



Constitution and Bylaws



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Preface

This *Constitution and Bylaws* document is compiled under the supervision of the Elder Team and the voting members of Word of Life Baptist Church, Alpena, Michigan.

The Constitution generally contains the most essential provisions relating to itself as an organization. The Constitution is the central document defining who the corporation is, what officers give leadership to the corporation and how its Constitution and Bylaws are amended.

The Bylaws set forth various procedures and rules regarding corporate operations. The Bylaws are the central document defining how the corporation must be operated.

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Table of Contents

Preface	2
Word of Life Baptist Church Covenant	5
Word of Life Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement	6-7
Word of Life Baptist Church Constitution	
Article 1 - Name	8
Article 2 - Denominational Affiliation	8
Article 3 - Purpose/Mission/Vision	8
Article 4 - Membership	9
Article 5 - Ordinances.....	9
1. Baptism.....	9
2. The Lord's Supper.....	9
Article 6 - Marriage.....	9
Article 7 - Church Discipline	9-10
Article 8 - Corporate Officers.....	10
Article 9 - Appointed Ministry Teams	10
Article 10 - Other Organizations	10
Article 11 - Amendments	10
Statement of Adoption.....	11
Word of Life Baptist Church Bylaws	
Article 1 - Membership	12
Section 1 - Process	12
A. Membership	
1. Baptism.....	12
2. Letter.....	12
3. Experience	12
4. Restoration.....	12
5. Reconciliation.....	12
B. Membership Types	
1. Active	12
2. Inactive	12-13
3. Associate	13
C. Dismissal from Membership	
1. Letter of Transfer.....	13
2. Lapsed Membership.....	13
3. Exclusion.....	13
Section 2 – Privileges, Responsibilities and Conduct of Members.....	13-14
Article 2 - Church Organization	14
A. Plurality of Elders.....	14
B. Deacon/Deaconess.....	15
1. Outreach & Assimilation Team	15
2. Pastoral Care Team.....	15
3. Youth & Family Team	15

4. Children & Family Team.....	15
5. Teaching & Discipleship Team.....	15
6. Facilities/Trustee Team.....	15
7. Finance Team.....	15
Article 3 - Church Officers and Duties	16
Section 1 - Elders.....	16
A. General Elder Description	16
B. Pastoral Elders.....	16-17
C. Pastoral Elder Roles	17
1. Senior Pastoral Elder	17
2. Associate/Assistant Pastoral Elders.....	17
D. Non-staff Elders	17-19
Section 2 - Elected Non-Elder Officers	19-21
A. Deacons/Deaconesses	19
1. Membership	19
2. Duties.....	19
B. Trustees.....	20
1. Membership	20
2. Duties.....	20
C. Church Clerk.....	20-21
D. Treasurer.....	21
E. Financial Secretary	21
Article 4 - Meetings and Elections	21
Section 1 - Meetings of the Church	21
A. Church Services	21
B. Church Business Meetings	22
C. Church Business Procedures	22
Sections 2 - Voting	22-23
A. General Guidelines	22
B. Annual Election.....	22-23
C. Staff Selection	23
Article 5 - Audits and Records and Policies.....	23
Statement of Adoption.....	24



Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus the Christ as our Lord and Savior, and having given public confession of our faith through baptism in the name of the triune God, we do now in the presence of God joyfully and sincerely enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

(John 1:12; Romans 10:9; Matthew 28:19; Romans 12:5)

We determine as a body of believers that our primary purpose is to bring glory to God through worship, edification, fellowship, service and evangelism. We determine to walk together in Christian love, striving for the advancement of God's kingdom, justice, righteousness and mercy. We determine to promote the spirituality and prosperity of Christ's church by upholding His ordinances, practicing discipline and following Biblical teachings. Through the resources entrusted to us, spiritual gifts, time and finances, we will contribute to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, the relief of the poor and oppressed, and to missions, home and abroad.

(Acts 2:42-47; 1 John 4:11; Matthew 6:33; 1 Corinthians 12:24-46; Galatians 6:1; 1 Corinthians 12:11; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9)

We also determine to foster spirituality in our families and in our own individual lives, to educate our children in the faith and to seek to be the presence of Christ to our family and acquaintances. We resolve to walk carefully and responsibly in the world, to be salt and light in society, to be just in all our relationships and exemplary in lifestyle.

