



BYLAWS

2021 Edition

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BYLAWS

Adopted this 12th day of September, 2021

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ, by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; we, the members of this assembly, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local assembly in fellowship with, and as a part of, the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God; and that we do hereby adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this assembly shall be: "*New Life Assembly*" of the city of Landisburg, Pennsylvania.

ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES AND PURPOSES

The prerogatives and purposes of a General Council affiliated assembly shall be:

1. To Govern

This assembly shall have the right to govern itself and to conduct its own affairs according to the standard of the New Testament Scriptures and of the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This right shall specifically include such matters as the calling of a pastor, the election of the church board, and the discipline of its members and the conducting of its own services and church programs.

2. To Acquire and Dispose

In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, this assembly shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by its charter or by the applicable nonprofit corporation law of this state; all in accordance with its bylaws as the same may be hereafter amended.

3. To Worship, Fellowship, and Propagate

The purpose of this assembly shall be to establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony, and to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands.

4. To Cooperate

This assembly shall cooperate with the District Council and the General Council to extend the work and kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council and General Council sessions through its chosen delegates and share in the support of the ministries of these bodies.

5. To Recognize

This assembly shall recognize that the District Council and the General Council have the authority and right to approve scriptural doctrine and conduct; also to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and conduct, and to withdraw their certificates of membership if deemed necessary. See Article IX of the Bylaws of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs as herein set forth, this assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith, associated in the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation. Officers of the District Council and General Council shall be recognized and respected by the pastor and members of this assembly.

As a member of the General Council, this assembly has the right to request the assistance of both the General Council and the District Council in dealing with any of its problems, upon the request of the pastor, a majority of the church board, or a petition signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the active voting members of the assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services of, and supported, this assembly for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

It is understood and agreed that this assembly shall conform its standards of membership, qualifications for deacons, and requirements for a pastor to those standards set by the District Council and the General Council.

By its affiliation, the assembly—directors, officers, and members—agree that no provision of these Bylaws shall be inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of both the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God and the General Council of the Assemblies of God as now in effect or hereafter amended.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

A. The Adorable Godhead

(a) Terms Defined

The terms *trinity* and *persons*, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the one proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11, 21; Zechariah 14:9).

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the Godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation, and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; 8:17, 18).

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation Lord Jesus Christ is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3, 7; 2 John 3).

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is,

therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2, 10, 14; Revelation 1:13, 17).

(g) The Title, Son of God

Since the name *Immanuel* embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title *Son of God* describes His proper deity, and the title *Son of Man*, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title *Son of God* belongs to the order of eternity, and the title *Son of Man* to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title *Son of God* solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

(i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- (a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35).
- (b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(a) Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

(b) The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

A. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Romans 6:4).

B. Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements--bread and the fruit of the vine--is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this

instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use.

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15, 16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- (a) To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16).
- (b) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- (c) To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- (d) To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason for being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- (a) Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3, 4).
- (b) Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- (c) Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world (Galatians 5:22-26; Matthew 25:37-40; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a Body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians

4:11,16), and (4) meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3, 4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).

Section 2. Holy Communion

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP

This church invites the committed participation of those people who share its faith, mission, and fellowship, to whom are granted, by the church, privileges and responsibilities pertaining to its spiritual life and the conduct of its ministries.

We believe membership in the early Church was marked by several characteristics that each individual possessed, and therefore, those who seek to become members of this assembly should seek

to embody the same. According to Acts 2:42-47, each individual member was faithfully devoted to following the instruction and training (teachings) of the church leaders (Acts 2:42). Their heart was mutually linked to other believers, causing them to come together corporately and pray with one another (Acts 2:42). The individual had a deep sense of holy awe towards God (Acts 2:43). Individuals were in fellowship as one body (Acts 2:44). The individual was full of generosity (Acts 2:45). The individual made a daily effort to meet together with other believers in the temple courts and in one another's homes to celebrate communion (Acts 2:46). The individual had a heart of sharing, and a joyful heart which was evident in their tender humility (Acts 2:46). The individual was continually filled with praises to God, they enjoyed the favor of all the people, and their efforts to fulfill the Great Commission were blessed with success (Acts 2:47).

