

**BYLAWS
OF
COMMUNITY HARVEST CHURCH
(Also noted in this document as the Church)**

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

This church shall comprise people who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who evidence regeneration in their lives.

A. Membership

1. The membership of this church shall comprise people who:
 - a. Publicly confess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and evidence regeneration through obedient faith to God as revealed in Scripture and the fruit of the Spirit.
 - b. Verbally pledge agreement with ARTICLE II of Constitution, ARTICLES OF FAITH
 - c. Strive to follow and verbally agree to the Church Covenant.
2. Voting rights shall be extended to active members in good standing and who are 18 years or older.

B. Application for membership

1. Applicants shall fill out the Community Harvest Church membership application form, meet with a pastor/elder to give their personal testimony of conversion and commitment to this church and make a public profession of faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Applicants shall verbally agree to and support the covenant, Articles of Faith, Purpose, Mission and Core Values of Community Harvest Baptist Church.
3. Applicants shall be recommended by the Elder Team for membership and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members.

C. Dismissal of Members

Membership of Community Harvest Baptist Church may be terminated due to any of the following reasons.

1. **By Letter.** Members, upon request, shall be dismissed to unite with another church designated in the request. All Church letters shall be sent by a member of the Elder Team or an individual approved by the Elders.
2. **By Request.** If a member wishes to withdraw from this Church, his/her name, they may do so by letter of resignation.
3. **By Removal.** The Elder Team may remove a member from membership in the Church if it concludes that the action would be in the best interest of the Church. Removal must be done according to the guidelines given in Matthew 18:15-22. The purpose of removal is restoration of the member, unity and the purity of the Church.

D. Inactive Members

1. Those, who for any cause, except physical disability or who are temporarily absent from the community, have absented themselves from the regular services of this church for three months or more, shall be considered inactive.
2. An inactive member may become an active member again by request to and approval of the lead pastor and the Elder Team.
3. Inactive members shall not be eligible to vote on any matter.

E. Associate Membership

Students and others temporarily residing in the Lincoln, NE area and who are members of an evangelical church may apply for associate membership. Qualifications are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that their home church membership must be retained. A letter of commendation may be sought from the applicant's home church. Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members.

F. Discipline

1. It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to its members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist any troubled member and to resolve conflict in the church. The Lead Pastor, Elder Team, Leadership Team and the Deacon Team are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for our unity in the Holy Spirit, which is one of our greatest testimonies for Jesus to the world (John 17:20-23), our mutual love and grace, and redemption rather than punishment.
2. Should some serious condition exist that would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, including its testimony to the world, the Lead Pastor, Elder Team, Leadership Team and Deacon Team will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accordance with the guidelines given by our Lord Jesus in Matthew 18 in a spirit of love and grace. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, a majority vote of the Elder Team is required. The Elder Team may proceed to declare the person to be no longer in the membership of the church. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian love, kindness and forbearance. These meetings shall be preceded by a time of prayer and fasting as the Elder Team seeks the Holy Spirit's presence, power and guidance in matters of discipline.
3. The Elder Team by their discretion may restore to membership any person previously excluded, upon request of the excluded person upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

ARTICLE II – GOVERNMENT

A. The Headship of Christ

The government of the Church and the authority to govern proceed from Jesus Christ. The government of the Church shall be focused on seeking and maintaining the Lordship and direction of Jesus Christ over the ministry and other Christian activities in which the church is engaged. All those in authority shall continually seek His mind and will, through prayer, His Spirit and the Word of God in all actions and decisions.

B. Human Leadership

Community Harvest Baptist Church will be led by Spirit-filled individuals that meet the spiritual qualifications given in Scripture and who are members that have a passion for the work of Jesus Christ. These individuals may or may not be monetarily compensated for their duties and they will serve on one or more of the following groups: Lead Pastor, Elder Team, Deacon Team and Leadership Team.

C. Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor is an Elder and chief under shepherd of the church. He shall be the spiritual leader of the Church. He shall lead the church by developing and implementing the church's vision, giving spiritual direction to the church, equipping members for service and teaching God's Word. He may appoint other pastoral and ministerial staff to serve with him in the direction of the church and its ministries. The staff may or may not be compensated for their duties. Compensation shall be determined by the Elder Team in agreement with the Financial Stewardship Team as outlined in II.G.