(Deuteronomy 6:5-7; John 20:21; Ephesians 5:15; Matthew 5:13-16; Peter 2:11-12)

We further determine to care for one another in Christian love and concern, to uphold each other in prayer, to encourage each other, to help each other in all areas of life and to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the teaching and example of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

(Galatians 6:2; Matthew 18:15-17)

We also determine that if we move to a different location, we will unite with another congregation in order to continue to carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

(Hebrews 10:25)

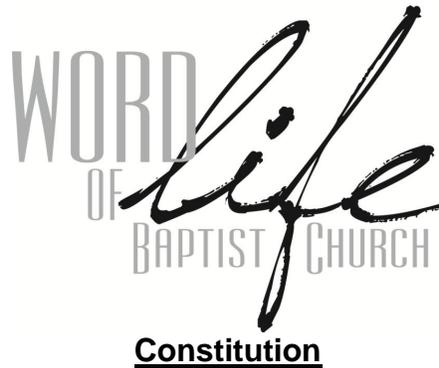


Doctrinal Statement

1. We believe in the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired of God, inerrant in the original writings and supreme and final authority in faith and life.
(2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
(Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; Ephesians 4:4-6)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary and is true God and true man. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, His ascension into heaven, and in His present life, there for us as High Priest and Advocate.
(1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Acts 1:1-11; 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 4:14-16; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; John 1:1-14)
4. We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death which is separation from God, and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.
(Genesis 1:26-27, 3:1-19; Romans 3:23, 5:12, 19, and 6:23)
5. We believe that salvation is only and altogether through confession of simple faith in Jesus Christ, who died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice. We believe that this faith is manifested by works in keeping with repentance, and that without such faith, there can be no salvation here or hereafter. Furthermore, we believe that all born-again believers in Christ are kept eternally secure through the indwelling and sealing of the Holy Spirit and are called to live a Spirit-filled life.
(Romans 5:1-10, 8:1-17, 10:9-10; Ephesians 2:8-10, 5:18; James 2:14, 18, 26; Galatians 5:22)
6. We believe in the Holy Spirit, sent forth from the Father and Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer in Christ, and that He is an abiding helper, teacher and guide.
(John 14:16,17,26, 15:26,27, 16:9-14; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; Galatians 5:22-26)

7. We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church, consisting of a company of believers in Jesus Christ, baptized by immersion upon a credible profession of faith, and associated for worship, instruction, service and evangelism.
(Ephesians 2:19-22, 5:19-21; Acts 1:8, 2:42; Hebrews 10:23-25)
8. We believe in the personal, bodily and pre-millennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ to set up His Kingdom upon the earth.
(Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7; Revelation 19 and 20)
9. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.
(1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 20:11-15)
10. We believe in the existence of angels. Angels are created by God as ministering spirits to serve those who will inherit eternal life. *(Hebrews 1:14)*
We believe they were created with intelligence and will; moral creatures of which some chose to follow Satan in his rebellion and are now fallen and eternally damned.
(2 Samuel 14:20; Mark 8:38; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6)

We believe that the worship of angels is idolatry.
(Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10)
11. We believe in the existence of Satan, the adversary of both God and His people. We believe that he was defeated, judged at the cross and his doom is certain. We are, therefore, able to resist him through the power of Christ.
(Genesis 3; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 12:9, 20:10)
12. We believe that the Lord has given his church two ordinances:
 - a. Baptism by immersion of the believer, in obedience to Christ's command, as a symbol of the death of the old life and the resurrection to the new life.
(Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:11-12; 1 Peter 3:20b-21)
 - b. The Lord's Supper, which is to be administered to all believers only in accordance with the Word of God. *(1 Corinthians 11:17-32; Luke 22:14-19)*
13. We believe in evangelism and worldwide missionary endeavor.
(Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 13:1-7)



ARTICLE 1 - NAME

The name of this church shall be: Word of Life Baptist Church. *(Philippians 2:16)*

ARTICLE 2 - DENOMINATIONAL AFFILIATION

This church is a member of the North American Baptist Conference with its international headquarters at P.O. Box 1910, Folsom, CA 95763-1910.

Word of Life Baptist Church is a self-governing body under the Lordship of Christ with members sharing responsibility.

ARTICLE 3 – PURPOSE/MISSION/VISION

Purpose/Mission:

“As we seek to glorify God, we believe The Purpose/Mission of Word of Life Baptist Church is
To lead all people toward full devotion to Jesus Christ

Vision:

“Word of Life Baptist Church is a place where Christ’s followers regularly share life together, connecting believers in authentic biblical community that visibly expresses the attributes of a fully devoted life, in order to reach the lost, prepare servants for meaningful ministry and multiply disciple makers to share this experience with others.
(Matthew 28:19&20 and Acts2:42).”

Summary:

What are we called to do?

To lead all people toward full devotion to Jesus Christ

How do we do that?

By

Reaching...The Lost

Connecting...Believers

Preparing.....Servants

Multiplying...Disciple-makers

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this Church shall consist of persons who confess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior; who give evidence of spiritual rebirth by a life consistent with profession of faith, doctrine and practice of this Church; who have been baptized by immersion as the norm; and who have been received into its membership according to the Bylaws of this Church. Members shall not be a member with secret orders, lodges or any other organizations that are contrary to the Word of God and the Word of Life Baptist Church Covenant.

