

Preamble

We, the members of Pennington Park Church, Inc., desiring to faithfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ, to foster the spirit of harmony, to promote good order in the Church and to better set forth our position before the world, ordain and establish the following articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves together with the Member Confession and the Membership Covenant of the Church.

ARTICLE I – Name

This assembly shall be known as Pennington Park Church, Inc., and is herein referred to simply as the “Church.”

ARTICLE II – Purpose

The purpose of the Church shall be:

- A. To exalt the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the Head of His Church. (Matthew 16:13-18; Romans 10:8-11; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:15-19)
- B. To establish a local congregation of believers patterned after the New Testament church and obedient to the teaching of the Scriptures.
- C. To build and advance the universal Church of which Christ is the Head by:
 - 1) Teaching believers the doctrines of Scripture and equipping them for the work of the ministry. Timothy 2:15; Ephesians 4:11-12)
 - 2) Providing a place where believers can assemble to worship the Lord. (Hebrews 10:25)
 - 3) Preaching the Gospel of Christ to the lost and leading them to the Savior. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)

ARTICLE III – Association

The Church, recognizing Christ as its Head and the Scripture as its supreme and final rule for faith and practice, shall not be subject to any other authority. It may associate in fellowship with those of like faith and practice and may declare itself in agreement with others in a common cause, but under no circumstances shall such association be construed as bringing the Church under the authority of any such person, group, or body.

ARTICLE IV – Membership

Section 1 – Qualification

Membership in the Church shall be restricted and limited to believers who have been baptized subsequent to regeneration. Pennington Park Church practices immersion as the mode of baptism (Mark 1:9-10; Acts 8:36-39 ;John 3:23; Romans 6:4).

Section 2 – Application

Applicants for covenant membership shall be interviewed by the Elders, or their designees, concerning their salvation, baptism and Christian life. Applicants must complete a membership course or its equivalent as designated by the Elders. Additionally, Elders shall receive from the applicants (a) their personal testimony of faith in Christ and subsequent baptism by immersion (b) their intention to support the mission and vision of the Church; (c) abide by and governed by the Member Confession, the Member Covenant, and these Bylaws; (d) be in agreement with the Member Confession of the Church and; (e) participate in the life of the Church through regular attendance at the Sunday gathering and financial support. The interviewers shall make a recommendation to the Elder Council for the applicant’s nomination for membership. Otherwise, the applicant’s name shall not come before the Church members.

Section 3 – Acceptance

Applicants shall be received into membership of the Church on a majority vote of 75% approval of the members in attendance at any regular service or members meeting called by the Church, and pursuant to Article VIII, Section 3 of these Bylaws.

Section 4 – Discipline, Suspension and Restoration of Members

A. The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of the restoration of the offender. The discipline process follows the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1; and Titus 3:1-11. We all sin. Jesus calls us to confess and repent of our sin, and He promises to forgive our sins (1 John 1:8-9). Discipline is practiced when a member refuses to repent of known sin.

- The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6: 1). Any member of this Church who continues in practices or affirmations of a doctrine or conduct that, in the judgment of the Elders, is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline.

B. The Elders are to follow the above process and bring discipline recommendations to the congregation when a member refuses to repent of known sin(s). A majority vote of 75% approval of the members in a regular service or appointed members meeting shall be sufficient for removal of the member from the membership role. Following discipline, all contact with the person from that point forward is for the purpose of restoration (except for family members) (Matthew 18:17; I Corinthians. 5:11; II Thessalonians 3:15). The entire church body should recognize a responsibility to "say the same thing" in loving effort to restore the offending one and to maintain the church's testimony and harmony.

C. All members shall submit to the discipline process if and when it is administered, and no member shall be allowed to remove himself or herself from membership pursuant to Section 5 of this Article or otherwise to avoid such process.

D. If the disciplined person decides to repent of the sin(s) and wishes to be reinstated as a member, it is the responsibility of the Elders to discern that there has been appropriate confession and that repentance is genuine. After a time that fruit of repentance has been demonstrated, the Elders may present a recommendation for reinstatement of membership to the congregation. The person shall come before the congregation, in a regular service or an appointed members meeting, and give a testimony of repentance and a desire to be restored to membership. A majority vote of 75% approval of the members in the member meeting shall be sufficient to restore the person to membership of the Church.

