

BYLAWS OF THE STILLWATER BIBLE CHURCH

ARTICLE I

Name and Offices

The principal office of the corporation hereinafter referred to, as the "Church" shall be located at the address set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The Church may have such other offices, either within or without the State of Incorporation, as the Board of Elders may determine from time to time. The name of the Church is Stillwater Bible Church (SBC).

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Our purpose is to glorify God in the following ways:

1. By proclaiming the gospel.
2. By edifying and equipping believers through the teaching of the scriptures.
3. By ministering to the physical needs of the Church and the world.
4. By supporting missions at home and abroad.
5. By providing opportunities for Godly worship and Christian fellowship.

ARTICLE III

Doctrinal Statement

A. The Holy Scriptures

We believe the Holy Scriptures to be the verbal, plenary inspired Word of God. Authoritative, inerrant, infallible, and God breathed in the original manuscripts (2 Tim 3:16 & 17, 2 Peter 1:20 & 21, Matthew 5:18).

B. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God, Creator and Sovereign of the universe, existing in three persons, The Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Eternal in being, identical in essence, equal in power and glory and having the same attributes and perfections (Deut. 6:4, 2 Cor 13:14).

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C. The Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man, of himself, is totally unable to regain his former state (Gen 1:26 & 3:1-24, Romans 3:23 & 5:12, Ephesians 2:12).

D. The Person and work of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and reconcile mankind to God. We believe that He lived a sinless life, died on the cross to pay for all sin and rose from the grave three days later to conquer death, providing the way of salvation for all people (John 1:1, 14, 18, Luke 1:35, Romans 3:24-26, 9:24, I Corinthians 15:3-4).

E. The Personality of the Holy Spirit

We believe that God, the Holy Spirit, convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He regenerates believers in Christ, baptizes them into the Church which is the body of Christ, indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon each one and fills those yielded to Him (John 15:26, 16:7-15, John 3:8, 1 Cor 12:4-11, John 14:16, Eph 4:30, 1 Cor 12:13, Eph 5:18).

F. Angels

We believe that God created sinless, spiritual beings known as angels. A great company of these angels serve God at His throne and minister to men, especially believers. Some angels fell, often called demons and are enemies of God and man (Heb 1:14, Ps 148:5, Matt 25:41, 2 Peter 2:4).

G. Satan

We believe that Satan sinned through pride and led a host of other angels in rebellion. Satan subsequently tempted our first parents to sin, leading to their fall. He is, today, the enemy of God and God's people, and opposes their efforts at Godly worship and service. Although Satan was judged at the cross, he rules temporarily as the god of this world—as God allows. Ultimately Satan will be defeated and eternally condemned (Ezek 28:11-19, Isaiah 14:12-17).

H. Salvation

We believe that salvation is a gift from God by grace and is received only by believing in Jesus Christ for eternal life (Ephesians 2:8-9, John 1:12, John 3:16).

I. The Eternal Security of the Believer

We believe that all who have believed in Jesus Christ for eternal life are kept secure in Christ forever (Romans 8:1, 29-30, 38-39, John 10:27-30).

J. Sanctification

We believe that, in Christ, every believer has a perfect standing before God in mortal life. However, our sinful nature remains. Thus, there is a progressive aspect to sanctification that comes as the believer is transformed into the likeness of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 3:17-18, Galatians 5:16-17).

K. The Church

We believe that the universal Church is the body and bride of Christ and is a spiritual organism made up of all believers. We believe the local Church is a voluntary assembly of believers united to honor God by proclaiming the gospel, edifying, and equipping believers, ministering to the Church and the world and providing worship and fellowship (Ephesians 1:22-23 & 5:25-27, 1 Cor 12:12-13, Eph 4:11-16).

L. The Blessed Hope

We believe the next prophetic event, the rapture, will be the coming of the Lord to receive the Church. Following the rapture, there will be a time period of 7 years, known as the Tribulation. After that Christ will return to earth to establish His millennial kingdom (1 Thess 4:13-18, Rev 19:11-19, Rev 20:2-7).

