

# **Grace Fellowship**

## **Formerly ASSEMBLY OF GOD**

### **Constitution and Bylaws**

Adopted September 9, 1986

Amended October 7, 2007

#### **PREAMBLE**

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; we, whose names appear upon the assembly roster under above date, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with and a part of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, and of the Wisconsin and Northern Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God; and declare that we hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

#### **CONSTITUTION**

##### **I. Name**

The name of this church shall be Whitewater Assembly of God of the City of Whitewater, State of Wisconsin.

##### **II. Prerogatives**

- A. This Assemblies of God church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,...till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:3,13).
- B. In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest, or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its constitution and bylaws or as the same may be hereafter amended.

##### **III. Affiliation and Relationship**

This assembly declares itself to be voluntarily in full cooperative fellowship with all other churches affiliated with the Wisconsin and Northern Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Waupaca, Wis.; and with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shares in the privileges and assumes the responsibilities enjoined by this affiliation.

- A. As a member of the General Council this assembly agrees to:
  - 1. Cooperate by every possible means in the extension of God’s work and kingdom throughout the world.
  - 2. Support the missionary program agreed upon by the District and General Councils.
  - 3. Participate in District and General Council sessions via duly chosen delegates.
  - 4. Invite the counsel of the district officary when changing pastors and in the event of church difficulty.

5. Share in the support of the District and General Council. (See General Council Bylaws, Article XVIII, Section 1, paragraph 2, and all of paragraph 2C.)
  6. Recognize that The District Council or The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall have the right and authority to:
    - a. Approve scriptural doctrine and conduct;
    - b. Disapprove unscriptural doctrine and conduct, as stated in Article III, paragraph f, of the General Council Constitution; and
    - c. Withdraw its certificate of membership if deemed necessary.
- B. Whereas, this assembly became officially affiliated with the fellowship of this Wisconsin and Northern Michigan District with a district official present, it shall be understood that if this assembly desire to withdraw from the district, it will notify the district office at least 30 days before such action is taken and the district shall be properly represented, with the privilege to speak, at the meeting called for such a purpose.

#### IV. Tenets of Faith

This assembly accepts the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, to wit:

- A. **The Scriptures Inspired.** The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (II Tim. 3:15-17; I Thess. 2:13; II Peter 1:21).
- B. **The One True God.** The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM”, the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 23:10-11; Matt. 28:19; Luke 3:22).
- C. **The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.** The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:
  1. His virgin birth (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).
  2. His sinless life (Heb. 7:26; I Pet 2:22).
  3. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
  4. His substitutionary work on the cross (I Cor. 15:3, II Cor. 5:21).
  5. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:6, Luke 24:39; I Cor. 15:4).
  6. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11: 2:33; Phil 2:9-11; Heb. 1-3).
- D. **The Fall of Man.** Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Gen. 1:26, 26; 2:17, 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19).
- E. **The Salvation of Man.** Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.
  1. *Conditions to Salvation.* Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).
  2. *Evidences of Salvation.* The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).
- F. **The Ordinances of the Church.**
  1. *Baptism in Water.* The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe in Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare

to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Rom 6:4).

2. *Holy Communion.* The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Pet 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (I Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (I Cor 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He comes!”
- G. **The Baptism in the Holy Ghost.** All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; I Cor 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Ghost come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Heb. 12:28), and intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word and for the lost (Mark 16:20).
- H. **The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Ghost.** The baptism of believers in the Holy Ghost is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (I Cor. 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.
- I. **Sanctification.** Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Rom. 12:1,2; I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord,” (Heb 12:14). By the power of the Holy Ghost we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (I Peter 1:15, 16).  
Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Rom 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 2:12,13; I Pet. 1:5).
- J. **The Church and Its Mission.** The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Eph. 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).  
Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, and to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:
  1. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
  2. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (I Cor. 12:13).
  3. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Eph. 4:11-16; I Cor. 12:28; 14:12).The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason-for-being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:
  1. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:12-20; Acts 4:29-31; Heb. 2:3,4).
  2. Adds a necessary dimension to worshipful relationship with God (I Cor 2:10-16; I Cor. 12-14).
  3. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ (Gal. 5:22-26; I Cor 14:12; Eph. 4:11,12; I Cor 12:28; Col. 1:29).
- K. **The Ministry.** A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the three-fold purpose of leading the Church in:

1. Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20),
  2. Worship of God (John 4:23-24),
  3. Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Eph. 4:11-16).
- L. **Divine Healing.** Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isa. 53:4,5; Matt 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).
- M. **The Blessed Hope.** The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (I Thess. 4:16,17; Rom 8:23; Titus 2:13; I Cor. 15:51,52).
- N. **The Millennial Reign of Christ.** The Second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zech. 14:5; Matt 24:27,30; Rev 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezek. 37:21,22; Zeph. 3:19,20; Rom 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isa. 11:6-9; Psa. 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).
- O. **The Final Judgment.** There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Rev. 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).
- P. **The New Heavens and the New Earth.** We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21,22).

