

Otter Creek Christian Fellowship

26-0452343

Part IV Narrative

IV. Our supreme desire is to know Christ and to be conformed into His image by the power of the Holy Spirit. We believe that the only true basis of Christian fellowship is His (agape) love, which is greater than any differences we possess, and without which we have no right to declare ourselves Christians. See page 2 of Constitution and By-Laws.

Part V (5b, c) The Elder Board will need to have a unanimous vote on the salary and/or compensation of any individual employed by the church. Any expense over \$200 will need to be approved by the elder board by unanimous vote as laid out in the Constitution, Article VII 2b.

Part VI (1a) We provide religious biblical studies and resources to individuals who attend services and to others in need. All who are seeking the Lord receive our services. We also provide, when approved by the board, to those in financial need in the community.

Part VIII Part 4(D) Dunn County Wisconsin, Weekly Tithe.

Part VIII (11) Donations: We will, as a religious organization, accept donations with the understanding that the donations will be used for the glory of God.

Part VIII (12) As relationships are made with missionaries and mission organizations that further the gospel of Jesus Christ, we will offer support.

Part VIII (13) A basic requirement of any organization that Otter Creek Christian Fellowship will support is that they must be spreading the gospel according to the Bible and according to Jesus Christ.

Part VIII (14) All of 14 – We will get to know personally individuals in the mission organization and/or the missionaries themselves via visits, letters, email, and will do research on the internet. We will require bi-annual or annual reports of the missionaries and/or organizations that we support.

Part XI (1) a. Church Constitution is attached.

b. Our worship services are every Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. for church, but we get there at 8:00 and set up at the church building. We pray for the service and set up. We start the service with prayer and then a time of worship in song and praise for half an hour. We then have a corporate prayer concern time and pray for the needs in the church. The Teaching Elder then teaches on a chapter of the Bible for about 45 minutes, then we close with a song and benediction. We then have pot luck meals and fellowship monthly for an hour or so. We also have prayer and Bible study on Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m. at the church building.

(2) a. Our formal code of doctrine is the Statement of Faith and starts on page 2 in the Constitution. Our guidelines for discipline are on page 16.

(3) Our church order and government is laid out in the Constitution starting on page 4.

(4) a. Yes, we do have regular services as described in Part XI (1) b. 30-50

(5) a. Own a building at N10091 County Rd. S, Wheeler, WI 54772

b. Membership is laid out on page 15 of the constitution and members have the right to see accounting and to participate in all services, but the Board of Elders lead and direct the church.

(11) a. Yes, Elder Rich Sutliff leads the service and teaches from the Bible. The elders will also teach from time to time. Rich graduated from the School of Ministry at Jesus Fellowship of Believers.

(13) This process is laid out on page 16 of the constitution.

(17) We desire to work with other evangelical churches in the Northwestern WI area to further the Kingdom of God.

Article I Purpose

The purpose of the Conflict of Interest Policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization's (Organization) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization, or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement, but not to replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to non-profit and charitable organizations.

Article II Definitions

1. Interested Person

Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board-delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

2. Financial Interest

A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

- a. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,
- b. A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or
- c. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement. Compensation includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that are not insubstantial. A financial interest is not necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

Article III Procedures

1. Duty to Disclose

In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of the committees with governing board-delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

2. Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists

After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

3. Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest

- a. An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.
- b. The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

- c. After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain, with reasonable efforts, a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.
- d. If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement is not reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination, it shall make its decision as to whether to enter the transaction or arrangement.

Constitution & By-Laws of Otter Creek Christian Fellowship
A Wisconsin Religious Corporation

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Preamble to The Constitution & By-Laws of

Otter Creek Christian Fellowship

A Wisconsin Religious Corporation

Otter Creek Christian Fellowship has been formed as a fellowship of believers in the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Our Supreme desire is to know Christ and to be conformed into His image by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We are not a denominational church, nor are we opposed to the denominations as such, only their over-emphasis of the doctrinal differences that have led to the division of the Body of Christ.

We believe that the only true basis of Christian fellowship is His (agape) love, which is greater than any differences we possess and without which we have no right to claim ourselves Christians.

WE BELIEVE worship of God should be spiritual.

Therefore: We remain flexible and yielded to the leading of the Holy Spirit to direct our worship.

WE BELIEVE worship of God should be inspirational.

Therefore: We give a great place to music in our worship.

WE BELIEVE worship of God should be intelligent.

Therefore: Our services are designed with great emphasis upon teaching the Word of God, that He might instruct us how He should be worshiped.

WE BELIEVE worship of God is fruitful.

Therefore: We look for His love in our lives as the supreme manifestation that we have truly been worshiping Him.

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS OF
OTTER CREEK CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
A Wisconsin Religious Corporation

Article I: Name

The name under which the church is incorporated is: Otter Creek Christian Fellowship.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the church is:

To win people to Jesus Christ and equip them for the work of the ministry through discipleship that they might edify the Body of Christ, evangelize the lost, and exalt the name of God.