ARTICLE 5 - ORDINANCES

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed two ordinances to the local church: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

1. **Baptism:** We believe that the normative mode of Christian baptism is by immersion of the believer in water in the name of the triune God.
(*Colossians 2:11-12; Acts 8:36; Mark 1:9-10*)
2. **The Lord's Supper:** We believe that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for commemoration of His death.
(*Luke 22:19*)

We believe these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*)

ARTICLE 6 - MARRIAGE

To secure and preserve the benefits of marriage for our society and for future generations of children, the union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized by Word of Life Baptist Church as a marriage or similar union for any purpose.
(*Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5; 1 Peter 3*)

ARTICLE 7 - CHURCH DISCIPLINE

When a member has been wronged, personally by another member, it is expected and demanded that the grieved party shall act in a spirit of reconciliation and love according to the instruction of the Lord in *Matthew 18:15-17*. If all steps have been taken and no reconciliation has been reached, then the grieved party may take the matter to the Elders who shall investigate and seek to effect reconciliation.

Likewise, any charge brought against a member regarding a serious public offense or frequently repeated sins that bring disgrace to the Lord and His church, shall be brought to the Elders who shall follow the procedure outlined in *1 Corinthians 5:2*. Such offenses or repeated sins are included but not exhausted in such passages as *1 Corinthians 6:9-10* and *Revelation 2:8*.

If these attempts at reconciliation fail, the Elders will inform the membership. In the event that such an attempt on the part of the Church shall remain without result, the individual shall be removed from Church membership and fellowship.

ARTICLE 8 – CORPORATE OFFICERS

The purposes of Corporate Church officers are to provide leadership requirements fulfilling our non-profit status and to provide leadership to the ministries of this local assembly with unselfish devotion to the welfare of the Church, seeking to be an example to the members in prayer life, in faithful attendance of the public services, love of God's Word and daily walk and trusting God for a Spirit-filled life.

(Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3:8)

Official Signatures will be three non-staff Elders.

ARTICLE 9 - APPOINTED MINISTRY TEAMS

Members of this Church shall have the liberty to participate in and organize themselves for ministry, provided that such participation and ministry does not conflict with Article 3 of the Church Constitution.

Any such ministry may seek Church approval from the Elder Team as an official ministry of Word of Life Baptist Church. Such approval shall be granted provided that:

- 1) The purpose, belief and conduct of the ministry and its members are consistent with Article 3 of this Church Constitution; and,
- 2) The primary team leaders of the ministry are members of the Church who have been approved by the corresponding deacon/deaconess team leaders.

Approval by the Elder Team does not necessarily imply support of the ministry by the Church with personnel, finances or facilities.

ARTICLE 10 - OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

All outside ministries and organizations wanting to be directly identified or affiliated with Word of Life Baptist Church must agree with our Church Covenant and Doctrinal Statement and be approved by a vote of the Church.

ARTICLE 11 - AMENDMENTS

This Church Constitution and/or Bylaws may be amended at any regular Quarterly or Annual Church Business Meeting by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and eligible to vote, provided the proposed change has been announced, posted or presented in print at least two (2) weeks in advance.

Statement of Adoption

This Word of Life Baptist Church Constitution was adopted at a Quarterly Church Business Meeting on April 10, 2011 having been properly announced and distributed prior to said meeting.

This Word of Life Baptist Church Constitution cancels and supersedes all previous Constitutions of this Church and becomes effective immediately.

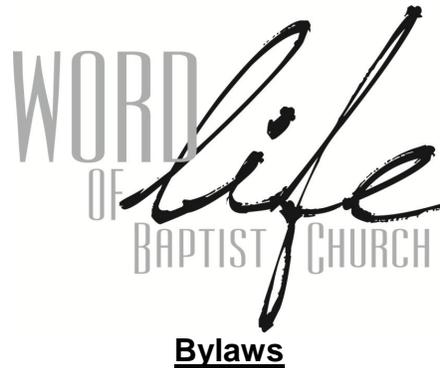
The following committee treated the task of Constitutional revision reverently and prayerfully:

Pastor Dan Lute, Senior Pastor

Deacon Team: Craig Ryan, Steve Idalski, Bill Speer, Rick DeMarr, Mike Kramer, Bob Page, Kevin Berg and Dan Kirschner

