



**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
OF  
OUTREACH CHRISTIAN  
CHURCH**

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## Article I Name

The congregation shall be known as the Outreach Christian Church.

## Article II Purpose

The purpose of this organization shall be to establish and maintain a church based on Christian principles after the pattern set forth in the New Testament; to diffuse moral and Biblical knowledge; to purchase, hold or convey, mortgage or lease real estate; receive donations or bequests; and transact legally any other business necessary to the purpose of said Church.

As obedient believers in Christ, the congregation is associated for the following purposes:

a. Worship

Weekly observance of the Lord's Supper "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he comes." (I Corinthians 11:26).

Preaching of the Word, prayers, hymns of praise, and sharing of fellowship.

Presenting of tithes and offerings "Upon the first day of the week, let each one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (I Corinthians 16:2).

b. Evangelism – in obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20)

c. Instruction—in the word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16)

## Article III Authority

The Outreach Christian Church is a free and autonomous body, claiming the right of autonomous government, recognizing no outside authority, and maintaining no official or ecclesiastical affiliation with such groups as Bible Colleges, missionary societies, benevolent homes, conventions, other local churches or other ecclesiastical organizations. To this end, the right is, and shall ever be, reserved to conduct our own business without outside interference and to abide by the decisions of the Elders and Congregation, meeting in regular or special sessions as set forth in the By-Laws.

This organization recognizes the Bible as the Word of God and the New Testament as its sole authority in all matters pertaining to the Church. The Eldership of this church is the church's sole authoritative interpreter of these Scriptures.

#### Article IV Membership

Membership shall consist of those people who have complied with the following terms of pardon as recorded in the New Testament, either at Outreach Christian Church or elsewhere, and have officially joined the Outreach Christian Church.

- a. Belief – Acts 16:31, John 3:16-18
- b. Repentance – Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30
- c. Confession – Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:9, 10
- d. Immersion – Mark 16:16, John 3:5, Acts 2:38, 8:36-39, Romans 6:4,5, Galatians 3:27, Colossians 2:12-14
- e. Continuing steadfastly in Apostles Doctrine – Acts 2:42, I John 5:18-21

#### Article V Sanctity of Human Life

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all of its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139)

#### Article VI Marriage

The Bible defines marriage as a lifelong commitment made by one woman and one man. (Genesis 2:24, 1 Corinthians 7:2, Hebrews 13:4) Outreach Christian Church will only recognize marriages between one biological man and one biological woman. Further, the ministers and staff of Outreach Christian Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. The facilities and property of the Outreach Christian Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman. Marriage is the only legitimate and acceptable sexual relationship. (Exodus 20:14; Hebrews 13:4; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19; Romans 1:26-28)

## Article VII Finance

The finances for the operation of the Outreach Christian Church shall be obtained through free will offerings from its Members, guests or others. This shall not be interpreted as preventing the borrowing of funds if the Congregation deems it necessary.

## Article VIII Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the Congregation by a majority vote of the active Members present and voting, provided that written notice of the proposed amendment has been announced and displayed or put in the bulletin at the two proceeding regular Sunday morning services.

# BY-LAWS OF THE OUTREACH CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## Article I Property Ownership

All church property, real or otherwise shall be under the exclusive ownership and control of the local congregation and shall be legally and religiously independent of any and all denominations, denominational agencies, societies, and bureaus, as well as interdenominational agencies, councils, mergers, and groups.

## Article II Membership

- a. Membership must be maintained by active participation in the activities of the church. Members will be disqualified from Membership for continuing in conduct unbecoming a Christian, as specified in the New Testament. Members will be counseled of their conduct unbecoming a Christian following the procedures outlined in the New Testament. Disqualification shall be under the jurisdiction of the Eldership and shall be accomplished in the manner set forth in the New Testament. (1 Timothy 5:20; Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2nd Thessalonians 3:14; 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 2:24-25; Hebrews 10:25-26 and Hebrews 13:17)
- b. Members may resign their Membership by submitting a letter of resignation, which is effective when the church receives the letter.