M. The Eternal State

We believe that those who have believed in Jesus Christ for eternal life pass into His presence immediately at death or at His coming in the clouds. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, believers to eternal life with Jesus Christ and unbelievers to judgment with everlasting separation from the presence of the Lord (Rev 20:11-15, 1 Cor 15:40-58, 2 Cor 5:8, 1 Thess 4:13-18).

N. The Responsibility of Believers

1. We accept the authority of the Scriptures over our lives. We seek to obey its commands and apply its principles as the Holy Spirit enables us (Gal 5:16, Phil 4:9, Ephesians 5:18).
2. We believe that Christians are commissioned by God to be His ambassadors, to be agents in reconciling the world to Him. Therefore, it is our responsibility to proclaim the gospel, teach the Scriptures and make disciples throughout the world (Acts 1:8, 2 Cor 5:20, Matt 28:18-20, Eph 4:11-16).

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3. We believe God uses the believer's prayer, time and wealth to accomplish His purposes on earth. It is both our privilege and our responsibility to invest all three wisely, generously and, at times, sacrificially as God enables us (1 Cor 16:2, 2 Cor 8:3-5, 1 Thess 5:17-18, Ephesians 5:15-16).

O. Church Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper to be observed by all believers until His return (Matt 28:19, 1 Cor 11:23-26).

P. Doctrinal Summary

This Church believes and teaches the following:

1. That the Bible is verbally inspired, the Word of God, inerrant in the original writings, and the absolute authority.
2. That God exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. That Man, in his natural state, is separated from God and in need of regeneration.
4. That Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, born of a virgin, who became man without ceasing to be God and through His sacrificial death on the cross and His resurrection from the dead provided the way of salvation for all people.
5. That God the Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment and He indwells every believer.
6. That Satan, a fallen angel, is active today as the enemy of God.
7. That salvation is a gift from God received only by believing in Jesus Christ for eternal life and that all who believed in Jesus Christ for eternal life are kept secure in Him forever.
8. That the local Church as a part of the universal body of Christ, is an assembly of believers united for Godly worship and training. All believers are responsible to live under the authority of the scriptures to proclaim the gospel and to support the work of the Church.
9. That the Lord will return to receive the Church in the air and ultimately at His second coming establish His kingdom.
10. That all people will be resurrected, the believers to continue eternal life with Christ and the unbelievers to eternal separation.

ARTICLE IV

Government

Nothing in these Bylaws is implied nor can supersede the **BIBLE**.

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The government of Stillwater Bible Church is vested in the congregation. The congregation shall elect a Board of Elders and a Board of Deacons. The Board of Elders shall appoint the Trustees. The affairs of the Church shall be managed only by the Board of Elders, with the consent of the congregation as stated in these bylaws. The Elders will also have a fiduciary obligation to the Church. The Board of Deacons and Trustees will report directly to the Board of Elders and are expected to operate only within their delegated authority. The congregation reserves the right to approve and amend the annual budget, to amend the bylaws and to authorize all capital improvement projects. Based on the recommendation of the Board of Elders and their reasoning, the congregation itself reserves the right of final approval of the hiring or firing of the Senior Pastor.

ARTICLE V

Membership

A. Types of Membership

1. Regular membership is intended for those who are believers in Christ, agree with our Church doctrines and support the long-term development of Stillwater Bible Church.
2. Inactive membership is intended for those believers who have been active members but due to various circumstances have been unable to attend Stillwater Bible Church for six months. Exceptions will be made for those in the missionary field and those members of the military and their families that are actively serving our country.

Only the regular members, age 18 and above, may vote in a business or a congregational meeting. However, any regular member may participate in the discussions at the business or congregational meetings.

There may be those in the congregation who choose to fellowship with us without formal affiliation. They will have no voice or vote in the business or congregational meetings.