Wilma Kirschner, Assistant to the Senior Pastor

Sue Srebnik, Church Clerk



ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – PROCESS

- A. **MEMBERSHIP:** Upon confirmation by the Elders and affirmation of the Church, membership in this Church may be acquired by any person who has completed a Church Pre-Membership Class, has attended regularly for six out of the past ten weeks and by:
1. Baptism: Any person professing faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and giving evidence of a change of heart, may be received through baptism by immersion, or;
 2. Letter: Any person to whom the ordinance of baptism by immersion, upon profession of his faith in Christ, has been administered, may be received by promise of letter from other churches of like faith and practice, or;
 3. Experience: When a letter of transfer is not appropriate, any believer who by satisfactory statement of prior conversion and baptism by immersion, may be received into membership, or;
 4. Restoration: Former members of this Church, in good standing from whom the hand of fellowship has been withdrawn, may, upon recommendation of the Elders be restored, or;
 5. Reconciliation: Former members of this Church from whom the hand of fellowship has been withdrawn due to Church discipline, may, upon public repentance and confirmation of the Elders be restored. (2 Corinthians 2:5-7)
- B. **MEMBERSHIP TYPES:**
1. Active: Active membership status is granted to individuals who have: met the criteria for members (Constitution - Article 4), completed the process as stated above and are attending regularly. (Active membership status is not affected for those who leave for the winter season are gone less than six months and who maintain permanent residence here.)
 2. Inactive:
 - a) Inactive membership status may be extended by the Elder Team to those members who have left the area to seek employment upon graduation from school/college.

- b) Inactive membership status shall not exceed three (3) years without Elder approval.
 - c) Inactive membership status may be extended by the Elder Team to those members who have left the area for purposes that are expected to be temporary (i.e. not to exceed three (3) years).
3. Associate: Associate membership status may be extended by the Elder Team to those who meet the qualifications of active membership, but who are not permanent residents of the area (such as students, missionaries and summer residents who may hold regular membership elsewhere). Associate members may be permitted to teach a Sunday School class or participate in other similar “membership” ministries upon the approval of the intended ministry’s team leader overseeing that particular area of ministry. Associate members have the right and are encouraged to attend Church Business Meetings. They shall not have the right to vote or to hold elected or appointed positions.
- C. **DISMISSAL FROM MEMBERSHIP**: The Elders shall annually review the membership list. Members may be dismissed by:
- 1. Letter Of Transfer: By action of the Elders, letters of transfer to other churches of like faith and practice shall be granted to members upon request and shall be sent directly to the church that the individual intends to join. Such action shall be reported at the next regular Church Business Meeting. Letters of transfer are not granted to churches of unlike faith and practice; however, they may be given a letter stating that the individual’s name will be removed from our roles upon notification they have been received as a member of that church.
 - 2. Lapsed Membership: Any member who has missed eight (8) consecutive weeks of worship will be contacted by an Elder in efforts to restore their fellowship. If personal contact is unsuccessful, it will be followed up by a formal letter and questionnaire to determine the member’s intent. If efforts by an Elder fail to restore fellowship, the member’s Word of Life Baptist Church membership will lapse. The Elder Team will vote to lapse said membership and this action will be reported to the Church at the next regular Church Business Meeting.
 - 3. Exclusion: Following the guidelines for Church Discipline, in Article 7 of the Constitution, and upon the determination of the Elders, a member will be removed and excluded from fellowship for: conduct unbecoming a Christian; gross disregard of covenant obligations; any cause that promotes discord or injures the unity and the effectiveness of the Church; or heretical doctrine.
(1 Corinthians 5:2)

Section 2 – PRIVILEGES, RESPONSIBILITIES & CONDUCT OF MEMBERS

Let each member diligently search his own heart and put aside any sin that might be an offense to someone else or is in any way a hindrance to the progress of the Church. We urge all that are in doubt as to their conduct, to consider *Colossians 3:17* – “*And whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.*”

A. PRIVILEGES:

1. To attend and participate in the meetings and activities of the Church as circumstances may permit.
2. To contribute time, talents and treasures toward the support of the Church according to one's ability and according to the instructions of the Scriptures.

B. RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. To cooperate to win others for Christ, to build up the membership of the Church and to promote the interests of the Kingdom of God.
2. To live according to the principles, ideals and teachings of the New Testament as to what is acceptable for a Christian way of life.

C. CONDUCT:

In areas of specific conduct, the following principles are offered as guidelines to help us to maintain a lifestyle of separation and holiness, to prevent us from becoming a stumbling block to our brothers and to promote unity within our Church.

1. *Is It Expedient?* – Is this activity profitable for the cause of Christ?
(1 Corinthians 6:12)
2. *Is It Enslaving?* – Could this activity tend to control my life or interfere with God's control of my life?
(1 Corinthians 6:12)
3. *Is It Edifying?* – Will the body of believers be helped and built up by this action?
(1 Corinthians 10:23)
4. *Is It Exalting?* – Can I glorify God in this action? Will I draw others to Christ through this action?
(1 Corinthians 10:31-33)
5. *Is It Entangling?* – Could someone stumble into sin or become entangled with legalism on account of my action or attitude?
(1 Corinthians 8:9-13)

ARTICLE 2 – CHURCH ORGANIZATION

Word of Life Baptist Church shall be structured around a plurality of Elders and deacon/deaconess support:

A. PLURALITY OF ELDERS:

The Elder team exists to oversee the overall wellbeing of the members of Word of Life Baptist Church and its faithful pursuit of fulfilling God's purposes *so that the Body of Christ may be built up until all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*
(Ephesians 4: 12-13)

