exemplary lives (Hebrews 13:7)
7. Rightly using the authority God has given them (Acts 20:28)
8. Teaching the Bible correctly (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:2)
9. Preaching (1 Timothy 5:17)
10. Praying for the sick (James 5:13-15)
11. Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings (Titus 1:9)
12. Working hard (1 Thessalonians 5:12)
13. Rightly using money and power (1 Peter 5:1-3)
14. Protecting the church from false teachers (Acts 20:17-31)
15. Disciplining unrepentant Christians (Matthew 18:15-17)

B. The Council of Elders determines the lead elder, who functions as the first among equals and is the lead pastor for the church. It is the duty of the lead elder to help lead the Council of Elders and the rest of the church in obeying God's leading as revealed in Scripture.

C. Selection as an elder pursuant to Article V below confers the authority to preach, marry, and enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to licensed or ordained ministers under secular law.

D. No loan shall be made from the church to any elder. Any director who assents to the making of such a loan shall be jointly and severally liable for its repayment.

ARTICLE V – ELDER SELECTION

The process of becoming an elder/pastor involves at least the following steps:

1. He must be a member in good standing at Sojourn who has demonstrated the calling, character, and competency of an elder.
2. He must make his desire to become an elder known to one of the elders and be interviewed for approval.
3. His nomination must be approved without objection from anyone on his respective campus of elders.
4. If accepted as an elder nominee, the man will then undergo a period of training and testing.
5. Training, prior to becoming an elder, will include whatever is deemed necessary to enhance the nominee's understanding of an elder's responsibilities as outlined in Scripture.
6. Upon completing his training and testing process, the man must be approved by the full council of elders without objection to be introduced to the church members as an official elder candidate.
7. If approved as an elder candidate, members of the Sojourn campus will be notified that he has met the criteria of an elder. Anyone, in or out of the church, having a concern regarding the man's qualifications to lead as an elder will have four weeks to notify the elders, who can investigate the matter to determine if there is any reason to disqualify the man.
8. Consensus approval from the elders and a congregational affirmation, indicated by a majority vote, are required prior to the installation of a elder (except in the case when a pastor is hired from outside the church, see 11 below).
9. If the elders do not find any reason to reject the man as an official elder, an official final vote of the elders shall be taken and if there are no objections to his installation

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from any elder, the man will be installed by the laying on of hands, after which he shall be considered an ordained and licensed minister of the gospel.

10. Selection as an elder does not result in contract rights as an employee. All employees are "at will" and the employment relationship may be terminated without regard to such person continuing to serve as an elder.
11. When a man is hired as a pastor from outside our body, his process of affirmation and season of investigation are part of the hiring process so that once a man is hired, he is immediately installed as an elder. A pastor's position on the Council of Elders is pursuant to his employment with the church and any voting or leadership right within the church is immediately revoked upon dismissal or if he is called elsewhere to pastor.

ARTICLE VI – ELDER SERVICE

A. Once a man becomes an elder at Sojourn it is expected that he will continue to serve as an elder indefinitely.

B. If the elders determine that an elder needs an extended Sabbath for a season because of a legitimate need (e.g., illness, tragedy), then that elder can transition to an inactive and non-voting elder for a set period of time as determined by the elders.

C. To resign from the Council of Elders, an elder must notify the Council of his decision in the form of a letter of resignation, which he will give to the lead elder, and which the lead elder will then distribute to the other elders.

D. An elder who senses God's call to leave Sojourn to help plant a Sojourn– sponsored church plant should make his desire known to the Council of Elders. If the elders confirm his calling, the elder will be sent out with blessing to help lead another church.

E. Any credible charge of moral impropriety, doctrinal error, or anything else that could displease the Lord or harm Sojourn, against an elder shall be investigated by a task force established by the elders. During the investigation, the elder in question shall not be allowed to vote on any church matters and shall be placed on temporary leave. If the elder task force finds credible evidence of wrongdoing, the elder in question shall be tried by the elders according to the criteria of Scripture (e.g., James 3:1; 1 Timothy 5:19–21). A three-fourths vote of the remaining elders is necessary in order to find an elder guilty of the charges. If such a verdict is rendered by the remaining elders, the consequences for such a finding shall be determined by the remaining elders, with any action (up to and including removal) requiring another three-fourths vote of the remaining elders. In such instance, the members of Sojourn shall be notified in writing of the process and results.

