

# CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS OF PILLAR CHURCH OF TWENTYNINE PALMS

## PREAMBLE

The Constitution and Bylaws of Pillar Church of Twentynine Palms have been created in order to:

1. preserve and secure the principles of our faith,
2. preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church,
3. ensure freedom of action and independence from any religious body or organization, and
4. provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

## CONSTITUTION

### I. NAME

The name of this church corporation shall be Pillar Church of Twentynine Palms.

### II. PURPOSE

This church exists to know Jesus and make Him known by being a pillar of truth and displaying God's glory. This church shall endeavor to accomplish this purpose by:

1. loving God and obeying His commandments,
2. equipping the saints through biblical preaching, instruction, and study,
3. advancing the gospel of Jesus Christ through proclamation, personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Scripture,
4. encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work and the establishment of new churches—local, domestic, and international,
5. administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper,
6. encouraging biblical fellowship among believers, and
7. serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ.

### III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

#### **1. God**

We believe that there is only one living and true God. He is the eternal, infinite Creator and supreme Ruler of heaven and earth. He is merciful, just, and loving and governs all things according to His sovereign will for His glory. He alone is inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and is worthy of all honor, confidence, obedience and love.

We believe that the one true God eternally exists as three distinct persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; each is fully God and equally possesses all the perfections of deity while executing their distinct and harmonious roles in the great work of redemption.

We believe that God the Father is fully divine and sovereignly reigns over creation. He is the source of all life and the one to whom the eternal kingdom belongs. He is the author of every event that occurs in both time and eternity. He foreknows, chooses and predestines people according to His glorious plan of redemption. The Father draws sinners to believe in His Son through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Father forgives their sin and adopts them as His children, thus giving them peace with Him.

We believe that God the Son is fully divine and has eternally existed with the same glory as the Father. He was born as a man named Jesus who lived a sinless life, died as a substitute for sinners, and rose from the dead as the Lord and Savior of all those who believe. Jesus is now seated at the right hand of God the Father and serves as the mediator of those who believe. He will soon return to judge sinners and to receive all those who have trusted in Him.

We believe that God the Holy Spirit is the eternal Spirit who shares in the fullness of deity along with the Father and the Son. He is the Spirit of truth sent by God the Father and Jesus Christ to carry out the eternal plan of redemption among God's people. His primary ministry is to exalt and glorify Jesus by applying the Gospel to sinners' hearts, convict them of their sin, give them new life in Christ, and seal them until the day of redemption.

#### **2. The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible, both Old and New Testaments, was authored by God and, through divine inspiration, written down by men. We affirm that the Bible is totally sufficient and trustworthy, completely free from error, and reveals the principles by which God will judge us. It includes within it the only way of salvation, and has as its ultimate fulfillment Jesus the Christ. The Bible will remain to the end of the world the supreme standard and final authority by which all matters of life and doctrine should be tested.

### **3. People**

We believe that God created people in His own image and because of this all people have inherent value. We believe that God created people male and female as the crowning jewel of His creation. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created with innocence, but voluntarily rebelled against God and brought sin into the world. As a result, all people are born as sinners, inheriting the condemnation of our first parents, Adam and Eve.

We believe that we are sinners by nature, utterly void of the holiness required by God and completely inclined to evil. As a result, we do not worship God as He requires according to His Holy Law, but instead choose to worship idols and unworthy things. All people are, apart from God's grace, unable to turn to God and are under just condemnation to eternal punishment, without defense or excuse.

### **4. Salvation**

We believe that the salvation of sinners is only by the grace of God through the work of Jesus Christ, who is the mediator of the New Covenant, the promised Messiah and Savior of the world. He is fully God and fully man, was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and lived a sinless life in obedience to the Father. He taught the way of God's kingdom, worked miracles, suffered, died on a cross, rose from the dead and is now enthroned in heaven as High Priest and Lord over all. In His death, He made full atonement for our sins and became our sacrificial substitute, absorbing the full wrath of God, forgiving sins, and adopting into the family of God any who repent of their sin and believe in Him. This message of salvation is known as the Gospel.

