

# WORD OF *Life* BAPTIST CHURCH



## *Membership Information*

Word of Life Baptist Church  
1900 N. Bagley, Alpena, Michigan 49707  
(989) 354-8019

Web Site – [www.wolbc.org](http://www.wolbc.org)  
E-mail – [info@wolbc.org](mailto:info@wolbc.org)  
Office Hours: 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM  
(Closed All Day on Thursdays)

Lead Pastor: Scott A. Joy  
Associate Pastor of Connecting Ministries: Nathan Mayer  
Secretary: Jeanne Romero

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## Membership Policy

Word of Life Baptist Church contains two structures: a Spiritual Body and a Corporate Body. The Spiritual Body of Christ is a grouping of born again individuals collectively seeking to fulfill the will of God here on earth through the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit. The Corporate Body is that same group of individuals but is viewed from a corporate standing. Why is this necessary? Because even though we are part of the kingdom of God we still reside in this world with its rules and regulations. Coinciding with the spiritual identity of the church then is its legal identity. The church is viewed by our government as a legal entity with power to buy and sell property, to refrain from paying taxes, and to perform other legal business on behalf of its membership. With this said, it is the desire of Word of Life to have a membership policy that encourages both a healthy participation in ministry and a healthy oversight and protection of the corporation.

### Biblical Considerations:

1. While there are no Bible passages that *explicitly* mandate a formal membership process, it *implicitly* encourages such commitments. By *explicitly* we mean that the Scriptures do not clearly give us a universal step by step process to bring believers into a covenanting relationship with others in that local body. However, the Scriptures set forth elders and deacons to minister and govern based upon the needs and desires of their local congregants (Acts 20:28, 1 Tim 3:1, Titus 1:7, Heb. 13:17, 1 Pt. 5:1-3). Therefore governing policies in regards to membership may differ from local church to local church.
2. God chose to use a covenant, a formal agreement, as a way of uniting others in fellowship with Himself, e.g. Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 6:18ff; Gen. 17; Ex. 19:5-6; 2 Ex. 31:16; 2 Sam. 7:5-16, 1 Cor. 11. Each of these covenants included a relational promise from God and certain behaviors and responsibilities to be followed by the intended recipients. God's covenants were also ratified visually for remembrance, e.g. circumcision, a rainbow, the Law, the Writings, the wine and bread.
3. Covenants were not restricted to God and His creation but are found between equal parties as well (Gen. 31:44, 1 Sam. 18:3, 20:16). In both of the Scriptures cited it again equates certain promises with agreed behaviors and responsibilities. These, too, were ratified visually, e.g. the setting up of a stone monument, the giving of one's possessions, etc...
4. Church membership at Word of Life Baptist Church is therefore defined as a formal public covenant between the individual member and the larger local membership. The purpose is to set forth commonly held biblical beliefs, expected behaviors and agreed upon responsibilities by both the individual and the local membership.<sup>1</sup> It, too, is ratified visually through a signed statement of agreement and by a public affirmation of acceptance from the congregation.

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<sup>1</sup> Found in the Covenant and Doctrinal Belief documents of Word of Life Baptist Church.

## Other Considerations

1. The local church is a microcosm of the universal church. All of the admonitions to believers in general apply specifically to the local church. It is God's designed place of growth and accountability (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25). We fulfill the "one another" passages in the context of the local church because it is based on a covenant community.
2. The biblical view of membership comes directly from the analogy of our physical bodies. This is found in Romans 12:4ff. Per the context of Romans, membership is defined as *belonging* to a local body (Eph. 4:16), and to a believer's personal *function* within that local body. All believers are given gifts by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12) for the common good of others. It is for the purpose of functioning well as a unit to the glory of Jesus Christ that we seek to practice those gifts. Once again membership finds its fullest expression within the local body. (See 1 Cor. 1:7 for a fully gifted local church).
3. It was a biblical expectation that each new believer would be publicly baptized, find a local gathering of believers and commit themselves to being taught the Apostles doctrines, to fellowshiping with each other, to corporate prayer and communion (breaking of bread) with their local group of believers (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25ff). The majority of the Pauline writings are teaching letters on how to live out your faith with communal accountability (1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians).

## Legal Liability

The following is quoted with court case citations from *Managing Conflict in Your Church*, by Ken Sande and Peacemaker Ministries.