ARTICLE VII – GOVERNANCE

The Council of Elders may structure and organize however it deems necessary for the sake of simplicity, clarity of communication, and efficiency of organization, according to the needs of the church and the size of the Council of Elders so long as it preserves the plurality of elders and the doctrinal and character requirements for elders articulated in this document.

To promote efficient handling of Council of Elders matters, the Council may appoint various councils and committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Council of Elders. The general functions

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of councils and committees are:

- a. To bring considered recommendations to the Council of Elders concerning ministries.
- b. To provide a wider base of counsel to the Elders having the oversight of specific ministries.

All councils and committees shall exist for the period specified by the Council of Elders.

ARTICLE VIII – DEACONS

A. DESCRIPTION: A Deacon is a lead servant in the ministry of our church. She/He works with her/his fellow Deacons in extending the overseeing ministry of the Elders into the physical needs of the people and property of the church and responsibilities of this body. Under the Elders’ leadership, she/he is to care for and maintain the orderly administration of our fellowship in which God has placed her/him as a Deacon. Deacons are not in a position of authority in areas of teaching, correction, or rebuke.

B. TERM: Deacons may take sabbaticals from service as needed upon approval of the elders.

C. QUALIFICATIONS:

1. In accordance with the biblical requirements found in 1 Timothy 3, Deacons at Sojourn must be respectable, sincere, temperate and trustworthy. They must not be greedy or drunkards. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience, and manage their families well. Deacons will be tested to ensure that their lives qualify them for the task of service.
2. The first Deacons in Acts 6:1-7 were “full of the Spirit and wisdom;” Sojourn’s Deacons must also demonstrate fullness of the Spirit and wisdom.

D. OBLIGATIONS:

1. To develop and meet regularly with ministry groups.
2. To meet specific designated needs in the congregation and broader community.
3. To provide encouragement and help to the Elders in their ministry.

E. SELECTION: The following procedure will be followed for adding members to the Deacon community.

1. All nominations made by the existing elders at their campus.
2. Consensus vote of the elders at their campus.

F. TERMINATION: The following are reasons for termination of service.

1. Resignation.
2. Continued behavior which violates the biblical qualifications for the office (requires 3/4 vote of elders).
3. Continued agreement with doctrine which violates the doctrinal outlook of our church (requires 3/4 vote of elders).

ARTICLE IX - MEETINGS OF THE COMMUNITY

ANNUAL MEETING: At the annual meeting of the community, the elders are required to submit a budget to the members of the corporation for approval. The elders may call other meetings of the congregation, as deemed necessary.

ARTICLE X - MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

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A. Membership shall be based upon (all of the below):

1. A confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and the testimony of believer's baptism. Other membership requirements (participation in membership classes, required interviews, etc) may be added as necessary as determined by the elders to maintain the health and purity of the congregation. Current requirements are detailed in the "Current Membership Requirements" document.
2. An expressed desire to accept the responsibility of living a holy life, to participate actively in ministry, to give generously to Sojourn Community Church, and to live an evangelistic lifestyle. As such they solemnly commit to covenant with the Sojourn Community to uphold its fundamental doctrines, to participate in its core passions, to pray for and fellowship with the believers in the church.
3. A sympathy with and willingness to submit to the doctrinal outlook of the church.
4. Agreement with and signature of the membership covenant

B. Voting Privileges:

Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in the Corporation, but shall only entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters specifically set forth in these Bylaws or that the Council of Elders chooses to submit to the church membership for affirmation and approval. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are:

1. In good standing
2. At least 18 years of age
3. Not under any disciplinary action

All matters shall be determined by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the constitution and by-laws.

C. Dual Membership - Any person who is currently a member of another church, yet through a temporary relocation has routinely been in attendance at Sojourn Community Church, shall be encouraged to have dual membership status. This status shall facilitate proper watchcare and oversight while the person is under the care of Sojourn Community Church.