Section 5 – Removal

Members who do not attend the regular services of the Church for a consistent period of time, or who indicate to the Church that they no longer attend, shall be brought before the Elders for consideration of member removal. Unless other actions should be taken by the Elders, these members will be removed by a majority congregational vote of 75% approval. Exception to this rule shall apply in cases of illness or infirmity, missionary and Christian service, absence due to military service and temporary employment not involving a permanent relocation.

Section 6 – Internal Matters

Determinations of the internal affairs of the Church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the Church's own rules and procedures, as amended from time to time.

Section 7 – Membership Rights

A.. A member, upon five-business days prior written request made upon the Church, may inspect, but not copy or remove, the most recent financial statements of the Church that have been reviewed or audited by an independent CPA firm, the minutes of the proceedings of Church meetings and Elder meetings, subject to the right of the Church to redact confidential information.

B. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to member discipline, individual contributions to the Church, any non-public list of names and addresses of Church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the Church, including, but not limited to personally identifiable information such as compensation, leave, or benefits.

C. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the Church shall have the discretion, exercised in good faith, to redact from any records information that the Elders reasonably believe should remain confidential.

ARTICLE V – GOVERNMENT & OFFICERS

Section 1 – Congregational Authority

The Church observes congregational polity that finds its authority in the majority vote of the congregation. The congregation shall, as it deems advisable from time to time, assign responsibilities and delegate authority concerning those responsibilities to its officers and auxiliary organizations in order to carry out its mission in an orderly fashion, but only in accordance with these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation. Further, the groups of members serving the congregation, including the Elders and the Deacons, shall organize themselves so that majority rule governs their respective activities. However, no amendments to these Bylaws shall limit the congregation’s responsibility or authority to (a) approve the expenditure of funds under the control of the Church, whether by predetermined budget limitation or individual approvals; (b) to elect those who will serve as Elders and Deacons; and (c) to admit Church members, remove Church members and administer Church discipline.

Section 2 – Council of Elders; Pastors; Deacons

The Council of Elders shall serve as the Board of Directors. Elders shall be responsible for the general oversight, care, shepherding, and teaching of members. Pastors (staff elders) and other staff shall be employees who are responsible for such things as discipleship, instruction, leadership, and oversight for various ministries in the church. Deacons shall be responsible for serving members and supporting the Elders.

A.. Elders

1.. Number and Term – The Elders shall determine the number of men who shall serve on the Council after taking into consideration the number it reasonably believes is necessary or useful to adequately shepherd and lead the Church. The Elder Council shall always have more non-staff Elders than permanent staff Elders as voting members. Should the Church have more permanent staff Elders than non-staff Elders, the Council shall determine which staff Elders will serve as voting members and which staff Elders will be non-voting in Elder council meetings. Elders shall be elected to three-year terms and after serving a full three-year term shall be eligible for nomination and re-election unless the Elder no longer meets the criteria set forth in Section 2(A)(4) of this Article.

2. Nomination and Election

- Candidates for the office of Elder shall be nominated by seventy-five percent (75%) of the Elders present at a duly called Elder meeting or by not fewer than 35 members of the Church who have signed a nominating petition and presented the petition to the Elders not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual Church congregational meeting. All Elder nominees presented for a congregational vote must meet the criteria and qualifications set forth in Section 2(A)(4) of this Article along with being approved by the Elders with a seventy-five percent (75%) vote.
- Elders shall be elected individually by the members. The approval of seventy-five percent (75%) of the members present at a duly called Church congregational meeting shall be necessary to elect each Elder.
- Any candidate being voted on by the congregation as a Pastor can be voted on as an Elder at the same time.

3. Responsibilities – The Elders shall be responsible for shepherding oversight, overseeing the Church’s doctrine and teaching, its two ordinances, and overall leadership of the Church’s members, administering the affairs of the congregation, and shall assign responsibilities to officers and respective members of their number to accomplish assigned tasks and offices. Elder oversight and administration shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- nominate Pastors for consideration and approval by members
- appoint officers of the Church;
- administer employees of the Church;
- nominate Deacons for consideration and approval by the members;
- direct the Deacons;
- nominate Elders for consideration and approval by the members;
- appoint from their number a Chairman of all meetings of the Elders and of the congregation; and
- all other lawful actions in furtherance of the Church’s purposes.