We believe that salvation is made free to all who believe in Christ, and that it is the immediate duty of all to receive Him by a penitent and obedient faith. We believe that the power of the Gospel is sufficient to save even the greatest sinner and that all people everywhere are commanded to repent and believe upon Jesus. Those who reject Jesus and His Gospel do so voluntarily and will receive eternal condemnation for their decision. The gracious gift of salvation makes a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Those who trust in Christ are pleasing in God's sight and those who continue in unbelief are wicked in His sight and remain under His wrath, destined to judgment for eternity in Hell.

### **5. God's Grace**

We believe that in God's eternal purpose, He graciously chose some people before the foundation of the world to be regenerated and saved through the work of His Son

Jesus Christ. This choosing, otherwise known as election, was not based on any good they would do, but only on His sovereign mercy and pleasure. God's electing grace does not diminish people's accountability before God and is perfectly consistent with man's responsibility to believe in Christ. This grace of God exhibits His love, compassion, goodness, wisdom, holiness, power, and unchangeable character. This grace also extinguishes boasting, grants assurance, cultivates humility, promotes love, encourages prayer, fuels evangelism, and solidifies trust in God to keep those who are His.

### **6. Regeneration**

We believe that in order to be saved, a sinner must be regenerated, or born again. Regeneration is a work of God's grace whereby the Holy Spirit gives new spiritual life and replaces our rebellious heart with a heart that delights in obeying God and responding to Him by repentance and faith.

This new birth occurs when the Holy Spirit of God applies the divine truth of the Gospel to a sinner's heart, resulting in our voluntary obedience to God through faith in Jesus Christ. The new birth is evidenced by spiritual fruits of repentance, faith, and a newness of life that seeks to please God. We believe that only God can give us this new spiritual life and bring us into the blessings of the New Covenant. In this New Covenant, we receive forgiveness of sins, God's Law written on our hearts, and the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit.

### **7. Justification**

We believe that justification is God's declaration that those who believe in Christ are righteous in His sight because He has fully forgiven them of their sin and imputed Christ's righteousness to them. We affirm that justification is given freely by God, not in consideration of anything we have done, but solely through faith in Christ and His finished work. This justification brings us into peace and favor with God, and secures our eternal destiny with Him.

### **8. Repentance and Faith**

We believe that repentance and faith are the right and required response of sinners to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They are the inseparable acts of turning away from sin and turning to God through Christ alone for salvation. This response to the Gospel is brought about by the Holy Spirit who graciously convicts us of our sin, convinces us of our unrighteousness, and reveals that we are hopelessly condemned apart from Christ. We affirm that the Holy Spirit assures us that Christ is the only way of salvation and therefore we turn to God with sincere remorse for our sin and certain hope for mercy. We affirm that salvation

comes to those who truly believe and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that all true believers will trust in Him alone as their only and all-sufficient Savior.

### **9. Sanctification**

We believe that sanctification is the process by which God frees believers from slavery to sin and makes them more like Christ in their lives. This is a progressive work that begins in regeneration and is carried on in the hearts and lives of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit until they see Christ. While this growth in holiness is a gift of grace, it also requires a believer to actively, intentionally, and persistently fight sin through means such as prayer, reading and hearing God's word, and the mutual edification of Christian community. Faith and repentance are necessary responses to Christ that mark a believer's life from the moment of conversion until Christ calls us to be with Him.

### **10. The Perseverance of Believers**

We believe that all those who are truly born again will be kept by God's power, and that they will, by His grace, persevere in active trust and obedience to Christ until they see Him face to face. The grand mark of those who receive salvation is that they have an enduring attachment to Christ as their Lord and Savior. This enduring faith of believers distinguishes them from those who renounce Christ and prove not to be His. A persevering faith is evidence of God's election and love which gives sure hope of eternal life with Christ.