D. Watchcare Membership – Watchcare members are persons who submit themselves to the teaching and discipline of Sojourn Community Church and are expected to actively serve. At the same time, watchcare members may not vote in membership meetings or serve in the office of deacon or elder. There are two situations in which watchcare membership may be appropriate:

1. Persons who are currently members of other churches, yet through a temporary relocation have routinely been in attendance at Sojourn, may find watchcare membership to be the most fitting step (for example, college students temporarily studying in Louisville).
2. Persons who were baptized as infants and cannot in good conscience submit to believer's baptism by immersion can be considered for watchcare membership on a case-by-case basis.

E. Termination of Membership: Members shall be removed from the roll for the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Transfer of membership to another church. A letter is needed from the church to which you have transferred in order to properly remove you from the membership rolls.
3. Withdrawal of Membership. In order to properly withdraw from membership, a written letter of intent is required with explanation of reasons submitted to the Council of

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Elders.

4. Dismissal by Church Discipline as outlined below in Article XI.

F. Restoration of Members: Members who are dismissed by the elder community shall be restored by the Council of Elders when they deem it appropriate and reinstated by the Council of Elders according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8.

ARTICLE XI – CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Through God’s grace, the fourfold purpose of church discipline is the means (1) to help conform us individually and corporately to Christ, in terms of the purity and unity of his church, for the glory of God (Col. 1:28; Eph. 4:1-6; 1 Cor. 10:31), (2) to help bring a wandering soul back to Christ (Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 6:1- 5), (3) to help deter others from sin (1 Tim. 5:20), and (4) to help protect the church from false teachers, wolves, and division (Acts 20:25-31; Titus 1:10-11).

Members of this church and all others who regularly attend the various church gatherings who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Council of Elders, shall be subject to appropriate church discipline which they have impliedly or expressly consented to honor prior to engaging in the conduct triggering the disciplinary action. Application of church discipline shall be consistent with the biblical approach outline in Matthew 18:15- 18. As such, it is to be exercised against offenders who are members of Sojourn. The elders oversee the disciplinary process described below and members of the congregation delegate authority to the elders to make the final decision in all disciplinary matters.

A. Offenses Addressed - General categories of offenses in Scripture that may result in church discipline include:

- 1.Divisiveness (Titus 3:9-11, Romans 16:17-18, Hebrews 13:17)
- 2.Scandalous immorality (1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10, Exodus 20:12-17)
- 3.Rejecting doctrines of the Christian faith (1 Timothy 1:19-20, 6:3-5, 2 John 9-11)

B. Methods Used - Matthew 18:15-16 outlines the approach to bring about reconciliation between individuals when offenses occur. If this is unsuccessful, then those who sought the offender’s repentance may come to the Council of Elders. The Elders, in turn, are to follow the general procedures below to ensure order. Each of the four following steps represents a separate phase of church discipline; the time required for each depends upon the particular circumstances. Each step in the process below will be documented in writing and will include all pertinent information (e.g. history, proven offenses, expectations, actions taken). The Elders will not entertain anonymous accusations. The person accused of sin has the right to face and answer his or her accusers. Any charges against an Elder must be supported by two or more witness (1 Timothy 5:19) as well as provided in writing.

The Church Discipline Process

All church discipline should maximize redemptive and protective efforts for all involved in accordance with the Scriptures. For the sake of context, the passage on church discipline is embedded within other relevant passages: (Matt. 18:7-11)—the seriousness of causing others to stumble; (Matt. 18:12-14)—the importance of pursuing the one lost sheep; (Matt. 18:21-35)—the parable of the unmerciful servant.

The process for church discipline outlined in Matthew 18:15-20 involves four progressive steps: (Step 1) privately seek reconciliation (Matt. 18:15). (Step 2) If the person refuses to listen in the private confrontation, involve select others (Matt. 18:16). (Step 3) If the

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person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church by informing the elders (Matt. 18:17a). (Step 4) If the person refuses to listen even to the church, treat the unrepentant person as an unbeliever (Matt. 18:17b). The church discipline process is made up of both informal steps (steps 1-2) and formal steps (steps 3-4).

The details associated with each step are presented in the Sojourn "Elder Position Document: Church Discipline Guidelines."