"Church membership is generally viewed by the courts as being as a matter of contract, whereby members freely choose to associate with a particular church community and in doing so accept the benefits and duties of such association."<sup>2</sup>

"Since non-members have not accepted such duties, a church can encounter significant legal liabilities if it tries to exercise jurisdiction over or impose membership responsibilities on them. For example, since non-members have not consented to the confidentiality, counseling, disciplinary, or conflict resolution policies of a church, the church may face a lawsuit if:

1. It divulges any confidential information regarding the non-member, even if only between a pastor and an elder;<sup>3</sup>
2. Pastoral counseling fails to meet the needs and expectations of a non-member;<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> See *Hester v. Barnett*, 723, S. W. 2d 544, 559 (Missouri 1987); ("The consent to submit to church discipline of the church...is one of contract, therefore, between the member and the religious body.")

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> See *Nally v. Grace Community Church of the Valley*, 47 Cal. 3d278, 253, Cal. Rpt. 97, 763P.2d948 (1988).

3. The church tries to confront a non-member about a sinful conduct or notifies another church to which a non-member flees of such conduct.”<sup>5</sup>

“Membership may be considered to exist merely as a result of regular attendance at a particular church over a certain period of time, if that is the traditional view of the church, as reflected in its official documents, customs, usage, and teaching. When mere attendance is the only condition for membership, however, the question of whether membership actually exists in a given situation may have to be decided as question of fact by a jury if a person later claims not to have been a member after all.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Child and Worker Protection**

“Studies indicate that between 500,000 and 1,500,000 children are sexually abused every year. Most of this abuse takes place in an environment that is familiar to the child, including the home, at school, or even in the church. Such abuse causes enormous harm to children, causes great damage to their relationship with God, and devastates their families and churches.

The church is especially susceptible to incidents of child abuse, for a variety of reasons: by nature and conviction, Christians are trusting people who want to believe the best about others; we are eager to put people to work in the church, even if they are relative strangers; churches are often short handed and have generally failed to adopt effective screening procedures for youth workers; as other organizations that work with youth become more successful at screening out child molesters, molesters may turn their attention more and more to the church.

Child abuse lawsuits filed against churches and other nonprofit organizations usually allege ‘negligent hiring/selection,’ ‘negligent supervision,’ ‘and /or ‘negligent retention’ (i.e. failing to exercise reasonable care in the selection , supervision, or dismissal of employees or volunteers); actions based on *respondent superior* (employer is vicariously liable for an employee’s or volunteer’s tortious acts committed within the scope of employment) have also been filed but are generally less successful).

Court decisions vary widely from state to state, some finding in favor of the church and others holding both the church **and its leaders** liable for damages (see, e.g. *J. v. Victory Baptist Church*, 372 S. E. 2d 391 (Va. 1988); *Scott v. Central Baptist Church*, 243 Cal. Rptr. 128 (4<sup>th</sup> Dist. App. 1988); *Scott v. Blanchett High School*, 757 P.2d 1124 (Wash. App. 1987). Damage awards have run into the tens of millions of dollars.

Because of the growing incidence and expense of these lawsuits, many insurance companies have limited or eliminated insurance coverage for incidents of sexual abuse.

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<sup>5</sup> See *Guinn v. Church of Christ Collinsville*, 775 P. 2d 766 (Okla. 1989).

<sup>6</sup> Ken Sande, J.D. *Managing Conflict in Your Church* (Billings: Peacemaker Ministries, 1993), p.79, footnote 11.

The risk of abuse can be significantly reduced by working on four important areas: screening youth workers, supervising youth workers, reporting guidelines, and responding to incidents of abuse.”<sup>7</sup>

## **Philosophy of Ministry and Membership**

One of the major elements of a membership policy is the understanding of the ministry philosophy of the church. One part of that philosophy addresses the question of who can serve in certain positions within the local church. Once again we need to be reminded that the Scriptures give each elder team or elder/deacon team the responsibility of caring for and protecting the flock of God. Therefore each local body should determine for itself its governing structure as well as requirements to lead the church ministry structure.

The Scriptures urge all believers in Jesus Christ to serve (Rom. 12:1; 7ff). Once again this is found, as the norm, in the context of the local church. And because of this exhortation, Word of Life seeks to find places of ministry for the attending non-member as well as the member. There are a number of ministries that do not require formal church membership, e.g. choir, kitchen serving groups and set up/take down teams, etc. Our desire is to not withhold or to stop people from serving the Lord simply because they do not officially belong to this local church (Mk. 9:38-41). Our desire is to actually move them into greater areas of influence for the kingdom of God. Neither is our intent to set up a hierarchical system where someone who serves in a non-member position is looked upon as less in comparison to a member position. We desire that all believers use their gifts to the level of maturity associated with those particular gifts (Eph. 4:13).