## V. Ordinances and Observances

- A. **Water Baptism:** The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matt 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins and who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12).
- B. **Lord’s Supper:** The ordinance of the Lord’s Supper (communion) shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; I Cor 11:23-26).
- C. **Marriage:** The institution of marriage is created by God, observed by man, and shall be recognized as a covenant between a man and a woman, and God. (Gen. 1:27, 2:23-24; Mal 2:13-16; Matt. 19:5-6)

## VI. Membership

- A. **Membership Eligibility:** Membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith and agree to be governed by its constitution and bylaws as herein set forth.
- B. **Voting Membership:** All those who meet the scriptural standards for membership, whose names appear on the original membership roll of the assembly at the time the assembly was first organized, together with those names that shall be added from time to time, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the assembly, provided they are 18 years of age or over, that they regularly attend and take part in the services, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony.

- C. **Junior Membership:** Junior membership shall be available for young people under 18 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, having received Christ as personal Savior, and who meet the qualifications for membership established by this assembly. They shall be eligible for voting privileges at 18 years of age, upon favorable review by the official board.
- D. **Inactive Membership:** Enrolled members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of 3 consecutive months or more, or who cease to contribute of their means to its support, or who may be out of harmony with its teachings, or who shall be under charges of misconduct, or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the assembly through its elected officers.
- E. **Associate Members:** (Non-voting) The home church shall have an associate membership roll for college students and military personnel, etc. who are absent from this church body for prolonged periods. They shall be returned to voting membership status at the discretion of the board of deacons.
- F. **Honorary Members:** Honorary members shall consist of those members who have entered the ministry as district officers, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, religious educators, making it impossible to serve as active members. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. (Voting privilege may be granted at the discretion of the assembly).

## VII. Officers

- A. **Officers:** There shall be a pastor(s), a board of deacons, trustees, a secretary and a treasurer. Other officers shall be added as may be needed.
- B. **Pastor(s):**
  - 1. *Qualifications:* The pastor(s) shall be a credentialed member(s) in good standing with the General Council and/or the District Council of the Assemblies of God and shall comply with the scriptural and Assemblies of God standards for the ministry. (I Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; I Pet. 5:2-3).
  - 2. *Duties:* The assembly finds its headship under the Lord Jesus Christ, in its pastor. He should be honored in his sacred office, as the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall be general supervisor of all its activities. He shall be the president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the official board. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and departments. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, giving due regard to the assembly. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without his approval.
- C. **Assistants:** Assistants to the pastors may be added to the staff as necessary.
- D. **Deacons:**
  - 1. The board of deacons consisting of not less than three members shall function under the leadership of the pastor. Of this board of deacons, one shall serve as the secretary and one may be the treasurer.
  - 2. The deacons shall be spirit filled men, with the evidence of speaking in other tongues, of mature Christian experience and knowledge, who shall be expected to meet the requirements as set forth in I Timothy 3 and Acts 6.
  - 3. Administrative affairs of the church shall be carried on by the board, except in matters affecting the entire body. In such cases they shall present their recommendation to the church for ratification. Members of the board shall be at least 23 years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least 6 months.

4. It is recommended that not more than one member of a family serve on the board of deacons. This is understood to include parental, sibling, and in-laws relationships.
  5. No credential holders, other than the local pastors, shall be allowed to serve on the board of deacons of a local assembly.
- E. **Trustees:** A Board of at least three trustees may be elected for the holding of all church property. Their terms of office shall be for periods of three years each. (One or more terms ending each year).