To accomplish these purposes, Otter Creek Christian Fellowship is committed to the following principles:

1. To the verse-by-verse teaching of the Word of God.
2. To discipleship training from the Scriptures.
3. To personal evangelism.
4. To the worship of God in singing, serving, and giving from a cheerful, willing heart.
5. To personal and corporate prayer.
6. To fellowship (koinonia), which is biblically defined as bearing one another's spiritual and physical needs.
7. To ministry, which consists of using our spiritual gifts in service to others.

All to be conducted in an environment of:

- **Love** (agape) – Our commitment is to love others and especially the Body of Christ.
- **Acceptance** – Our commitment is to accept and welcome into our church every believer and sincere seeker regardless of their past, nationality, or social standing.
- **Forgiveness** – Our commitment is to forgive others completely, regardless of their sin or wrongdoing, just as God, through Christ, has also forgiven us.

Article III: IRS Provisions

The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

1. To receive, solicit, and maintain a fund or funds of real or personal property, or both, and use and apply the whole or any part thereof exclusively for religious or charitable purposes.
2. No part of the earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of any member, director, or officer of the corporation, or to the benefit of any private individual (except that reasonable compensation be paid for the services rendered to or for the corporation in connection with one or more of its purposes. And no member, director, or officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Article IV: Statement of Faith

In order to identify Otter Creek Christian Fellowship as conservative in theology and evangelical in spirit, we set forth this general statement of fundamental beliefs:

The Bible

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible, composed of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that Scripture in its entirety originated with God, and that it was given through the instrumentality of chosen men. Scripture thus, at one and the same time speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of the human authors. We hold that the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are unique, full, and the final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God.

God

We believe that there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – each of Whom possessing equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. In the beginning, God created out of nothing, the world and all things therein, thus manifesting the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness. By His sovereign power, He continues to sustain His creation. By His providence, He is operating throughout human history to fulfill His redemptive purposes. A primary attribute of God is faithfulness. In Romans 9, 10, and 11, it specifies His faithfulness to His chosen nation, Israel, past, present, and future. We, His children, have the same assurance of our salvation. He has never forsaken Israel, so He will never forsake us because when we are faithless, He is faithful still.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ is the eternal second Person of the Trinity, miraculously conceived and born of a virgin. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father, and voluntarily atoned for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died. He ascended into Heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where He, the only Mediator between God and

man, continually makes intercession for His own. He shall come again, personally and visibly, in power and glory, to establish His kingdom upon the earth.

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. He was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind, the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them a recognition of their need of a Savior, and regenerates them. At the point of salvation, He permanently indwells every believer and is their source of assurance, strength, and wisdom, and uniquely endows each believer with gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Scriptures. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for the believer to lead a life of Christ-like character, and to bear fruit to the glory of the Father.

Salvation

The central purpose of God's revelation in Scripture is to call people into fellowship with Himself. Originally created to have fellowship with God, man defied God, choosing to go his independent way, and thus became alienated from God and suffered the corruption of his nature, rendering him unable to please God. This fall took place at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered these consequences, and thus are in need of the saving grace of God. The salvation of mankind is, then, wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness, and must be personally appropriated by repentance and faith in the death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who alone is the only source of salvation for mankind.

Human Destiny

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be resurrection of the body into the spiritual world, and a judgment that will determine the fate of each. Unbelievers will be separated from God into hell. God's judgment will reveal His justice in consigning them to literal, irrevocable, eternal punishment for their sins and for their rejection of His Son. Believers will be received into eternal communion with God and will be rewarded for works done in this life as members of the Body of Christ.

The Church

The corollary of union with Jesus Christ is that all believers become members of His body, the church. There is one true universal church, comprised of all those who acknowledge and receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Scripture commands believers to gather to devote themselves to worship, prayer, teaching of the Word, fellowship, service to the body through the development and use of talents and gifts, and outreach to the world. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ committed two ordinances to the church: baptism and the Lord's supper. We believe that water baptism and communion are open only to those who have accepted Jesus Christ as their

Lord and Savior. These ordinances are observed in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ as acts of love and devotion and are not considered to be necessary for salvation.

We believe this Statement of Faith to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. All members shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in a way that causes dissension.

Article V: Sovereignty and Fellowship of the Local Church

A. Sovereignty

Otter Creek Christian Fellowship is an independent, non-denominational church with full freedom of deliberation, decision, and deportment under God without restriction, supervision, or domination from any outside individual, organization, or institution. This church is to be completely autonomous and self-governing and will not affiliate with any organization which seeks to exercise control over the local church.