### **11. The Church**

We believe that the invisible church is the communion of God's people drawn from every tribe, language, people, and nation throughout all the ages. It is made visible in the assembly of believers in local churches, which are marked by the right preaching of God's word and right administration of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The church is governed by the word of God, which teaches that elders are given to oversee the church as pastors, that deacons are to serve the church, and that the congregation, comprised of all members, have the responsibility to defend doctrine and execute discipline when required by Scripture. We affirm that members of local churches are commanded to assemble regularly, promote Christ-honoring unity, and live lives that bring honor and glory to God. The mission of the church is to be a corporate display of God's glory to the world by preaching the gospel and making disciples.

### **12. Baptism and The Lord's Supper**

We believe that Baptism in water is the delightful duty of all believers upon their profession of faith. Baptism is to be

done by immersion, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit; to show forth our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior in a solemn and beautiful symbol. Baptism symbolizes our death to sin and resurrection to a new life and is a response to the command of Christ. Baptism is performed once, upon one's profession of faith, and is required for church membership.

The Lord's Supper is a commemoration of Christ's dying love through the sacred use of bread and the fruit of the vine. This time of remembrance should be taken by baptized believers and members in good standing with a Gospel-preaching local church who prepare for the meal with self-examination to ensure holiness before God and unity with the church. The Lord's Supper is performed regularly at the discretion of each local church.

### **13. Family, Marriage, and Sexuality**

We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of society. Families are composed of people related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. Husband and wife are both made in God's image and have equal value before God; while at the same time possessing distinct roles in the marriage. The husband is to gently lead and sacrificially love his wife as Christ loved the church and the wife is to graciously submit herself to her husband as the church willingly submits to Christ.

We believe that children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and inheritance from the Lord. Parents are to patiently lead their children in the ways of Christ by intentional instruction, gracious discipline, and consistent example based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents for the glory of God and their ultimate good.

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. Any form of fornication, adultery, pornography, homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, or incest are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex.

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance and that all conduct with the intent to adopt or express a gender other than one's birth gender is immoral and therefore sin.

#### **14. Civil Government**

We believe that civil government is divinely appointed by God for the interests and good order of society, and that officials are to be prayed for and rightfully honored. These officials are to be obeyed except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and Ruler over the kings of the earth.

#### **15. The World to Come**

We believe that the end of the world is approaching quickly. On that last day Christ will descend from heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final judgment. At that time, there will be a solemn separation during which the wicked will be judged and sentenced to endless conscious punishment in hell, and the righteous rewarded with endless conscious joy in the new heavens and new earth. This judgment will fix forever the final fate of people in heaven or hell based upon God's unchanging and unchallengeable principles of righteousness. Those belonging to Jesus will have eternal life in the new heavens and the new earth and live in everlasting joy to the glory of God.

#### IV. OTHER STATEMENTS OF FAITH

This church affirms the following Statements of Faith:

1. The Praetorian Project Statement of Beliefs (2011)
2. The Baptist Faith and Message (2000)
3. The Nashville Statement (2017)

These statements will be kept in the Policies and Procedures manual, which shall be available at the church office for members to review.

#### V. MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

We have, by God's grace, been brought to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to love Him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength. We do now, in dependence upon His Spirit, solemnly and joyfully make this covenant with each other.

By God's grace: We will submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final word on all matters of life and doctrine. We will seek to please God by resisting sin and pursuing holiness. We will regularly assemble together to worship God and mutually build each other up in Christ. We will work and pray for the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace with one another. We will use our words to build up one another and glorify God rather than speaking lies, deceit, slander, or gossip. We will show Christian love, affectionate care, and genuine forgiveness toward each other. We will encourage, admonish, and exhibit watchfulness over one another with wisdom and humility in the power of the Holy Spirit. We will raise our children and youth in the training and instruction of the

Lord, and by a pure and loving example seek the salvation of our family and friends. We will rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep, helping to carry each other's burdens. We will defend and maintain a Christ-exalting ministry in this church by supporting and upholding the preaching of the Bible, the right administration of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper, and when necessary the exercise of church discipline. We will cheerfully and regularly contribute to the support of the ministry, the needs of the church, and relief of the poor. We will proclaim the Gospel in our homes, neighborhoods, and to the ends of the earth in whatever way the Lord enables us. We will, when moving from this place, unite with another church where we will carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

#### BY-LAWS

##### ARTICLE 1—MEMBERSHIP

###### Section 1: Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be:

1. a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration,
2. baptized by immersion, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and
3. willing to commit themselves to serve Jesus Christ through the ministry and vision of this church.