## VIII. Meetings

- A. **Services:** Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the pastor and the board of deacons.
- B. **Business Meetings:**
1. There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be presented. This meeting shall be held on the fourth Sunday of January of each year. (Example: Third Monday in January.) The time and place shall be announced by the pastor. Due notice shall be given on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting.
  2. Special business meetings of the assembly may be called when necessary, after proper notice has been given by the pastor or by the secretary of the assembly, provided the meeting has been agreed upon by a majority of the board of deacons. Special meetings may also be called by petition having been signed by not less than one-third of the active membership of the assembly, the petition to be placed in the hands of the pastor or the secretary and announcement made on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of the meeting. However, before the right of petition is exercised, the church should request the help of the district of officary.
  3. No one, or any number of persons, shall conduct any private or secret business or devotional meetings without the consent and knowledge of the pastor and the board of deacons.
- C. **Quorum:** No special or regular business meeting of the assembly shall be held unless one half or more active members shall be present to constitute a quorum. (One-third is recommended).
- D. **The Board of Deacons:** The board of deacons with pastor, shall meet monthly or as the need requires for the transaction of routine business for the assembly. Time and place to be announced by the pastor.  
A majority of the board being present at any of their regular or special meetings shall be considered a quorum.

## IX. Departments and Committees

The assembly shall hereby provide for the establishment of a Sunday school department, young people's work, home and foreign missionary committees, and any other departments and committees. They shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole church. They shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and/or board of deacons, and the pastor shall be ex-officio member of all committees or departments.

## X. Finances

- A. **Funds:** All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the tithes and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the pastor and the board of deacons, and shall be administered by the treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38, I Cor. 16:1,2; II Cor. 16:1,2; 9:6-8). Money in each fund can only be operated in the black.

- B. **Salaries:** The pastor and pastor's assistants shall be given adequate support at the discretion of the official board. Salaries shall be reviewed at least annually by the official board, following the annual business meeting.

## **XI. Property**

- A. **Properties:** All real property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name or, if the church is not incorporated, by trustees and their successors in office. No real property of the assembly shall be purchased, sold, leased, mortgaged, encumbered, or otherwise disposed of without the same shall have first been recommended by at least two-thirds of the votes cast at the regular meeting or special meeting of the assembly which has been called for the consideration of this proposal. The pastor and the secretary of the assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by a vote of the assembly. Such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.
- B. **Defection:** In the event defection shall occur from the Tenets of Faith of this church as stated in Article IV of this document, any portion of the membership subscribing to and practicing the aforesaid Tenets of Faith and retaining membership with the.....shall retain possession of, and title to, all properties of said church with full rights thereto as provided in its constitution and bylaws.
- C. **Dissolution:** In the event this church shall cease to function for the purposes as declared heretofore in its Articles of Agreement and/or the Articles of its Constitution, then after providing for the payment of its debts, the remaining assets will not inure to the benefit of any private person or persons but all such remaining assets shall revert to, and be transferred to, the parent body, The General Council of the Assemblies of God, a Missouri Corporation with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri. The General Council of the Assemblies of God shall have full authority to sell such property and to use the proceeds derived therefrom for the extension of the work of the Assemblies of God within the Wisconsin and Northern Michigan District and under the direction of the presbytery of said district.

In the event of cessation of this church, its board of trustees (or directors) shall within 1 year thereafter transfer all properties and any remaining assets to The General Council of the Assemblies of God in accordance with the foregoing provisions. If such transfer is not made within the time prescribed herein or if the aforesaid, The General Council of the Assemblies of God, shall be unable or unwilling to accept the aforesaid transfer as an organization operated exclusively for religious purposes with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, then disposition thereof shall be made by the court of the county in which this church is located, provided that in such case proceeds of the dissolution shall be distributed to an organization or organizations having purposes nearest the purposes of The General Council of the Assemblies of God, and which are organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, and which have established tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

## **XII. Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by two-thirds of the votes cast at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed changes shall have been made at all the services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the time of such meeting. It shall be understood that this does not apply to the Tenets of Faith, which stand regardless of majority.

# **BYLAWS**

## I. Membership

### A. **Qualifications:** Those eligible for membership in this church must:

1. Be born again. John 1:12-13; I Peter 1:18-25.
2. Be (or willing to be) baptized in water by immersion except where deemed physically impossible. Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48; Rom. 6:4-6.
3. Be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues or earnestly seeking according to Acts 2:4.
4. Members must demonstrate a mastery of the Christian life and not allow the exercise of their freedoms to become a stumbling block to the weak. Members must not bring into disrepute the testimony of the local church. Members must not be bound to external substances or compulsive habits. They must possess a basic Biblical knowledge and reliance on prayer. They must be able to maintain a cooperative spirit in regards to church decisions and submit to corporate standards of behavior as defined by the body through its leaders. (Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13-14; Eph 4:17-32; 5:1-2; I John. 1:6-7, Rom. 14:1-5; I Cor. 8).
5. Live free of those sins mentioned in Gal. 5:19-21.
6. Contribute regularly to the financial support of this church with tithes and offerings .
7. Believe in all the Tenets of Faith as set forth in the Constitution, Article IV.
8. Children under 18 years of age showing evidence of a consistent Christian life may be added to the church roster, but not given voting privileges until reaching eighteen years of age.
9. The pastor and his wife by virtue of office, shall be considered members of the church they serve during the tenure of their ministry and be accorded all the rights, privileges, as well as responsibilities of said membership.

