

CONSTITUTION

OF

LIVING HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF EATON RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

ADOPTED MAY 21, 2023

ARTICLE I Name

The name of this church shall be **Living Hope Community Church of Eaton Rapids**.

ARTICLE II Foundation, Purpose, and Ministry

Living Hope Community Church is established as an association of people committed to following the teachings and leadership of Jesus Christ. Our founding document is the Bible. Our core beliefs are found in our Statement of Faith. Our Constitution and Bylaws govern the life of our church as we worship together, care for each other, and share the Gospel with the world. Living Hope Community Church is a Christian church and serves God as an independent body of believers. Living Hope Community Church holds regular public worship services, numerous small group studies, service projects, leadership meetings, and other special gatherings.

The name for incorporation and all other legal matters shall be **Living Hope Community Church of Eaton Rapids (hereinafter “LHCC”)**. LHCC resides in Eaton County, MI. LHCC is organized exclusively for religious and charitable purposes, including, for those purposes, making distributions to organizations qualifying as an exempt organization from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

LHCC exists to glorify God. We serve His Kingdom by proclaiming the good news that Jesus’ death and resurrection paid the penalty for our sins and through faith in Him, we can receive forgiveness and life everlasting.

Our goal is to expand the Kingdom of God by inviting others into it, helping believers grow their faith, equipping everyone for ministry, developing spiritual leaders, and making disciples who make more disciples.

The ministry of LHCC flows from a deep love for the Creator God who made us. He died for us, saved us, and gave us eternal life. We honor God by loving Him with the whole of our hearts. We pour our souls into worship and service to Him. We allow God to renew our minds and shape them to become more like His own. We obey his commands and submit to His lordship.

We love all people. Both individually and collectively, we set aside our personal priorities and agendas to work for the benefit of others. We connect not only in the corporate activities of the church but also as friends and neighbors. In both tangible and intangible ways, we lift each other up; always striving to put the interests of others before our own.

ARTICLE III Statement of Faith

Article III represents our formative statement of faith. We charge the elders to review, amend, and offer to the congregation a final statement of faith no later than two years from the effective date of the formation of this ecclesiastical corporation. Any such final statement of faith adopted and approved by the congregation shall supersede the statement of faith contained herein.

Statement of Basic Beliefs

The Gospel is the hope of the world. As we read the Scriptures, we see the overarching themes of God's providence, power, and provision to reconcile mankind and the created world to Himself through the Person and work of Jesus Christ. In light of this, we aim to be explicitly Gospel-centered in all that we do.

We believe...

- The Scriptures are true, authoritative, and sufficient.
- There is only one God.
 - We believe in one God eternally existing in one essence, yet three co-equal persons, the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God. The Father is neither the Son nor the Holy Spirit. The Son is neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son.
- Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, was born of a virgin and is both fully God and fully human.
- Jesus Christ was tempted in every way that humanity is tempted today, and yet was without sin.
- Every human being is (Christ excluded), by birth and action a sinner.
- The deserved penalty for sin is death, both physical and spiritual.
- Jesus Christ died as a substitute to pay the penalty for sin.
- Jesus Christ physically rose from the dead.
- Jesus Christ physically ascended into heaven and will one day physically return.
- There will be a future physical resurrection of the dead. Those who trust in Jesus Christ alone will be raised to eternal reward. Those who have not trusted in Jesus Christ will be raised to eternal punishment.
- Only by trusting in the person and work of Jesus Christ alone can one be reconciled to God and experience true life and joy.

The following statements provide further explanation to our core doctrines and enumerate the core beliefs that anchor our faith and shape our ministry. Originating in Scripture and affirmed throughout Church history, they express the absolute and incontrovertible truths that inform and confirm our worldview and our identity as Christians.

1. THE BIBLE

We believe the Bible is the true message of God. Through it, God reveals Himself to the world, explains our place in the universe, and invites us into a relationship with Him. Written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Bible is without error in its original manuscripts. It is trustworthy in all it affirms, and is the final authority in matters of faith and conduct.

2. THE TRINITY

We believe there is one living and true God, an eternal Trinity existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe these three persons are equal in their divine perfection and power. In absolute unity, they perform distinct functions in the works of creation, providence, and redemption.

3. GOD THE FATHER

We believe God the Father is an infinite, yet personal spirit whose holiness, wisdom, power, and love are perfect. We believe He created and sustains all things. We believe He involves Himself in the affairs of men and women and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

4. JESUS

We believe the man called Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ, is God's only begotten Son. We affirm His conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. We believe He lived a sinless human life, performed verifiable, physical miracles, and taught absolute truth through word and deed. We believe He was crucified and died, came back to life in bodily form, ascended into Heaven, and now intercedes on our behalf. We believe His death paid the penalty for our sin, allowing us into God's presence both now and for eternity. We believe that through Him and for Him all things were made and exist. We believe He will someday return to this earth in bodily form and rule with power and justice.

5. THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe the Holy Spirit works in human minds to reveal sin, encourage repentance, and bring people into God's kingdom. We believe the Holy Spirit resides in every Christian and works in their heart as helper, teacher, and guide. We believe He is able to radically change and empower all who believe in Jesus Christ.

6. NEW LIFE

We believe men and women are created by God in His own image. We also believe humans are sinful, both by nature and choice. We believe all have broken God's laws

and are condemned to both physical and spiritual death. We believe Jesus took the penalty for our sin from us when He died on the cross. We believe those who turn from their sin and gratefully accept what Jesus did for them are no longer condemned but become new creatures gifted with eternal life.

7. THE CHURCH

We believe in the universal church — a living, spiritual entity with Christ as the head and all those with faith in Him as members. We believe the local church is a body of believers joined together by common faith and associated locally for worship, fellowship, and outreach. We believe God calls and equips members of the local church for the primary tasks of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ and caring for each other.

8. OBSERVANCES

In recognition of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, we practice water baptism as a symbolic and public celebration of each believer's salvation. We also share the Lord's Supper (communion) regularly to remember and honor Jesus' death on our behalf.

9. RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Within the bounds of Biblical authority, we allow great freedom living out our faith. In essentials, we strive for unity. In non-essentials we recognize and celebrate the unique ways God calls, gifts, and directs people to worship and serve. In all things we seek to obey God while loving, supporting, and encouraging each other. As a body, we remain independent of ecclesiastical, denominational, governmental and other authorities. We do not allow denominational distinctives to separate us from true brothers and sisters in Christ.