Transitioning from Informal to Formal Church Discipline

If disciplinary steps 1 and 2 are unsuccessful, then those who sought the offender's repentance may come to the Council of Elders. The Elders, in turn, are to follow the general procedures below to ensure order throughout the formal phase of church discipline. The time required for each of the following action steps depend upon the particular circumstances. Each step in the process below will be documented in writing and will include all pertinent information (e.g. history, proven offenses, expectations, actions taken). The Elders will not entertain anonymous accusations. The person accused of sin has the right to face and answer his or her accusers. Any charges against an Elder must be supported by two or more witness (1 Timothy 5:19) as well as provided in writing. [see Sojourn "Elder Position Document: Church Discipline Guidelines" for additional details for each of these action steps]

1. Investigation: The elders are to conduct an investigation to determine if the accused is guilty of the charges. If the charges are proven false, then appropriate exhortation will be given to the parties so that reconciliation can occur. If the charges are proven (whether by confession or by witnesses), admonition is to be initiated.
2. Admonition: Admonition includes a description of how the unacceptable behavior violated the Scriptures and what must replace it; a gathering of a select, intentional community to journey with and minister to the offender over a specified period of time; and a warning that public admonition (Matt. 18:17b) or removal from membership could follow if repentance and subsequent changes in heart attitude and action does not result by God's grace. If repentance and satisfactory changes occur, the Elders may discontinue further disciplinary efforts. Other disciplinary measures, short of removal from membership, may include limitation of social associations and ministry opportunities.
3. Removal from Membership: If admonition and redemptive efforts fail to result in repentance, removal from membership will occur. The person removed from membership is to be treated as an unbeliever and is excluded from the privileges of membership. He is thus excluded from communion. He is also excluded from social meals, gatherings, and recreational activities with other church members. The church will be informed by the Elders of the reasons for this decision (this will include the reading of the person's name and biblical offense), and will explain the duty of all members relative to the offender. The nature of the offense will only be read at the member's campus of membership (unless it is an offense that affects the entire church and more explanation is required to protect the church) but his/her name will be read at all campus member gatherings in order to instruct every member on his/her duty as a member relative to the offender. If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-17 and begins attending another church, the Elders are obliged to inform the new church of the offender's status.. If a member withdraws from membership while the subject of a pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-17, such withdrawal shall not cancel the Elders' authority to complete the appropriate

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disciplinary action.

4. Restoration: If and when the person removed from membership repents, restoration begins. Restoration is a process that restores an offender to the full privileges that were withdrawn during excommunication. This will only occur if the Elders are satisfied that full repentance is a reality. If restoration is appropriate, the Elders will inform the church of the reasons for this decision and will explain the duty of all members relative to the restored person (2 Corinthians 2:5-11).

Other Important Details

1. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Council of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee thereof), a member, a regular attendee, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises or at church functions for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.
2. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Council of Elders (or a duly appointed Committee thereof), the names of any members who have not attended a worship service or Community Group meeting at or under the leadership of Sojourn Community Church for a consecutive period of six months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls.

The methods described here also cover any and all disputes or claims arising from or related to church membership covenant, doctrine, policy, practice, counseling, and discipline, including claims based on civil statute or for personal injury.

By joining this church, all members agree that these church discipline methods shall provide the sole remedy for any dispute arising against the church and its agents, and they waive their right to file any legal action against the church in a civil court or agency.

ARTICLE XII – BIBLICAL COUNSELING

All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on our lives and our relationships (Romans 3:23, 7:7-25). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviors through private efforts, God desires that he seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Elders who have the responsibility of providing pastoral counseling and oversight (Romans 15:14, Galatians 6:1-2, Colossians 3:16, 2 Timothy 3:16-5:2, Hebrews 10:24-25, 13:17, James 5:16). Therefore, this church encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other and especially from pastoral counselors.

A. Principles of Counseling: Counseling at Sojourn Community Church is based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. The counselors of this church are not trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists.