B. Regular Membership

Any person desiring regular membership shall meet with the Pastor Elder or Board of Elder(s) and give satisfactory evidence of the following;

1. A personal faith in Christ.
2. A willingness to complete a membership-training course.
3. Agreement with our Church doctrines, bylaws and the ability to support the long-term development of Stillwater Bible Church.

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C. Reactivation of an Inactive Membership

Reactivation to a regular member status is accomplished by contacting the Church office and requesting regular membership. Approval of the request by the Board of Elders is required.

D. Receiving into Membership

Upon recommendation of the Pastor Elder or Board of Elders, the applicant shall be received into membership and presented to the congregation at an appropriate service.

E. Discipline

The responsibility of administering discipline in the Church is that of the Elders. Some grounds for exercising discipline, suspension or expulsion from membership in the congregation may include, but are not limited to: unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure, which shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a member. Other disciplinary actions may include but are not limited to: restricting a member's public ministry or other corrective measures. Failure to comply with the corrective measure is grounds for immediate mandatory expulsion. The Board of Elders shall prayerfully administer such discipline according to the Scriptures (Matt 18:15-17, Romans 16:17, 1 Cor 5:9-13, 2 Thes 3:6, Titus 3:10). Confidentiality shall be maintained. The policy will include avoidance of maliciousness and unnecessary violations of privacy. The removal of a member from the congregation requires seventy-five percent of the Board of Elders to approve. The ultimate goal of all Church discipline is the restoration of the believer. Once the believer deals with their sin and seeks to be restored, then the Elders will aid in the process of restoring the believer to fellowship within the body.

F. Cooperative Action

The members of the congregation of Stillwater Bible Church shall submit to its forms of government and to the policy of fundamental unity and agreement, alike in doctrine, conduct, and action, and shall conform to the Scriptural command that there be no division in the body. This shall be subject to the Board of Elders so that, as the Word of God plainly teaches, the principle of Christian fellowship may be kept inviolate and perpetuated. No member of the congregation may use means to incite or engender strife but shall work in harmony with the other members of the congregation and the Board of Elders, as did the early Church (Acts 2:42). If there is a cause of dissatisfaction, it should be called to the attention of a member of the Board of Elders. The cause of dissatisfaction should be presented in writing. After investigation, at the discretion of the Board of Elders, necessary adjustments shall be made (Acts 6:1-7, Matt 18:15-17).

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G. Termination of Membership

1. A member may withdraw his/her membership, by submitting a written request to the church office.
2. A member may be removed by expulsion (See E. Discipline above).

ARTICLE VI

Officers and Staff

A. The Sr. Pastor

1. **Selection:** The Board of Elders shall interview and recommend any prospect to be considered for the role of Sr. Pastor. The Sr. Pastor shall be chosen by the congregation for an indefinite period upon the recommendation of the Elders after prayerful investigation and examination. Only such men shall be recommended for the Sr. Pastorate who subscribe to our doctrinal statement and agree to abide by the bylaws of this Church. The selection of a Sr. Pastor shall be voted on by the regular members, by secret ballot. The selection of the Sr. Pastor requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of those voting.
2. **Supervision:** The Sr. Pastor shall be accountable to the Board of Elders. The Sr. Pastor shall be evaluated as to his performance on a regular basis with at least one formal written evaluation per year.
3. **The Primary Leader:** The Sr. Pastor shall be directly responsible for all staff. The Sr. Pastor may delegate these responsibilities to the Executive Pastor who will continue to report directly to the Sr. Pastor. If the church is without a Sr. Pastor at any time these responsibilities will be delegated to the Executive Pastor. The Sr. Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor shall evaluate each Ministerial Staff member on a regular basis with at least one formal written evaluation per year. The Sr. Pastor is responsible to cast a clear and compelling vision for the Church. He aligns resources with the overall mission of the Church and shows a fiduciary responsibility in the use of these resources. He is solely responsible for the hiring and termination of all staff, both ministerial and support, however, he shall seek counsel from the Board of Elders before taking final employment actions.
4. **Duties:** The Sr. Pastor has general oversight of the spiritual life of the Church. The Sr. Pastor is responsible for the pulpit and teaching ministries of the Church. He oversees and coordinates all worship services and administers the ordinances. He may be a member of any boards and committees and would have full voice on those boards and committees that he serves as a member. The Sr. Pastor not only

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provides teaching, but also in his role of Church leadership provides vision and direction.