B. Fellowship

This church desires the fellowship of all evangelical churches and Christian groups and will cooperate with them to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Article VI: Government

A. The Headship of Christ

Jesus Christ is the head of the church. He is the true source of all the church is and does. Obedience to Him for the glory of God is to be the objective of every act, function, decision, and motive of His body, the church (Eph 1:22-23; Col 1:18; Col 2:19).

B. The Biblical Role of Elders in the Church

The governing body of the church shall be the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall be comprised of the Teaching Elder and the appointed elders.

1. The Function of the Board of Elders

- a. The Board shall oversee the ministry of the church by precept and example. They shall pray together and meet regularly to review the progress of the execution of day-to-day functions. They shall gather, pray, and review the progress informally as needed for mutual consent.
- b. The board shall correct the congregation where acts of immoral behavior occur according to the Bible, or where the Elders feel doctrinal error or heresy is being taught and propagated in the church in contradiction to the truth of God's Word. Such correction, however, will be carried out in line with Galatians 6:1; 1Timothy 5:19-20; and Matthew 18:15-17 in hope that the error is corrected, and repentance and restoration occur.
- c. Subject to limitations of this Constitution, and of Wisconsin law, all corporate powers of the corporation, and the business and affairs of the corporation shall be exercised by, under the authority of, and controlled by the Board. Without limiting the general powers, the Board of Elders shall have the following powers:

- 1) To elect and remove all officers, agents, and employees of the corporation; prescribe such powers and duties for them as may be consistent with the law and this Constitution, fix their compensation, and require of them faithful service.
- 2) To conduct, manage, and control the affairs and business of the corporation, and to make rules and regulations consistent with federal and state law, or this Constitution.
- 3) To borrow money and incur indebtedness to promote the purposes of the corporation, and for those purposes to authorize to be executed and delivered, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, or other evidence of debt and securities, except that the Board of Elders shall not be able to encumber, transfer, sell, or purchase any land or building without unanimous vote of the Board of Elders.

2. Qualifications of an Elder

Qualifications for elders fall into three categories: 1) personal requirements, 2) family requirements, and 3) ministry requirements. The qualifications in this list are qualities which have been demonstrated in a man's life before his appointment to eldership. A person who is seriously deficient in any of the eldership qualifications is prohibited from being an elder until such a time as the problem is corrected. While there may be isolated instances in the life of an elder when his actions do not reflect the qualities set forth in 1Timothy 3 and Titus 1, he must generally manifest those special attributes in his life which are consistent with Scripture and indicative of the office of an elder.

a. Personal Requirements

- 1) Above reproach (blameless) – 1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6
The life of an elder must be above reproach. It means that there shouldn't be a great blot on his life (adultery, fornication, etc.) that would be a point of criticism by others.
- 2) Temperate – 1Tim 3:2
This word means to "keep your head in all situations." An elder needs to be calm and to keep a cool head. He needs to exercise sensible judgment in all things.
- 3) Sober-minded – 1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8
An elder must have a serious attitude in his work for God. This doesn't mean that he can't have a sense of humor, or that he always must be solemn and somber. It rather suggests that he knows the value and importance of serving God and does not want to cheapen the ministry or the gospel by foolish behavior.
- 4) Good behavior (dignified) – 1Tim 3:2
"Orderly" would be a good translation. An elder should be organized in his thinking and in his living, as well as in his teaching and service.
- 5) Hospitable – 1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8

This word literally means “loving the strange.” Elders (and their wives) must be a model of those who are willing to share their substance and open their homes to those in need.

- 6) Not given to wine (addicted) – 1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
The Greek word here describes a person who “lingers long beside his wine.” In other words, “a drunkard.” This is in keeping with the above qualities of self-control, temperance, and being above reproach. An elder must be moderate in all things.
- 7) Not violent (“not a striker,” gentle) – 1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
An elder must not be a violent man or one who is ready with his fists. He must be gentle in his demeanor, not contentious or looking for a fight.
- 8) Not greedy for money – 1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
The Amplified Bible reads, “Not a lover of money – insatiable for wealth and ready to attain it by questionable means.” Money must never be the motivation behind a man becoming an elder or in his decision making. An elder must be a model of integrity.
- 9) Gentle (patient) – 1Tim 3:3
An elder must never allow the pressures of his office to cause him to be short-tempered with others. He must take time to listen to people and be able to take criticism without reacting negatively. He is to lead with a servant’s heart.
- 10) Not quarrelsome – 1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
Elders must be peacemakers, not troublemakers. This doesn’t mean that they must compromise their convictions, but they must disagree without being disagreeable.
- 11) Not covetous – 1Tim 3:3
This word means, “to strongly desire something that belongs to someone else.” While this word centers mainly on money, a person can covet many things: popularity, a large ministry, other material objects, etc. An elder’s passionate desire should be to know God more fully, while helping others to know Him as well.
- 12) Not self-willed (arrogant) – Titus 1:7
Elders must not be stubborn, insensitive, or prove to force their opinions on others. They must be more interested in service than self-pleasure.
- 13) A lover of what is good – Titus 1:8
This speaks of a man who surrounds himself with good things: good books, good music, good causes, and good men. He is first and foremost a lover of God and as such would never deliberately associate with things that are evil or bad for him and his family.
- 14) Just – Titus 1:8
“Upright” is a good translation. He should be a man of integrity who sticks by his word and who practices what he preaches. His conduct must be righteous.