4. Eligibility – Any man who meets the following criteria may be nominated to serve as an Elder:

- satisfy those requirements set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1: 5-9;
- be twenty-one (21) years of age; and
- be a voting member of the congregation in good standing for at least one year prior to election, or, in the case of a Pastor, commit to become a member upon election as an Elder.

5. Removal; Vacancies – Elders may be removed from the office of Elder for unbiblical conduct or abandonment of office, as determined by the Elders. An Elder shall be removed upon a vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the remaining members of the Elder Council present at a duly called meeting. In the event an Elder is removed or resigns before his term expires, the Elders may nominate a qualified member to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. Such nominee shall be brought before the congregation as set forth in Section 2(A)(2)(b) of this Article.

6. Regular Meetings – Unless otherwise determined by the Chairman, a regular meeting of the Elder Council shall be held monthly on any day designated not less than seven (7) days in advance by the Chairman of the Elders. The Elder Council may provide by resolution the time and place within Marion County or Hamilton County, Indiana for the holding of additional regular meetings of the Council without other notice than the resolution.

7. Special Meetings – Special meetings of the Elder Council may be called by or at the request of the Chairman, the President or any five (5) Elders. The persons authorized to call special meetings of the Council may fix any place within Indiana as the place for holding any special meeting of the Elder Council.

8. Notice – Notice of any special meeting of the Elder Council shall be given to each Elder at least two (2) days previously by written notice delivered personally, faxed, or by email. If notice is sent by postal mail, such notice shall be deposited in the US mail first class or by next-day delivery, not less than seven (7) days before such special meeting. Notice shall be sent to the Elder's last known address as shown by the records of the Church. Any Elder may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of an Elder at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where an Elder attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or conducted. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Council need be specified in the notice of waiver of notices of such meeting, unless specifically required by law or by these Bylaws.

9. Quorum – A majority of the Elder Council shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Council; but if less than a majority of the Elders are present at the meeting, a majority of the Elders present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

10. Manner of Acting – The act of a majority of the Elders present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Elder Council, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or by these Bylaws.

11. Practices and Communication of Elders– Any action required by law to be taken at a meeting of the Elders, or any action which may be taken at a meeting of Elders, may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing or given written approval through email, setting out the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the Elders or electronically voted upon through email by all of the Elders and to be recorded into the minutes and documented.

B. Pastors (staff elders)

1. The Lead Pastor will be the main preaching pastor and responsible for leading in the development of vision.

2. Pastors shall be those men elected by the members and employed by the Church on a full-time basis in recognition of their call by God to lead and teach. A Pastor may be elected to serve with regard to a specific role, such as Pastor of Education.

3. The Elders will be responsible to find candidates, either from among Church staff or Church membership or external to it, to fill pastoral roles as needed (including the Lead Pastor and any other positions deemed necessary by the Elders). After due process a 75% vote of the Elders shall be required to nominate a candidate for the pastorate to Church members.

4. The candidate will become a Pastor upon the approval of seventy-five percent (75%) of the members present at a duly called Church congregational meeting as set forth in Article VIII, Section 2.

5. Staff elders can be presented as Pastors in order to designate staff versus lay elders once they are approved by the congregation.

6. Any Pastor's term of service will be open ended until terminated by resignation or a 75% vote of the Elders at a duly called meeting of the Elder Council for that purpose.

7. A Pastor may only become an Elder through the process designated for the nomination and election of Elder as set forth in Section 2(A)(2-3) of this Article.

8. The term of a Pastor as an Elder shall be the same as any other Elder as set forth in Section 2(A) (1) of this Article.

C. Deacons

1. Number and Term – The Deacons shall be elected, by a 75% vote of the members of the Church present at a duly called Church congregational meeting, in sufficient number to provide for the needs of the Church membership, shall serve for a term of three (3) years, and be eligible for reelection. In addition to nomination by the Elders as provided in this Article V, Deacons may be nominated by not fewer than 35 members of the Church who have signed a nominating petition and presented the petition to the Elders not less than sixty (60) days prior to the annual Church business congregational meeting.

2. To be qualified to be nominated and serve as a Deacon, each nominee and Deacon must:

- meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and be male or female;
- be willing to accept instruction, training and oversight from the Elders; and
- be at least twenty-one (21) years of age and a voting member in good standing for at least one (1) year.