1. Qualifications of Lead Pastor:

- a. The Lead Pastor shall meet the biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- b. The Lead Pastor shall meet the basic leadership qualifications recognized by the apostles of the early church: good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom (Acts 6:3). These qualities must be recognized by the church before and during his ministry. Evidences of a Spirit-filled life shall include the fruit of the Spirit, submissive spirit (Ephesians 5:21), prayer life (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18), witnessing (John 15:26-27) and a godly relationship with his family (Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:4). Note: some of these evidences are not specifically mentioned as qualifications (e.g., prayer and witnessing); however, by inference these are qualities that a Spirit-filled individual will manifest.
- c. The Lead Pastor must be a good example to the church, and must therefore joyfully agree to the church covenant both in word and practice, including, but not limited to, demonstrating love for the church and a spirit of unity, a committed prayer life, devotion to his own family, faithful service, cheerful and regular financial support of the ministry, hospitality, and a desire to help others grow to maturity.

2. Selection of Lead Pastor.

In the event that a Lead Pastor needs to be selected, a Pastor Selection Team shall be put in place with the responsibility of prayerfully seeking, interviewing and presenting a candidate to the church membership for prayerful consideration and vote. When possible, the composition of this team should be a reflection of the church in its age, race, and gender. Members of the Pastor Selection Team will be selected and come from the following Teams when possible:

- a. The Pastor Selection Team shall comprise up to eight persons.
- b. The Elder Team will, by selection within their group, provide up to two persons to serve on the Pastor Selection Team.
- c. The Deacon Team will, by selection within their group, provide up to two persons to serve on the Pastor Selection Team.
- d. The Leadership Team will, by selection within their group, provide up to two persons to serve on the Pastor Selection Team.
- e. The members established by these teams will together select up to two persons from the active membership of Community Harvest Church and that do not currently serve on any of the following teams: Pastor/Staff, Elder Team, Leadership Team or Deacon Team.
- f. If there are not enough spiritually mature church members or members of these groups, then the number of individuals serving on the Pastor Selection Team shall be lowered to equal the number available.
- g. The Pastor Selection Team, Elder Team and congregation shall set aside of period of time for prayer and fasting before making any decisions on any candidates. A second church-wide period of prayer and fasting shall also be observed before a candidate is brought to the congregation for a vote.
- h. The Pastor Selection Team will present their first choice to the Elder Team for consideration. The elders shall evaluate the candidate to determine whether he meets the qualifications outlined in Article V, Section 1 and Article VI, Section 3A. If the candidate does not meet these qualifications, the elders will ask for the Team's second choice and so on until a qualified candidate is selected. When a candidate is found that meets these qualifications, the Elder Team shall notify the congregation of the following:
 - i. The name and qualifications of the Lead Pastor candidate.

- ii. The date(s) and time(s) of his visit with the Church.
- iii. The date and time of the second church-wide time of prayer and fasting.
- iv. The date and time of the Special Meeting of the church during which time the church will vote for the candidate as Lead Pastor.
- v. This information shall be given to the Church at least two weeks before the Elder Team formally presents the candidate to the Church for its consideration and action.
- vi. Selection of a Lead Pastor shall be preceded by a time of open discussion by the Church followed by secret ballot, and shall require a 90% affirmative vote of those present and qualified to vote. A candidate called to be Lead Pastor shall be given a time to ask questions about the results of the vote, and shall be given up to four weeks from the time of the vote to declare whether he accepts the offer.

3. Term of Service.

The Lead Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. The Lead Pastor may be removed from office by resignation or grievance. If the Lead Pastor resigns, he must give the church at least 30 days written notice, unless waived by the Elder Team. Where a grievance exists against the Pastor due to alleged conduct on his part unfitting the Lead Pastor, the Elder Team may receive the accusation only when brought by two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). If the Elder Team, after thorough investigation and consideration, reaches consensus that the grievance is true and substantial, then the Lead Pastor may be recommended for removal from office by a consensus, but not less than two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining Elders. Should the Elder Team recommend removal of the Lead Pastor, then the matter shall be brought before the church at a special called meeting. The vote to remove The Lead Pastor shall be by secret ballot and require a 2/3's vote by those present. Upon written notice, and except for justifiable cause, the Church will be obligated to pay full benefits for one (1) month, with at least partial benefits possible for up to six (6) months under extenuating circumstances.