Section 1. Membership Eligibility

In the spirit of Acts 2:42-47, active voting membership in this assembly shall be open to all those who possess the following qualifications:

- (a) Having reached at least 18 years of age.
- (b) A testimony to an experience of the "new birth" (John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:2-4, 22-23).
- (c) Having been baptized in water by immersion (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Romans 6:4).
- (d) Evidence of a consistent Christian life (Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13, 14; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1, 2, 15; 1 John 1:6, 7).
- (e) An indication of a willingness to contribute regularly to the financial support of the church of which he or she is to become a member.
- (f) Acceptance of the Tenets of Faith as set forth in Article IV of these bylaws.
- (g) Having regularly attended services of, and supported, this assembly for a period of at least three consecutive months prior to the date of application for membership.
- (h) Maintain sexual purity as defined in scripture and our church's beliefs. (1 Corinthians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 4:3). We will not receive into membership anyone who is actively practicing the following behavior:
 - I. We believe that adultery, sex outside of the marriage relationship, is sinful and immoral behavior.
 - II. In no case shall a person be accepted into membership who is known to be living in a common-law state of matrimony.
 - III. Neither will we receive anyone into membership who is married to a person of the same gender, known as same-sex marriage.
- (i) Divorced and remarried persons who meet the other membership qualifications may become members.
- (j) Agreement to being governed by the Bylaws of this assembly and of the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God, as both may be amended from time to time.
- (k) Believes in and is willing to contribute to the vision, mission, and strategy of this assembly and its leadership.

Section 2. Procedure for Membership Recognition

Those individuals eligible for membership who desire to become members of this church shall make written application to the pastor or church board. The church board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership by majority vote.

Those approved for membership by the church board shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within 30 days before an annual business meeting, or within 10 days before a special business meeting.

Section 3. Pastor and Spouse

A. Lead Pastor and Spouse

By virtue of office, the lead pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during his or her tenure. The pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the pastor, subject to section 7.A of this Article VI.

B. Staff Pastor and Spouse

By virtue of office, the staff pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during his or her tenure. The pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the pastor, subject to section 7.B (f) of this Article VI.

Section 4. Transfer Members

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI (other than the attendance and support requirements), may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the church board.

Section 5. Honorary Members

The church board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve honorary members by a unanimous vote of the members present. Honorary membership is considered a non-voting membership and is available to any member who has left the church indefinitely due to their physical condition. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly.

Section 6. Inactive Membership

Active voting members who shall without good cause regularly absent themselves from the in-person services of the assembly, and have therefore drifted from the spirit of Acts 2:42-47 for a period of 3 consecutive months (thirteen weeks) or more, or who cease to contribute of their means to its support for a period of 3 consecutive months (thirteen weeks), may be declared inactive members by a majority vote of the church board, and thereupon shall have their voting privileges suspended until they are restored to the fellowship.

A. Criteria for inactive membership:

- (a) The term *good cause* shall be defined by: ailment, work schedule, vacation, family obligations, and/or special occasions.
- (b) The term *regularly absent* shall be defined by: missing more than four (4) Sunday services within a thirteen (13) week quarter without good cause.
- (c) Any active member, not under discipline, who feels they need to take a temporary leave of absence, for any reason, shall request to be put on the inactive membership list temporarily.

- I. The term *temporary leave of absence* shall be defined by: missing more than thirteen (13) consecutive Sunday services within a fifty-two (52) week year (October—September).
- II. Members on a temporary leave of absence shall be responsible to maintain regular correspondence with the leadership of NLAG concerning the status of their absence either via telephone, email, or messaging.
- III. Members on a temporary leave of absence who wish to return to active membership shall be subject to B. a. of this section to be reactivated.

B. Criteria for reestablishing active membership:

- (a) An inactive member may request to be reinstated to active membership after 3 months of consecutive attendance and having reestablished a pattern of regular attendance (i.e. missing less than four (4) Sunday services within a thirteen (13) week quarter with good cause) and/or giving. Their standing is to be settled by a majority vote of the church board.
- (b) Furthermore, when an inactive member is carried on our rolls for a period of not less than one year, and the individual(s) concerned have not made an indication to become an active member within that period of time, they are to be contacted by letter. If then, within one week, they do not contact the church board and indicate what their pleasure is, either in transfer, withdrawal, or becoming active again, their name(s) will be removed from the rolls.