The Elder team will pursue this mandate through the following responsibilities: Overseeing, Shepherding, Leading, Protecting, Equipping and Praying for the flock at Word of Life Baptist Church. (Act. 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-3 and Titus 1:9)

B. DEACONS/ DEACONESSES:

The role of the Deacons and Deaconesses is to support the Elder Team, by managing and developing an area under the Elder's oversight. They are the leaders of the following teams:

1. *The Outreach & Assimilation Team*, which exists to create ways of reaching the lost for Jesus Christ and assimilating them into the local body of Christ. Its members include but are not exclusive to: one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, Foreign Missions Team Leader, Local Outreach Team Leader, Special Events Coordinator and general team members as needed.
2. *The Pastoral Care Team*, which exists to care for the Church family by creating an atmosphere for effective instruction and worship, assisting with spiritual and physical needs and by encouraging active participation within the family of Word of Life Baptist Church. Its members include but are not exclusive to: one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, Men's Ministry Team Leader, Women's Ministry Team Leader, Couples Ministry Team Leader, Worship Arts and Worship Technology Team Leaders, Youth and Children Team Leader, Adult Bible Fellowship Coordinator and general team members as needed.
3. *The Youth & Family Team*, which exists to support and serve those young people 6th grade to Senior High School. Its members include but are not exclusive to: one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, select youth lay leaders and parents.
4. *The Children & Family Team*, which exists to support and serve children from infancy to 5th grade. Its members include but are not exclusive to: one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, KW2 team leader, Sunday School Superintendent or representative, Kid's Club director, AWANA director(s), VBS director, summer camp representative, and parents.
5. *The Teaching & Discipleship Team*, which exists to support and give direction to the teaching and discipleship ministries of Word of Life. Its members include but are not exclusive to: one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess, Adult Bible Fellowship representative, Sunday School representative, Youth Team representative, and Children's Team representative.
6. *The Facilities/Trustee Team*, which exists to provide a Christ-honoring place of worship, instruction and fellowship by caring for the physical property of Word of Life Baptist Church. Its members include all elected Trustees and one (1) Deacon.
7. *The Finance Team*, which exists to support the Outreach Team, the Pastoral Care Team and the Facilities Team ministries by ensuring that the finances of the Church are handled in a way that is honoring and pleasing to God as good stewards. Its members include the Financial Secretary (elected), Church Treasurer (elected), Assistant Treasurer (if applicable), Trustee representative, Restricted Funds Treasurer, one (1) Deacon, one (1) Deaconess and two (2) appointed at-large Church members (appointed, if needed, and reviewed yearly). The finance team shall prepare the annual budget and present it to the Elders for approval.

Refer to the "*Word of Life Baptist Church, Team Job Descriptions Manual*" for further clarification of duties.

ARTICLE 3 – CHURCH OFFICERS AND DUTIES

Section 1 – ELDERS

A. GENERAL ELDER DESCRIPTION

1. The Elder team exists to oversee the overall wellbeing of the members of Word of Life Baptist Church and its faithful pursuit of fulfilling God's purposes *so that the Body of Christ may be built up until all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.* (Ephesians 4:12-13)
2. The Elder team will pursue this mandate through the following responsibilities: Overseeing, Shepherding, Leading, Protecting, Equipping and Praying for the flock here at Word of Life Baptist Church. (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-3 & Titus 1:9)
3. Non-staff Elders will be nominated by the congregation, recommended by the existing Elder team, and elected by the congregation during annual elections. Their positions will be reviewed annually by the congregation and existing Elders.

B. PASTORAL ELDERS

Pastoral Elders are men who meet the Elder qualifications and serve in a vocational role at Word of Life Baptist Church.

1. Calling: The Pastoral Elder shall be called by the Church for a term of mutually agreeable relationship. Either party terminating the relationship shall not give less than a two (2) month prior notice. (Except as noted in Bylaws, Article 4, Section 2, C, 4.)
2. Authority: The Pastoral Elder may give instructions to any of the elected officers of the Church provided such instructions are in the spirit of God's Word and Christian love.
3. Conduct: All Pastoral Elders shall be men who believe, preach and practice the foundational doctrines of the New Testament as set forth in the Church's Doctrinal Statement. Their conduct shall be consistent with the Church Covenant and leadership qualifications set forth in *1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1*.
4. Dismissal:
 - a) A Pastoral Elder shall be dismissed upon recommendation of the Elder Team and a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of the special quorum for:
 - i. Sexual immorality. (Adultery, homosexuality, incest, etc.)
 - ii. Divorce.
 - iii. Heresy or drastic shift in doctrinal stance, not in keeping with the Word of Life Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement.
 - iv. Any illegal public action that would bring disgrace upon the person of Jesus and His church.

- b) If the vote to dismiss is passed, the Pastoral Elder will be immediately relieved of his position.