10. END TIMES

We believe Jesus will one day return to Earth and establish His Kingdom among humankind. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment, and eternity in either Heaven or Hell.

11. MARRIAGE & HUMAN SEXUALITY

We believe marriage is God's creation and is ordained by Him for the welfare and happiness of humankind and the propagation of the human race. It is designed to be the spiritual and physical union of one biological man and one biological woman bound together in covenant with God. We affirm the scriptural and historical definition of marriage as both heterosexual and exclusive (monogamous), and sexual intimacy limited to the confines of that relationship. Furthermore, since the body is a creation of God, the Church holds sexual identity to be biologically determined, and associated gender norms are to be observed as appropriate to biblical standards.

ARTICLE IV

Church Government and Officers

- A. LHCC is an elder-led, not an elder-ruled, body of believers. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and in faithfulness to the teachings of the Bible, the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation is the final authority in all matters of faith, doctrine, and practice within this local church. The covenant membership of the LHCC congregation is called to participate fully in the mission of LHCC. A vote of the covenant membership at a properly called meeting, as provided in the Bylaws, shall be required to effect the following actions:
1. Affirm new members into the Church;
 2. Approve/remove officers of the Church;
 3. Approve the annual budget of the Church, authorize the expenditure of funds not covered by an approved annual budget, approve any borrowing activity, approve any transactions regarding real property;
 4. Accept, reject or otherwise address all matters, including but not limited to administrative and/or theological concerns, submitted to the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation by the Council of Elders, or the Board of Deacons, or raised by proper motion from the covenant membership at a business meeting;
 5. Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution or Bylaws of LHCC; and
 6. Approve the call, job description and initial salary of vocational pastors, ministers, and lay ministers.
- B. The officers of LHCC shall be Elders and Deacons. The offices of Elder and Deacon are callings from God. Candidates for the offices of Elder and Deacon shall be nominated for installation by the Council of Elders, confirmed by the covenant membership, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Nominations for consideration of these positions may come from the Council of Elders, Board of Deacons, or any of the covenant members of the LHCC congregation.
- C. Elders are qualified men called to lead the body of Christ in all humility and compassion. Elders are called to set an example “in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.” (2 Timothy 4:12) They do this through the study and teaching of God’s Word, by praying for and encouraging others in their walk with Christ, by modeling Jesus in every area of their life, by protecting the flock against evil and false doctrine, and by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While duties and assignments may vary, Elders are equal in standing. All ministries of the church, including but not limited to children, youth, adult, music, missions, small groups, and all service and teaching ministries, are subject to and under the authority of the Council of Elders.
- D. Deacons are qualified men and women called to serve the congregation through oversight of scheduling, programming, property maintenance, finances, special

events, and other administrative tasks. They serve and assist the Council of Elders in caring for the personal needs of members.

- E. Employees are representatives of LHCC. All persons employed by LHCC in any capacity shall abide by and agree to this Constitution and Bylaws and shall conduct themselves accordingly.

ARTICLE V

Covenant Membership and Associate Membership

We believe covenant membership of LHCC to be a covenant fellowship—all of us together taking responsibility to fulfill the vision and mission of the church. We believe that covenant members are called to participate fully and actively in the mission of LHCC.

The covenant membership of LHCC shall consist of persons who confess faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, who give evidence of salvation through their desire to live consistently with the teachings of Scripture, who follow the doctrines and practices of LHCC, who have publicly proclaimed their faith by baptism, and who have been received into its membership according to the Bylaws of LHCC.

The Membership Covenant of Living Hope Community Church:

I, having been saved by faith in the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on the cross for my sins; having been baptized publicly as a proclamation of my personal association with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection; and having completed the church membership class; feel prompted by the Holy Spirit to join in membership with Living Hope Community Church of Eaton Rapids, Michigan. In doing so, I express my agreement and support for teachings enumerated in this church's Statement of Faith, along with its purposes and structures. I further covenant with God and the other members of this church to faithfully carry out the responsibilities and commitments of membership as explained below.

I will protect the unity of my church by:

Placing the needs of others before my own, kindly encouraging and building up others in the church and in our community, supporting and praying for our leadership, and being honest, loving, and gracious in my conversations.

I will share in the responsibilities of the Church by:

Praying for our church's needs and spiritual growth, sharing life with people both inside and outside the church for the purpose of discipleship, and welcoming anyone and everyone who joins us in service to Christ and/or Christian fellowship.

I will serve the ministry of the Church by:

Utilizing my gifts to minister to the Body of Christ, equipping myself and others for the work of ministry, and striving to selflessly serve those whom the Lord has placed in my life.

I will support the testimony of the Church by:

Engaging in services, fellowships, and business meetings faithfully, living my life for the glory of God both inside and outside of the church, and supporting the church faithfully with the first fruits of what God has given me.

ARTICLE VI

The Church Property

No part of LHCC's revenue shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its elders, officers, or other private persons. However, LHCC shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions for its exempt purposes provided above. No substantial part of the activities of LHCC shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. LHCC shall not participate in, nor intervene in (including the publishing and distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, LHCC shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on: (1) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under IRC 501(c)(3) or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; or (2) by a corporation whose contributions are deductible under IRC 170(c)(2) or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

In the event of a division of LHCC, the property of LHCC shall belong to the group that represents the largest portion of the LHCC covenant membership prior to the division, provided such a group is loyal to this Constitution; otherwise, it shall belong to the group remaining loyal to this Constitution though it may not be the largest group in such division. Any disputes arising under this paragraph shall be resolved exclusively through mandatory binding arbitration conducted under the rules and procedures of The Christian Conciliation Service (<https://rw360.org/christian-conciliation-service/>), or if at the time of the dispute that organization is no longer in existence, a neutral Christian mediation and arbitration service selected by a majority vote of disinterested covenant members at any regular meeting or special business meeting called for the purpose of selecting such a service. It shall be a condition precedent to the institution of any such arbitration that the parties to any such dispute shall engage in good faith mediation to

resolve the dispute for at least 90 days prior to any arbitration, and no arbitrator shall have any authority to resolve any such dispute before satisfaction of this condition precedent.