The Scriptures tell us that those placed in places of greater responsibility are given a greater amount of authority but are also held to a greater accountability (Lk. 16:10-12; Heb. 13:17). With this in mind, those who desire to minister and serve in places of greater responsibility are called on by our church membership to be formally committed to those in their care. We therefore seek formal membership as a *basic* qualification for any position with the primary responsibilities of:

1.     **Leading**  
      E.g. – Elders, Deacon, Deaconess, Team Leader, (basically all elected and appointed positions), etc...
  
2.     **Teaching**  
      E.g. – Sunday School Teacher, Youth Worker, AWANA Teacher, etc...

## **Our Goal**

Our goal in membership is to have a beginning process whereby we might confirm, reaffirm and celebrate our common relationship with Jesus Christ, to covenant with one another in practicing Christ-like behavior, to provide a unified, cohesive direction spiritually, and to develop future leaders to carry on that direction within and without our local body.

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<sup>7</sup> Ib. , 107-8.

The church is also about commitment, relationships and fellowship, offering you an opportunity to use your God given spiritual gifts. We at Word of Life Baptist Church agree with God's Word in Hebrews 3:13 and Hebrews 10:24 and 25 that it is important to encourage one another and to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together. The Word of Life Baptist Church's Church Constitution and Bylaws has guidelines regarding membership. Please see Church Bylaws Article 1-Membership. Also you will find at the end of this booklet a copy of the formal letter and questionnaire as discussed in these bylaws.

## **Historical**

Being "Baptist" has to do with three major areas:

1. First and foremost being Baptist is descriptive of our doctrinal beliefs; in particular, our view of believer baptism by immersion.
2. Second being Baptist is descriptive of our spiritual heritage. For example, we are a part of the North American Baptist Conference. Our heritage links us back to Rev. Konrad Fleischman and Philadelphia, PA. He left his native Germany to come to the States for the express purpose of winning the German immigrants to Jesus Christ and establishing churches.
3. Lastly, being Baptist is descriptive of our way of governance. We govern by congregational rule. This means that we do not have a synod or diocese that governs the actions of our church. We are independently governed through the congregation who hires pastors/elders and elects deacons/deaconesses for the purpose of overseeing and serving the local church body.

One other point of notation is that membership at Word of Life Baptist Church is not focused on being "Baptist." We are about being followers of Jesus Christ. There are no denominations in heaven but only those persons who genuinely profess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord. We are not ashamed of our heritage, but neither do we set it above our identification as followers of Jesus Christ.

## 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)*

<b>Scripture References</b>	<b>Context</b>
<b>Member</b>	
Rom. 12:5 “Every one members of one another”	Spiritual gifts in the church
Eph. 4:25 “for we are all members of one another”	Glorifying God with our speech (put off lying)
<b>Actions Related to Membership</b>	
<b>Kindness</b>	
Rom. 12:10 “be kindly affectioned...”	Applied righteousness to other saints
Eph. 4:32 “be kind...tenderhearted...”	“ “
I Pt. 3:8 “having compassion...be pitiful...be courteous”	“ “
<b>Humility</b>	
Rom. 12:10 “in honor preferring...”	“ “
Eph. 5:21 “Submitting yourselves...”	Reverence for Christ
I Pt. 5:5 “be subject...clothed with humility”	Example of a servant / follows elder instru.
<b>Acceptance</b>	
Rom. 15:7 “accept one another”	Christian liberty issues / Jew-Gentile
<b>Exhortation</b>	
Col. 3:16 “admonishing one another”	The Word of God
I Thess. 5:11 “edify one another”	Warning about the Day of the Lord
Heb. 3:13 “exhort one another daily”	Unbelief and sin’s deceitfulness
Heb. 10:24 “consider...to provoke”	Responsibility to others (because of our access to God)
Heb. 10:25 “exhorting one another”	(same as above) / end times
<b>Instruct/Teach</b>	
Rom. 15:14 “able also to instruct...”	Benediction
Col. 3:16 “teaching...and admonishing...”	The Word of God