C. PASTORAL ELDER ROLES

1. Senior Pastoral Elder

- a) The Senior Pastoral Elder of this Church shall be a regularly ordained minister of the Gospel by a Baptist denomination or of equal doctrinal belief.
- b) As under-shepherd, accountable to the Elder Team, he shall have general oversight and care of the day to day ministry needs of the Church. (*Acts 10:28*)
- c) Among his many responsibilities, the following shall be specifically under his jurisdiction:
 - i. The public ministry of the pulpit, administration of ordinances, all weddings and funeral services, and provide direct supervision for all other Pastoral Elders.
 - ii. Recommend to the Elder Team the hiring or dismissal of Associate/Assistant Pastoral Elders.
 - iii. Hire or dismiss Church support staff and other help pertaining to the Church's administrative work upon recommendation of other staff members and Elder approval.
 - iv. A member of the Elder Team, the Church Moderator, and/or Financial Secretary shall represent the Church at regular sessions of the Great Lakes Association and General Conference at the expense of the Church. If none of these can attend, the Elder Team will seek to appoint a Word of Life Baptist Church member at-large to attend at the expense of the Church.

2. Associate/Assistant Pastoral Elders

- a) An associate/assistant pastoral Elder of Word of Life shall be an ordained or licensed pastor of the Gospel by a Baptist denomination or of equal doctrinal belief.
- b) As an associate/pastoral Elder he shall preside over and give attention to their designated area of ministry responsibility
- c) He shall be a member of the Elder Team.

D. NON-STAFF ELDERS

Non-staff Elders are men who meet the Elder qualifications and do not serve in a vocational role at World of Life Baptist Church.

1. Authority: The non-staff Elder may give instructions to any of the elected officers of the Church provided such instructions are in the spirit of God's Word and Christian love.
2. Conduct: All non-staff Elders shall be men who believe and practice the foundational doctrines of the New Testament as set forth in the Church's Doctrinal Statement. Their conduct shall be consistent with the Church Covenant and leadership qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
3. Dismissal:
 - a) A non-staff Elder shall be dismissed upon recommendation of the Elder Team and a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of the special quorum for:
 - i. Sexual immorality. (Adultery, homosexuality, incest, etc.)
 - ii. Divorce.
 - iii. Heresy or drastic shift in doctrinal stance, not in keeping with the Word of Life Baptist Church Doctrinal Statement.
 - iv. Any illegal public action that would bring disgrace upon the person of Jesus and His church.
 - b) If the vote to dismiss is passed, the non-staff Elder will be immediately relieved of his position.
4. Individual Requirements
 - a) Active membership
 - b) Age – 30 years of age minimum (*Numbers 4:3; Luke 3:23*)
 - c) Character - I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1: 5-9.
5. General Duties:
 - c) The non-staff Elders determine salary and benefits for the Pastoral Elders and support staff upon input from the Finance Team.
 - d) The Elder Team shall oversee the visitation of the sick; distribute the elements of the Lord's Supper and have general supervision of the work of the Church. (*James 5:14-15*)
 - e) The Elder Team shall interview all persons wishing to unite with the Church and shall quarterly review the membership list.
 - f) The Elder Team shall arrange for pulpit supply in the absence of a Pastoral Elder and during the interim between Pastoral Elders.
 - g) The Elder Team shall appoint a Pastoral Elder Search Team as noted in Bylaws, Article 4, Section 2, C. 3).
 - h) By the beginning of the new fiscal year, the Elder Team shall:
 - i. Appoint a Church Moderator from the membership.
 - ii. Appoint the at-large members of the Finance Team.
 - iii. Determine a maximum amount that a Ministry Team can spend without additional Elder or Church approval, upon input or recommendation from the Finance Team.
 - iv. Appoint three Corporate Officers from the non-staff Elders.
 - v. Review deacon and deaconess appointments for ongoing eligibility.
 - vi. Complete an annual evaluation of each Pastoral Elder.
 - i) The Elder Team shall prepare a ballot with the names of those nominated to fill elected positions.

- j) The Elder Team shall formulate and present at any Church Business Meeting, any recommendation it deems appropriate. All recommendations from any other Ministry Team or committee of the Church shall be approved by the Elder Team before being presented at a Church Business Meeting.
- k) The Elder Team will have the authority to make decisions on routine issues that do not need to be brought to the Church Business Meeting for consideration.
- l) If any elected office becomes vacant during the year, the Elder Team may appoint a person to fill that position until the next annual election.

Section 2 – ELECTED NON-ELDER OFFICERS

The following officers of the Church are approved for nomination by the Elder Team, elected by the Church, and take office on the first day of the new fiscal year: Non-staff Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, Trustees, Church Treasurer, Church Clerk and Financial Secretary. The duties listed below offer highlights for each office. (For full details, refer to the *Word of Life Baptist Church, Job Description Manual*.)