## Article III Officers

- Section 1.** Officers must be Members who meet the scriptural qualifications for the position.
- Section 2. The Officers of Outreach Christian Church shall meet the following qualifications:
- a. Elders- Male members who in the opinion of the Elders meet the scriptural qualifications listed in 1st Timothy 3:1-7 and who have expressed a desire to be an Elder and have been accepted by the current Elders to that position. The names of new Elders will be announced to the congregation. The Elders will ask that anyone who thinks this person does not meet the Biblical qualifications to become an Elder meet with one of the Elders to discuss their concerns. If no one has concerns then the Elder candidate will become an Elder 2 weeks after the announcement. If someone has concerns the Elders will evaluate those concerns and decide if the candidate will become an Elder.
  - b. Elders are the overseers of the Outreach Christian Church Congregation concerning:
    1. The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
    2. The faith of each individual member.
    3. The growth in the Christian life of each member.
    4. The sick of the congregation.
    5. The body's regular attendance at the Lord's Supper.
    6. The Missionary and benevolent work of the congregation.
    7. The winning of souls to Christ.
    8. Any matter affecting the well being of the congregation of Outreach Christian Church.
  - c. Deacons – Male members who in the opinion of the Elders meet the scriptural qualifications listed in 1st Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-6. Deacons will be appointed by the Elders as needed to fulfill various designated duties supporting activities of the Outreach Christian Church.
  - d. Ministers shall be initially selected by the Elders with voting approval of the congregation.
  - e. Treasurer – The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elders and shall be responsible to maintain all accounts, funds, financial records and see that all

debts are paid on time. The treasurer shall be appointed annually. An Assistant Treasurer may be appointed if deemed necessary.

- f. Trustees – Two Trustees will be appointed by the Elders to handle the legal fiduciary responsibilities for Trustees of the church. Trustees will have 3-year terms.

### Section 3. Duties/Responsibilities of Officers.

- a. It shall be the responsibility of the Elders to define all duties and responsibilities and to clearly communicate these to all Officers.
- b. If the work is not being performed satisfactorily, the Elders shall consult with the Officer to rectify the situation. If the deficiency is not rectified the Elders have the responsibility of replacing the Officer.
- c. The Elders shall review the goals and performance of the Outreach Christian Church at least annually.
- d. If an Elder ceases to meet the scriptural qualifications as specified in the New Testament or loses his desire to serve in this office, he shall no longer be considered an Elder (I Timothy 5:19).

### Section 4. Filling Vacancies.

- a. A vacancy in the office of an Elder may remain vacant because there is no specific number of Elders required.
- b. The Elders may appoint a new Deacon to fill a vacancy if there is a qualified person and the need still exists.
- c. The Elders shall appoint a new Trustee or Treasurer to fill vacancies in those positions.

## Article IV Selection of Officers

### Section 1. Nomination.

- a. The Elders shall prepare a list of qualified candidates for each office.

- b. Each nominee will meet with the Elders prior to final selection. This interaction will allow the nominees to clarify concerns and the Elders to update nominees on current plans and operations.
- c. The Elders shall apprise each nominee of the qualifications, goals for a strong leadership, duties, and responsibilities of one holding the office.

## Section 2. Election.

- a. The only elected office is the office of Minister. The Elders will select a candidate and recommend this candidate to the Congregation to fill each vacancy.
- b. A majority of 85% of votes cast to accept the candidate will be required to hire a Minister.
- c. Votes shall be counted by no less than two Officers.

## Article V Governing Body

The Outreach Christian Church shall be directed by a Board comprised of all Elders providing there are at least 2 elders currently serving in this capacity. If the eldership reduces to just 1 then the board shall become the Elder, Deacons and Sr. Minister until such time that there are at least 2 Elders serving and they shall:

- a. Meet every other month in business sessions or more often as the Chairman or, in his absence the Vice Chairman deems necessary.
- b. A simple majority must be present to constitute a quorum. Elders will be considered present if participating by conference call or video conference.
- c. Have authority to transact all business for the continued operation of the Church except those items requiring a Congregational vote as defined by Article VI Section 9 of these By-Laws.
- d. Appoint a secretary from the Eldership to draft and distribute minutes of all Elders and Congregational meetings.

