

BYLAWS

NORTHWEST COMMUNITY CHURCH | PHOENIX, ARIZONA

ARTICLE I: CORPORATE NAME

This body was duly incorporated in 1956 as Northwest Missionary Church and amended in 1976 under the laws of the State of Arizona as THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY CHURCH of Phoenix, Arizona.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

This corporation is organized for exclusively religious purposes. Our purpose is to establish and maintain an interdenominational church for the proclamation of the gospel according to the scripture that we believe to be inerrant, sovereign, and totally authoritative. Therefore, Northwest Community Church exists to honor God by developing fully devoted followers of Christ who are giving ourselves away for His Kingdom. (Matthew 22: 37-39; Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8)

The foundation of the philosophy of ministry is the biblical presuppositions that dictate what the church is to be doing. These would include:

1. Worship: Loving God and others (Matthew 22:35-40)
2. Evangelism: Being His witnesses (Acts 1:8)
3. Discipleship: Making disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)
4. Fellowship: Sharing in mutual authentic relationship (Acts 2:42-47)
5. Service: Equipping the saints for ministry (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Our commission is summarized as follows, "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20) Therefore, Northwest Community Church exists to glorify God by making mature disciples of Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:37-39; 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).

ARTICLE III: STATEMENT OF FAITH

SCRIPTURES

We believe the Holy Scriptures are verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, and are God's complete written revelation to man. We affirm that they are thus both authoritative and sufficient in all matter of faith and practice. As the primary resource of one's spiritual growth, it is the responsibility of followers of Jesus Christ to apply the truth of the Holy Scriptures to their lives.

GOD

We believe that there is but one living and true God, an infinite, all-knowing Spirit, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three persons: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the loving, sovereign, creator, and sustainer of all things, deserving of our worship and obedience.

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is both fully God and fully man. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and His imminent personal return to earth in power and glory.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the triune God. As the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, the Holy Spirit indwells all believers and baptizes them into the Body of Christ at the moment of their salvation. The Holy Spirit also sanctifies, instructs, illumines, empowers for service, and seals each believer unto the day of redemption.

SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of man, who is totally depraved and hopelessly lost, is a free gift for all who repent of their sin and put their trust in Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. This salvation is wholly of God, by grace, on the basis of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ and the merit of His shed blood, not on the basis of human merit or works. All of the redeemed are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the process of becoming more like Christ that begins at salvation and is completed when the believer reaches Heaven. At salvation, the believer is justified and is declared holy by God. Through the empowering of the Holy Spirit and obedience to the Word of God, the believer is enabled to live a life of increasing holiness and growing victory over sin.

THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church consists of all who have been regenerated by the Spirit, called out from the world, separated from sin, and called to pursue holiness. The Church is expressed as local bodies of believers, operating under the direction of Jesus as Lord and Head of His body. The church gathers in community for corporate worship and to equip the body of believers to build up one another and in turn, serve as salt and light to the world.

THE FUTURE

We believe that Jesus Christ will physically return to earth and that this return is imminent. This promise of His return should unite, comfort, and motivate all believers to holy living. Christ will bring His kingdom to completion with His return by judging the world in righteousness and fulfilling His promise to His people. His future work on earth will conclude with the destruction of all evil and the creation of a new heaven and earth. After death, man will exist eternally in a real physical place; either united with God in heaven or separated from God in hell.

ADDITIONAL

At the direction of the Elders, the "Statement of Faith" is supplemented and clarified by the "Doctrinal Distinctives" and "Articles of Practice" issued by the elders, and such other doctrinal statements as may be subsequently issued by the Elders.

ARTICLE IV: CORPORATE MEMBERS

The corporation shall have no members.

ARTICLE V: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: THE PURPOSE OF MEMBERSHIP

The purpose of membership is to state publicly one's commitment to be held accountable to living according to the principles of Scripture while contributing to the edifying of other believers in the fellowship. Membership indicates a willingness to embrace the purpose of the church and work towards its accomplishment.

SECTION 2: APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants for membership shall complete the membership process as determined by the elders.