Upon LHCC's dissolution, after paying or providing for the payment of all of LHCC's liabilities, LHCC's assets shall be distributed for religious or other charitable exempt purposes within the meaning of IRC 501(c)(3), or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, provided that in the event of such dissolution, the properties of LHCC shall be distributed only to an organization that promotes beliefs consistent with the Statement of Faith of LHCC as set forth above and as amended. Such distribution shall be made first to the Lansing City Rescue Mission if such organization is in existence at the time of dissolution. In the event such a distribution is not possible because no such organization exists, LHCC's assets shall be distributed for religious or other charitable exempt purposes within the meaning of IRC 501(c)(3). Any assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the circuit court of the county in which the principal office of LHCC is then located, exclusively for the exempt purposes or to an organization or organizations that the court shall determine and that are organized and operated exclusively for exempt purposes under IRC 501(c)(3).

ARTICLE VII

Constitutional Revisions, Additions and Amendments

The Council of Elders, Board of Deacons, and Covenant Membership shall review this Constitution two years after the effective date of incorporation, and thereafter every five years, according to the following procedures:

Revisions, additions or amendments of this Constitution may be made only in the following manner:

- A. Timing: Motions to amend this Constitution may be made only at a regularly scheduled quarterly or annual business meeting;
- B. Notice:
 - 1. A motion to amend this Constitution shall be presented to the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation at a quarterly or annual meeting at least three months before the meeting during which the vote on the matter is taken;
 - 2. The motion to amend this Constitution may be discussed and amended at the meeting at which it is presented;
 - 3. Following the meeting at which the motion to amend this Constitution is presented, the Board of Deacons shall communicate a copy of the motion (as amended) to the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation no later than 10 business days after the meeting at which such motion is presented;

4. A member of the Council of Elders or the Board of Deacons shall announce the motion to amend this Constitution during regular worship services on at least two Sundays preceding the quarterly or annual meeting at which the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation shall vote on such motion.
- C. Approval: On the first biennial review of this Constitution (two years after the date of incorporation), a motion to amend this Constitution shall pass only upon approval by a majority of covenant members. For all other motions to amend this Constitution, such motions shall pass only upon approval by sixty-five percent (65%) of covenant members.

BYLAWS

OF

LIVING HOPE COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF EATON RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

ADOPTED MAY 21, 2023

ARTICLE I Membership

A. COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

1. Covenant membership is an option for those attending our church, but is not necessary to be actively involved in Living Hope Community Church (hereinafter "LHCC"). Only covenant members are allowed to vote at business meetings, fill official church offices, or lead ongoing ministries.
2. To become a covenant member, an individual must complete a membership class devoted to explaining the mission, vision, and core values of LHCC and to answer questions about our faith, structure, ministries, and opportunities for service. The membership class will also introduce and discuss the membership covenant of LHCC.
3. Individuals seeking to become covenant members of LHCC must meet with the Council of Elders. At this meeting, a candidate for membership will have the opportunity to share the story of their faith in Jesus, answer questions from the Elders, and ask questions of their own. Following this meeting, the Council may, at their discretion, recommend them to the congregation for membership. Those who feel led to pursue covenant membership at LHCC shall agree to the church covenant, a document which commits this body to the covenant member and the covenant member to this body.
4. The covenant membership of the LHCC congregation shall be notified in writing of those recommended for covenant membership. Any objections must be presented, in writing, to the Council of Elders within two weeks of the written notification. The Council of Elders shall inquire into the matter and, at their discretion, decide whether to continue the membership process. If nothing disqualifying is found, the council may recommend them to the covenant members of the LHCC congregation for membership.
5. Admission of membership shall be by unanimous vote of the Council of Elders and upon verbal affirmation by the covenant members of the LHCC congregation at any Sunday worship gathering or regularly scheduled business meeting.
6. Vocational Elders and Ministers, having been interviewed by the Council of Elders and called by the covenant members of the LHCC congregation, shall, along with their spouse, become covenant members upon beginning their ministry in this church.
7. A list of current members will be given to the Covenant membership at the annual business meeting.

B. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

1. Associate membership will be assigned to:
 - a. Any covenant member of the church who will be non-resident or inactive in church attendance and involvement for reasons such as school attendance, full-time ministry, military service, or physical disabilities.

- b. Those who are under 18 years of age who have fulfilled the requirements and followed the procedures of Article I. Associate Membership will be subject to all the provisions of Article I. Associate Members will not be counted for quorum determination.
2. Associate Members (18 and over) who have become active in church attendance and involvement may receive covenant membership upon approval by the Council of Elders.
3. Associate Members do not have voting privileges.

C. WITHDRAWAL OR DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

1. Withdrawal from membership shall be granted upon written request to the Council of Elders.
2. Any member in good standing who moves to another locality and wishes to join another Bible believing church shall, upon request, receive a letter of recommendation. Members of LHCC who later become members of another church shall be withdrawn from membership with LHCC.
3. If a member willfully and continuously neglects the responsibilities in the membership covenant of LHCC, the Council of Elders shall prayerfully and humbly seek to renew that member's interests and bring about full and complete restoration to fellowship. If this attempt does not bring resolution, and the person is unwilling to be restored to the fellowship, upon a unanimous vote by the Council of Elders the person shall be removed from membership and asked to end their association with LHCC. The dismissed member shall not return to association with LHCC unless and until the Council of Elders unanimously approves their return.
4. If a member has been absent from the church for a period of more than six months, the Council of Elders may move the person to associate membership or remove the member from the rolls completely upon a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders.

D. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline is commanded by God and necessary for the local church. The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God, edify believers, and protect the church. The goal is to call every believer to the high standards of doctrine and conduct found in the Bible. Church discipline is the responsibility of all believers and must follow the protocols found in Matthew 18:15-17. If the member will not hear the Council of Elders, the Council of Elders may agree upon an appropriate form of discipline up to and including removal from church membership. The Council of Elders shall be the final arbiter in all such matters.