Section 7. Discipline

A. Discipline of the Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor is morally, theologically, and ethically accountable to the Holy Spirit, as well as to the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God. The ultimate responsibility for any discipline of the Lead Pastor lies with the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council who will conduct a thorough investigation into any matter that would affect the Lead Pastor's credentials and be the final arbiters in any discipline of the Lead Pastor. He or She is also accountable to the church board for all matters of stewardship and integrity (see Article VII, Section 8).

B. Grounds for Disciplining a Member

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible (Matthew 16:19; 18:15-20; Luke 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17). All discipline of active members shall be prayerfully administered according to the Scriptures. The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing sinful behavior. It is to be redemptive in nature, as well as corrective. Any member of the assembly is subject to discipline at the discretion of the Lead Pastor and of the church board. Grounds for disciplinary action may be one of, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) A member shall be subject to discipline who sows discord in the congregation or is otherwise divisive in behavior and attitude towards the pastor, other leadership, members, and/or children of the assembly.
- (b) A member shall be subject to discipline who shows unscriptural conduct (i.e. acting in a way that is illegal, immoral, and/or unethical).

- (c) A member shall be subject to discipline who shows a departure from the Tenets of Faith (see Article IV).
- (d) A member shall be subject to discipline who shows a contentious or uncooperative spirit with leadership and/or with others.
- (e) Any other good and sufficient cause.
- (f) The discipline of ministers (not the Lead Pastor) who hold credentials with the Assemblies of God is administered by the District Council and General Council of the Assemblies of God. He or She is also accountable to the Lead Pastor and to the church board for all matters of stewardship and integrity.

C. Procedure for Disciplining a Member

The assembly will follow the disciplinary procedure set forth in Matthew 18:15-20. This procedure consists generally of the following steps:

- (a) The pastor and/or a designated member of the church board discusses the charges with the member in an effort to resolve the matter privately.
- (b) If the first step does not resolve the matter, then the member shall meet with the Lead Pastor and church board, or with a designated committee of the church board in an effort to resolve the matter privately.
- (c) If the first and/or second steps do not resolve the matter, a member found guilty by the church board may be dismissed from membership in the church (Matthew 18:17). However, lesser disciplinary sanctions may be imposed as appropriate, depending on the circumstances of each case.
- (d) The decision of a majority of the church board shall be final.

D. Procedure for Restoring a Dismissed Member

Dismissed members not convicted of abuse of any kind may be allowed back to the premises for church functions and restored to active membership after two years from the time of their dismissal from the assembly in the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 and Galatians 6:1-2, when they have:

- (a) Been approved by the Lead Pastor and by a majority of the church board to return on a probationary basis.
- (b) Humbly taken ownership of their misconduct and made every effort to make things right with all parties involved to the best of their ability.
- (c) Demonstrated an attitude and lifestyle of humility and repentance for their actions.
- (d) When their attitude and lifestyle are judged to be again in accordance with the qualifications for membership (Article VI, Section 1, Section 2) by the Lead Pastor and by a majority vote of the church board.

E. Resignations

Members who are under discipline by this assembly forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this assembly. Resignations from membership are possible only by those members in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

Section 8. Rights and Responsibilities of a Member

Active voting members shall have the following rights and responsibilities:

A. Voting

Each active member shall be entitled to one vote when called upon to do so. Voting by proxy or absentee ballot shall not be allowed. Active members in good standing shall have voting privileges on the following matters:

- (a) The ratification of the church board's selection of a new Lead Pastor (Article XII, Section 1.A).
- (b) The ratification of deacon nominees at the annual business meeting (Article XII, Section 1, D.).
- (c) Amendments to this assembly's Bylaws (Article XIV).
- (d) Large financial decisions:
 - I. The purchases or sales of property (Article XII, Section 2).
 - II. Projects or purchases that exceed \$10,000.00 (Article XI, Section 4).
- (e) Dissolution of the church corporation (Article XII).