5. Termination:

- a. The Sr. Pastor may tender his resignation to the Elders with at least thirty days' notice. The Sr. Pastor may be dismissed by a majority vote of the regular members present at a meeting announced by the Elders in regular Sunday Services at least two consecutive Sundays prior to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting must be detailed to the congregation. The Sr. Pastor may be at the meeting to defend his position. Prior to a final discussion and voting the Sr. Pastor will leave the meeting. If the Sr. Pastor is dismissed, he will be given one month of health care benefits and at least one month's salary. The Board of Elders will consider a severance package that would be 1 or 2 weeks of salary for every year of service at SBC.
- b. A meeting to dismiss the Sr. Pastor may be called by the other Elders.
- c. The Elders must call a special meeting of the regular members within thirty days after receiving a valid petition that states the reasons for the requested special meeting. The petition must contain signatures of ten percent of the regular members. Proxy votes are allowed if they contain the member's name and signature, the designated voter, the issue addressed and the date must be within 30 days of the meeting, all proxy requests must be legible. All voters must be 18 years or older and be regular members of SBC.

B. MINISTERIAL and SUPPORT Staff

1. **Authorization and Selection:** Upon recommendation of the Elders and Chairman of the Financial Committee, the congregation may authorize additional ministerial and support staff. All staff, with the exception of the Sr. Pastor will be hired with a one-year probation period in which termination may occur without cause or recourse.
2. **Supervision/Duties:** The Sr. Pastor is responsible for the supervision and assignment of duties of the support and ministerial staff. The Sr. Pastor may delegate these responsibilities to the Executive Pastor who reports directly to the Sr. Pastor. If the church is without a Sr. Pastor at any time these responsibilities will be delegated to the Executive Pastor. The Sr. Pastor and/or the Executive Pastor shall evaluate each Ministerial Staff member on a regular basis with at least one formal written evaluation per year. Each Support Staff member will be evaluated by their supervisor.

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C. The Elders

1. **The Position:** The Board of Elders is responsible for the governance of the Church. Their role is to provide accountability and support to the Sr. Pastor, and support to all staff as well as to serve as spiritual shepherds to the church body. Their role does not involve the day-to-day management of the Church, which is the responsibility of the Sr. Pastor. The board members shall have a fiduciary obligation to the Church. They are to provide wise leadership, discipline, guard the purity of the doctrine and protect the Church in a spiritual manner according to the Word of God. However, final authority in SBC is reserved for the congregation.

2. **Qualifications:** The qualifications of Elders are specifically set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Also to be considered would be business experience, life experiences and proven leadership abilities in addition to their spiritual qualifications.

3. **Number and Terms:** The number of Elders shall be no less than 5 and a maximum of 7. The Sr. Pastor will be a member of the Board of Elders on a standing basis. The Chairman of the Finance Committee shall not be held by a paid staff position. The Chairman of the Finance Committee will be an ex officio member. The Board should be structured to have no more than 1/3 of the Elders rotate off in any given year to preserve continuity and stability. The normal term shall be three years. The Elders may shorten or lengthen a term by as much as one year. After two complete consecutive three-year terms an Elder must rotate off all SBC boards for at least one year. No other paid staff member of SBC or close relative may serve on the Board of Elders for the protection of the staff members, their relatives, and to limit conflicts of interest.

4. **Nomination:** At least 90 days prior to the annual meeting the Elders shall solicit nominations from the regular members of the congregation. The current Board of Elders will screen all nominees regarding their availability and willingness to serve. Those who are willing and available will be interviewed by the Board concerning their qualifications. The Board will vote on candidate's acceptability without ranking them. The acceptable unranked candidates will be presented to the congregation as nominees at the annual meeting.