4. Licensing and Ordination.

Licensing and ordination are traditions that provide a means for the Church to set apart and recognize men that God has already set apart for the gospel ministry. The Lead Pastor and Elder Team will do all that they can to determine the genuine call of God on a man's life; therefore, the final decision to license and/or ordain a man shall be preceded by a time of prayer and fasting to determine the Lord's will, and according to the following:

a. Licensing.

- i. The Elder Team may license any man who has shown by his life and has heard the call to the gospel ministry and who meets the qualification of an elder outlined in Article VII.A.
- ii. Any man who is licensed by the Church may be ordained after a minimum period of one year, during which time he shall be observed by the Elder Team to determine that his life and character confirm his call to the gospel ministry.

b. Ordination.

- i. The Elder Team may recommend any qualified and licensed man, as outlined in Article VII.A and VI.A (if applicable), for ordination to the gospel ministry; licensing shall not be a requirement for a man who was recognized as a pastor by another church or denomination that is of like faith, and has at least a one year working relationship with the Lead Pastor and/or member(s) of the Elder Team.
- ii. Upon a man's recommendation for ordination, the Elder Team shall assemble a special ordination council to examine the candidate. The council shall include members of the Elder Team and the Lead Pastor and may include other qualified individuals.
- iii. Upon a majority vote of the ordination council, the candidate shall be presented to the Church for final approval by a simple majority vote. An approved candidate's call to the gospel ministry shall be recognized at a special ordination service. The service shall be announced to the Church at least two weeks in advance and shall be conducted by the Lead Pastor or someone designated by the Lead Pastor.

D. ELDER TEAM

The Elder Team shall consist of the Lead Pastor and a group of biblically qualified men from the membership of the Church. All Elders must recognize that they are the under shepherds of the Church, and are therefore responsible before the Lord to actively shepherd the people of God, loving and caring for them by ministering to them (Acts 20:17-35). It is important for each Elder to recognize that an Elder is not someone who simply occupies a seat of authority, but he is to be a servant that follows Jesus' example (Mark 10:37-45). Elders are responsible to equip the saints for service so that the body will be built up, unified and mature in Christ; the Elder Team must do everything in its

power to preserve the unity of the Church, avoiding such behaviors as divisiveness, pride, selfishness and a critical spirit, all of which dishonor our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 4:1-13).

Each member of the Elder Team will actively serve in specific areas of ministry within the church. The Elder Team shall act as a governing body that shall support the Lead Pastor and other staff in the ministry of the church by providing spiritual counsel and wisdom and that shall provide the pastor a means of accountability as he leads the overall biblical ministry and direction of the church. Members of the Elder Team may or may not be monetarily compensated for their duties. Any compensation shall be decided by the Elder Team and Financial Stewardship Team according to II.G.

1. **Qualification of Elders.** Members of the Elder Team shall meet the same qualifications of the Lead Pastor.

- a. Each Elder shall meet the biblical qualifications given in 1Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- b. Each Elder shall meet the basic leadership qualifications recognized by the apostles of the early church: good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom (Acts 6:3). These qualities must be recognized by the church before and during his ministry. Evidences of a Spirit-filled life shall include the fruit of the Spirit, submissive spirit (Ephesians 5:21), prayer life (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18), witnessing (John 15:26-27) and a godly relationship with his family (Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:4). Note: some of these evidences are not specifically mentioned as qualifications (e.g., prayer and witnessing); however, by inference these are qualities that a Spirit-filled individual will manifest.
- c. Elders must be good examples to the church, and must therefore joyfully agree to the church covenant both in word and practice, including, but not limited to, demonstrating love for the church and a spirit of unity, a committed prayer life, devotion to his own family, faithful service, cheerful and regular financial support of the ministry, hospitality, and a desire to help others grow to maturity.

2. **Selection of Elders.**

- a. The initial Elders of Community Harvest Church will be selected by the Lead Pastor. Once the initial Elder Team is in place articles II.D.2.b.-c will apply to the selection of subsequent elders.
- b. Upon public request by the Elder Team, any voting member of the church may suggest a candidate for the Elder Team. Members shall bring any candidate before the Elder Team for their recommendations and approval. The Elder Team shall

examine each candidate to insure that he meets the qualifications in articles II.D. 1.a.-c. The Elder Team shall vote for approval of each candidate after a time of prayer and fasting, being convinced to the best of their ability that the candidate meets the requirements given in articles II.D.1.a-c. A candidate that is approved by the Elder Team will be presented before the congregation for a final vote.