15) Holy – Titus 1:8

“Unstained” an “set apart” give the idea. His conduct must be pure and his life must be separated from the world and consecrated to God.

16) Self-controlled – Titus 1:8

An elder must have control over self. “Disciplined” would be a synonym. An elder must discipline his time so that it is productive. He must discipline his desires. In short, he must be master over self, constantly yielding his mind and body to the control of the Spirit.

b. Family Requirements

1) The husband of one wife – 1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6

An elder is to be a one-woman man; faithful to one wife. Exemplary in fidelity. This is not referring to a man who was divorced and remarried before he became a Christian. Neither does it apply to a man who is divorced under the biblical exceptions governing divorce: i.e, a wife involved in continuous and unrepentant adultery, or an unbelieving wife who departs and obtains the divorce (Matt 19:9; 1Cor 7:15)

2) A godly family – 1Tim 3:4

“For if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God” (1Tim 3:5). If a man is going to be a leader in the church, he must first give evidence through his family that he is a godly leader at home and that his family is following the godly example that he sets. An elder must be a man who passionately loves his wife and a man who loves and is devoted to his children, one who constantly models for them a life of godliness and integrity. He must first be the spiritual leader of his family before he can be a spiritual leader of God’s family.

c. Ministry Requirements

1) Able to teach – 1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9

He must “hold fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” (Titus 1:9). An elder, whether he be a teaching or administrative elder, must be firmly grounded in the Word of God. He must be able to intelligently share his faith with unbelievers as well as to capably expound doctrine or instruct from the Word those needing instruction, correction, or edification.

2) Not a novice – 1Tim 3:6

Novice literally means “one newly planted,” referring to a new Christian. Elders must not be new believers. They must have been Christians for long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and depth of their spirituality.

3) A good testimony among those who are outside (the church) – 1Tim 3:7

Does he pay bills? Is he honest? Does he have a good reputation among unsaved people with whom he does business? An elder must conduct himself with integrity in everything he does.

3. Responsibilities of an Elder

a. **Keep right with God** – Acts 20:28 – “therefore take heed to yourselves...”

No man can lead God’s people who is not being led by God himself. God requires three things of all His children, but especially His elders:

- 1) To be filled with the Spirit – Eph 5:18b; 1Thess 5:19; Gal 5:16, 22, 23
- 2) To walk in purity (personal holiness) – 1John 3:3; Eph 4:22; 2Tim 2:19-22
- 3) To grow in the knowledge of God’s will by studying and applying His Word – Col 3:16-17; 1Tim 4:16; 2Tim 2:15

b. **Feed**

In regard to “feeding the flock,” great care must be taken in providing the proper food. To the “newborn babes” the shepherd must give “the pure milk of the Word” (1Peter 2:2); while “solid food” must be served to those “who are full age” (spiritually grown up) (Heb 5:14). All of this nourishment is found in the Word of God. The Bible is the main source of spiritual food for the believer (other Christian books can supplement but never replace this diet) (Acts 20:28; 1Peter 5:2).

c. **Lead**

Leaders are to do just that – lead. They are to be in constant contact with God. And as their lives are being led by the Lord, they can lead others in following Christ (1Thess 1:5-6; Heb 3:7, 17).

d. **Watch and Warn**

It is the responsibility of every elder to watch out for wolves who seek to enter the flock and carry off the sheep. These are false teachers who seek to mislead with their false doctrine. Also, the shepherd must constantly warn his people against false teaching when it appears, admonishing them to stay in the Word, which will guide them in God’s truth (Acts 20:28 2Peter 2:1-3).

e. **Pray**

An elder is to act in the role of a “priest” in that he is to constantly carry his people to God in prayer. This is, without a doubt, one of his most important responsibilities (Acts 6:4; 1Thess 5:17-18).

f. **Cherish and Nurture**

The heart of the shepherd must be one of total self-sacrifice. A nursing mother imparts her own life to her child. A mother not only cherishes and nurtures her child, but also would, without hesitation, lay down her life for that child should the situation call for it. A shepherd must have this kind of heart for his sheep (1Thess 2:7-8).

g. **Admonish**

1 Thess 5:12 – “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you...” The word translated “admonish” means “to put in mind or call attention to.” The word implies “to caution, instruct, reprove gently, or warn.” This word is used for: 1) Elders generally admonishing the church (Acts 20:31; 1Cor 4:14; Col 1:28) 2) Elders specifically admonishing those who are sinning (1Thess 5:14; 2Thess 3:14-15).

h. General Church Discipline

1) Errors in Doctrine

The elders are to correct unrepentant Christians who are involved in doctrinal error as given in the Statement of Faith section. In 2Timothy 2:17-18, Paul spoke of the destructive teaching of “Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.” The presence of heretics in the church is a serious problem that must be dealt with.