3. Responsibilities – The Deacons will be servants of the Church serving alongside of and supporting the vision and ministry of the Elders. These areas may include:

- caring for the needs of the people; and
- caring for the physical property of the Church.

4. Removal; Vacancies – Deacons may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct or abandonment of office as determined by a 75% vote of the members of the Elder Council present at a duly called meeting, or as determined by the President and upon written notice from the President to the removed Deacon. In the event a Deacon is removed or resigns before his or her term expires, the Elders may, at the discretion of the Elders, nominate a qualified member to fill the vacancy, which nominee shall be brought before the congregation pursuant to Section 2(C) (1) of this Article.

Section 3 – Officers

A.. Appointment; Removal – The officers of the Church shall be its President (Lead Pastor), Secretary and Treasurer, and such Vice Presidents and deputy secretaries and deputy treasurers as the Elders shall from time to time appoint, to have the authority and perform the duties prescribed by the Elder Council. All officers of the Church shall be appointed by the Council of Elders from among the members of the Church who are in good standing. One person may hold two or more offices and each officer shall serve until his or her successor has been appointed, unless the officer is no longer a member, no longer a member in good standing, or it is in the best interests of the Church to remove the officer, as determined by the Elders, in which event the officer shall be removed from office immediately. The Elders shall appoint qualified members to fill any vacancies in the offices of the Church.

B. Lead Pastor - Candidates for the position of Lead Pastor shall receive a memorandum of engagement that sets forth the candidate's duties, responsibilities, range of benefits and other material terms of employment. The memorandum of engagement shall first be approved by a 75% vote of the members of the Elder Council present at a duly called Elder meeting and then be made available to the congregation within a reasonable period of time before the members vote on the question of whether or not to employ the Lead Pastor. Subsequent modifications may be made in the memorandum of engagement by the Elders, provided that any material modifications shall be presented to the congregation in any congregational meeting. The material modifications shall be deemed approved by the congregation upon a vote of seventy-five percent (75%) percent of the members present at a duly called meeting.

C. President - The Lead Pastor of the Church shall serve as the President. In the absence of a Lead Pastor, the Elders shall appoint a President from among the Elders. The President shall be the principal executive officer of the Church and shall in general supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the Church. He may sign, with the secretary or any other proper officer of the Church authorized by the Elders, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments that the Elder Council has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution shall be expressly delegated by the Elder Council or by these Bylaws or by statute to some other officer or agent of the Church; and in general he shall perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Council of Elders.

D. Vice-President - The Vice President shall perform all duties incumbent upon the President during the absence or disability of the President and perform such other duties as this code of By-laws may require or the Council of Elders may prescribe.

E. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Church, receive and give receipts for money due and payable to the Church from any source, and deposit all such moneys in the name of the Church in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall be determined by the Church. The Treasurer shall, in general, perform all the duties incident to the office of Treasurer, and such other duties as may be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Elder Council.

F. Secretary - The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meeting of the Elder Council in books provided for that purpose, see that all notices are given in accordance with the provisions of these By-laws or as required by law, be custodian of the corporate records, and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as may be assigned by the President or by the Elder Council.

G. Assistant Treasurers and Assistant Secretaries - The assistant Treasurers and assistant Secretaries, in general, shall perform the duties assigned to them by the Treasurer or the Secretary, the President, and the Elder Council.

ARTICLE VI - FINANCES

Section 1 - Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall be determined by the Elder Council and communicated to the congregation along with the annual budget.

Section 2 - Disbursements

A.. All monies shall be disbursed by check, except amounts of fifty (\$50) dollars or less, which may be paid out of a petty cash fund accounted for by vouchers.

B. Expenditures over seventy-five thousand (\$75,000) not covered by the budget as presented to and approved by the members at the Annual Congregational Meeting shall be approved by a majority of the voting members present during a duly called congregational meeting.

C. Items requiring expenditures less than \$75,000 not covered by the Financial Budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the Elders present at a duly called meeting.

Section 3 - Funds

A.. All regular funds for the Church shall be primarily raised by voluntary tithes and offerings. Grants or bequests may also be received.