The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

###### Section 2: Admission

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall:

1. attend a membership class,
2. interview with at least two elders to give credible evidence of repentance of sin, faith in Christ, and understanding of the gospel,
3. commit to uphold, be governed by, and submit to the governing documents of this church, and
4. be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a three-quarters vote of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### Section 3: Duties and Privileges

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Membership Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of this church consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Further, members are privileged and expected to regularly attend its Lord's Day meetings, faithfully observe the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and submit to this church's discipline and instruction.

Only those who are members of this congregation shall serve in positions of leadership within this church. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve this church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under the oversight of the elders, someone from outside of this church may give instruction from the Scriptures for worship services, conferences, and other specifically determined occasions.

Under Christ, the members of this congregation shall have the final word in matters of doctrine, membership, discipline, and direction. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all Members' Meetings and participate in the affirmation of officers (thereby affirming doctrine), decisions regarding membership status (thereby affirming membership), the discipline of unrepentant members (thereby upholding discipline), the annual church budget (thereby affirming direction), and in other such matters that may be submitted by the elders to the congregation.

### Section 4: Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her scriptural duties as specified in the governing documents of this church, or who is otherwise guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of this church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of this church. Any such action shall be done in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Corinthians 2:6-8; and any other pertinent Scriptures.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from participation in the Lord's Supper for a definite period, removal from office, and/or removal from membership. See Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5.

If private efforts to bring about the member's repentance and reconciliation are unsuccessful, one or more members shall bring the matter to the attention of the elders. The

elders shall review and investigate the matter. After prayer and deliberation, the elders may:

1. Dismiss the matter
2. Take disciplinary action; or
3. Submit the matter to the members at a duly convened members' meeting for a decision

If the members vote to discipline the member, it shall be announced to the members to carry out the biblical admonition to bring about repentance and restoration of the disciplined member. Members who have been removed from membership by this church shall be restored to full membership privileges according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 when their conduct is judged by the elders and the members to be in accordance with the governing documents and biblical repentance.

### Section 5: Removal

This church shall recognize the removal of a person's membership:

1. upon the voluntary resignation of a member,
2. upon the death of the member, or
3. as an act of church discipline, upon the recommendation of the elders, when three-quarters of the members vote to terminate membership.

This church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation from membership for the purpose of:

1. proceeding with a process of church discipline,
2. to protect that member from following false teaching, or
3. for any other reason this church deems necessary or prudent.

In these instances, this church has the right and responsibility to bring any disciplinary process to an orderly conclusion, and to make final determination as to the person's membership status in connection with that process.

If a member departs from this church while under church discipline and thereafter attends another church, the elders shall inform that church of the pending discipline along with the grounds for that action, seeking to encourage the brother or sister to repent and be restored to the Lord and to any people he or she has offended.

### ARTICLE 2—OFFICERS

The biblical offices in this church shall be elder and deacon. In addition, this church recognizes the administrative

offices of clerk and treasurer. All officers shall be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

#### Section 1: Elders

The leadership of this church shall be vested in the elders who are responsible to govern this church, giving themselves to the ministry of the Word and prayer, thereby tending the flock of God in this church. The purpose of this office is to lovingly guide, give oversight to, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry. The elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function. This church shall endeavor to maintain a plurality of elders, exemplifying the biblical model for church leadership as described in Acts 15:4; Acts 14:23; Acts 20:17; Philippians 1:1; Titus 1:5; 1 Peter 5:1; James 5:14.