2) Errors in Deed

The elders are also to correct those who are living in sin. 1Timothy 5:20 says, “those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear.” The elders have the right to rebuke sin publicly. In some cases, when a sinning Christian is confronted with their sin and refuses to repent, that person must be put out of the fellowship (1Cor 5:13). The object of church discipline is always to hopefully bring a brother or sister to repentance and restoration (with God and their church family). Discipline is never to be used as a permanent way of ostracizing a person. If he or she repents they are to be accepted back into the fellowship with love and forgiveness; as Paul admonished the Corinthians to do (2Cor 2:5-11). The procedure for church discipline was given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17.

i. Be an example

While it is true that the elders oversee God’s people in the church, the true Christian leader is a servant, who always leads by precept and example (1Tim 4:12; 1Pt 5:2-3).

j. Stay free from self-interest

The elders are responsible for setting the pattern (for the flock) of a God-oriented, properly ordered life. A life which has only one goal: the glory of Christ (Acts 20:33, 35; 1Pt 5:2).

k. Train new leaders

2Tim 2:2, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses commit these to the faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

4. Appointment of Elders

- a. Elders shall be nominated by the consensus of the Board of Elders in private along with the wife of the nominee and approved by unanimous vote of the Board of Elders (2Tim 2:2; Titus 1:5).
- b. The office of elder is to be limited to a man who meets the biblical qualifications (1Tim 2:11-15; 3:1-7).
- c. Elders may have a one-year term from the time of appointment with the re-appointment every year after with acceptance. After a 3rd term or every three years, a sabbatical of one to two months is mandatory for a time of refreshment and prayer for future guidance from the Lord for the elder’s direction in the ministry. After the time off, the elders shall accept him back or encourage him on in whatever ministry the Lord directs.

5. Removal of Elders or Resignation

An elder may be removed from his office by unanimous vote of the Board of Elders with the elder in question abstaining from voting on his own removal. If an elder feels that he cannot perform his duties as an elder due to family problems, workload outside of church, and the like, resignation will be discussed and the elder will be prayed over. The elder's personal walk with the Lord is to be of the utmost importance and encouragement and love from the congregation is a must whether or not he is an elder again.

6. Quorum

A quorum for any meetings of the Board of Elders shall be majority of the elders. If a quorum is present at any meeting, a simple majority vote shall be sufficient to conduct any corporate business unless otherwise provided in this Constitution/By-Laws.

7. Place and Time of Regular Meetings

Regular meetings of the Board of Elders will be held monthly at any place that has been designated by the Board, and at any time designated by the board.

8. Special Meetings

Meetings of the Board of Elders for any purpose or purposes may be called at any time by the Teaching Elder and any other elders.

9. Telephone Meetings

Any meeting, regular or special, may be held by the conference telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as elders participating in the meeting can hear each other. All elders shall be deemed to be present in person at the meeting.

10. Action Without Meeting

Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board of Elders may be taken without a meeting, if all members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent to that action either verbally or in writing. Such action by unanimous consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders at a duly noticed and held meeting. Such consent(s) must be noted and filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Board.

11. Compensation

Elders shall receive no compensation for their services unless approved by the board.

C. The Biblical Role of Deacons in the Church

1. Qualifications of a Deacon

A deacon is a man nominated by the Board of Elders and appointed by unanimous vote. The deacons shall serve under the authority and oversight of the elders. Whereas the elders are responsible for the spiritual needs of the body (prayer, teaching, baptism, communion, weddings, funerals, financial decisions, etc.), the deacons are given responsibility over the physical ministries in the church (building maintenance, ushering, sound equipment, financial organization, etc.) (Acts 6:1-7).