<b>Scripture Reference</b>	<b>Context</b>
<b>Forbearing</b>	
Eph. 4:2 “forbearing one another”	Practice of a believer / glorifying God
Col. 3:13 “forbearing one another”	As God’s elect (same as Ephesians)
<b>Forgive</b>	
Eph. 4:32 “tenderhearted, forgiving...”	Practice of a believer / glorifying God
Col. 3:13 “and forgiving one another”	As God’s elect (same as Ephesians)
<b>Confession</b>	
Jas. 5:16 “Confess your faults...”	Prayer
<b>Prayer</b>	
Jas. 5:16 “and pray for one another”	Prayer
<b>Minister</b>	
1 Pt. 4:10 “even so minister the same...”	Spiritual gifts / end times
Gal. 5:13 “by love serve one another.”	Christian liberty issues
<b>Hospitality</b>	
1 Pt. 4:9 “Use hospitality...w/out grudging”	End times
<b>Love</b>	
Rom. 13:8 “Owe no man anything, but to love...”	Debt / government
I Thess. 4:9 “you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another”	Didactic / example
I Pt. 1:22 “see that you love...w/ a pure heart”	Sanctification / obedience
I Jn. 3:11 “from the beginning...we should love...”	Characteristics of a believer
I Jn. 3:23 “love one another, as he commanded us”	Jesus’ commands
I Jn. 4:7 “Let us love one another...”	Association with God
I Jn. 4:11 “we ought also to love one another”	God’s example
I Jn. 4:12 “If we love one another...”	God and others interrelated
2 Jn. 5 “from the beginning...”	Obedience

<b>Scripture Reference</b>	<b>Context</b>
<b>Comfort</b>	
I Thess. 4:18 “Wherefore comfort one another...”	Death / God’s promises
<b>Greeting</b>	
Rom. 16:16 “Salute...w/a holy kiss”	Benediction
I Cor. 16:20 “Greet...w/a holy kiss”	Benediction
2 Cor. 13:12 “Greet...w/a holy kiss”	Benediction
I Pt. 5:14 “Greet...w/a kiss of charity”	Benediction
<b>Negatives used w/”one another”</b>	
Rom. 14:13 “Let us stop passing judgment...”	Christian liberty issues
Gal. 5:15 “if you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out or you will be destroyed...”	Christian liberty issues
Gal. 5:25 “Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying one another.”	Fruit of the Spirit / obedience
Col. 3:9 “Do not lie to one another...”	Progressive sanctification
Jas. 4:11 “Brothers do not slander...”	Worldliness
Titus 3:3 “We too were...hating one another...”	Rebirth and renewal

## 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; Revelations 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)*

## Church Organization

To help us stay on track with our mission of making fully devoted and fully developed disciples of Jesus Christ, Word of Life follows a simple organizational structure. This structure provides leadership, accountability, and direction the various ministry teams. As we serve in each of the roles described below we are mindful that Christ is our head and that we serve in unity as His body.

<b>Role</b>	<b>Description</b>
Jesus Christ	He is Lord of all and head of His Church.
Congregation Members	The Congregation gathers at business meetings to seek the Lord's will as they make decisions on the direction of the church and to vote for elected officials.
Elders	The Elders are called by a congregational vote. There are two types of elders: staff elders and non-staff elders. The elder's primary role is to oversee the flock. They do this through actively overseeing or getting the "big picture of things" – "a standing on the hill looking over the flock" idea. They are also called to shepherd, which has the idea of being with the flock and knowing their specific needs. They are to protect the flock theologically from heresy and to guide them spiritually as a shepherd would guide his flock to fresh water and food. They do this through collective and personal study and prayer. Based on their gifting, individual elders also have oversight over specific areas of church life, e.g. teaching/discipleship, assimilation/outreach, pastor care, children and family care, etc.
Deacons and Deaconesses of the Deacon Serving Team (DST)	The Deacon and Deaconesses of the DST are regularly elected. The members of the DST are a pool of biblically qualified and officially recognized servants who are ready and available for specific hands-on ministry assignments that serve the practical needs of the flock. Currently the DST supports four main ministry areas: Benevolence Ministry, Visitation & Communion for those unable to connect regularly with the congregation, Membership Care & Health, and Coordinating Special Occasion Ministries. The DST serves the congregation in accordance with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.
Support Staff	The church employs staff to support the practical needs of the ministry including roles in administration and management. Church staff serve under the direction of the elders or appropriate ministry leads.
Other Elected Officers	Other elected positions include the Trustees, the Church Clerk, the Treasurer, and the Financial Secretary. These are positions of trust which help to assure the church does business in a manner that brings honor to our Lord through faithful stewardship. Elected officers serve the congregation in accordance with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.
Ministry Teams	Ministry teams are formed by the elders and work in a co-laboring role with the elders in a particular area of ministry.
Individual Members & Attenders	The individual members & attendees are called on to support and implement the ministries, ideas, or care that a specific ministry team has been called to do.