### B. **Limitations:**

#### 1. *Membership:*

- a. There are now among Christian people those who became entangled in their marriage relations in their former lives of sin and who do not see how these matters can be adjusted. We recommend that these people be received into the membership of local assemblies and that their marriage complications be left in the hands of the Lord. (I Cor. 7:17,20,24).
- b. In no case shall persons be accepted into membership who are known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.

#### 2. *Remarriage:* Low standards on marriage and divorce are very hurtful to individuals, to the family, and to the cause of Christ. Therefore, we discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. We positively disapprove of Christians getting divorces for any cause except fornication and adultery (Matt. 19:9). Where these exceptional circumstances exist or when a Christian has been divorced by an unbeliever, we recommend that the question of remarriage be resolved by the believer as he walks in the light of God's Word (I Cor. 7:15,27,28).

#### 3. *Local Church Leadership:* Church leaders are expected to uphold and embody the high Scriptural model of marriage, however, in light of I.B.2, a person who has been divorced and is remarried may serve in church leadership provided that:

- a. the divorce was scripturally justified (Matt. 19:9; I Cor: 7.15) or occurred pre-conversion (2 Cor: 5.17)
- b. the current marriage has proven over time to embody the ideals of fidelity and devotion fitting a Christian leader (I Tim. 3:2ff; Titus 1:6ff)

The determination as to whether the above criterion are met will be made by the Board at the request of the nomination committee after an investigation into the character of the individual, the circumstances surrounding his divorce/remarriage, and a prayerful consideration. The decisions of the Board may not be appealed but can be annually reconsidered by the Board at the nomination committee's request without prejudice.

### C. **Reception of Members:**

1. Persons desiring to become active members of this assembly shall make the fact known to the Pastor, who shall examine the applicant according to the standards of membership.

2. The pastor shall present the names of those who apply for membership with his recommendation to the board of deacons, who shall act upon said recommendation and render a final decision. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have been passed on favorably shall be received into the assembly publicly at any of the regular services and their names inscribed on the roster.

**D. Transfer:**

1. *Transfer In:* It is recommended that reception of members from other Assemblies of God churches be by application and letter of transfer.
2. *Transfer Out or Withdrawal:* Members in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with the assembly, or who may desire to be transferred to some other congregation, may apply to the secretary for a letter, which shall be granted on the approval of the pastor and board of deacons, said letter to be signed by the pastor and/or the secretary of the assembly.

## **II. Duties of Officers**

**A. Pastor:**

1. *Qualifications:* The pastor shall be a member in good standing with the General Council and/or the District Council of the Assemblies of God and shall comply with the scriptural and the Assemblies of God standards for the ministry. (I Tim. 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; I Pet. 5:2-3).
2. *Duties:* The assembly finds its headship under the Lord Jesus Christ, in its pastor. He should be honored in his sacred office, as the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall be general supervisor of all its activities. He shall be the president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the official board. He shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and departments. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, giving due regard to the assembly. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without his approval.

**B. Assistants:**

The assistants shall be amendable and accountable to the pastor who shall provide a job description for their position.

**C. Deacons:**

The board of deacons is chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in an advisory capacity with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the assembly in its spiritual life and in the ministry of its ordinances. The board shall act in the examination of applicants for membership, and also in the administration of discipline.

A majority present at any meeting of the board of deacons shall constitute a quorum, provided all the members have been notified to be present. In the event the assembly is temporarily without a pastor, the board of deacons shall be empowered to provide for its own chairman from its membership in order to transact business for the assembly.

**D. Trustees:**

The trustees shall be the custodians of all the real property of the assembly. They shall meet for the discharge of their duties as necessity may demand, subject to the call of the pastor, who shall serve as chairman. If there is no elected board of trustees, the board of deacons shall serve as trustees.

**E. Secretary:**

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the board of deacons and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly. He shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his duties. He shall be the custodian of all legal documents and the corporate seal.