- a. In relation to character and spiritual matters
 - 1) Of good reputation – Acts 6:3
A man of good character; one who is respected by the congregation.
 - 2) Full of the Holy Spirit – Acts 6:3
A man who is maintaining a Spirit-filled life and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit on a daily basis.
 - 3) Full of Wisdom – Acts 6:3
Possessing sound spiritual judgment, capable of wise decisions and actions.
 - 4) Full of Faith
A man full of faith is also a faithful man. He must be a man who has entrusted his life completely to God as well as one who serves Him faithfully.
- b. In relation to the church
 - 1) Acceptable to the Church
“And the saying pleased the whole multitude.” (Acts 6:5) Deacons must be men who are grounded in their faith, men in whom the body has confidence as responsible, godly men.
 - 2) Appointed by the Elders
“And when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.” (Acts 6:6) By virtue of laying on of hands, the apostles acknowledged the call of God and appointed these men as deacons. By doing this in a public service, it allowed the congregation to share in the dedication of these men to the ministry.
- c. In relation to personal life
 - 1) Reverent – 1Tim 3:8
A deacon should be a man worthy of respect; a man possessing a Christian character worth imitating. A deacon must take his responsibilities seriously and faithfully discharge his ministry.
 - 2) Not double-tongued – 1Tim 3:8
A deacon can’t be a gossip or someone who says one thing to one person and something entirely different to another. He must be a man of his word, someone who is honest and sincere in what he says.
 - 3) Not given to much wine - 1Tim 3:8
Like the elders, deacons must be examples of moderation and godliness in all things. They must be ever watchful to properly represent their Lord to the body.
 - 4) Not greedy for money – 1Tim 3:8
Money is never to be the motivation for service or the basis for making decision in any area of ministry. The love of the Lord and His people are the main reasons a man serves the body as a deacon.

- d. In relation to the ministry
 - 1) Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience – 1Tim 3:9
Deacons must understand Christian doctrine and obey it with a pure conscience. Although they are not required to be “able teachers,” they still must be men of the Word.
 - 2) Let these also first be proved (tested) – 1Tim 3:10
A person must prove his dedication to God and his commitment to the church before his appointment to the office of deacon.
 - 3) Blameless – 1Tim 3:10
A deacon must be a man with a good reputation, someone of outstanding character.
 - 4) Faithful in all things – 1Tim 3:11
- e. In relation to their family
 - 1) Likewise, their wives must be... 1Tim 3:11
The deacon’s wife is part of his ministry and will either enhance or hinder it. Therefore, his wife must be a Christian woman who is serious about the ministry. She must be the kind of woman who can control her tongue; not a gossip or one given to slanderous talk.
 - 2) Let the deacons be the husband of one wife – 1Tim 3:12
This is the same requirement as for an elder. Deacons are to be faithful to one wife.
 - 3) Ruling their children and houses well – 1Tim 3:12
Before a deacon can serve as a leader in God’s family, he must first give evidence that he has been a godly leader in his own family. His children should be obedient and respectful. His family should reflect the principle he claims to believe.

2. Appointment of Deacons

- a. Deacons shall be nominated by the Board of Elders and appointed by unanimous vote. There is no term limit for a deacon. If the need to step down occurs, resignation may be accepted with grace, prayer, and encouragement to continue in love and good works.
- b. The office of deacon is to be limited to a man who meets the biblical qualification.

3. Removal of Deacons

A deacon may be removed from his office by resignation or by unanimous vote by the Board of Elders.

Article VII: Officers of the Church

A. Officers

The Board of Elders shall act as the officers of the corporation until such a time when the congregation reaches a size where it will be reasonable and prudent to separate the two. The Teaching Elder shall be president, the other elders shall act as Vice President, Secretary, and other such offices as the Board of Elders may elect. No person, other than the President may

hold more than one of these offices. The Treasurer does not need to be an elder, but will be appointed by unanimous vote of the elders.

B. Election

The Board of Elders shall elect by unanimous vote the officers of the corporation (except for the President). The officer shall remain in office as long as he is a member of the Board of Elders.

C. Removal

An officer may be removed from his office by resignation or by unanimous vote of the Board of Elders with the officer in question abstaining from voting on his own removal.

D. Vacancies

A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or otherwise shall be filled by the Board of Elders.

E. President (Teaching Elder)

The Teaching Elder/President shall have general supervision, direction, and control for the business and affairs of the corporation. He shall be responsible for presiding over all meetings of the members of the board and shall have such other powers and duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the Board of Elders.

1. His Ministry

- a. The Teaching Elder shall minister unto the Lord in regular personal worship and praise. He shall give himself to the ministry of the Word and prayer (Acts 6:4). He shall endeavor by the grace of God to walk uprightly before the Lord in his personal life. The glory of God and the mind of Christ shall be the passion and pursuit of his ministry.
- b. The Teaching Elder is the chief overseer of the church (Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11-16; 1Pt 5:1-3). He shall give considerable time to the study of the Word and shall teach the Scriptures to the congregation by precept and example. His ministry shall be that of a shepherd – to feed the flock, to guard them against false doctrine and other attacks of the enemy, and to nurture and care for them with love and faithfulness.