E. INITIAL COVENANT MEMBERSHIP

Notwithstanding the qualifications and requirements for covenant membership stated in these Bylaws, the initial membership of LHCC shall comprise those individuals who:

1. Have been regularly involved in the activities of the body of believers committed to creating LHCC beginning in August 2022; and
2. Have signed and returned to the initial incorporators the "Membership Covenant of Living Hope Community Church" on or before the effective date of the formation of this ecclesiastical corporation.

ARTICLE II Meetings

A. WORSHIP AND OTHER GATHERINGS

Public worship services shall be held each Sunday. Communion shall be celebrated regularly as determined by the Council of Elders. The Council of Elders may schedule other gatherings to meet the ministry needs of the church.

B. CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

1. Quarterly Meetings

A quarterly business meeting shall be held within the first month of each quarter of the fiscal year.

2. Annual Meeting

The LHCC fiscal year shall close upon the 30th of April in each year and the Annual Meeting shall be held during the month of May, the exact time to be set by the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons and announced to the congregation no less than 4 weeks before the meeting is to take place. Annual reports from Pastors and Ministers, the Council of Elders, the Board of Deacons, Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and ministry leaders shall be printed and made available to the congregation a minimum of one week prior to the annual meeting.

3. Special Business Meetings

Depending on its purpose, special meetings of the covenant membership of LHCC may be called by the Council of Elders or the Board of Deacons. The purpose of the meeting, including an agenda of the meeting, shall be publicly

announced to the congregation at a Sunday Worship Gathering and disseminated in writing or electronically at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.

4. Agendas

Agendas for all properly called business meetings shall be prepared by the Board of Deacons with approval from the Council of Elders. Depending on its purpose, new business brought before the covenant members of the LHCC congregation from the floor will be referred to the Board of Deacons or the Council of Elders for consideration and further action. All other agenda additions, subtractions, and considerations must be brought to the Board of Deacons for approval. The Board of Deacons shall review the final agenda for any business meeting with the Council of Elders before approving such agenda. Additionally, if twenty-five (25) or more covenant members in good standing petition to have an item added to the agenda, and that petition is presented to the Council of Elders at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the posting of the agenda of a regularly scheduled business meeting, it shall be added to the agenda.

5. Quorum

Forty percent of covenant membership of the LHCC congregation shall constitute a quorum at any properly called meetings of the church, except as otherwise stipulated in these Bylaws.

- a. Failure to achieve quorum; absentee voting – If any matter is brought before the covenant membership of LHCC for a vote at two consecutive business meetings where quorum does not exist, a provision for absentee ballots may be made upon a decision by the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons. In such situations, absentee ballots shall count towards establishing quorum. In the instance that quorum is not reached after three consecutive business meetings, even after counting collected absentee ballots, quorum shall be those Covenant members in attendance as well as absentee ballots collected, if in fact absentee ballots were collected. In this instance, all matters being considered shall be resolved by a majority of two-thirds vote of those Covenant members present and voting.
- b. Hiring matters; installment; absentee voting – For any vote relating to the hiring of a vocational pastor or vocational minister or to the installment of an Elder or Deacon, a provision for absentee ballots may be made upon a decision by the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons. In such situations, absentee ballots shall count towards establishing quorum.
- c. Special quorum requirements for installment and no confidence votes for vocational pastors and vocational ministers – Only with respect to votes regarding (1) installment of Elders and Deacons, and (2) no confidence votes for vocational pastors and vocational ministers, quorum shall be two-thirds of the covenant membership of LHCC.

6. Parliamentary Procedure

Ordinarily the business of the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation shall be conducted informally according to the general pattern for the conduct of meetings contained in Robert's Rules of Order (revised). Matters requiring a vote shall follow the Rules of Order explicitly. In the event of any procedural question or challenge, all provisions of Robert's Rules of Order (revised) shall apply, unless inconsistent with these Bylaws or the Constitution of LHCC. Unless otherwise explicitly stated herein, only covenant members of the LHCC congregation may vote at any church business meeting. Other persons who are not covenant members of the LHCC congregation may attend such meetings for observation, but may not be granted voice or vote at such business meetings.

7. Special Financial Decisions

A motion to approve any non-budgeted financial items or a motion to change either a current or proposed budget cannot be approved by the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation without prior review by the Board of Deacons in consultation with the Council of Elders.

8. Minutes of Meetings

Accurate minutes of all business meetings shall be maintained by the Church Clerk. Minutes must be made available and publicly posted in writing in the church. A permanent record detailing the time, place and purpose of all meetings of the covenant membership of the LHCC congregation must be maintained.

9. Meetings of Committees

The protocol for regular and special meetings of any committee is as follows:

- a. Depending on the purpose of the committee, the Council of Elders or Board of Deacons shall determine membership (including ex-officio members) of the committee and will designate whether ex-officio members may vote. At the request of a voting member, final discussion may be done in a closed session. All votes shall be taken in open session and shall be made public.
- b. Issues shall ordinarily be decided by a majority vote of members present.
- c. Accurate minutes of all meetings must be maintained by the respective secretaries. Copies should be given to the church office and publicly posted.

C. Communications

All communications may be disseminated or sent electronically. Committee meetings may be conducted in-person or electronically. Regular and Special Business Meetings of LHCC shall be conducted in-person only.

ARTICLE III Church Government

A. GENERAL STATEMENT

1. Officers

The Officers of the LHCC shall be the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons. Officers shall be called to office by a vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article III, Sections D and E of these Bylaws. All officers of LHCC shall be members in good standing. The Council of Elders shall be composed of men; the Board of Deacons may be composed of both men and women. The Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons are the only bodies and offices created by these Bylaws.

2. Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.

- a. LHCC shall have a Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary. These positions are not offices of the church.
- b. The covenant membership of the LHCC congregation, upon nomination by the Council of Elders, shall elect at the third quarterly business meeting covenant members to the positions of Church Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.
- c. The position of Financial Secretary may remain unfilled if the Financial Secretary's duties are contracted to an outside accounting firm.
- d. The functions of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall not be performed by one person.
- e. The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be bonded by the church in a suitable amount.
- f. The Council of Elders shall establish the qualifications and the Board of Deacons shall provide a written description of duties for the positions of Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary.
- g. The term of service for Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary shall be 2 years starting on the first day of the fiscal year and ending on the last day of the fiscal year, two years from installment. If the duties of the Financial Secretary are performed by an outside accounting firm, the term of the Financial Secretary shall be at will or as otherwise provided by contract.
- h. The positions of Clerk, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary shall be elected no later than the last quarterly meeting preceding the annual meeting with term of service beginning at the start of the fiscal year.