SECTION 3: QUALIFICATIONS

Active membership in Northwest Community church shall be open to all persons who are sixteen (16) years of age, who profess Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord, who take the Bible as their rule of faith and practice and who have been baptized or have expressed a willingness to be baptized. Each applicant shall assent to the Statement of Faith and Doctrinal Distinctives as well as any other policies or statements issued by the elders. Upon completion of the membership process, applicants will be invited to become members of the church.

SECTION 4: DENIAL OF MEMBERSHIP

If, upon review of an application for membership and/or after meeting with a prospective member, the elders determine that [a] the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, or that [b] there is a lack of evidence of a godly lifestyle, membership will be denied. Any appeal must be made in person to the Board of Elders. The decision by the Board shall be final and there shall be no appeal to any court from that decision.

SECTION 5: INACTIVE STATUS

Any member who has been absent from the church for a period of six months without showing any interest therein by communication with the church, or contribution to its support, may be declared inactive. Persons declared inactive shall not be counted as members and shall have no rights of membership. An "inactive member" may be returned to "active" status by written request to the elders.

SECTION 6: TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP

Those who wish to transfer membership from another church to Northwest Community Church must still go through the same application process. Those who wish to remove their membership from Northwest Community Church need only to submit a written request to the elders. Request can be made for a letter of commendation from the leadership of Northwest Community Church to the church being pursued.

SECTION 7: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

SECTION 7A:

The threefold purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Corinthians 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin (1 Timothy 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Galatians 6:1).

SECTION 7B:

Members of this church and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church who err in doctrine, or who engage in conduct that violates Scripture as determined by the Board of Elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15–18. Before such dismissal, however,

- (1) it shall be the duty of any member of this church who has knowledge of the erring individual's heresy or misconduct to warn and correct such erring individual in private, seeking his or her repentance and restoration. If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then
- (2) the warning church member shall again go to the erring individual, seeking his or her repentance, but accompanied by one or two individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring individual has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent. The first and second warnings may occur with no specified time interval. If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then
- (3) it shall be brought to the attention of the Board of Elders. If the Board of Elders determines—after thorough investigation in accord with the procedures prescribed by pertinent Scripture, including Matthew 18:15–18 and 1 Timothy 5:19—that there is corroborating evidence that the erring individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders shall inform the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance. If the erring individual demonstrates repentance, then notice to that effect may be given at a regularly scheduled worship service. If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then
- (4) he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the Board of Elders, then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

SECTION 7C:

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to the third stage of church discipline, (i.e. the informing of the church and the congregation thereof at a regularly scheduled worship service in order that the church may call the erring individual to repentance) or to the fourth stage of church discipline, (i.e. the dismissal from the fellowship and/or membership of the church) when one or more of the following have occurred:

- (1) where the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church (1 Cor. 5:1–5);

(2) where the disciplined party has taught or otherwise disseminated doctrine deemed false or erroneous by the Elders, then chosen to disregard the direction and reproof of the Elders (Romans 16:17); or

(3) where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning (Titus 3:10–11).

SECTION 7D:

The members of this church, and all other professing Christians who regularly attend or fellowship with this church, agree that there shall be no appeal to any court because of the dismissal or because of public statements to the congregation at the third or fourth stages of church discipline. Members of this church who are under discipline by the church, as defined in the previous paragraphs, forfeit and waive the right to resign from this church. Resignations from membership are possible only by church members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.

SECTION 7E:

Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, a church member, non-member regular attender, or other individual may be notified that he or she is not to be present upon church premises for such a period of time as is deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of others on church premises. Such required absence may, but need not, be concurrent with church discipline of that person.

ARTICLE VI: ORDINATION, LICENSING, AND COMMISSIONING

SECTION 1: ORDINATION

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

SECTION 2: LICENSING

The license is issued by the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's service in a ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform the ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church. Licenses will be evaluated—and issued or renewed—each year at the sole discretion of the Elders. Licenses are to be issued only to church members of Northwest Community Church.

SECTION 3: COMMISSIONING

When local-church certification is required for ministry or where ordination would otherwise be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person may be commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This commissioning continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect and as long as the person maintains the qualifications for ministry, or until the Board of Elders in its sole discretion revokes the commissioning.