- c. Final selection for an Elder shall be by secret ballot following an open discussion by the Church, and shall require a simple majority of those present and qualified to vote. This vote shall be preceded by a church-wide time of prayer and fasting.
- 3. Term.** Members of the Elder Team shall be asked to serve for at least one year with a maximum term of three years. An Elder may be reappointed for a consecutive term by following the procedures outlined in Article II.D.2a-c. An Elder may resign upon approval of the Elder Team. Elders may be removed from office by grievance. Where a grievance exists against an Elder due to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an Elder, the Elder Team may receive the accusation only when brought by two or more witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). If the Elder Team, after thorough investigation and consideration, reaches consensus that the grievance is true and substantial, then the Elder may be recommended for removal from office by a consensus, but not less than two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining Elders. Should the Elder Team recommend removal, then the matter shall be brought before the church at a special called meeting. The vote to remove an Elder shall be by secret ballot and require a 2/3's vote by those present.
- 4. Number.** The number of Elders shall be determined according to the needs of the church, number of qualified men and the direction of the Holy Spirit.
- 5. Meetings.** The Elder Team shall meet with the Senior Pastor at least once a quarter.

E. Deacon Team

The Deacon Team shall be in place to promote unity in the church (Acts 6) by serving the physical needs of the Church and supporting the ministries of the Pastor, Elders and Leadership team through the coordination of church ministries under the direction of the Elder Team and Lead Pastor. The Deacon Team's ministry shall include, but not be limited to, benevolence, hospitality, serving ministries and care of any physical property.

- 1. Qualifications.** The Deacons shall meet the qualifications outlined in Scripture.
 - a. Each Deacon shall meet the biblical qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - b. Each Deacon shall meet the basic spiritual qualifications recognized by the apostles of the early church: good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with

wisdom (Acts 6:3). These qualities must be recognized by the church before and during the deacon's ministry. Evidences of a Spirit-filled life shall include the fruit of the Spirit, submissive spirit (Ephesians 5:21), a desire to promote unity (Ephesians 4:1-6), prayer life (Romans 8:26; Ephesians 6:18), witnessing (John 15:26-27) and a godly relationship with the deacon's family (Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:4). Note: some of these evidences are not specifically mentioned as qualifications (e.g., prayer and witnessing); however, by inference these are qualities that a Spirit-filled individual will manifest.

- c. Deacons must be good examples to the church, and must therefore joyfully agree to the church covenant both in word and practice, including, but not limited to, demonstrating love for the church and a spirit of unity, a committed prayer life, devotion to personal family, faithful service, cheerful and regular financial support of the ministry, hospitality, and a desire to help others grow to maturity.

2. Selection of Deacons.

- a. Upon public request by the Elder Team, any voting member of the church may suggest a candidate for the Deacon Team. Members shall bring any candidate before the Elder Team for their recommendations and approval. The Elder Team shall examine each candidate to insure that the candidate meets the qualifications in articles II.E.1.a.-c. The Elder Team shall vote for approval of each candidate after a time of prayer and fasting, being convinced to the best of their ability that the candidate meets the requirements given in articles II.E. 1.a-c. A candidate that is approved by the Elder Team will be presented before the congregation for a final vote.
- b. Final selection for a Deacon shall be by secret ballot following an open discussion by the Church, and shall require a simple majority of those present and qualified to vote. This vote shall be preceded by a church-wide time of prayer and fasting.

3. Term.

Members of the Deacon Team shall be asked to serve for at least one year with a maximum term of three years. A Deacon may be reappointed for a consecutive term by following the procedures outlined in Article II.E.2a-b. A Deacon may resign upon approval of the Elder Team. A Deacon may be removed from office by grievance. Where a grievance exists against a Deacon due to alleged conduct on his part unfitting a Deacon, the Elder Team may receive the accusation only when brought by two or more witnesses. If the Elder Team, after thorough investigation and consideration, reaches consensus that the grievance is true and substantial, then the Deacon may be recommended for removal from office by a consensus, but not less

than two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Elders. Should the Elder Team recommend removal of a Deacon, then the matter shall be brought before the church at a special called meeting. The vote to remove a Deacon shall be by secret ballot and require a 2/3's vote by those present.