3. Committees and Appointees.

- a. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified responsibility. All committees shall be formed for a specified purpose and term not to exceed two calendar years.
- b. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to dissolve any committee or position it creates.
- c. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to appoint covenant members of LHCC to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions.
- d. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to appoint those who are not covenant members of LHCC or those who are associate members under the age of 18 to serve as ex-officio members of a committee.
- e. The Council of Elders may establish committees and positions to accomplish the ministry tasks of the Council of Elders.
- f. Every committee shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the committee. Each committee chair and those who serve on committees do so as a service to the Board of Deacons and the Council of Elders.
 - i. All decisions made by a committee are subject to approval by the Board of Deacons or the Council of Elders, depending on whether the committee was created by the Board of Deacons or the Council of Elders.
 - ii. Committees created by the Board of Deacons shall keep the Board of Deacons regularly apprised of the matters pertaining to the purpose of the committee. Committees created by the Council of Elders shall keep the Council of Elders regularly apprised of the matters pertaining to the purpose of the committee.
 - iii. The Board of Deacons shall provide the Council of Elders with all reports from committees reporting directly to the Board of Deacons.

4. Ministries.

- a. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to create ministries to accomplish ongoing missions within the church. All ministries shall be formed for a specified purpose.
- b. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to dissolve any ministry or position it creates.
- c. The Board of Deacons, in consultation with the Council of Elders, has the authority to appoint covenant members of LHCC to serve in leadership positions within ministries and to act as its agents in such positions.
- d. The Council of Elders, in consultation with the Board of Deacons, may establish ministries and positions to accomplish the ministry tasks of the Council of Elders.
- e. Every ministry shall have a designated ministry leader, responsible for ministry activities. Each ministry leader and those who serve on ministries do so as a service to the Board of Deacons and the Council of Elders.

- i. All decisions made by a ministry leader are subject to approval by the Board of Deacons or the Council of Elders, depending on whether the ministry was created by the Board of Deacons or the Council of Elders.
- ii. Ministry leaders for ministries created by the Board of Deacons shall keep the Board of Deacons regularly apprised of the matters pertaining to the ministry. Ministry leaders for ministries created by the Council of Elders shall keep the Council of Elders regularly apprised of the matters pertaining to the ministry.
- iii. The Board of Deacons shall provide the Council of Elders with all reports from ministries reporting directly to the Board of Deacons.

B. VOCATIONAL PASTORS AND MINISTERS

1. Definition.

- a. Vocational pastors are ordained Elders of LHCC who, in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. Vocational pastors must be qualified as an elder and exhibit fruit and gifts in keeping with their calling. By definition, vocational pastors are "Pastor, Elder, Shepherd" to and for the body of Christ, and may carry the title "Pastor" or "Reverend."
- b. Vocational ministers are the *non-ordained* ministers of LHCC who, in response to God's call, serve LHCC as a part-time or full-time vocation. Vocational ministers are servants of LHCC, gifted to lead in particular areas of ministry, and affirmed to lead in those areas under the direction and supervision of the Council of Elders.
- c. Both vocational pastors and vocational ministers shall be supported financially by LHCC.

2. Duties.

In addition to the duties of their offices described in Article III, Sections D and E below, vocational pastors and vocational ministers shall perform the duties determined by the Council of Elders and approved by the covenant membership. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes shall be approved by the covenant membership of LHCC.

- a. LHCC's call of a vocational pastor is a call to the Eldership of LHCC. Therefore vocational pastors shall be members of the Council of Elders.
- b. Vocational ministers shall serve as Deacons who assist the elders in the ministry of LHCC. Vocational ministers may be ordained when deemed appropriate or necessary by the Council of Elders. Once ordained, they shall become a vocational pastor and immediately placed on the Council of Elders as a voting member.

3. Vocational Call by LHCC

A vocational call is given to a pastor or minister to become vocationally supported by the calling church in exchange for ministry to and with the church.

Generally, the vocational call of a pastor or minister at LHCC shall be done at any regularly scheduled business meeting or a special business meeting called for that purpose. If a special business meeting is needed, the Board of Deacons shall follow all procedures in the LHCC Constitution and Bylaws to call a special business meeting. The Board of Deacons shall also disseminate, in writing and electronically, notice of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

In order to call a Vocational Pastor or Minister, the covenant membership of LHCC must adhere to the following provisions:

- a. A vote must be taken at a quarterly meeting or a special business meeting to approve initiating the process of hiring a vocational pastor or minister. The vote must pass by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.
- b. Upon a successful vote approving the process of hiring a vocational pastor or vocational minister, the Council of Elders shall establish a Pastoral Search team to conduct a search for hiring a vocational pastor or vocational minister. Membership on the Pastoral Search team shall comprise:
 - i. At least three Elders from the Council of Elders;
 - ii. At least one member of the Board of Deacons; and
 - iii. A number of at-large covenant members (who do not currently serve on the Council of Elders nor the Board of Deacons (either currently or ex officio)) equal to the combined number of Elders and Deacons serving on the Pastoral Search team.
- c. The Vocational Pastor or Minister must be interviewed thoroughly by the Pastoral Search team for both theological unity and philosophical agreement with the LHCC Constitution, covenant membership of LHCC, and the Council of Elders.
- d. The Pastoral Search team must be unanimous on the hiring of the Vocational Pastor or Minister.
- e. The candidate must commit to one meeting with the LHCC congregation for the purpose of fellowship and theological discourse, including adequate opportunity for formal interaction between the candidate and the LHCC congregation.
- f. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws regarding quorum or majority voting requirements, the final vote to approve the hiring of a Vocational Pastor or Minister shall be no less than 75% of the covenant membership of LHCC at a quarterly or regularly scheduled business meeting.