SECTION 4: MARRIAGES AND WEDDINGS

All who are ordained, licensed, commissioned or otherwise authorized by this church to solemnize marriages may do so, in the exercise of religious freedom, only where the participants are one man and one woman (Gen. 2:21–24; Matt. 19:4–6; Mark 10:6–9). Church facilities may be used for weddings only where both prospective spouses affirm and abide by the Statement of Faith, Doctrinal Distinctives, and Articles of Practice of Northwest Community Church

and are willing to complete premarital counseling with a pastor of Northwest Community Church or another counselor affirmed by Northwest Community Church.

ARTICLE VII: CHURCH BOARDS

SECTION 1: CORPORATE LEADERSHIP – THE BOARD OF ELDERS

The governing body of the church shall be known as the Board of Elders. The primary duty of the Board of Elders is to have spiritual, prayerful and diligent oversight over the church and its various ministries. The term of office shall be as long as they are qualified and choose to serve. The Senior Pastor and all other boards and committees shall be responsible to this Board.

SECTION 1A: THE ROLE OF ELDERS

The elders are to shepherd the flock of God among them and to manage the affairs and ministries of the church. They are the church's final authoritative interpreter of scripture. They are given the authority to discern and determine the final decision related to policies and practices within the church. They are to steward the doctrine, vision and values of the church and to see that the finances are managed with biblical integrity. They are to delegate ministry oversight to the staff, deacons and other ministry leaders as necessary to maintain their priority of giving themselves to the study the Word of God and to prayer.

SECTION 1B: THE QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS

All members of the Board of Elders must be active members of this Church, and exhibit the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. They must affirm the Statement of Faith, be willing to support the Doctrinal Distinctives and complete the appointment process as determined by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 1C: SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

New appointments to the Board of Elders will follow the appointment process as determined by the elders. This process is to include presenting the names of prospective elders to the congregation for final affirmation.

SECTION 1D: FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

The Board shall meet as often as necessary for the transaction of business and for prayer and consultation concerning the work of the church. Special meetings may be called by the Chairman, Senior Pastor or at the request of a majority of the members of the board.

SECTION 1E: QUORUM

A majority of the board membership shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting church business, with the following exceptions: whenever the business of the Board of Elders concerns discipline of a member, calling or dismissing a Senior Pastor, or buying or selling real estate, a quorum shall consist of not less than two-thirds of the total number of elders.

SECTION 1F: REMOVAL FROM THE BOARD

If any elder fails to meet the defined qualifications for an elder or is no longer fulfilling his role as an elder, he may be asked to step down from the board. Such action will require a 75% vote of the Board of Elders.

SECTION 2: DEACONS

Deacons are to assist the elders in performing the tasks necessary for the orderly function of the church.

SECTION 2A: THE ROLE OF DEACONS

The role of the deacons is to take on responsibility in the administration of the ministries of the church as the elders see fit. The elders will determine the roles that the deacons will fulfill as they identify needs within the church body.

SECTION 2B: THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

All deacons must be active members of this church, and exhibit the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3. They must affirm the Statement of Faith, be willing to support the Doctrinal Distinctives, and complete the appointment process as determined by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 2C: SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT

New appointments to the role of deacon will follow the deacon appointment process as determined by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 2D: REMOVAL OF A DEACON

If any deacon fails to meet the defined qualifications or is no longer fulfilling his role as a deacon, he may be asked to step down from the position as deacon. Such action will be determined by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VIII: COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: APPOINTMENT

All committees deemed necessary for the efficient operation of the ministry of Northwest Community Church shall emanate from, be appointed by and be accountable to the Board of Elders. Each committee shall be composed of those deemed necessary by the Board of Elders to fulfill its purpose.

ARTICLE IX: CHURCH OFFICERS

SECTION 1: EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

The Executive Officers of the Corporation shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Elders and the Church Treasurer. These Executive Officers correspond in intent to the President, Chairman of the Board, Secretary and Treasurer respectively of the corporation.

SECTION 2: DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT

The Senior Pastor shall function as President of the Corporation by virtue of the role and responsibilities given that position.

