

The guidelines stated below are taken from Sample Constitution and Bylaws. We would also suggest that you request a copy of the Potential Leadership Questionair and Leading By Example. These and other materials are available at no cost.

Suggested Guidelines On Church Structure

CHURCH AUTHORITY

God's form of government is *theocratic* in character with checks and balances. That is to say, God chooses, calls and equips persons to be leaders in the church, investing and delegating to them degrees of authority according to His will. These persons are called "*elders*". There is a variety of personality, degrees of spirituality and measures of God-given grace and ability within the eldership. God places the mantle of leadership upon one elder. This man is referred to as the "*senior pastor*". The senior pastor may function in any one of the five-fold gifting (apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist, Ephesians 4:11).

The senior pastor and elders make up the "*board of directors*" and set the direction of the church. The senior pastor presents final decisions to the congregation and speaks as the voice of authority for the eldership. The group of elders confer and agree on the decisions for the church as the board of directors, acting as checks and balances.

The local church is under Christ's leadership, and all ministerial authority is exercised by each local church assembled as a congregation and decisions thus made shall not be subject to change or reversal by any other ecclesiastical body unless agreed to by the senior pastor and elders. This church is autonomous (self-governing), but advice and counsel from qualified ministers of other bodies of like principals and faith may be sought. This church may also affiliate with other organizations of like beliefs for the furtherance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The activities of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures.

ORDINATION

Any male member of this church, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God and a desire for the work of the ministry, who is in agreement with the statement of faith (see Article II) and possesses the qualifications stated in Article VI, Section 4, may be considered for ordination as an elder, deacon, or five-fold minister (apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, Ephesians 4:11).

The senior pastor shall call a meeting of the elders to examine the qualifications of the candidate. Following unanamous approval by the eldership, a public ordination service shall be held.

God's design is for men to be the heads of their homes, as Christ is the head of the church and to exercise governmental authority in the church. Because of this, men serve in our church as five-fold ministers, deacons, and elders (Ephesians 5:23, Titus 1:6).

We recognize that women play a vital role and we strongly support women in ministry that avoid unscripratural practices in those ministries. While women have great liberty for ministry they are restricted from the exercise of governmental authority in the Church.

CHURCH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SECTION 1 – DESIGNATION OF CHURCH OFFICERS:

The board of directors shall be comprised of the elders and the senior pastor who will head the Board. The board of directors shall be the governing body of the church and shall transact church business and act as legal trustees, have supervision over all endowment and trust funds, see that an independent financial report be done annually, see that adequate insurance coverage is maintained, and perform such duties as are required by the laws of the State of Colorado.

The board of directors shall consist of a minimum of three (3), there shall be the president, secretary and treasurer, board members may be added as the need arises, these being taken from qualified members who shall agree with the Statement of Faith (Article II), have a desire for eldership and are qualified to serve as stated in Article VI, Section 4. Prospective board members (elders) shall be nominated by the senior pastor and confirmed by a unanimous vote of the eldership.

(A) Duties of Secretary

It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep an accurate record of the proceedings of the meetings of the board

and of the yearly or special congregational meetings of business, and all such other duties as pertain to this office as may be prescribed by the Board.

(B) Duties of Treasurer

The treasurer shall oversee the care and custody of all funds, securities and deposits of the church in such bank or banks as the board of directors may select.

The board of directors shall, by resolution fix all matters of signatures at the point of taking office, which shall continue during the tenure of office, or until changed by the board of directors.

The treasurer shall at all reasonable time exhibit his books or accounts to any member of the board of directors or committee appointed by the senior pastor for that purpose where such inspection has been requested by the board on that subject.

SECTION 2 – SENIOR PASTOR:

(A) The senior pastor, as spiritual authority of the local church, shall perform the following duties for an indefinite period:

- Devote time to prayer and study of the Scriptures
- Supervise the teaching ministries of the church
- Provide nurturing care and counsel to the congregation regarding spiritual growth and development
- Act as moderator at all church business meetings (unless delegated to another person for a specified time)
- Serve as the president of the corporation
- Supervise the day-to-day business affairs of the church
- Hire church staff, subject to approval of the elders
- Supervise all church staff, whether paid or volunteer

(B) The senior pastor's compensation shall be specified by the elders and reviewed at the beginning of each fiscal year. Compensation shall include, but is not limited to, the following: salary, housing allowance, medical insurance, and vacation pay.

SECTION 3 – ELDERS:

Elders shall oversee and govern the ministry of the church and demonstrate leadership by personal example under the direction of the senior pastor. They shall meet the spiritual needs of the church through visitation, counsel, hospitality, mediation of disputes among members, study and ministry of the word, and prayer. They shall meet together, pray, and review the progress of the church.