The officers of the Church shall consist of: Pastoral Elders and Non-staff Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses, Trustees, Church Clerk, Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

- 1. No person shall hold more than one of the above offices at one time.
- 2. All elected officers shall be active members of the Church.
- 3. Responsibilities and qualifications of the respective offices are found in the Bylaws.

A. DEACONS/DEACONESSES:

1. Membership:

- a) Deacons/Deaconesses shall be recommended by the Elder Team and annually elected by the congregation.
- b) A Deacon/Deaconess must bear evidence of devotion to the Lord and His Church and ascribe to the Church's Doctrinal Statement and Church Covenant.
- c) They will be chosen based on the character descriptions found in 1 Timothy 3:8ff.
- d) Qualifications for serving in this capacity will be reviewed each year, 45 days prior to the annual election.

2. Duties:

The Deacons/Deaconesses will have the authority under Elder Team oversight to make decisions on routine issues that do not need to be brought to the Church Business Meeting for consideration.

B. TRUSTEES:

1. Membership:

- a) The Trustee Team shall have a minimum of three (3) members and shall add additional trustees as needed.
- b) Trustees must be at least 21 years of age, and shall be elected and reviewed annually.

2. Duties:

- a) The Trustee Team Leader, or another appointed Trustee, shall serve on the Finance Team.
- b) The Trustee Team shall be the legal custodian of the real and personal property of the Church, all notes, insurance policies and legal instruments of any kind. They shall assume the responsibilities, obligations and duties assigned to them by the Church and the laws of the State of Michigan.
- c) The Trustee Team shall keep, maintain and preserve the real and personal property in connection with the Church buildings and other properties.
- d) The Trustee Team shall have the power to make changes or improvements to the Church and its personal property without submitting a plan to the Church for approval:
 - i. When the cost for a given project does not exceed the maximum sum established annually by the Elder Team.
 - ii. When the cost does not exceed an amount previously allocated in the annual budget. The Elder Team, upon input or recommendation from the Finance Team, will determine a "maximum amount" annually. Any non-budgeted expense, except to cover emergencies, must be approved by the Elder Team upon input from the Finance Team.
- e) The Trustee Team shall recommend the hiring or dismissal of the Site Manager to the Elder Team. The Trustee Team will list the duties of the Site Manager and serve as the acting supervisor. The Trustee Team will set the Site Manager's compensation subject to input from the Finance Team and approval from the Elder Team.

C. CHURCH CLERK:

1. A Church Clerk shall be elected and reviewed annually.
2. It shall be the duty of the Church Clerk to record and properly maintain the minutes of all corporate Church Business Meetings and provide copies of the minutes for review by the congregation.
3. The Church Clerk shall attend to all correspondence referred to the Church Clerk or coming to the Church Clerk on behalf of the Church.
4. The Church Clerk shall keep on file, a list of names of membership of the Church and shall give a statistical report of the membership at the Annual Church Business Meeting.
5. The Church Clerk shall keep on file, a copy of the Treasurer's Annual Report.
6. The Church Clerk shall validate and confirm a quorum necessary for voting at all

Church Business Meetings. The quorum shall be determined per the most recent quarterly membership status.

7. The Church Clerk shall validate and confirm a “special quorum” necessary for voting to hire, retain and terminate a pastoral Elder, and to build or purchase property.

D. TREASURER:

1. A Treasurer shall be elected and reviewed annually.
2. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive and have custody of all moneys of the Church. The Treasurer shall keep a full and accurate account of all transactions and give a report of all receipts and disbursements at each Quarterly Church Business Meeting.
3. The Treasurer may be responsible for signing official documents required by government agencies.
4. Upon request by the Treasurer, the Elder Team may appoint an Assistant Treasurer.

E. FINANCIAL SECRETARY:

1. The Financial Secretary shall be elected and reviewed annually.
2. The Financial Secretary, together with the Treasurer, shall receive and accurately record all income from all sources for Church and missionary purposes.
3. The Financial Secretary shall give a report at each Quarterly Church Business Meeting or when called upon by the Elder Team. The Financial Secretary shall serve as a member of the Finance Team.
4. The Financial Secretary shall keep in confidence, all records of individual giving and shall make available an Annual Statement of Giving to each contributor by January 31.

ARTICLE 4 – MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1 – MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

A. CHURCH SERVICES:

1. There will be public worship service each Sunday morning and evening, and a midweek service, with exceptions approved by the Elder Team.
2. There will be children, youth and adult programs for all ages each Sunday morning, with exceptions approved by the Elder Team.
3. The Lord's Supper will be observed the first Sunday of each month or at such time as the Elder Team may determine.
4. The Senior Pastoral Elder and the Elder Team may arrange special services.

B. CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS:

1. Church Business Meetings will be held quarterly on a date specified by the Elder Team and the Church Moderator, and shall be announced at least two (2) weeks in advance.
 - a) Annual reports will be given by the previous year's officers at the Annual Church Business Meeting.
 - b) The annual election of Church officers shall be conducted at a business meeting held prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year.
2. Adoption of Budget: A Special Church Business Meeting shall be held prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year, for the Elder Team to present for adoption, an annual budget for the following year.
3. Special Business Meetings: A Special Church Business Meeting, may be called by the Senior Pastoral Elder, the Church Moderator, or upon request of the Elder Team by a simple majority vote (51%).

C. CHURCH BUSINESS PROCEDURES:

1. Quorum: Ten percent (10%) of the voting members eligible to vote (determined by the Church Clerk per the most recent quarterly status) shall constitute a quorum necessary to hold any Quarterly, Annual or Special Church Business Meeting, except that a fifty percent (50%) quorum is necessary for a special meeting to call or terminate a Senior Pastoral Elder or Associate/Assistant Pastoral Elder and for building projects and real estate purchases that exceed \$10,000.
2. Meeting Procedures: All Church Business Meetings will be conducted according to the current edition of "*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.*"
3. Determination of Special Quorum: The church clerk will establish a quorum of fifty percent of current, active voting members as determined within three weeks prior to the expected vote. One week prior to the vote the clerk will provide a current (up to date) membership list and will verify its accuracy first with the church secretary and then with the Elder Team.

Section 2 – VOTING**A. GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

1. All Church business shall be conducted using a simple majority vote (51%), unless stated otherwise.
2. Qualified voters must be active members at least eighteen (18) years of age.
3. Absentee ballots are allowed only for the purpose of voting to call or terminate a pastoral elder and for building projects and real estate purchases.

B. ANNUAL ELECTION:

1. Election of Church Officers: The annual election of Church officers (designated in Article 3, Section 2 of the Bylaws) shall be conducted at a business meeting held prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year. Terms of office take effect on the first day of the new fiscal year.

2. Tentative Ballot: A tentative ballot shall be prepared and posted by the Elder Team, at least three (3) weeks preceding the election. Any member of the Church may make additional nominations up to one (1) week after posting of the tentative ballot. Two (2) weeks prior to voting, nominations will be closed.
3. Final Ballot: A final ballot, approved by the Elder Team for the next year's elected positions, will be presented for voting at a Church Business Meeting held prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year.
4. Quorum: Ten percent (10%) of the voting members eligible to vote (determined by the Church Clerk per the most recent quarterly status) shall constitute a quorum.

C. STAFF SELECTION:

Hiring Of Full-Time Pastoral Elder Staff:

1. Search Team: The Elder Team shall appoint a "Pastoral Elder Search Team" for the purpose of recommending a Senior Pastoral Elder or Associate/Assistant Pastoral Elder.
2. Voting to Hire/Dismiss: For the purpose of voting to call or dismiss a Pastoral Elder a Church Business Meeting shall be announced verbally and in writing at the morning and evening services for at least two (2) weeks previous to said meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot. This Special Church Business Meeting must have a quorum of fifty percent (50%) of voting Church membership. A confirmation vote of ninety percent (90%) of members present and eligible to vote is necessary to call a Pastoral Elder. A vote of seventy-five (75%) percent is needed to dismiss a Pastoral Elder.
3. Termination: Either party desiring termination of an employment relationship shall give written notice not less than two (2) months prior to termination or other time mutually agreed to.
4. Failure: Failure to abide by the qualifications in Bylaws Article 3, Section 1, B, 4, (Dismissal), may result in immediate termination of employment.

ARTICLE 5 – AUDITS, RECORDS AND POLICIES

- A. Two (2) Church members shall be appointed auditors annually by the Elder Team to audit the financial records of the Church Treasurer and Financial Secretary. This audit shall be completed and a report given at the first Church Business Meeting held following the new fiscal year. Any discrepancies found by the appointed auditors shall be immediately reported to the Senior Pastoral Elder and Elder Team.
- B. All records, including minutes of Church Business Meetings, Annual Financial Reports and other financial records, are the intellectual property of the Church and shall be preserved and stored in a location specified by the Trustee Team.
- C. Any ministry may establish policies and procedures that affect their own ministry function. However, any policy involving the general Church body must receive the approval of the Senior Pastoral Elder and the Elder Team. Such policies shall be kept in writing and available in the Church office for any Church member to review.

Statement of Adoption

This Word of Life Baptist Church Bylaws document was adopted at a Quarterly Church Business Meeting on April 10, 2011 having been properly announced and distributed prior to said meeting.

This Word of Life Baptist Church Bylaw document cancels and supersedes all previous Bylaws of this Church and become effective immediately.

The following committee treated the task of Bylaw development reverently and prayerfully:

Pastor Dan Lute, Senior Pastor

Deacon Team: Craig Ryan, Steve Idalski, Mike Kramer, Bob Page, Rick DeMarr, Bill Speer, Dan Kirschner, Kevin Berg.

Wilma Kirschner, Assistant to the Senior Pastor

Sue Srebnik, Church Clerk