4. Termination of a Vocational Call.

a. By resignation

A vocational pastor or vocational minister may resign from their office at any time with a notice of no less than two weeks.

b. Grievance

Where a grievance exists against a Pastor or Minister, the protocols of Matthew 18:15-17 must be initiated. If these fail to bring resolution, the grievance shall be brought before the Council of Elders. If the disinterested members of the Council of Elders, after thorough investigation and

consideration, believes the grievance to be true and sufficient to require termination, then the disinterested members of the Council of Elders, upon a unanimous vote, may terminate the vocational call of the vocational pastor or vocational minister. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

c. Vote of no confidence.

(i) Vocational Pastor

(a) A vocational pastor shall not be subject to a reaffirmation vote, nor to any term limit.

(b) **No Confidence Action by the Council of Elders and Board of Deacons:** A vocational pastor may be removed for lack of confidence by the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons.

(1) If a vocational pastor has lost the confidence of the Council of Elders, a vote of no confidence may be taken among disinterested Elders at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of Elders. If the no confidence vote is unanimous, the Council of Elders shall submit to the Chair of the Board of Deacons, in writing, that such a vote has taken place and shall submit reasons as to why the unanimous conclusion of no confidence has been reached.

(2) The Chair of the Board of Deacons shall schedule a special meeting of the Board of Deacons with the agenda being a no confidence vote only, and a vote of no confidence shall be taken at this meeting. Upon a two-thirds majority vote of no confidence from the disinterested members of the Board of Deacons present and voting, the vocational pastor shall be terminated and removed from office.

(3) The Council of Elders shall notify the congregation of the no confidence determination, with explanation, at the next Sunday gathering, then in writing both electronically and by mail, to the covenant membership of LHCC.

(c) **No Confidence Action by the Covenant Membership:** A vocational pastor shall be removed from office and his employment terminated upon a 75% majority vote of those present and voting on the question at any properly scheduled business meeting.

(ii) Vocational Minister

(a) A vocational minister shall be subject to a review by the Council of Elders triennially. They shall be removed from office and their employment terminated upon a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders. Removal from office and termination of the vocational call in this manner shall not be considered a disciplinary matter, and the Council of Elders shall inform the vocational minister stating the reasons for this conclusion.

(b) A vocational minister shall be removed from office and their employment terminated upon a 75% majority vote of the covenant

members present and voting on the question at any properly scheduled business meeting.

5. Ministry Ordination & Preparation

Ministry ordination recognizes the lifelong call of God on a man to serve the body of Christ as a Vocational Pastor or an Elder. It confers the responsibility to perform all the corporate duties of a Pastor, including but not limited to the officiation of weddings and baptisms and administering the Lord's supper. For this reason, ordination shall be the process by which a vocational minister becomes a vocational pastor or a covenant member becomes an Elder. An Elder shall undergo preparation leading to ordination.

- a. The candidate shall commit to the requirements laid out for ministry ordination or preparation and must adhere to all protocols set forth by the Council of Elders.
- b. The Council of Elders shall provide training and instruction that is tailored to the needs of each particular candidate. The Council of Elders has full discretion as to the requirements of ordination or preparation and the completion of ordination, which may or may not be distinct for each individual candidate.
- c. The candidate shall commit to humble service under the direction and supervision of the Council of Elders during the ordination or preparation process.
- d. The Council of Elders must unanimously approve the process of ordination or preparation.
- e. Once preparation for ordination is complete by Elder Candidates, the Candidate will meet with the Elders to determine if the Elders are committed to moving forward with ordination or if the candidate is committed to completing the process of ordination. If both the Candidate and the Council of Elders are in agreement, the ordination process shall continue.
- f. Once ordination requirements are completed, the candidate must receive a unanimous vote from the Council of Elders confirming the completion of the ordination process and the biblical qualifications of eldership being maintained, making the candidate eligible for vocational pastor and eldership.
- g. The Council of Elders shall, within one month of the completion of ordination, call for a special business meeting (or place an item on the agenda of a quarterly or annual business meeting) for the purpose of recommending the candidate for a vote unto eldership.
- h. Once confirmed, the candidate becomes a part of the Council of Elders. If the individual is a Vocational Minister, they are given the title "Vocational Pastor."

C. LAY OFFICERS

1. Definition.

Lay officers are non-Vocational Elders or Deacons of the Church.

2. Nomination.

a. Nomination by the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons

The Council of Elders or the Board of Deacons may nominate eligible candidates for Elder or Deacon at any quarterly business meeting.

b. Nomination by the Covenant Membership

At the annual meeting, blank nomination ballots shall be passed out to attending covenant members for Elder nominations. Covenant members may anonymously nominate up to two candidates for Elder or Deacon, four candidates total. Any person who receives at least three nominations from the covenant membership shall be considered for candidacy and receive due consideration by the Council of Elders.

3. Election and Installment of Elders and Deacons

- a. The Council of Elders or the Board of Deacons may nominate candidates for installation to the office of Elder or Deacon, respective to the office nominating, at any quarterly or special business meeting. A written ballot of nominees shall be made available for review in the church office at least two weeks in advance of the meeting. An announcement shall be made during a Sunday Service at least two weeks prior to the meeting, and notice of the meeting and shall be disseminated to the church by mail and/or electronically to its covenant members and in the Sunday worship service at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- b. Elder and Deacon Nominees must be confirmed by a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders. Deacon Nominees must also be confirmed by a unanimous vote of the Board of Deacons.
- c. A candidate for Eldership shall have been ordained to be considered for Eldership.
- d. Elder and Deacon candidates are confirmed by a vote of 75% of those voting on the matter within the covenant membership of LHCC. If a candidate fails to receive a confirming vote, the candidate must wait one year before being considered a candidate again for the office of Elder or Deacon.

4. Terms of Service

- a. Elders and Deacons shall serve no more than 2 consecutive terms as voting members on the Council of Elders or the Board of Deacons. Terms shall be followed according to the following provisions:
 - i. Upon nomination, the individual must be willing to commit themselves to an initial term of not more or less than three years.
 - (1) The initial Council of Elders and Board of Deacons formed after approval of the first Constitution and Bylaws of LHCC shall, at their first meeting, select individual Elders or Deacons who shall serve less than a 3 year term so as to establish staggered terms for the Council of Elders and Board of Deacons. After the initial term of less than 3 years, all subsequent terms shall be for a 3 year term.