# **Constitution and Bylaws**

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1900 N. Bagley St.  
Alpena, Michigan 49707-1524

Telephone: (989) 354-8019  
Fax: (989) 356-6785  
E-mail: [info@wolbc.org](mailto:info@wolbc.org)  
Church Website: [www.wolbc.org](http://www.wolbc.org)

## 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 it's 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.  
First printing of this edition of the Constitution and Bylaws: May 1, 2005.

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## Covenant

Having been led by the Spirit of God to receive Jesus 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)
11. 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)
12. We believe that the worship of angels is idolatry. (Colossians 2:18; Revelation 19:10)
13. 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)
14. 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)
15. We believe in evangelism and worldwide missionary endeavor.  
(Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 13:1-7)



## **Constitution**

### **ARTICLE 1 - NAME**

The name of this church is: 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 an independent body under the Lordship of Christ where members share responsibility for the actions of the church.

### **ARTICLE 3 -MISSION**

The Mission of Word of Life Baptist Church is:

To Make Fully Devoted and Fully Developed Disciples of Jesus Christ

### **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 of Word of Life 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.

**A. BAPTISM:**

We believe the scriptural 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)

**B. THE LORD'S SUPPER:**

We believe 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, marriage is the union of one man and one woman, to the exclusion of all others. This 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)

Word of Life Baptist Church also establishes the standard that all individuals, who are licensed to perform marriages, will not officiate, co-officiate or participate as a pastor at any marriage outside of the previously stated definition of marriage.

**ARTICLE 7 - CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

When a member has been wronged 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 and the individual shall be removed from church membership and fellowship.

**ARTICLE 8 – CORPORATE OFFICERS**

Corporate church officers are appointed to provide compliance with our non-profit status within the 501(C)3 of the United States Internal Revenue Code. Word of Life Baptist Church is a nonprofit organization and recognized as a 501(c)3 religious organization. The Elder Team will select three people from the Elder Team and/or the Word of Life Elected Officers

to be the designated Corporate Officers for the purposes of filing the State of Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Annual Report.

#### **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 the Church Constitution and is approved by the Elder Team.

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 the Elder Team.

#### **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 14 days in advance.

#### **Statement of Adoption**

This Word of Life Baptist Church Constitution was adopted at a Quarterly Church Business Meeting on October 23, 2016, 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:

- Scott Joy – Lead Staff Elder
- Nathan Mayer – Staff Elder
- Dan Kirschner - Elder
- Brad Matuzak - Elder
- Kevin Berg - Elder
- Wilma Kirschner
- Jim Makowske



## Bylaws

### ARTICLE 1 – MEMBERSHIP

#### Section 1 – PROCESS

- A. MEMBERSHIP:** Any person who meets the criteria for membership under Article 4 of the Constitution may be received into membership upon approval of the Elder Team.
- B. MEMBERSHIP REMOVAL:** Any member who shall absence themselves from the services of the Church for a period of twelve months without giving satisfactory reason for such absence to the Elder Team, may be removed from the rolls. However, every reasonable effort should have been made to contact and restore them to active membership by the Elder Team or their representative. No notice of removal need be given to those persons whose names have been thus removed. An individual can request their membership be removed by contacting the Elder Team.

#### 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.

**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:

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)

**ARTICLE 3 – CHURCH OFFICERS**

**Section 1 – ELDERS**

**A. STAFF ELDERS**

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

1. **Calling:** The Staff 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, 3.)
2. **Authority:** The 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.
3. **Conduct:** All Staff 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.
4. **Dismissal:**
  - a. A Staff Elder shall be dismissed upon recommendation of the Elder Team and a seventy-five percent (75%) vote at a Special Business meeting 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 Staff Elder will be immediately relieved of his position.