B. Call a Special Meeting (see Article IX, Section 3).

C. Personally contribute to the spiritual and cultural health of New Life Assembly.

Membership is more than simply affiliating with an organization, it's a calling. To effectively function as an active, committed part of this local body, a member shall own the following statements:

- (a) I will protect and promote the UNITY of my church.
 - I. By acting in love toward others – Romans 12:9-16
 - II. By refusing to gossip – Ephesians 4:29
 - III. By following and supporting the leadership – Hebrews 13:17
- (b) I will share the RESPONSIBILITY of my church.
 - I. By inviting the unchurched to attend – Luke 14:23
 - II. By creating an atmosphere of grace and hope – Colossians 4:5-6
 - III. By warmly welcoming guests – Romans 15:7
- (c) I will serve the MINISTRY of my church.
 - I. By discovering and sharing my gifts and talents – 1 Peter 4:10
 - II. By being equipped to serve by the leadership – Ephesians 4:11-12
 - III. By developing a servant's heart – Philippians 2:4-7
- (d) I will support the TESTIMONY of my church.
 - I. By attending faithfully – Hebrews 10:25
 - II. By tithing and giving regularly – 1 Corinthians 16:2
 - III. By living a Godly life through the power of the Holy Spirit– Philippians 1:27

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT

Section 1. The Church Board

A. In General

The government of this assembly shall be vested in the church board, which shall consist of the Lead Pastor and three or five deacons. The church board shall act as a covering for the Lead Pastor in prayer and financial accountability, and shall assist the Lead Pastor in the ministry of the ordinances of the church. They shall also act in an advisory capacity with the Lead Pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual life of the church, and in all business matters of the church, to help ensure that the Lead Pastor and the church fulfill its mission and vision.

B. Qualifications of Church Board Members

Board members (Deacons), whether male or female, shall meet and maintain the following qualifications for this level of leadership:

- (a) They shall be 21 years of age or older.
- (b) They shall be able to pass a Child Abuse, ePATCH (electronic Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History), and a FBI background check or a signed affidavit. Those with non-abusive or non-federal convictions may still be eligible. The nominating committee shall investigate the circumstances of the offense.
- (c) They shall be in the church long enough to prove themselves (1 Tim. 5:22), which shall be a minimum of two years.
- (d) They shall be an active member of the church who is in good standing and is involved in its ministry.
- (e) They shall agree with the church's core values, vision, mission, and the leadership strategy of the Lead Pastor.
- (f) They are committed to completing, or have completed, our discipleship process and are willing to disciple others.
- (g) They shall be consistent in tithing.
- (h) They shall be baptized in water (see Article IV, Section 6.A).
- (i) They should be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues *or* earnestly seeking the same (Acts 2:4; 10:44-47; Mark 16:17).
- (j) They shall be reliable (trustworthy) and teachable persons (2 Tim. 2:2) who meet the spiritual qualifications of Acts 6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- (k) They shall care about, respect, and trust others, including the Lead Pastor (1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:2).
- (l) They shall not be preservers of the status quo or dogmatic about tradition, but open to what the Holy Spirit is doing today to reach our culture.
- (m) They shall not be of the same immediate family (i.e. spouse, child, step-child, sibling, in-law, or first cousin).
- (n) The nominee nor their spouse shall have a former spouse living, unless:
 - I. The divorce from that spouse occurred prior to his or her conversion.
 - II. The believing spouse was abandoned by an unbelieving spouse.
 - III. They are the non-guilty party to adultery.
 - IV. In the event any nominee or a nominee's spouse has a former companion still living, the nominating committee shall investigate the circumstances of the divorce (Matthew 5:32; 1 Corinthians 7:10-15, Romans 7:2-3).
- (o) Their spouse (*if applicable*) shall be supportive of their service on the board, and each are willing to submit to the Board Member/Spouse Covenant as detailed in the current edition of the Board Member Handbook.
- (p) They shall not hold ministerial credentials.

C. Duties of the Church Board (Deacon's)

The term *Deacon* means "*servant*." According to Acts 6:1-6, they're chosen to serve the church and to assist the pastor (the primary equipper), by administrating the temporal and material affairs of the church, so that the pastor (the equipper) might give himself to prayer and to the ministry of the Word. Therefore, above all else, a deacon's heart and behavior shall reflect the attitude of Jesus, to serve others and not to be served (Mark 10:43-45; Philippians 2:3-5).

To create consistency and to help facilitate the mission, vision, purpose, and values of this church, each board member shall follow the operating policies, processes, and procedures as detailed in the current edition of the Board Member Handbook. The following is a general outline of their service:

- (a) The church board shall have general charge and management of the affairs, funds, and property of the assembly. The church board shall have the authority to carry out

the purposes of the assembly according to its charter and these bylaws (Article XI, Section 4).