Since the office of an elder is a biblical one, certain qualifications of spiritual maturity shall be met. The Bible indicates that only men shall hold the office of elder; therefore, only male members shall be considered for this position. Qualifications for elders are described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

The responsibilities of the elders shall include:

1. equipping the membership for the work of the ministry,
2. encouraging sound doctrine and practice,
3. admonishing and correcting error,
4. overseeing the process of church discipline,
5. conducting worship services,
6. overseeing the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper,
7. overseeing the ministries of this church,
8. overseeing the work of the deacons,
9. examination and instruction of prospective members,
10. examination and recommendation of all prospective candidates for offices and positions,
11. ensuring that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share this church's fundamental convictions as expressed in the Statement of Faith and,
12. mobilizing this church for world missions and the establishment of new churches.

#### Section 2: Deacons

This church also recognizes the biblical office of Deacon, which is an office of service open to both men and women who are giving of themselves in service to this church and who possess particular gifts of service.

The purpose of this office is to provide for the physical and practical needs of the church, thereby freeing and enabling the elders to carry out the responsibility of their office.

Qualifications for deacons are described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7.

The deacons shall operate under the oversight of the elders. The responsibilities of the deacons shall include:

1. Meeting the congregation's physical needs
2. Caring for the physical property of the church
3. Encouraging the gifts of service among the members of the church by example
4. Performing various services of administration for the church
5. Freeing and enabling the elders to carry out the responsibilities of their office

#### Section 3: Clerk

The clerk shall be responsible for recording the minutes of all members' meetings of this church, preserving an accurate roll of the membership, and rendering reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the members. The clerk also shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent version of the Constitution and Bylaws are available for all members. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint another member to perform the duties of the clerk.

#### Section 4: Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, shall ensure that all funds and cash assets of this church are properly secured in the name of this church in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer also shall keep full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements in records belonging to this church, and implement adequate controls to ensure that all funds belonging to this church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of this church. The treasurer shall be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of this church at each regular members' meeting; this responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall render to the elders an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of this church as requested by the elders, but in any event at least annually.

#### Section 5: Appointment

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting.

Names of nominees to serve as officers shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting provided the previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior, and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The moderator shall declare elected all officers receiving a three-quarters vote of the members.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

#### Section 6: Removal

An officer's term may be terminated by resignation or dismissal by a three-quarters vote of the members.

### ARTICLE 3—CHURCH CORPORATION

For purposes of the corporation laws of the State of California:

#### Section 1: Directors

The elders shall serve as the directors of this church corporation, and the corporate powers of this church corporation shall be exercised by or under their authority. No salary or compensation shall be paid to any director in his capacity as a director, but nothing herein shall be construed to preclude any director from serving this church in any other permitted capacity and receiving reasonable compensation therefor. Moreover, directors may receive reasonable reimbursement for church-related travel and other approved expenses upon request and submission of proper written documentation.

#### Section 2: Officers

The officers of this church corporation shall be president, secretary, and treasurer, and may include one or more vice presidents as the directors may from time to time determine. The officers must be members of this church, and the president must also be an elder of this church. Unless otherwise determined by the directors, the lead pastor shall serve as the president, the church clerk shall serve as the secretary, and the church treasurer shall serve as the treasurer of this church corporation. In the event of a vacancy in the office of secretary or treasurer because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other reason, the directors may appoint a member of this church to serve in such office on an interim basis until such time as a successor has been nominated and elected by this church.

#### Section 3: Annual Meeting of the Directors

The annual meeting of the board of directors shall be held contemporaneously with an elders' meeting. Notice of such elders' meeting given at least two weeks prior shall

constitute proper notice of the annual meeting of the board of directors.

#### Section 4: Annual Meeting of the Members

The annual meeting of the members shall be held contemporaneously with a members' meeting. Notice of such members' meeting given in accordance with the Bylaws shall constitute proper notice of the annual meeting of the members.