2. His Authority

- a. Regarding spiritual matters
The elders shall work together, pray, and seek guidance from the Lord in all matters that effect the spiritual well-being of the church. If there is disagreement between the elders regarding spiritual direction, the current direction will be maintained until a concensus can be reached among the elders.
- b. Regarding financial matters
 - 1) The Teaching Elder shall have the discretion to authorize the spending of up to \$200 per month as he deems appropriate to church ministry, excluding personal expenditures. The unused portion of this discretionary fund shall not accumulate from month to month.
 - 2) Over \$200
Any expenditures exceeding \$200 must have unanimous vote of the Board of Elders and be recorded in the minutes of the church (corporation).
- c. Regarding church staff and general oversight
The Teaching Elder shall be the President of the corporation and its chief executive officer. He shall oversee the business of the church on a daily basis and give leadership to the assistant pastors/elders, the deacons, the paid staff, and the general church body

and its ministries. The paid staff members' compensation shall be specified and ratified by the Board of Elders at the time of hiring. Periodic increases or decreases shall be proposed and ratified by the board. The position of staff members may be terminated by unanimous vote of the Elder Board.

3. His qualifications

The Teaching Elder must meet the qualifications for an elder specified in Article VI B-2.

4. His appointment

- a. In the event of a vacancy in the pastorate, the board shall serve as a Pulpit Committee to seek a suitable candidate for Teaching Elder. Only one candidate at a time shall come before the board. The candidate will be appointed if he receives unanimous vote of the board. His appointment will be presented to the congregation at the next regularly scheduled worship service.
- b. Unless he is being terminated in accordance with Article VII, E-6, the resigning or retiring Teaching Elder, in conjunction with the board, may nominate a successor and/or participate in the selection of his successor.

5. His Compensation

The Teaching Elder's initial compensation shall be specified by the Board of Elders, at the time of his calling and reviewed annually. The church shall provide, if possible, adequate salary, housing allowance, pension, and other special funds as needed for his ministry. The board, excluding the Teaching Elder, shall vote on and provide a written contract annually stating the Teaching Elder's salary and compensation package. A copy of the contract shall be kept in the church office.

6. His Potential Termination

Same as an elder.

F. Assistant Pastor/Elders

1. Ministries

An Assistant Pastor shall minister unto the Lord in regular personal worship and praise. He shall give himself to the ministry of the Word and prayer (Acts 6:4) and seek to walk uprightly before the Lord in his personal life. He shall seek the mind of God. The Teaching Elder shall define an Assistant Pastor's ministry upon his appointment. He shall serve under the Teaching Elder's direction.

2. Qualifications

An Assistant Pastor shall meet the qualification specified for elders but will not have term limits as those of elders (Article VI, B-2).

3. Appointment

The Teaching Elder shall nominate, and the board shall approve and ordain an Assistant Pastor to share in the ministry (See Article VI B-4).

4. Compensation

The Assistant Pastor's compensation shall be specified and ratified by the Teaching Elder and the board at the time of their calling. For the full-time pastor, the church shall provide, if possible, adequate salary, housing allowance, pension, conference and continuing education funds, and vacation. For part-time assistants, the church shall provide a written contract annually stating their salary and compensation package. A copy of their contracts shall be kept in the church office.

5. Termination

It shall be the prerogative of the elder board to terminate the paid position of pastoral assistants if they are not in harmony with the ministry of the church as directed by the Board of Elders.

G. Vice President

If a Vice President is elected by the board, and in the absence or disability of the President, the Vice President shall perform temporarily all the duties of the President, and in so acting shall have all the powers of the President until the board takes action on the vacancy. The Vice President shall have such other powers and perform such duties as may be prescribed from time to time by the board.

H. Secretary

The Secretary shall keep a full and complete record of all the proceedings of the board, shall keep the seal of the corporation and affix it to such papers as may be required in the regular course of business, shall make services of such notices as may be necessary or proper, shall supervise the keeping of records of the corporation, shall discharge such other duties of the office as prescribed by the Board.

I. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall receive and safely keep all funds of the corporation and deposit them in the bank or banks that may be designated by the board. Those funds shall be paid out only on checks of the corporation signed by the President, Secretary, or Treasurer, or by such persons as may be designated by the board.

Article VII: Membership

A. Definition

Otter Creek Christian Fellowship shall not have a formal membership but any person or family who desires to call Otter Creek Christian Fellowship their "home church" will be asked by an elder if they are in agreement to the church's Statement of Faith, as given in this Constitution, along with giving their personal testimony of when they came to saving faith. At that time, only those who profess Christ as Lord and Savior and desire to adhere to the teachings of the Word of God shall be added to the church directory. The church board shall take seriously all those asking to call OCCF their home church. With that commitment, the persons or families will be advised of our goals, as a church, to direct people in the love of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, which may include, in some cases, admonishment, exhortation, or discipline as shown in Matthew 18:15-20. If those who call OCCF their "home church" do not attend for a year, they shall be taken out of the directory. Any who wish to move on to another fellowship will be encouraged to continue their walk with the Lord.

B. Discipline

All members (regular attendees) shall be subject to the Constitution and By-Laws of this church. Any member of this church advocating doctrines not taught in the Scriptures or involved in practices condemned in the Scriptures is subject to discipline (removal from ministry, private, and/or public rebuke, etc.), and if unrepentant, disfellowship. (Matt 18:15-17; 1Cor 5:13; 2Cor 2:5-11; 1Tim 2:17-18) See Article VI B-1b and Article VI B-3h.