- (2) Upon establishing additional positions on the Council of Elders or Board of Deacons, the initial term for such positions shall be established so as to maintain staggered terms for the Council of Elders and Board of Deacons.
- ii. After the initial 3 year term has been served, the individual may choose to candidate for a second term consisting of not more than 3 years. The individual must be reconfirmed by no less than a two-thirds vote by the covenant membership present and voting at a properly called business meeting.
- iii. An Elder or Deacon may not serve more than 2 consecutive terms, or 6 consecutive years.
- iv. Once the individual has served 2 consecutive terms, they shall not be eligible for re-election as an Elder or Deacon for one year.
- v. If an Elder or Deacon resigns from their office for any reason, they shall not be eligible for re-election as an Elder or Deacon for one year.
- vi. In extraordinary circumstances, and upon a unanimous resolution by the Council of Elders stating the extraordinary justifications for such action, the Council of Elders may appoint a former Elder in good standing to sit on the Council of Elders as an ex-officio member with no voting privileges.
- b. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure, and no Deacon shall hold the office of Elder during their tenure.

5. Resignation and Removal.

- a. An Elder or Deacon may resign their office at any time if they find they are no longer able or willing to discharge the duties of the office.
- b. Where a personal grievance exists against an Elder or Deacon, the protocols of Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19-20 must be initiated. If these fail to bring resolution, the grievance shall be brought before the Council of Elders. If the Council of Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and, either (1) sufficiently serious to justify immediate disqualification or (2) sufficient to indicate a pattern of sin that would justify disqualification, then the officer shall be removed from office upon unanimous recommendation of the disinterested members of the Council of Elders. In such instances, the congregation shall be notified of the decision with sufficient explanation of the matter.
- c. **Accountability Committee**
In situations where a significant grievance against an Elder or Deacon arises that cannot be resolved under the protocols of Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:19-20, the disinterested Elders and Deacons collectively and not separately shall create, upon a majority vote, an ad hoc Accountability Committee to review the grievance. The Accountability Committee shall comprise one disinterested member of the Council of Elders, one disinterested member of the Board of Deacons, and three disinterested members of the covenant membership of LHCC who are not currently members of the Council of Elders or Board of Deacons.

- i. **Review:** The Accountability Committee shall undertake a review of any grievance properly before it. This review shall continue even if the person or persons initially raising the grievance are no longer associated with LHCC.
- ii. **Initial report:** The Accountability Committee, upon receiving any grievance, shall make a timely initial report and recommendation regarding whether the grievance is sufficiently credible that the elder or deacon should be placed on leave of absence pending investigation and final resolution. The initial report and recommendation shall be made upon majority vote.
 - a. In making its initial report and recommendation, the committee shall consider any prior grievances brought against the individual elder or deacon.
 - b. In all cases involving allegations of illegal misconduct, the elder or deacon shall be placed immediately on a leave of absence and shall not have contact with the grievant until the Accountability Committee completes its initial report and recommendation.
 - c. If the initial report recommends a leave of absence, the leave of absence shall be effective until final resolution of the grievance.
- iii. **Final report:** After full investigation, and upon a majority vote, the Accountability Committee shall present a final report to the disinterested members of the Council of Elders and Board of Deacons for final resolution.

D. COUNCIL OF ELDERS

1. Composition and Organization.

The covenant members of the LHCC congregation govern the church through the Council of Elders.

- a. The Council of Elders shall be composed of godly men called by God to shepherd the church.
- b. Generally, there shall be at least one more Lay Elder than Vocational Elders and no less than three elders total. In the event that a vocational pastor is hired or a vocational minister becomes a vocational pastor, they shall serve on the Council of Elders regardless of lay to vocational elder composition.
- c. The Council of Elders shall annually select its Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary from among its Lay Elders. A recording secretary from outside the Council may serve as "Secretary" in place of a Lay Elder. At the Council of Elder's discretion, they may organize themselves however needed to meet the needs of the Council of Elders and LHCC.
- d. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may specialize in function.
- e. The Elders must meet once per month for a regularly scheduled meeting. Meetings of the Elders may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication in which the Elders may simultaneously

hear each other. Other meetings of the Council may be held as needed with unanimous approval of the Council of Elders.

- f. A quorum for meetings of Elders is defined as at least one-half of the Lay Elders plus one-half of the Vocational Elders.
- g. Every Elder shall be expected to abide by the Bylaws of LHCC, and every Elder shall have a right to attend the entirety of every meeting of the Board, except as described in these Bylaws of LHCC.
- h. In the event that LHCC has no Elders, the covenant members of LHCC shall, at the next quarterly meeting, elect an Interim Moderator who shall, at each subsequent quarterly meeting, nominate one or more men to serve as Elders pursuant to Article III, Section C, Paragraph 2 and 3 of this Constitution until an Elder is elected. If an Elder is selected in this way, there is no requirement for ordination. The office of Interim Moderator shall dissolve immediately upon the election of an Elder.

2. Qualifications

Elders and nominees for Elder shall be qualified for the office as specified in the Bible. Relevant texts include I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and I Peter 5:1-4.

3. Authority and Responsibilities.

The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles set forth in the Scriptures, especially Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, undertake the responsibility of shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They shall have particular authority to plan and oversee worship services and;

- a. To establish and maintain the vision and mission of LHCC;
- b. To oversee the ordinances, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper;
- c. To bring clarity and understanding to the Biblical doctrines of LHCC;
- d. To examine and instruct prospective members;
- e. To oversee the process of church discipline;
- f. To examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;
- g. To oversee the work of the Deacons/Deaconesses and all other agents of the church;
- h. To hire, oversee, evaluate the performance of, and when necessary terminate paid church staff; and
- i. To take any other action which shall be necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the church.

E. DEACONS

1. Composition and Organization.

Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of advice, administration, and implementation.

- a. Deacons may be men or women and shall be composed of covenant members of the LHCC congregation and vocational ministers.