### ARTICLE 4—PASTORAL STAFF

#### Section 1: Lead Pastor

Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public meetings of this church shall be vested in the lead pastor. The lead pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described above and shall be recognized by this church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching, teaching, and equipping. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, oversee the administration of the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and perform such other duties, any of which may be delegated to the other elders.

#### Section 2: Associate Pastors

This church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of associate. An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described above, and shall be recognized by this church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching, teaching, and equipping. He shall assist the lead pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in the Bylaws, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.

In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume the responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

#### Section 3: Support Staff

The elders may create or dissolve paid support staff positions. Support staff shall serve under the supervision of the pastors and the other elders. Support staff shall affirm and support the governing documents of this church, and shall exemplify godly character.

#### Section 4: Calling of the Lead Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of lead pastor, the same process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, this church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential

lead pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as lead pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of his wife if he is married) must be given at all church services on two Sundays following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

#### Section 5: Calling of an Associate Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of associate pastor, the same process of calling an elder must be followed. In addition, however, this church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at all church services on two Sundays following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

### ARTICLE 5—MEETINGS AND VOTING

#### Section 1: Worship Meetings

This church shall meet every Lord's Day (Sunday) and may schedule any other meetings deemed necessary by the elders.

#### Section 2: Members' Meetings

There shall be a regular members' meeting at least once a quarter, at some time apart from a public worship service. The date, time, and location of regular members' meetings shall be announced at the public service of this church within two weeks preceding the meeting.

Special members' meetings shall be called as required by the elders. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at the public service of this church.

An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of this church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to this church by the responsible members.

A budget shall be approved by the congregation at a members' meeting not less than one month before the start

of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures shall continue at the prior year's level. A fiscal year of this church shall be from January 1 to December 31.

#### Section 3: Voting

A three-quarters vote is necessary on all matters. All votes shall be cast at a regular or special members' meeting. Votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present. Upon the discretion of the moderator, a members' meeting shall be postponed if a sufficient representation of the congregation is not in attendance. Some matters presented to the congregation may require a period of consideration before voting. The elders shall determine the instances where this is the case.

### ARTICLE 6—POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The elders and any of their designees shall be responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance, and periodic review of policies and procedures for the day-to-day functions of this church. Such policies and procedures shall be maintained in a Policies and Procedures Manual, which shall be available at the church office for members to review.

### ARTICLE 7—WRITTEN DOCTRINES

The elders and any of their designees shall be responsible for overseeing the development, maintenance, and periodic review of written doctrines. The purpose of these written doctrines is to make a clear statement of this church's position on controversial issues within the church (local and universal) and culture.

### ARTICLE 8—NON-PROFIT STATUS AND DISPOSITION OF CHURCH PROPERTY

This church is not organized for profit.

#### Section 1: Division

In the case of organic division of this church, all assets shall belong to those members who abide by this document as determined by the Praetorian Project.

#### Section 2: Dissolution

Should conditions arise when, for any reason, this church's work cannot continue, all assets shall be transferred to the Praetorian Project.

#### Section 3: Consolidation

Should the conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of similar biblical faith is advisable, the elders shall be authorized by a three-quarters vote of the congregation to negotiate the terms of such a consolidation. Should the terms of said negotiation be



acceptable, the congregation shall approve the consolidation by a three-quarters vote.

#### ARTICLE 9—AFFILIATIONS

This church shall work in friendly cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention, the California Southern Baptist Convention, and the Inland Empire Baptist Association.

#### ARTICLE 10—REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Revisions or amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, or Membership Covenant shall be made only in the following manner:

1. Any member of this church can provide a suggested revision or amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, or Membership Covenant in writing to the elders of this church.
2. For a revision or amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, or Membership Covenant to be affected, the elders shall confirm its consistency with Scripture and unanimously affirm the revision or amendment.
3. After approval from the elders, the revision or amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, or Membership Covenant of this church shall be presented at a members' meeting for affirmation.
4. Any revision or amendment to the Constitution and Bylaws, Statement of Faith, or Membership Covenant shall be approved by a three-quarters vote.