4. **Number.** The number of Deacons shall be determined according to the needs of the church, number of qualified men and the direction of the Holy Spirit.
5. **Meetings.** The Deacon Team will meet at least once a quarter.

F. Leadership Team

The Leadership Team shall be members of the church that have been selected to lead in specific areas of ministry within the Church. They will act as a management team to help the Lead Pastor implement the vision and coordinate the ministry of the church. Members of The Leadership Team may or may not be monetarily compensated for their duties.

1. Selection of Members.

- a. The initial members of the Leadership Team will be selected by the Lead Pastor. Subsequent members will be selected according to Article II.F.1.b.
 - b. Members of the current Leadership Team shall submit names of persons for consideration for any open Leadership Team position or the addition of a position. The persons for consideration must be active members of Community Harvest Church. The Lead Pastor will work with the current leadership team to make the final selection.
2. **Term.** Members of the Leadership Team shall be asked to serve a one-year commitment subject to reaffirmation in subsequent years by the Lead Pastor.
 3. **Meetings.** The Leadership Team shall meet at least quarterly.

G. Financial Stewardship Team

This team shall have the responsibility of developing an annual budget and of assuring that the adopted budget is followed. It shall recommend an annual budget and financial policies to the Lead Pastor, Elder and Leadership Teams and foster and promote programs of stewardship. The Financial Stewardship Team shall construct an annual budget proposal by the month of October for the next calendar year. The Financial Stewardship Team's annual budget proposal shall be submitted to the Elder, Deacon and Leadership Teams for consideration. Upon approval of the Elder and Leadership Teams, the budget proposal shall be submitted to the congregation for final adoption. The budget

proposal will be adopted by a 2/3's vote by the congregation. The final budget must be adopted by the month of December.

1. Selection of Members.

- a.** The initial members of the Financial Stewardship Team will be selected by the Lead Pastor. Subsequent members will be selected according to Article II.G.1.b.
 - b.** Members of the current Financial Stewardship Team shall submit names of persons for consideration for any open Financial Stewardship Team position or the addition of a position. The persons for consideration must be active members of Community Harvest Church. The Elder Team will work with the current leadership team to make the final selection.
- 2. Term.** Members of the Financial Team shall be asked to serve a one-year commitment subject to reaffirmation in subsequent years by the Elder Team.
- 3. Meetings.** The Financial Stewardship Team shall meet at least quarterly.

H. Other Positions

Other positions are necessary to serve and assist the leadership of the church in their duties.

- 1. Church Treasurer.** The Church Treasurer shall oversee the financial activity of the Church. The Church Treasurer will fulfill day-to-day financial activities until the church is large enough to add additional support staff. The Church Treasurer will give written approval for church expenditures over \$1,000 and oral approval for expenditures under \$1,000.
 - a. Selection.** The Church Treasurer will be selected by the Elder Team and must be a member of the church. The Church Treasurer may or may not be monetarily compensated for his duties.
- 2. Support Staff.** As the need arises positions of support staff will be required. These positions may or may not be monetarily compensated for their duties.
 - a. Selection.** Any support staff will be selected by the Lead Pastor. If compensation is included, the Elder Team will assist in developing compensation packages.

I. General

1. Church Meetings.

- a. **Annual Meeting.** The church body shall come together at least once a year for a church meeting. The annual meeting will be held on the third Sunday in January. The Elder Team will give communication about regular church activities. The meeting will be led by the Lead Pastor or a member of the Elder Team. Any items for the congregation to affirm or the membership to vote on will be presented at this meeting.

- b. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings may be called by the Elder Team as the need arises. The Elder Team must announce any special meeting at least two Sundays prior to the scheduled date of the meeting.

- c. **Voting.** A vote of acceptance would be constituted by a majority of the membership present, unless otherwise stated in these bylaws.

2. Amendments and Bylaws. This document was drafted by faithful but fallible people. Should it become necessary to revise this document in any way, an ad-hoc Revision Team shall be formed by the Lead Pastor to revise this document. Any proposed amendment shall be presented to the Elder Team for consideration at the next regularly scheduled meeting. Such proposed amendment shall not be adopted until approved by majority vote of the church membership.

Adopted at Lincoln, Nebraska, this _____ day of _____, 2010.

Director

Director

Director