B. Special accounts created by vote of the members may be funded by loans, mortgages, or bonds.

C. The Church will engage a qualified accounting firm to conduct an audit or review at the conclusion of each fiscal year. The Treasurer or Director of Finance will arrange for the audit.

Section 4 - Allocation of Funds

The Church will designate not less than five percent (5%) of its general fund giving for benevolent and missionary work. This statement will not limit giving away much higher percentages and even would encourage that, but will require a minimum allocation regardless of other financial statements.

Section 5—Budgeted Staff Positions

The Church may only hire staff to the extent its budget includes funds for such a position. The members shall vote to adopt the Financial Budget at the Church’s annual congregational meeting and material revisions to the Financial Budget as identified in Article VI, section 2(B), shall be adopted upon the vote of the members at a specially called congregational meeting.

Staff positions (other than assistant pastors who are approved by elders and pastors who are approved by the congregation), which are provided for in the budget, will be recruited and approved by the appropriate person(s) on staff.

When appropriate and the budget allows, the Elders can hire assistant pastors to provide additional pastoral care and assistance in the work of the ministry. Assistant Pastors are men who meet the Biblical requirements explained in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 who are in or will soon begin the ordination process. Pastors and Church staff can hire other personnel including directors, residents, and interns to carry out pastoral and ministry duties as deemed necessary to assist the pastors in the ministry of the church.

ARTICLE VII – MINISTRIES

Ministries may be formed as deemed appropriate by the Elders to carry out the ministry and fellowship of the Church. Such ministries shall report to and be under the supervision of the Elder Council or staff.

ARTICLE VIII – CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Church business may be conducted any time the Church meets as stipulated below. The teaching of the Word of God shall govern the conduct of business in all sessions. Where the Bible is silent, *Robert’s Rules of Order* shall be the guide for the processes and order of a meeting.

Section 1 – Annual Congregational Meeting

A.. An annual congregational meeting of the Church shall be held on a Sunday in the last fiscal quarter. Additional meetings may be held throughout the year.

B. These meetings may include the election of Elders and Deacons, the approval of the Financial Budget for the next fiscal year, and any other business that shall be on the agenda published.

Section 2 – Special Congregational Meeting

Subject to Article IX, special congregational meetings may be called by the Elders at any time, or by petition of at least five percent (5%) of those members eligible to vote at a congregational meeting, with notification at least two weeks prior to the date of meeting. The notification shall include the proposed agenda for the meeting and shall be issued in the same manner it would be issued for the annual congregational meeting.

Section 3- Limited Congregational Meetings

Limited congregational meetings for the sole purpose of voting new members into the congregation may be convened during any regular church service without prior notification.

Section 4 - Eligible Voters

The voting age shall be sixteen (16) years or older except in cases where the law may require the voter to be of legal age. Only eligible members can vote.

Section 5 - Quorums

A quorum shall be the members present at a duly called Church congregational meeting with that number being no less than 20 voting members.

Section 6 – Notification

Official announcements will be made using one or more of Pennington Park Church's current general communication methods on at least two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting. Absentee ballots will be available upon request of a voting member.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS

A.. The Member Confession, Confession of Faith, and the Bylaws of Pennington Park Church can be amended only during a duly called annual or special congregational meeting as set forth in Article VIII, Section 2.

B. Copies of the proposed amendment(s) or change(s) must be provided for each voting member of the Church two (2) weeks prior to the congregational meeting.

C. The approval of seventy-five percent (75%) of members present at a duly called Church congregational meeting shall be required for passing any amendments.

ARTICLE X - INDEMNITY CLAUSE

Members of the Church shall agree not to pursue civil litigation against the Church corporation, its members, its officers, its paid staff, its Elders, its Deacons, or its Pastors. This provision will not prevent a member from pursuing a claim for personal injury against an insurance company.

ARTICLE XI - DISSOLUTION CLAUSE

In the event of the dissolution of the Church corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied before any assets are otherwise disbursed. None of its net assets or holdings shall be divided among members or other individuals but shall be irrevocably designated by congregational vote prior to dissolution to such not-for-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with the letter and spirit of the Bylaws and the Member Confession adopted by this Church and in conformity with the requirements of Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Service Code of 1954. In the event a quorum of members is not achieved after two (2) attempts for the purpose of voting on matters under this Article XI, then the Elders shall designate the distribution of the Church assets and holdings.