SECTION 3: DUTIES OF THE CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Chairman, who is elected by the Board of Elders each year at their first annual meeting, shall preside over all meetings of the Board of Elders. He is responsible to insure that the board functions as an effective representation of the Corporation. The Vice-Chairman shall act in the absence of the Chairman with the same authority.

SECTION 4: DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY

It shall be the duty of the Secretary to ensure that a faithful record is kept of all business proceedings of the church and the Board of Elders; to take care of correspondence as authorized by the Board of Elders; to serve as clerk in all business meetings; and to serve in any other secretarial capacity when authorized by the Board of Elders.

SECTION 5: DUTIES OF THE TREASURER

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to oversee the receipts of all monies of the church; to diligently monitor all disbursements made in the name of the church; to insure that federal, state and local laws regarding the financial activity of the church are complied with; to verify bank and accountants' records for completeness and accuracy; to insure all liabilities are satisfied in a manner pleasing to God; and to verify all formal financial reports submitted to the Board of Elders. The Treasurer shall be appointed annually by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE X: PASTORS AND STAFF

SECTION 1: SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor shall be selected according to the search processes determined by the Board of Elders. The final candidate shall be presented by the Board of Elders to the congregation for a vote to formally call the candidate to the position of Senior Pastor. A majority of sixty percent of all votes cast shall be required for an election by the membership. Proxy votes shall not be permitted in a pastoral election.

SECTION 2: DUTIES OF SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor shall serve as one of the elders giving primary leadership and oversight to the implementation of the vision and direction established by the elders. He has responsibility for the general operational oversight of the church with specific responsibilities as determined by the elders. He is directly accountable to the Board of Elders.

SECTION 3: ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Associate Pastors are called upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall have the authority to dismiss associates.

SECTION 4: DUTIES OF ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Associate Pastors shall operate under the direction of the Senior Pastor.

SECTION 5: PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF

Individual members of the professional paid support staff shall be selected by the Senior Pastor and staff in accordance with procedures outlined in the personnel handbook.

ARTICLE XI: CORPORATE BUSINESS

SECTION 1: MEMBERSHIP

The local congregation shall be composed of all members of the church, who also comprise the voting constituency of the church.

SECTION 2: CHURCH FISCAL YEAR

The regular church fiscal year shall extend from July 1 to June 30.

SECTION 3: REGULAR BUSINESS MEETINGS

A regular annual meeting of the church members shall be held prior to the end of the fiscal year. At this meeting members shall consider reports of the affairs of the local congregation, and transact such other business as the Board of Elders determine necessary.

SECTION 4: SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS

Special meetings of the members may be called with a three day notice by order of at least two of the following: [a] Senior Pastor, [b] Chairman of the Board of Elders, or by [c] quorum of the members of the Board of Elders.

SECTION 5: NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The public notice of the regular meeting shall be made at least two Sundays in advance. If necessary, the date and hour of such meetings may be changed with a public notice at least five days in advance of the publicized date.

SECTION 6: QUORUM AND VOTING ELIGIBILITY

A quorum shall consist of the eligible voting members present at any business meeting. Members who are in good standing are entitled to one vote each. No provision shall be made for proxy voting.

SECTION 7: VOTING QUALIFICATIONS

Those admitted to the church membership do not constitute a legislative body, nor do they constitute members in the corporation and they cannot vote, pass resolutions binding upon the corporation, nor shall they have any equity in the real property of the corporation, or right to vote on its disposal, outside of the provision made within these bylaws. Said property of the corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation.

SECTION 8: FUNCTIONAL UNIFICATION

In order to preserve the function and integrity of Northwest Community Church as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to Northwest Community Church, it is imperative that all persons employed by Northwest Community Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to abide by the Bylaws, Statement of Faith, and Doctrinal Distinctives of Northwest Community Church (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

ARTICLE XII: OTHER MINISTRIES/ORGANIZATIONS

Any other organizations, directly affiliated with Northwest Community Church shall be auxiliaries of the church and, as such, shall carry on their organization and activities subject to the Board of Elders and in keeping with the Bylaws, and must be approved by the Board of Elders before their inception.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws or any part of them may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at any regular or special business meeting of the members, provided the purpose of the meeting is stated at the time it is called.