## Article VI Congregational Meetings

- Section 1. A special Congregational Meeting may be called by the Elders, or upon a request made through the Elders by one or more Members and with the Elders support, or upon a written petition of 40% of the Members of the Congregation, stating the purpose of said meeting.
- Section 2. All Congregational Meetings must be announced from the pulpit and published in the bulletin or displayed at the two consecutive Sunday morning services prior to the date of the meeting.
- Section 3. A quorum for a duly called Congregational Meeting shall consist of twenty five per cent (25%) of the Members who are qualified to vote.
- Section 4. An annual Congregational Meeting shall be held in January. At this meeting, a report of the activities of the past year, a plan of activities for the coming year, and a long range projection of congregational activities will be presented.
- Section 5. Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed at all Congregational Meetings.
- Section 6. Any Member 16 years or older that is active in attendance and service shall be eligible to vote. The Elders shall keep a list of Members eligible to vote by updating the Active Members list at least once a year.
- Section 7. No Member may vote by proxy.
- Section 8. A Member may request an absentee ballot stating the reason for the request. The request must be submitted in writing at least one week prior to the vote. The Elders will determine if the request warrants issuing an absentee ballot
- Section 9. Congregational approval is necessary for the following transactions: the sale or purchase of church property; undertaking major financial obligations or major construction projects; hiring Ministers; changes to the By-Laws or Constitution; distribution of properties and funds to other tax exempt organizations in the case of dissolution. These votes must be taken at duly called Congregational Meetings and a majority vote prevails unless a greater percentage is required by these By-Laws.
- Section 10. Votes upon issues not on the Congregational Meeting agenda as voting issues shall be tabled until they can be adequately investigated by the Board

so a Board recommendation can be made available to the Members prior to a vote.

## Article VII Hiring and Administration of Church Personnel

- Section 1. To hire a Minister the Elders, acting as a pulpit committee, shall:
- a. Present to the congregation, for information purposes, the characteristics and qualifications for the Minister position according to the New Testament.
  - b. Solicit input on possible candidates from the congregation.
  - c. Identify candidates for the Minister position.
  - d. Hold a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of voting on the Minister candidate.
- Section 2. Other needed ministerial staff positions will be determined by the Elders and the Elders and Ministers will select a person to fill the new ministerial position. Ministerial staff must be Members.
- Section 3. The Senior Minister shall be responsible to the Elders for the performance of his office and the character of his doctrinal teaching. Other Ministers or staff will be responsible to the Sr. Minister or others designated by the Senior Minister. To dismiss a Minister at least 75% of the Eldership must vote for dismissal in an Elders' Meeting called for that purpose and where all Elders have received prior notification of the meeting.
- Section 4. It will be the responsibility of the Elders to review the performance of the Senior Minister at least annually.
- Section 5. No one will be allowed to supervise or work with children's activities until the church receives a satisfactory back ground check completed through a governmentally approved agency.

## Article VIII Control of Church Funds

- Section 1. The Elders have final approval of the Church budget and expenditure of church funds, except as specified in Article VI Section 9.

## Article IX Groups Within the Congregation

- Section 1. The organization and maintenance of all groups within the congregation shall be under the jurisdiction of the Elders.
- Section 2. Such organizations may maintain their own treasury for the purpose of extending the Lord's Kingdom.
- Section 3. The means of receiving, or gaining monies for the treasury, is subject to the approval of the Elders.
- Section 4. All group activities are subject to review by the Elders

## Article X Amendments

- Section 1. These By-Laws may be amended by a majority of those Members voting at a Congregational Meeting duly called for that purpose, provided the notice of proposal to amend has been announced during church services for at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting and copies of the revised By-Laws made available to the Membership.

## Article XI Dissolution

- Section 1. In the event of dissolution, all assets, real and personal, shall be distributed to organizations that are qualified as tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provisions of a future United States Internal Revenue Law.

## Article XII Effect

- Section 1. Upon adoption of these By-Laws by majority vote of those Members present and voting at a duly called Congregational Meeting, they shall become effective immediately upon being signed by the Elders.

**Note: All scripture references are representative Biblical passages and are not meant to be the only Biblical coverage of the subject.**

AMEN !!!!!

The forgoing are accurate copies of the Amended Constitution and By-Laws approved by the Outreach Christian Church of Lake Odessa MI congregation on Jan 31<sup>st</sup> 2016

ELDER	DATE
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____

ELDER	DATE
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