## **B. STAFF ELDER ROLES**

1. **Lead Staff Elder**
  - a. The Lead Elder of this Church shall be an ordained minister of the Gospel by a Baptist denomination or of a denomination 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 and support staffing needs of the Church and other care for other responsibilities consistent with the Word of Life Policy Handbook. (Acts 10:28)
  - c. The Lead Elder shall be a member of the Elder Team.
2. **Associate Staff Elders**
  - a. An Associate Staff 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 Staff Elder, he shall preside over and give attention to his designated area of ministry responsibility consistent with the Word of Life Policy Handbook.
- c. An Associate Elder shall be a member of the Elder Team.

### **C. NON-STAFF ELDERS**

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

1. **Calling:** Non-staff Elders will be nominated by the congregation, recommended by the existing Elder team, and approved by the congregation during any business meeting.
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **Dismissal:**
  - a. A non-staff Elder shall be dismissed upon recommendation of the Elder Team and a seventy-five percent (75%) vote at a Special Business meeting 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.
5. **Individual Requirements:**
  - a. All non-staff Elders shall be a member.
  - b. Non Staff Elders will serve in a manner consistent with Word of Life Policy Handbook.

### **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: Deacons,

Deaconesses, Trustees, Church Treasurer, Church Clerk and Financial Secretary. 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. Officers will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

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 Word of Life Policy Handbook.

**A. DEACONS/DEACONESES:**

1. Membership:
  - a. Deacons/Deaconesses will 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. Deacons/Deaconesses will be chosen based on the character descriptions found in 1 Timothy 3:8ff.
2. Duties: Deacons/Deaconesses will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

**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: Trustees will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

**C. CHURCH CLERK:**

1. The Church Clerk shall be elected and reviewed annually.
2. Duties: The Church Clerk will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

**D. TREASURER:**

1. The Treasurer shall be elected and reviewed annually.
2. Duties: The Treasurer will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

**E. FINANCIAL SECRETARY:**

1. The Financial Secretary shall be elected and reviewed annually.

2. Duties: 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 will serve in a manner consistent with the direction of the Elder Team and the Word of Life Policy Handbook.

## **ARTICLE 4 – MEETINGS AND ELECTIONS**

### **Section 1 – MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH**

#### **A. CHURCH SERVICES:**

1. There will be regularly scheduled public worship services as determined by the Elder Team.

#### **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 14 days 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 Lead Elder, the Church Moderator, or upon request of the Elder Team.

#### **C. CHURCH BUSINESS PROCEDURES:**

1. Quorum: Ten percent (10%) of the members eligible to vote (determined by the Church Clerk per the most recent membership report) will constitute a quorum necessary to hold:
  - a. Quarterly Business Meeting
  - b. Annual Business Meeting
  - c. Special Business Meeting (other than the exceptions stated below)
2. Special Quorum Exception: Twenty-five percent (25%) of the members eligible to vote will constitute a necessary quorum. The Church Clerk will establish the 25% quorum of eligible members as determined within three weeks prior to the expected vote. One week prior to the vote the clerk will provide an up-to-date membership list and will verify its accuracy first with the church secretary and then the Elder Team, or their designated representative. The Special Quorum Exception applies to Special Business Meetings for the purpose of:
  - a. Calling a Staff Elder
  - b. Dismissing a Staff or Non Staff Elder,
  - c. Purchasing church real estate,

- d. Selling church real estate, or
  - e. Obtaining a mortgage
3. Meeting Procedures: All Church Business Meetings will be conducted according to the current edition of "Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised."

## Section 2 – VOTING

### A. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. All Church business shall be conducted using a simple majority vote of qualified voters present, unless stated otherwise.
2. Qualified voters must be members at least eighteen (18) years of age.

### B. ANNUAL ELECTION:

1. 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.
2. 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.

### C. STAFF SELECTION:

1. Hiring of a Staff Elder: The Elder Team shall appoint a "Search Team" for the purpose of recommending any Staff Elder.
2. Voting to Hire/Dismiss: For the purpose of voting to call a Staff Elder or dismiss an Elder a Special Church Business Meeting shall be announced verbally and in writing during any regularly scheduled public worship service held in the 14 days prior to said meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot. A confirmation vote of ninety percent (90%) of members present and eligible to vote is necessary to call a Staff Elder. A vote of seventy-five (75%) percent is needed to dismiss a Staff 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 – REVIEWS, RECORDS AND POLICIES

- A. **ANNUAL REVIEW:** The Elder Team will insure an independent review of the financial records of Word of Life Baptist Church is completed annually. Major discrepancies found shall be promptly reported to the Elder Team. This review shall be presented no later than the third Quarterly Church Business Meeting held following the new fiscal year.