If an elder becomes unqualified to serve (as determined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9), he shall no longer be considered an elder, and shall no longer have the authority and responsibility of an elder.

SECTION 4 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS:

(A) An elder must be a “born-again” believer in Jesus Christ and must agree with the Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws of (*Your church name*).

(B) An elder is called to lead by example (I Peter 5:3, I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9). Therefore, we believe that the men who are selected to this position should be those who have a firm conviction and understanding of leadership by service to others (I Corinthians 10:22-33, Romans 14:13-23).

(C) An elder shall be a man of outstanding moral character, temperate, prudent, honest, gentle, not self-willed, self-controlled, just, devout, and not covetous. If married, he must be in a monogamous heterosexual relationship.

(D) An elder shall be a man who manages his home well, and if married, whose wife and children follow his example.

(E) An elder shall be a man who: conducts himself with integrity, is hospitable, has a good reputation in his community and business relations, is not given to drunkenness, is not belligerent, is not contentious or quarrelsome.

(F) An elder shall be a mature believer who is knowledgeable in the Scriptures and who is able to teach, exhort, and convince.

SECTION 5 – DEACONS:

Deacons shall carry on various ministries within the church to meet the physical needs of the church under the direction of the senior pastor and elders. In cooperation with the senior pastor, they shall make provision for the observance of the ordinances of the church, pray for those in their care, assist in the disbursement of benevolence funds, care for the work of ushering and extending the official hospitality of the church to its members and visitors. The deacons shall assist the senior pastor, ministry staff, and elders in caring for the administrative needs of the church's various ministries as directed by the senior pastor.

If a deacon becomes unqualified to serve (as determined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9), they shall no longer be considered a deacon, and shall no longer have the authority and responsibility of a deacon.

SECTION 6 – QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACONS:

(A) A deacon must be a “born-again” believer in Jesus Christ and must agree with the Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws of Integrity Christian Fellowship.

(B) A deacon holds a position of trust and authority and is assigned specific tasks that minister to the physical needs of the church and its members. He must be full of wisdom, faith, and have a good reputation (Acts 6:3-6).

(C) A deacon shall be a man who is respectable, maintaining a pure conscience before God and man, careful in speech, sincere, not given to drunkenness, not greedy for money, and trustworthy. If married, he must be in a monogamous heterosexual relationship. (I Timothy 3:8-11).

(D) A deacon shall be a man who manages his home well, and if married, whose wife and children follow his example (I Timothy 3:12).

(E) A deacon shall serve the Lord and others and have demonstrated this commitment prior to becoming a deacon.

SECTION 7- AGENTS OF THE CHURCH:

When the senior pastor and the elders lack the specific skills necessary to accomplish required objectives of the church such as building projects that require architectural or construction expertise, equipment purchases, or specialized knowledge and experience, an agent may be appointed to represent the church.

The agent of the church is selected and approved by unanimous vote of the board of directors, and shall remain in the position only as long as it takes to complete his assigned tasks. The agent of the church may have certain powers of decision making, or purchase authority, if agreed to by the board of directors and only for the duration of the assigned task or tasks. These powers must first be approved unanimously by the elders.

Once appointed and approved, the agent may carry out his duties as required, make decisions or purchases as necessary on behalf of the church. Once the agreed upon task (or tasks) has been completed, all such privileges and authority are revoked.

ACCOUNTABILITY BOARD

(Your church name) recognizes five men who are serving or have served as senior pastors. These are seasoned men with proven ministry skills and five-fold calling. These five men serve as an outside accountability board for this congregation. The purpose of the accountability board is to provide spiritual covering. They will advise and pray with the senior pastor of *(Your church name)*. The accountability board has the authority to investigate and discipline or remove the senior pastor of *(Your church name)*. They are initially selected by the senior pastor and confirmed by the elders.

The senior pastor may be disciplined or removed for sexual immorality, financial impropriety, teaching doctrine contrary to the Statement of Faith in Article II, or being unqualified to serve as an elder (as determined in 1 Timothy 3: 1-13 and Titus 1:6-9). The accountability board may be contacted by a majority of the elders after first following the procedure listed in Matthew 18:16-20. In the event the accountability board is requested to investigate alleged misconduct, a majority vote of the five accountability board members is required to take disciplinary action. If the senior pastor becomes unqualified to serve as an elder (as determined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9), the accountability board must require him to resign.

The elders shall announce the decision of the accountability board to the congregation. No vote by the congregation will be needed, since the decision of the accountability board is final.

Each year the senior pastor may replace one member of the accountability board. Once confirmed by the Elders, the change will be recorded into the minutes of a church business meeting. If disciplinary action is being considered, changes in the Accountability Board may not be made until its work is completed.