- b. Deacons shall be equal in authority but may specialize in function. The Board of Deacons may designate any specific Deacon or group of Deacons to undertake in a particular effort or mission of the church.
- c. Under the oversight of the Elders, the Deacons shall organize themselves in ways consistent with the mission and interests of the Church. The Board of Deacons shall annually select its Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary from among its members. Though not necessarily a deacon, the recording secretary shall be the Clerk of the church.
- d. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the covenant membership to meet the needs of the Council of Elders and the congregation in service to Christ, the church, and the community at large.
- e. Meetings of the Deacons and their ministry committees shall be held once a month. Meetings of the Board of Deacons may be held at any location and may be conducted by means of electronic communication in which the Deacons may simultaneously hear each other. Other meetings of the Board of Deacons may be held as needed with two-thirds approval of the Board of Deacons.
- f. A quorum for meetings of the Board of Deacons is defined as at least one-half of the Deacons.
- g. Every Deacon shall be expected to abide by the Bylaws of LHCC, and every Deacon shall have a right to attend the entirety of every meeting of the Board of Deacons, except as described in these Bylaws of LHCC.

2. Qualifications.

- a. Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be men and women who are members in good standing, demonstrate godly character, and exhibit a life of servant-leadership. Deacons will exemplify the godly characteristics set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-6, and other passages of Scripture.
- b. Nominees for Deacon shall undergo training as specified by the Council of Elders prior to their election to office.

3. Authority and Responsibilities.

The Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. They will promote and encourage service to this church and the kingdom and find ways to engage people in church-related activities. Their responsibilities may include:

- a. Administering and developing an annual budget.
- b. Administering and recruiting for ministerial programs and activities.
- c. Scheduling business meetings and providing moderation for the meetings.
- d. Providing administration, facilitation, and service for the success of all ministries including but not limited to small groups, hospitality, greeting, missions, outreach, building and grounds maintenance, finances, special events, weddings, and funerals.
- e. Assisting in administering the ordinances of the Gospel.
- f. Assisting at fellowship gatherings of the Church.

- g. Caring for and maintaining the Church properties.
- h. Administering the business affairs of the Church that pertain to its material assets.

ARTICLE IV Church Employees

In addition to Vocational Pastors and Ministers, LHCC may employ additional personnel. The funding for such personnel must be approved by the covenant members of the LHCC congregation at a properly called business meeting. The Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons shall be responsible for determining the duties and employment of such personnel.

ARTICLE V Church Finances

A. IN GENERAL

No method of fundraising which is in conflict with Scriptural principles or ideals, as determined by the Council of Elders, will be allowed. All funds donated for the missions and operations of LHCC shall pass through the LHCC Financial Secretary and the Treasurer in order that accurate records may be kept. The Board of Deacons shall provide assistance to the Financial Secretary in accounting for funds donated. In the event of unusual circumstances, the Council of Elders may authorize the expenditure of up to 3% of the budget without approval by the covenant membership. This may be designated as a line item in the budget, such as "Council of Elders Discretionary Fund..."

B. CONTRIBUTIONS

It is understood that following Jesus involves regular and proportionate financial giving. The congregation of LHCC shall be encouraged in Scriptural giving. All regular giving shall flow to the general fund of the church and be used according to the terms of the annual budget.

1. The Council of Elders may, from time to time, establish designated special funds to which amounts above and beyond regular giving can be designated. Individuals may ask the Council of Elders to approve new designated special funds to meet temporary needs in the body of Christ that are not addressed by the general fund. Such designated special funds may not exceed 5% of the annual budget. Gifts designated to funds that are not pre-approved by the Council of Elders will be returned to the donor or, in consultation with the donor, be reassigned to another fund. Anonymous gifts toward an unapproved fund or given without restrictions will be added to the general fund.

2. Any designated fund, such as a capital campaign, that is created with the expectation to receive more than 5% of the annual budget must be approved by the covenant Membership at a regularly scheduled business meeting.

C. FINANCIAL PLANNING

The financial planning of LHCC shall be carried out through the creation of annual budgets. Annual budgets shall be developed through recommendations and advice from Elders, Deacons or other authorized committees and individuals. Matters involving Pastoral and ministerial staff compensation shall be the responsibility of lay members of the Council of Elders. Matters involving church staff compensation shall be the responsibility of The Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons, under advisement from the Council of Elders, may delegate financial responsibilities to covenant members of LHCC.

D. ACCOUNTS

Financial receipts from all sources shall be accounted for by the Financial Secretary according to the purposes for which contributions are designated. The Treasurer of LHCC shall disperse these funds promptly as directed by the annual budget or approved special giving. All monies for missions shall be remitted in accordance with the Missions Budget or approved special mission giving.

E. LINES OF CREDIT

No note or contract exceeding 1% of the total annual budget whereby the credit of the Church is pledged shall be made except by recommendation of the Council of Elders and approved by the covenant membership of LHCC.

F. AUTHORITY TO BIND THE CHURCH

No officer, agent, employee, Elder, Deacon, Covenant Member, Associate Member nor any other person purporting to act on behalf of LHCC shall have any power or authority to bind LHCC in any way, to pledge LHCC's credit, or to render LHCC liable for any purpose or in any amount, unless that person was acting with authority duly granted by the Council of Elders as provided in these bylaws, or unless an unauthorized act was later ratified by both the Council of Elders and the Board of Deacons.

1. With respect to any transaction obligating LHCC in an amount or liability of \$500.00 or more, the execution of such transaction or payment must be signed by both:
 1. The individual authorized to execute the transaction by the Council of Elders; and
 2. A witness who is an Elder, a Deacon, the Treasurer, or the Clerk of LHCC.

2. The only individuals authorized to execute legal documents relating to real estate, church property, church finances, or any expenditure or binding obligation in an amount or value greater than 5% of the church budget for that fiscal year are:
 - a. The Chair of the Council of Elders;
 - b. The Vice Chair of the Council of Elders;
 - c. The Chair of the Board of Deacons;
 - d. The Vice Chair of the Board of Deacons; or
 - e. The Treasurer.

Provided however, that no such individual shall have any authority to bind LHCC for any transaction unless such individual shall have a resolution affirming authority for such transaction approved by the Council of Elders.

ARTICLE VI Amendments

Amendments to these Bylaws may be introduced through written motion at any quarterly meeting, but shall not be acted upon until the following quarterly or annual meeting, at which time an affirmative vote of the majority of the covenant membership shall be required for acceptance. Notice of the proposed change or amendment shall be given orally during a Sunday service on at least two Sundays before the vote is taken. It must also be disseminated in writing both electronically and by mail to the covenant membership in the interim period between meetings.