

NEW LIFE COVENANT POLICY MANUAL & BY-LAWS

Updated October, 2022

Article I. Pastor

1. The Pastor shall be paid according to the minimum salary requirements set by the Church of God Minutes and annually updated (each September) according to the cost of living index. The Elder Team, may, at its discretion, exceed minimum requirements based on tenure, merit, etc.
2. Pastor's tenure, according to the Church of God Minutes, is indefinite. Pastoral appointments, as the need would arise, are made by the State Administrative Bishop of Pennsylvania with input from the Elder Team.
3. Any member of the church who wishes to express a voice in the selection process should do so through the Elder Team.
4. The qualifications and responsibilities of the Pastor are referenced in the Church of God Minutes.
5. It is further suggested that the Pastor should spend adequate time in major areas which promote the growth and health of the church as a whole. These would include, but are not limited to: sermon preparation, counseling, administration, and leadership.
6. It is recommended that the Pastor maintain established office hours for accessibility.
7. It is also understood that the Pastor is to be provided a cell phone so that he may be reached in the event of an emergency.
8. The Pastor is encouraged to take time off for rest and refreshment. The following scale shall be used to establish a vacation policy.
 - One Year of Service: 2 weeks paid vacation
 - Five Years of Service: 3 weeks paid vacation
 - Ten Years of Service: 4 weeks paid vacation
9. State and national conferences and events shall not be considered as vacation time.
10. The Pastor should give prior notice to vacation time and make the necessary arrangements for services in his absence.

Article II. Staff

1. All other paid staff members of the church work directly for the Pastor. Staff members are not responsible to the Elder Team. Should staff issues arise, they will be addressed by the Pastor. If a church member wishes to address staff issues, they should be brought to the attention of the Elder Team, who in turn, will submit them for consideration by the Pastor.
2. The creation of new, paid staff positions will be done by the Pastor and will follow the spending guidelines set by *Article III. Elders - number 3, letter L*. If the proposed annual expense for a staff position is greater than \$1,000, it must be brought to the Elder Team for approval. If it is greater than \$10,000, it must be brought to a church conference for approval. If approved, the Pastor will select the individual to hire for that position.
3. All paid staff members of the church are encouraged to be faithful in tithing and in regular church attendance. Of course, a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ should be paramount.

Article III. Elder Team

1. The responsibilities and qualifications of an Elder Team Member can be found in the Church of God Minutes. Those responsibilities are listed under: *S52. Church and Pastor's Council*
2. The term of a member of the Elder Team shall be for two years. He or she may serve an additional two years if re-elected. A member shall not serve more than four consecutive years. The member must be off the Elder Team for a period of two years before being re-elected to serve again. Team members are elected in a congregational meeting.
3. The Elder Team meetings shall be guided by the following principles:
 - a. No Elder Team meeting may occur without the pastor's approval and presence.
 - b. Meetings are to be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.
 - c. A meeting may be called in the event of an emergency or urgent business by the Pastor or by two or more Elders.
 - d. Regular meetings shall be held monthly.
 - e. There will be no Elder Team meeting on the night of a meeting by the congregation unless it is deemed necessary. Team members are expected to attend the conference.
 - f. The time limit for a meeting shall be two and one half hours. The meeting may be extended with a new time limit imposed by a majority vote of those present.
 - g. The agenda for a meeting shall be established and distributed one week prior to the meeting.
 - h. Members of the Elder team are allowed up to three absences per year from the monthly meetings. If a team member cannot attend a meeting, they should notify the Pastor as soon as possible.
 - i. A quorum must be met for a meeting to take place. A quorum is met when at least 5 of the 7 board members are present.
 - j. If a quorum is not met when the meeting is to start, fifteen minutes will be allowed to see if a quorum can be met. If this does not occur, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled for a later date.
 - k. Any item in a meeting will be considered carried by a simple majority vote.
 - l. The Elder Team shall direct the spending of church funds under the following guidelines:
 - The Pastor has the authority to spend up to \$1,000 on any one project.
 - The Elder Team may agree by majority vote to spend up to \$10,000 on any one project.
 - Any amount that exceeds \$10,000 shall be brought to a church conference for approval.
 - m. It should be noted that the Elder Team is to balance the Pastor and serve as an accountability function. If a matter is evenly divided between the Board and the Pastor, that matter shall be directed to the church in a conference.
 - n. The Pastor is to report to the church in conference the activities and business of the Elder Team.
4. The Elder Team will operate as one team, but Elder Team members will fill one of two roles. Candidates for the Elder Team will need to indicate which role they would like to serve in. The roles are:
 - a. Administrative Elder
 - Review monthly financial activity of the church and Learning Center.
 - Make decisions on major disbursements as necessary.
 - Work within the constraints of the church budget.
 - Promote the local, state and national efforts of the Church of God.
 - Provide and maintain church facilities for ministry needs.
 - b. Spiritual Elder
 - Oversee the overall spiritual health of the church.
 - Provide input on church vision & direction.
 - Discern the will and voice of God through prayer.
 - Participate in praying for people at the altar.