- (b) The church board is authorized to adopt policies and procedures for the operation of the church as long as those policies do not conflict with the bylaws of the assembly or that of the General and District Council bylaws
- (c) The church board shall act in the examination of applications for membership and in the administration of discipline.
- (d) For so long as the church is temporarily without a pastor, the remaining members of the church board shall be empowered to select a temporary chairman of the church board.
- (e) The church board shall elect a secretary from among its members or from among the active voting members who meet the qualifications for such office.
- (f) The church board shall elect a treasurer from among its members or from among the active voting members who meet the qualifications for such office.

Section 2. Officers

A. In General

There shall be a president, secretary, and treasurer. The pastor, by virtue of office, shall be the president of the corporation (assembly) and chairman of the church board. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be held simultaneously by the same individual.

B. Qualifications

- (a) Pastor: The pastor shall be in good standing with both The General Council of the Assemblies of God and the District Council, holding a current fellowship card.
- (b) Secretary: The secretary shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least 1 year immediately preceding election to office, shall currently support the church with tithes, shall have a cooperative spirit, and shall be faithful in attendance at church services. The secretary can be a member of the church board.
- (c) Treasurer: The treasurer shall be an active voting member of this assembly for at least 1 year immediately preceding election to office, shall currently support the church with tithes, shall have a cooperative spirit, and shall be faithful in attendance at church services. The Treasurer can be a member of the church board.

C. Duties of Officers

- (a) Pastor
 - I. Shall be the spiritual overseer of the assembly and shall direct its vision, mission, strategy, and activities (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:1 1-13; I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; James 5:14-15).
 - II. Shall be recognized as a voting member of the church board, president of the corporation (assembly), and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the assembly and of the church board.
 - III. Shall provide for all services of the assembly and shall specifically arrange for all special meetings, conventions, and revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak, preach, or sing in the assembly without his or her approval.
 - IV. Shall, as chairman of the church board, be chairman of the nominating committee for the selection of deacon nominees. The pastor shall privately interview those nominated, ascertaining their eligibility and availability to serve as deacons.
 - V. Should conduct a training class at least once a year on the responsibilities of the church board, secretary, treasurer, and other church leaders. Such a

training course shall be based upon the scriptural directives for church leadership and the church bylaws.

- VI. Shall have oversight of all pastoral, administrative, and support staff, including, but not limited to:
 - a. All employment decisions (hiring, compensation package, raises, suspension and/or termination) as needs arise, in consultation with the church board.
 - b. Creation of job descriptions outlining the responsibilities of all staff.
 - c. Day-to-day operations.
 - d. Annual staff development and reviews.
- VII. Shall be an ex officio member of all committees.

(b) Secretary

- I. Shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the church board, and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly.
- II. Shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his or her duties.
- III. Shall be the custodian of all legal documents.
- IV. Shall file such annual corporation reports with the secretary of state as may be required by state law.

(c) Treasurer

- I. Shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly, subject to the supervision of the church board, and shall deposit all funds as a prudent investor would under the circumstances. Shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements, shall present a report for each regular meeting of the church board, and shall present an annual report to the assembly in its annual business meeting. The report shall consist of:
 - a. The name of the organization
 - b. The period which the report covers
 - c. The total cash balance at the beginning of the period
 - d. The total income received during the period
 - e. The total expenses paid during the period (*i.e. A standard profit and loss report by category*)
 - f. The total cash balance at the end of the period
 - g. The signature of the treasurer
- II. Shall assist the assembly in acquiring and maintaining available tax exemptions under state and local law.
- III. Shall provide a record of all identified giving to each donor at least annually.
- IV. Shall be the custodian of all the financial records of the church.

Section 3. Trustees

The church board shall be considered the trustees of NLAG and shall oversee the maintenance of the church property and buildings.

Section 4. Fiduciary Duties

The law imposes several fiduciary duties on officers and deacons, including the duties of due care and diligence, loyalty, avoidance of self-dealing, expending designated contributions for the purposes specified, and not commingling personal and corporate funds.