The counselors of Sojourn Community Church seek to apply biblical principles to all aspects of life. If a member or regular attendee of Sojourn Community Church seeks help in legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, the counselor will apply scripture to the matter to the best of his ability. The counselor will seek to cooperate with professional advisors and help members or regular attendees consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

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B. Confidentiality in Counseling

Confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible; however, there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the Elders of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people. Typical circumstances include:

1. When an Elder is uncertain about how to counsel a person about a particular problem and needs to seek advice from other Elders (Proverbs 11:14, 13:10, 15:22, 19:20, 20:18, Matthew 18:15-17).
2. When the person who disclosed the information, or any other person, is in imminent danger of serious harm unless others intervene (Proverbs 24:11-12) where required by scripture or law.
3. When a person refuses to repent of sin and it becomes necessary to institute disciplinary proceedings (Matthew 18:15-20 and Constitution Article V) or seek the assistance of individuals or agencies outside this church (see Romans 3:1-5).
4. When required by law to report suspected child abuse or other illegal activity.

ARTICLE XIII - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the corporation shall be July 1 – June 30.

ARTICLE XIV – BUDGET

The budget may be amended in three ways: reallocation, adjustment for growth, and expansion

1. Reallocation
 - a. The budget may be amended by reallocation of funds from one account to another upon approval by the elders so long as the total change in funds does not exceed 5% of the annual budget. This change does not require congregational approval.
 - b. Elders must approve reallocation of funds by a majority vote.
 - c. Reallocation of funds which exceeds 5% of the annual budget requires both approval by the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote at a members' meeting. 50% of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.
2. Adjustment for growth
 - a. The budget may be amended if giving exceeds the amount estimated in the annual budget. Adjustment for growth allows the elders to expand the budget so that what is given can be distributed to various budget items in proportion to the excess giving.
 - b. Elders must approve adjustment for growth by majority vote.
 - c. Adjustment for growth does not require congregational approval.
3. Expansion
 - a. The budget may be amended for the expansion of ministry need. This includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Expansion of a budget for a ministry that has grown in its need for resources.
 - ii. Addition of a new budget item, such as a new ministry or staff member.

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b. Expansion for budget items less than 5% of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and does not require congregational approval.

c. Expansion for budget items greater than 5% of the annual budget may be approved by a majority vote of the elders and a majority vote of the congregation. In this case, the amendment to the budget must be presented in writing to the congregation and approved by a majority vote at a members' meeting. 50% of the members shall be considered a quorum for this vote.

ARTICLE XV – VOTING

Those admitted to church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members of the Corporation, and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the Corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the Corporation, or rights to vote on its disposal, except any vote specifically provided in these Bylaws or as specifically provided by the Council of Elders. Said property of the Corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation. Congregational voting shall occur in the following instances:

- A. Affirmation of the annual budget and significant changes in the budget exceeding 5% of the annual budget.
- B. Affirmation of elder candidates from within Sojourn for installation according to campus.
- C. Purchases of land and real estate.
- D. Amendments to the constitution and by-laws.

A quorum shall be necessary only in the case of the rejection of a budget, elder, or purchase of land or real estate. A quorum is not necessary for a vote of affirmation.

If a vote is taken resulting in the rejection of one of these items, an attendance record is to be taken. If the number of members present is less than 50% of all the membership, the elders are to communicate in writing to all members the result of the vote, and within 45 days, a time for either:

- A. A second vote on the same issue, with the goal to have a quorum present at that meeting.
- B. A membership meeting to present an alternative (in the case of a budget).

ARTICLE XVI – EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

The corporation will not discriminate in employment policies for reasons of race, religion, or sex, except in those situations that are in clear disagreement with Scripture.

ARTICLE XVII - RULES OF ORDER

The current edition of *Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure* by Alice Sturgis shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these by-laws.

ARTICLE XVIII – AMENDMENTS

The corporation may later amend, revise, add to, repeal or rescind these by-laws and/or adopt new by-laws at pleasure by a majority vote of all the members of the corporation at any meeting of the corporation, provided that notice of the proposed alteration,

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amendment, revision, addition, repeal, or rescission of the by-laws or adoption of new by-laws shall have been given at least thirty days preceding the meeting.

ARTICLE XIX – COMPENSATION

No compensation shall be paid to elders unless a resolution authorizing such remuneration shall have been adopted by the corporation before the services were rendered. The elders have the freedom to hire assistants or office staff without seeking congregational approval, but the congregation should be informed of such decisions. All staffing costs are reflected in the annual budget.