5. **Election:** Voting will be by secret ballot by those regular members over age 18. If necessary, a second vote will be taken after lower ranked candidates are removed from consideration. For a candidate to be elected he must receive 75 percent approval of those voting. If no candidate receives 75 percent of the vote the position will remain vacant. Vacant positions, due to this and other causes, may be filled at a later congregational meeting provided the above procedure is followed. In an emergency/urgent situation, by appointment of the Elders, a former Elder can temporarily fill the vacancy.

6. Officers and Committees: The Elders shall elect a chairman and a secretary to carry out its functions as a board. Minutes shall be recorded and made available for any Church Member per their request.

7. Termination: The Board of Elders may remove an Elder who shows himself by person or attitude to be disturbing the purity, peace or unity of the Church, who fails to carry out the duties of his office, who rejects the doctrinal statement of the Church who cannot support the Church bylaws or whose life and activities are consistently unbecoming an officer of the Church. Such recommendation requires a majority vote of the Elders. The congregation shall be notified of the resignation or removal of an Elder.

8. Quorum: A quorum for the transaction of business in all Elders meetings consists of a majority of the total number of Elders. Actions taken by the Board of Elders require a majority vote of the Elders present.

9. Regular Meetings: A regular meeting of the Board of Elders shall be held at least 9 times per year. The Board of Elders may provide, by resolution, the time and place for holding additional meetings without notice other than such resolution.

10. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Board of Elders may be called by or at the request of any Elder. Notice of special meetings shall be given by oral or written notice to each Elder in a reasonable time frame prior to the meeting.

D. Deacons

1. Qualifications: The qualifications are specifically set forth in 1 Tim 3: 8-13.

2. Number, Term and Election: The number of Deacons is set by the Elders and approved by a majority vote of the Congregation. The normal term is two years. The Elders may shorten or lengthen a term by as much as one year in order that approximately half of the Deacons are elected each year at the annual meeting. No Deacon may serve more than three consecutive terms. They will be nominated in the same manner as Elders. Election is by secret ballot of those regular members at least 18 years of age. Election requires a sixty per cent majority of the voting congregation. If more candidates receive a sixty per cent majority vote than positions open, then those candidates with the highest number of votes will fill the open deacon positions. Vacancies may be filled at any congregational meeting as long as this procedure is followed.

3. Duties: The Board of Deacons operates under the general supervision of the Elders. The Deacons are responsible for the properties of the Church, their maintenance and the material provision for worship.

4. Officers and Committees: The Deacons shall elect a chairman, secretary, other officers and committees. Minutes shall be recorded and made available for any Church Member per their request.

5. Termination: The Elders may remove from office a Deacon who fails to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the office or whose conduct is

consistently unbecoming an officer of the Church. Removal of a Deacon requires approval of a simple majority of the Elders.

E. **Treasurer:** The function of the Treasurer shall be filled by the Executive Pastor, or by appointment of the Board of Elders.

F. **Trustees:**

1. **Number, Term and Election:** The Elders shall appoint three trustees to serve as legal officers for the Church. Trustees shall serve on a rotational basis with one Trustee's term being up for renewal or rotating off each year. There is no term limit for the office of Trustee.

2. **Duties:** Trustees hold in trust the Church property. Upon a specific vote of the congregation authorizing each action, they have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any Church property. When the signatures of Trustees' are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to Church approved matters. Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded.

3. **Termination:** The Elders may remove from office a Trustee who fails to carry out the duties of the office of Trustee or whose conduct is consistently unbecoming an officer of the Church. Removal requires a majority vote of the Elders.

G. **Board Meetings:**

There shall be regular board meetings. Failure of a Church officer (board member) to attend three consecutive Board meetings will result in a review of that officer by the Board of Elders. If the officer cannot give adequate justification for his absences at the Board meetings, the Elders may recommend the officer resign or be removed from office according to the procedures for termination of officers.