**F. Treasurer:**

The treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the assembly and shall received and disburse same under direction of the pastor and official board. He shall deposit all funds in his care in a responsible bank in the name of the church and make all disbursements by check. He shall keep a true and accurate record of all monies received and disbursed. He shall make reports as may be requested. His books shall be audited once a year, or when he may retire from office, or at the discretion of the board of deacons.

### **III. Elections and Vacancies**

#### **A. The Pastor:**

1. *Election:* Shall be elected to serve for one year term at his first election. He shall be nominated by the board of deacons after consultation with the district officary regarding available candidates. Only one name shall be voted upon at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special meeting called for that purpose. A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election.
2. *Re-election:* Shall be by simple majority of votes cast for a three year period of time.

#### **B. Assistants:**

Appointment: The pastor's assistants shall be appointed by the pastor with approval of the board of deacons.

#### **C. Deacons:**

The deacons shall be nominated by the nominating committee from the membership of the assembly. Election shall be by secret ballot and a majority of all votes cast shall be required to elect. The term of office shall be for three years and arranged so that one-third of terms shall expire each year.

#### **D. Secretary:**

The official board shall elect one of its members annually as the church secretary.

#### **E. Treasurer:**

The official board shall elect the church treasurer annually. The treasurer may be, but does not have to be, a member of the board of deacons.

#### **F. Nominating Committee:**

The nominating committee shall consist of either three or five members in good standing, appointed by the pastor. They shall nominate the deacons.

#### **G. Vacancies:**

##### **1. Pastorate:**

- a. When the pastor resigns, he shall give the church thirty (30) days notice before vacating the pulpit. In the event the church requests the pastor's resignation, they shall grant (except in cases involving morals) at least sixty (60) days salary. The pastor shall be given up to sixty (60) days to vacate the parsonage.
- b. In the event a pastor has serious charges preferred against him or his ministry has ceased to be effective and no provision has been made for the termination of his ministry, the board of deacons, after consultation with the District Office, has the prerogative to ask for the resignation of the pastor at any of its regular business meetings. If such resignation is refused, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until the action of the board of deacons has been sustained by a majority vote of the membership present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, such meeting to be presided over by a District Officer. When a vacancy in pastorate shall occur, a supply shall be arranged for by the board of deacons until a pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Section 1. In the case of a pastor's removal from office, a report of such action shall be made to the District Council Office.

##### **2. Other Officers:**

- a. Any office may be declared vacant by an act of a majority of the board at any regular or special meetings. In the event that an office is vacated, the unexpired term shall be filled by appointment by the official board.
  - (1) Ground for such action shall be:
    - (a) Unscriptural conduct.
    - (b) Departure from the Tenets of Faith.
    - (c) Incompetence in office.
    - (d) Any good and sufficient cause
  - (2) Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a hearing of his case before the assembly if he so requests.

#### **IV. Departments**

##### **A. The Sunday School:**

- 1. There shall be a Sunday school created and conducted as a branch of the church activities.
- 2. The pastor shall appoint the superintendent of the Sunday school from among the members of the church and appointment shall be ratified by the board. The pastor and the Sunday school superintendent shall have the right to appoint all officers, teachers and other workers of the Sunday school, and determine all policies and programs of the school.

##### **B. Other Departments:**

Other departments of the church shall be created as there is a need, and shall be under the supervision of the official board. Bylaws governing such departments shall be subject to the approval of the official board.

#### **V. Order of Business**

All business meetings of the assembly shall be conducted according to accepted rules of parliamentary procedure in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship. The order of business in the annual business meeting shall be:

- 1. Devotional
  - 2. Reading of previous minutes by secretary
  - 3. Report of treasurer
  - 4. Report of committees
  - 5. Unfinished business
  - 6. Election of officers
  - 7. New Business
  - 8. Adjournment
- A. The following information shall be given to the congregation at least 14 days before the Annual Business Meeting each year:
    - 1. The naming of any unfinished business.
    - 2. The naming of the Deacon nominees for that year's election.
    - 3. Stating whether the Pastor is up for election that year.
    - 4. Naming of any known business that will be discussed.

#### **VI. Amendments**

- A. The articles of this constitution and bylaws shall supersede and make null and void all articles or agreements, written or verbal, which are in conflict with the articles described herein.
- B. The articles of these bylaws may be changed by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any of the regular or special meetings called for that purpose.

#### **Article VII. Absentee Ballots**

Absentee ballots will be permitted by the church board when deemed absolutely necessary.