Section 5. Temporary Church Board

Should irreconcilable differences arise between the pastor and other members of the church board, destroying the unity and the successful ministry of the local assembly, the District Executive Presbytery along with the sectional presbyter (the investigating committee), upon request from the pastor or a majority of the church board members, shall investigate such differences. Upon a two-thirds majority vote of the investigating committee they may declare the church under District supervision. The term "District supervision" means that the investigating committee has the authority to:

- (a) Suspend the bylaws of the church
- (b) Suspend the church board
- (c) Reclassify the church as a District Council affiliated church
- (d) Appoint and establish a temporary church board invested with the authority to manage both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of the church until such strife shall cease. If the pastor is also the sectional presbyter, the assistant sectional presbyter shall be a member of the investigating committee in his or her place.

Section 6. Local Church Credential

This assembly may grant a local church credential to persons wishing to pursue ministerial recognition pursuant to guidelines established by the General Presbytery of The General Council of the Assemblies of God and the district council with which this assembly is affiliated. It is understood that this credential is to endorse ministry which is undertaken under the auspices of this church and implies no certification by the district council or the General Council, and is not transferable to other churches or ministries.

Section 7. Hiring a Lead Pastor

One of the primary responsibilities of the church board is to involve itself and the congregation in prayer. Prayer is your first and greatest tool! The church belongs to Jesus and He will give you direction and guidance as you seek Him and are open to His voice. *It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. (Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV)* God's will is top priority as efforts are made to secure a new Lead Pastor. Remember, it is not the Lead Pastor "we want" but the one God knows "we need!" The Lead Pastor should not be seen as one who is hired but as an under-shepherd, called of God, to minister to spiritual needs of those in their care and to direct the activities of the church in accordance with its Bylaws.

A. General Guidelines

During the period when the pastoral office is vacant, the church board shall elect from among its members a temporary chairman by unanimous vote. They:

- (a) Shall follow the operating policies, processes, and procedures as detailed in the current edition of the Board Member Handbook.
- (b) Shall not add to the membership roster. Nor shall they subtract names from the membership roster unless a quorum cannot be reached without doing so. Any action by the church board to add or delete names from the voting roster could be perceived as an attempt to influence the pastoral vote.

- (c) Shall avoid the temptation to use this time to carry out their own and/or other member's agendas (Article VIII, Section 2, C. a, c, e.).
- (d) Shall not adopt or amend any operational documents (i.e. the Bylaws, the Board Member Handbook, or the NLAG Policies and Procedures Manual).

B. General Process

- (a) Once a Temporary Chairperson is elected by a unanimous vote of the church board, the PennDel Ministry Network Superintendent's office and the Section Presbyter should be contacted immediately.
- (b) In the past, several candidates would be called and a ballot would be cast to see which, if any, might be God's choice. This multi-candidate approach is not permitted by the PennDel Ministry Network. The church board will select one qualified individual to be presented to the church as a pastoral candidate at a time. A vote of the membership, in accordance with the NLAG bylaws, will then determine whether or not the candidate receives the call to become the new Lead Pastor at NLAG.
- (c) Staff pastors who may desire to have their résumé considered should not be used in interim pulpit ministry. This gives an unfair advantage and affords the individual multiple weekends of "preparation for candidacy." Staff pastors who wish to be considered and whose résumés have been submitted and are not selected as a candidate should resign and leave the church prior to any candidate coming to avoid a conflict of interest.

Section 8. Functions of Pastoral Ministry

The tasks of pastoral leadership in the local church are numerous and varied. However, this section addresses four essential areas, which shall be evident in the Lead Pastor's ministry and shall act as a guideline for his or her performance review by the church board. Should the Lead Pastor be found by unanimous consent of the church board to be lacking in one or more of these four areas, as his or her covering, the church board should ask the following question: how can we help you grow in this area? Or how can we resource you (i.e. conferences, classes, etc.)? Above all, the attitude and behavior of the Lead Pastor shall reflect the attitude of Jesus, to serve others and not to be served (Mark 10:43-45; Philippians 2:3-5).

A. Equip and Serve the Assembly with Leadership

A crucial function of pastoral leadership in the local church is determining the direction (vision) and goals (strategy) for accomplishing the congregation's mission, as well as investing in the development of other leaders. This includes the vital task of administration, but even more importantly hearing from God, determining His will for the church, and communicating that clearly to the people. *Administration* assists the church in getting to the goal, but *leading* announces the goal. The analysis of the situation, potential, skills and resources available, community need, and strengths of the church are important, but paramount is hearing from God. Leadership needs to spend the time required in His presence to hear His heartbeat for the local assembly so they can declare that to the people of NLAG.