- B. RECORDS:** 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.
  
- C. MINISTRY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:** Any ministry may establish policies and procedures that affect their own ministry function. However, any policy involving the general Church body must be consistent with the Word of Life Policy Handbook and receive the approval of 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 October 23, 2016 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:

- Scott Joy – Lead Staff Elder
- Nathan Mayer – Staff Elder
- Dan Kirschner - Elder
- Brad Matuzak - Elder
- Kevin Berg - Elder
- Wilma Kirschner
- Jim Makowske

## **Connecting Point Ministries**

At Word of Life Baptist Church we understand that the church is a body of believers and not simply a building. There are numerous opportunities to connect with other believers throughout the week to encourage one another as we walk with our Lord. Some of our ongoing ministries are listed below. We encourage you to join one of these connecting point groups.

### **Adult Bible Fellowships (ABFs)**

An ABF is a smaller community of people committed to knowing and applying the Word of God together in a caring fellowship. Together an ABF cares, supports, disciples and reaches out to those around them. Currently, three different ABFs meet on Sunday mornings from 9:00 AM to 10:15 AM in the rooms off of the fellowship hall.

### **L.I.F.E. Tracks**

L.I.F.E. stands for Living Intentionally for Eternity. L.I.F.E. Tracks are the practical training element of our disciple making process at WOL, intended to help us develop into fully devoted and fully developed followers of Christ. L.I.F.E. Tracks emphasize the practical day-to-day aspects of what it means to be a disciple. These courses are repeated periodically to provide core opportunities for you to grow in specific areas of your walk.

### **Men's and Women's Bible Studies**

During the week there are opportunities for Men and for Women to gather and encourage one another. A Men's Bible Study and Breakfast meets every Wednesday morning in the Fellowship Hall from 7:45 AM until 9:00 AM. For Ladies there is a Bible Study that meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM in room 110. Both groups offer great fellowship centered around studies in God's Word.

### **Prayer Groups**

There are two connecting point groups dedicated to prayer. Each Monday morning the ladies' prayer group meets in the prayer room at 9:00 AM. A second group, open to all, gathers on Wednesday evenings in the prayer room at 6:30 PM. Both prayer groups are a sweet time of corporate prayer and intercession that draw us closer together as we draw close to the Lord.

### **Children and Student Ministries**

Investing in the next generation is a key priority at Word of Life. We have opportunities for students of all ages to learn and grow. On Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM there are classes for all ages including our Kidville Nursery, Life Lesson classes, Junior High Sunday School, and Senior High Sunday School. During the 10:45 AM Service students 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade have the opportunity to take part in what we call KW2 (Kids Worship Too) an interactive lesson and worship service designed to engage young hearts. On Wednesday evenings at our East Campus, our Junior High AXIS student ministry meets from 6:00 to 8:00. Senior High AXIS meets on Sunday nights at the East Campus from 6:00 until 9:00. The goal of our AXIS Student ministries is to turn the hearts of the next generation towards God.

**Word of Life Baptist Church**  
**Application for Church Membership**  
(Each person should complete an application)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_ Anniversary (if married) \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date Attended Class \_\_\_\_\_  
City, St., Zip \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? If so, would you please explain. (If you need assistance, leave blank and discuss with one of our leaders.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you been baptized by immersion after salvation? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, are you willing to be baptized? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you presently a member of another church? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, please provide the following information:

1) Name of Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City, St., Zip \_\_\_\_\_

2) Pastor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

3) Reason for leaving \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you read our Church Covenant and Doctrinal Statement and do you agree with it? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Are there any comments, questions, or matters of concern about Word of Life Baptist Church or this application that you would like to discuss? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Have you already attended our Membership Class? Yes [ ] No [ ] If not, we will be contacting you when the next class is scheduled.

**Commitment**

*I understand that as a member and ministry partner of Word of Life Baptist Church I am publicly committing myself to regularly meet together for teaching, fellowship and worship, to grow in godliness, to serve others by utilizing my God given gifts in ministry in the church, to give and support the church financially, to honor and be submissive to the Elders and other recognized spiritual leaders, to love my brothers and sisters in Christ by being patient with them, by striving for unity and solving problems. Biblically, I also understand that as a member I am under the care and loving discipline of the church as taught in Matthew 18:13-20 and I Corinthians 5.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parents Signature (if minor under 18)