- Be available to perform duties such as leading communion or doing hospital/home visitations.

Article IV. Elder Team Selection Process

1. The position of Elder is open to any member of the church, male or female, who has turned 25 years of age or older by July 1.
2. The candidate must be a faithful tither to New Life Covenant Church since one of the primary responsibilities of the Elder Team is to manage and direct church funds.
3. In addition, it is assumed that the candidate be a regular attender of the church and be committed to the mission and vision of the church.
4. To maintain a diversity of representation, no two persons living in the same household may serve together on the Elder Team at the same time.
5. The qualifying member must present his or her name for consideration by completing the application process described below:
 - a. The candidate should familiarize themselves with the Biblical qualifications of the office by reviewing the 20 guidelines set forth by the Apostle Paul for Eldership in Timothy and Titus.
 - b. The candidate will do an honest self-evaluation based on these 20 guidelines, rating themselves on each one.
 - c. Once the candidate has completed this process, they will then decide if they feel they are qualified to submit their name to the congregation for consideration.
6. All the candidates seeking a position on the Elder Team will then have their names submitted to the congregation at the October conference. The voting procedure shall be as follows:
 - a. The pool of names will be displayed for everyone at the conference to view, understanding that each person has gone through the application process.
 - b. To be voted on, a candidate must be nominated by a member in attendance. The nomination must be seconded by another member.
 - c. Once the nominations have ceased, the eligible members for the position of Elder will be voted on by the members present.
 - d. Members are then given opportunity to write down the names of their choices for the position of Elder, not to exceed the number of positions available to be filled. A member is permitted to write down less names than positions available if they so choose.
(Example: If there are 3 vacancies on the Elder Team, the member may write down in any order their 3 choices for these vacancies, or they may only write 1 or 2 names. However, if they write 4 names, their entire vote will be invalid.)
 - e. The votes will be tabulated by the Church Treasurer along with 2 members of the current Elder Team.
 - f. A candidate will be elected to the Elder Team by a simple majority vote, which is a minimum of fifty one percent of the valid ballots cast.
 - g. A vote is considered invalid if one or more of the following occurs:
 - A member writes down more names than positions available.
 - A member writes down the name of another member who has not been nominated.
 - A member writes down the name of a candidate who has already been elected by a previous ballot.
 - h. Once all vacancies on the Elder Team are filled through the voting process, two alternates will then be chosen from the remaining names. The alternates will be chosen using the same voting process. The candidate elected first will be the first alternate should an elected member not be able to fulfill his or her responsibilities. If that first alternate is unable to assume the vacant position for any reason, then the second alternate will become an Elder Team member.

Article V. Congregational Meetings

1. Congregational meetings, otherwise known as church conferences, shall be held two times per year - in the spring and the fall - on Sunday nights.
2. A roll of members present will be taken and kept on file.
3. Non-members are welcome at conferences, but only members are allowed to make or second any motions or cast a vote.
4. A simple majority shall carry any issue in a church conference. The only exception would include a change in by-laws which would require a two-thirds majority vote.
5. Special called conferences may arise if pressing issues cannot wait until a regularly scheduled conference.

Article VI. Church Membership

1. An attender must complete the membership class offered at New Life Covenant Church before becoming a member.
2. Attenders are qualified to become members at the age of sixteen.
3. A list of members shall be maintained and filed as a matter of record.

Article VII. Amending Church By-Laws and/or Procedures

1. Any change in policies or by-laws as specified in this document can only be altered in a Church Conference by a two-thirds majority vote.
2. If a member would request consideration of a change, it must be submitted in writing to the Elder Team for review one month prior to a regularly scheduled conference.

Finances (Offering, Financial Reports, etc.)

1. The offerings are counted and recorded by a financial committee that shall not consist of less than three individuals.
2. All collection, recording, and reporting to individuals shall meet current IRS guidelines so that individuals may be guaranteed tax credit for their giving.
3. Disbursements from the church checking account shall be made by members of the finance committee who have been assigned that task and all checks shall require two signatures.