ARTICLE VII

The Congregation

A. **Congregation:** The congregation consists of all the members of the Stillwater Bible Church. Only regular members at least 18 years of age may vote in Church matters. A properly executed written proxy of a regular member is acceptable in all Church voting matters unless specifically restricted (See page 8, Article VI, Section A:5-c)

B. **Meetings:** Normally the annual December meeting shall be held during the regularly scheduled G.R.O.W. Group time on Sunday Morning. If needed, a mid-year meeting shall be similarly called in April or May. The Elders will

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call a meeting within 30 days of receiving a petition that states the purpose of the meeting and signed by 10 percent of the regular members. Other meetings may be called at a time and place as designated by the Elders; however, proper notice of the meeting must be given. A proper notice of the meeting must be given at two consecutive Sunday morning services prior to the meeting. A specific agenda must be announced at the Sunday morning services. There shall not be any additions to the agenda or any unannounced informational meetings at that or prior to or following the congregational meeting. Roberts Rules of Order cannot be used to change the agenda at the time of the meeting.

- C. **Quorum:** A quorum for the transaction of business at congregational meetings shall consist of 15 percent of the regular members. If less than 15 percent of the regular members are present the Elders may declare a quorum at the beginning of the meeting as long as proper notification procedure has been followed.
- D. **Minutes:** Minutes shall be recorded and made available for any Church Member per their request.
- E. **Rules of Order:** The Chairman of the Elders or his appointee shall conduct the meeting. There shall be a parliamentarian appointed at the start of the meeting. The meeting shall be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order except for changing the agenda as described in Article 7 part B.

ARTICLE VIII

Finances

- A. **Budget:**
 - 1. **Annual Budget:** The Executive and Sr. Pastors will prepare a yearly budget. The proposed budget will be presented to the Finance Committee. After examination and approval by the committee, the Executive Pastor or Chairman of the Finance Committee will present the budget at an Elders meeting. The proposed budget will then be presented to the congregation for approval. The proposed budget shall be available to the congregation at least two weeks prior to the annual meeting. If amendments are approved at the annual meeting which change the total of the original proposed budget by more than 5 percent, the changes must be reported at the next two Sunday Services and notice must be given of a special meeting to approve the new proposed annual budget changes.
 - 2. **Amendments and Administration:** The Executive Pastor under the supervision of the Finance Committee will administer funds within the budget. The budget status will be posted publicly each month. The budget

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may be amended at any congregational meeting provided the original process is followed.

3. Capital Expenditures: Capital expenditures may be approved at any congregational meeting provided the budget approval process is followed. Capital expenditures, which require borrowing, require a two-thirds majority of regular members for approval.

ARTICLE IX

Church Year

The official Church year is a calendar year.

ARTICLE X

Ordinances

- A. Baptism:** Baptism is one of the two ordinances instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ. This Church believes in and practices baptism of believers by immersion.
- B. The Lord's Supper:** The Lord's Supper shall be administered at least quarterly at a time designated by the Pastoral Staff. This ordinance is available to all believers.

ARTICLE XI

Ordination

The Church has the authority to ordain qualified men to the gospel ministry. Such men shall be ordained and given a commission to preach the gospel by an ordination council composed of the Pastor and the Elders.

The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, education, Christian experience, reputation, character, doctrinal belief and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service.

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ARTICLE XII

Amendments

These bylaws shall be reviewed yearly and may be amended at a duly announced meeting of the congregation providing the proposed amendment has been conspicuously posted in written form, or a written communication (letter or e-mail) sent to regular members and announced from the pulpit at two consecutive Sunday services preceding the meeting. Approval of the change requires a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority of those voting.

ARTICLE XIII

Conflict of Interest

Any director, officer of the Church or key employee who has an interest in a contract, salary negotiation, or other transaction presented to the Board of Elders or a committee thereof for authorization, approval or ratification shall make a prompt and full disclosure of his interest to the Board of Elders or committee prior to acting on such contract or transaction. The Board of Elders shall thereupon determine whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict of interest does exist the involved person shall not participate in discussion or voting on the matter.