Church Policy on Sexual Sin

Scripture is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. This church recognizes that it cannot bind the conscience of individual members in areas where Scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible. However, we believe that open, unrepentant sexual sin is incompatible with Scripture. We, therefore, as a church refuse to perform or allow to be performed any ceremonies that celebrate homosexual and lesbian unions and further refuse to recognize the ordination or ministerial status of any practicing homosexual.

Article IX: Rites of Ordination

A. Principles of Ordination

A candidate for ordination recognizes that only our sovereign and holy God can truly call and ordain His children for service in the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The calling of a minister is not the result of a title; rather the title is a result of the calling. The calling is recognized as from the true and living God. It is man's privilege and specifically the privilege of the overseers of the true church of Jesus Christ to ratify the ordination of God when such is obviously placed on a man's life.

The purpose of this Article is to provide for the ordination rites of ministers of the gospel by Otter Creek Christian Fellowship.

B. Qualifications for Ordination

The qualifications for ordination are as follows:

1. A candidate for ordination must be a "born again" believer in Jesus Christ as described by our Lord in the third chapter of the gospel of John.
2. A candidate should have evidenced the obvious calling of God upon his life to the satisfaction of the board. Without limiting the board's discretion in this matter, some factors that may be considered by the board are the candidate's:
 - a. Formal education to include any Bible school/seminary education;
 - b. Personal study habits and demonstration of the love for an ongoing discipline in the study of the Word of God, and
 - c. A personal knowledge of the Word of God.
3. A candidate for ordination must subscribe to the Statement of Faith as described in this Constitution.
4. A candidate for ordination shall be a man (1Tim 2:12-15).

C. Procedures for Ordination

1. Each person fulfilling the above qualifications and upon their presentation to the Board of Elders of this church will receive full consideration for ordination into ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ by Otter Creek Christian Fellowship.
2. The board may make exceptions to these qualifying statements where, in the unanimous opinion of the board and under strong compelling conviction of the Holy Spirit, such exception is according to the will of God and consistent with His Word.
3. Upon unanimous approval of the board, the candidate will be ordained as a minister of the gospel with the right to perform ministerial functions in accordance with applicable laws

and regulations and the ordinances of God’s Holy Word with all prerogatives of such a calling and office.

4. All candidates, successful and otherwise, will be notified of the board’s decision in writing within one (1) week of the final board action.

5. Certificate of Ordination

The following is the text of the certificate of ordination to be issued to each successful candidate:

Certificate of Ordination

This is to certify that _____ was duly ordained by Otter Creek Christian Fellowship as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He has completed all his studies and has met all of the requirements of this body for recognition of such office; further, by rite of ordination this date, he is duly ordained to perform all ministerial functions without limit, as accorded by the laws of the land and in compliance with ordinances of God’s holy church as set forth in the Holy Bible. We now pray for God’s divine blessing and the power of the Holy Spirit upon him.

Given this ____ day of _____, _____

Elder

Elder

Elder

Article X: Auxiliaries

Any organization, group, or club whose membership is primarily for a church activity shall be considered an auxiliary of the church and shall be subject to the Constitution/By-Laws of the church. As an auxiliary organization, it shall exist only in cooperation with the Board of Elders.

Article XI: Annual Accounting

- A. The annual accounting period for the corporation shall begin on the first day of January and on the last day of December.
- B. Periodically the church shall have an audit performed.

Article XII: Property Rights

A. Property

The title or interest in any and all real and/or personal property of the corporation shall be in the name of the corporation and no person or group of persons shall have any individual property rights in the assets of the corporation.

B. Disposition of Property

If the corporation is dissolved, the properties shall be sold and all proceeds, less liabilities, are to be given to other non-profit religious organizations for the furtherance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The organizations and the proportion of proceeds to be given to each shall be decided upon by the board of the church at the time of dissolution.

Article XIII: Miscellaneous

A. Execution of Documents

The board may authorize by unanimous vote any officer or officers, agent, or agents, to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of, and on behalf of the church and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no officer, agent, or other person shall have any power or authority to bind the church by any contract or engagement to pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

B. Inspection of Constitution/By-Laws

The church shall keep in its principal office, the original or a copy of this Constitution, as amended to date and certified by the Secretary, which shall be open to inspection by the congregation at all reasonable times during office hours.

Article XIV: Amendment of Constitution/By-Laws

The Constitution/By-Laws may be amended or repealed and a new Constitution/By-Laws adopted by unanimous vote of the Board of Elders present at the annual meeting, regular meeting, or any special meeting called for the purpose of amending or repealing this Constitution/By-Laws.

Article XV: Ratification

This Constitution/By-Laws shall be effective upon unanimous approval of the Board of Elders.

Elder

Elder

Elder