B. Equip and Serve the Assembly with the Ministry of the Word

The work of equipping the saints for works of service (Ephesians 4:12) includes preaching and teaching the truths of the faith so they become ingrained in the hearts and minds of the congregation. Sound preaching and teaching will serve to increase biblical and theological literacy in the congregation. The effort to prepare sermons and lessons involves the use of all the skills gained through study and

diligent application to the task of interpreting the Word of God. When those efforts are bathed in prayer and anointed by the Holy Spirit, the people are prepared for the service to which they are called.

C. Equip and Serve the Assembly with Pastoral Care

Using the image of the shepherd to compare to the functions of leadership in the local church emphasizes the need for pastoral care for the congregation (Acts 20:28–31; 1 Peter 5:2–3). Congregational members have issues and concerns that need spiritual help, which the leadership of this assembly shall do their best to provide. Counseling, prayer, encouragement, challenge, visitation, and correction when needed, serve to strengthen the church as it grows into the image of Christ. The loving concern shown to believers as they pass through the difficulties of life can make all the difference in maintaining and having their faith strengthened. Pastoral leadership in this Assembly shall include the pastoral care of the congregation, as well as equipping others to do the same.

D. Equip and Serve the Assembly with Fulfilling the Great Commission (Global and Local)

God calls all born again believers to live the missional life Jesus lived. The local church has always been God's primary instrument to bring light into a dark world and to bid/teach people to faithfully follow Jesus. The Lead Pastor should be moved to inspire followers of Jesus to make a difference in people's lives through creative ideas and personable engagement. His or her desire should be to take a practical approach to preaching, teaching, and using relevant life experiences that help followers of Jesus to feel empowered, equipped, and encouraged to initiate conversations that lead them to fulfilling the Great Commission. Pastoral leadership in this Assembly shall include a strategy for the congregation to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; Acts 1) both globally and locally, as well as equipping others to do the same.

Section 9. Pastoral Sabbath Policy

A. Purpose

The purpose of a Sabbath is for rest, reflection, rejuvenation, and restoration of the pastor and their family. The Sabbath is to "recharge" spiritual batteries drawn down by the constant act of giving. The concept of the Sabbath comes from the very fabric of God's word. We all know that "Sabbath" means seven. On the seventh day God rested from creating and the seventh day became a special day of rest. Later in Leviticus, the "Sabbath" is extended to the land itself. It is this principle of rest that God has woven into the very fabric of our being that the concept of a "Sabbatical" is derived. Longevity of pastors and staff are often the surest signs of a healthy growing church. This policy is to help honor and reward longevity in the pulpit and in staff ministries, as well as aiding the ministers of our church to remain vital and strong in their ministries.

With this biblical principle in mind, the following shall be the Pastoral Sabbath Policy for the Lead Pastor and pastoral staff of New Life Assembly.

B. Sabbatical Guidelines:

- (a) At the end of six (6) consecutive years of ministry, the church shall provide a sabbatical rest for its pastor(s).
- (b) The sabbatical is to be approved by the church board no less than six months prior, and it shall be communicated to the District in the year it is taken.
- (c) The sabbatical shall be for a period of not less than four (4) consecutive weeks (or 28 days) and not more than eight (8) consecutive weeks (or 56 days), as determined by the Lead Pastor in consultation with the church board.

- (d) The congregation shall be informed no less than one (1) month prior to taking the sabbatical.
- (e) The pastor will ensure that the pulpit or ministry area is filled during their absence.
- (f) The Lead Pastor should not take the sabbatical during the annual business meeting unless special arrangements are made with the District in consultation with the church board.
- (g) The pastor will give a full, one to three page report to the board of his or her sabbatical upon the completion of the sabbatical period. The report shall consist of:
 - I. What have I learned about myself from this experience?
 - II. How has this time helped me (physically, emotionally, and spiritually)?
 - III. How has this time helped my family (physically, emotionally, and spiritually)?
 - IV. What's next for our church or ministry and why?
- (h) The pastor shall not transition during this time and shall remain the pastor of this assembly or ministry area for no less than six months after taking this sabbatical.

C. Sabbatical Activity:

- (a) The pastor shall engage in personal relaxation, ministerial development, or other activity not related to his or her normal pastoral responsibilities.
- (b) A minimum of one (1) week shall be spent with family.
- (c) There shall be no preaching or ministry assignments during the sabbatical.
- (d) Educational opportunities are approved, as are certain ministerial retreats or conferences.

D. Funding:

- (a) The church shall continue all salary and benefit coverage during the sabbatical period.
- (b) The church board shall establish a stipend to help cover any conference, education, or travel costs. This shall be a fixed amount that is documented by receipts.
- (c) An honorarium amount should be established for any pulpit guest during the sabbatical period.
- (d) Vacation shall not be tied to the sabbatical. The sabbatical is not an "accrued" benefit, and if not taken cannot be paid out as vacation or sick leave.

ARTICLE VIII. ELECTIONS, VACANCIES, AND REMOVALS

Section 1. Elections

A. Pastor

- (a) The pastor shall be nominated by the church board. Recommendations may be made to the church board by any member of the assembly.
- (b) The pastor shall be elected to serve for an indefinite period of time.
- (c) Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.
- (d) A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election.
- (e) In the event either the pastor or any other member or members of the assembly shall challenge the validity of an election, the validity of the election shall be arbitrated by

the District Executive Presbytery, or any three persons of its choice, and its decision shall be final.

B. Secretary

The secretary shall be elected by the church board from among its members, or from the active voting members of the assembly. The term of office shall be one (1) year, and the secretary may serve consecutive terms without limitation.

C. Treasurer

The treasurer shall be elected by the church board from among its members, or from the active voting members of the assembly. The term of office shall be one (1) year, and the treasurer may serve consecutive terms without limitation.

D. Deacons (Board Members)

- (a) Deacons shall be nominated by the nominating committee, which shall be comprised of the Lead Pastor (see Article VII, section 2C, paragraph [1] [d]) and those on the board that are not up for re-election.
- (b) Active voting members may recommend nominees to the nominating committee prior to making their decisions. However, nominations for deacon shall not be accepted from the floor during any business meeting without prior proof that the nominee meets the qualifications for a deacon and have been approved by the nominating committee.
- (c) Before the nominee is presented, the Lead Pastor shall share his or her ministry philosophy and vision to determine the person's willingness to serve.
- (d) The nominating committee shall present to the assembly no more than three (3) eligible nominees, in addition to the incumbent(s), for consideration at the annual business meeting. In the event that there is no incumbent(s), the nominating committee will still only present no more than three (3) eligible nominees.
- (e) Each incumbent shall be evaluated by the nominating committee to determine if they're still eligible for re-election (Article VII, Section 1.B). If they are found fit to continue to serve and are willing to do so, their name shall be submitted for consideration at the annual business meeting.
- (f) All votes shall be cast by secret ballot, with the full name of their nominee on the ballot.
- (g) The name of the incumbent (*if applicable*) and the eligible nominees shall be listed on the screen. Also, all the names and short bios of those being considered shall appear in the annual business meeting packet for members to review.
- (h) They shall be elected by a 2/3 majority vote of those active voting members present at an annual business meeting of the assembly at which an election is to be conducted.
- (i) The tally committee shall consist of the current nominating committee and two active members of the congregation that are not a current nominee.
- (j) After a tally has been conducted, if one eligible nominee has reached a majority vote, then they are announced as the elected member. Should no one meet this requirement, the number of votes cast per individual will be placed on the screen next to their name for all to see and a new vote will be taken.

- (k) Deacons shall be elected for a 2-year term, and shall hold office until the annual business meeting at which their successor is elected or they are re-elected. The terms of deacons shall be staggered appropriately.
- (l) After two consecutive terms of service, Deacons shall not be eligible for nomination for one year.

Section 2. Vacancies and Removals

A. Pastor

When a vacancy in the office of the pastor shall occur, a temporary replacement shall be arranged for by the church board until a pastor shall be chosen as prescribed in Article VIII, section 1A. The counsel of the District superintendent will be sought. When a pastor's credentials are withdrawn by the District or General Council, the pastor's term of office shall be automatically terminated. In the event a special business meeting is called by petition as provided in Article IX, Section 3, for the purpose of considering the status of the pastor, a majority vote of all voting members present shall be required to remove a pastor from office before he or she has resigned. Any steps of removal must follow the attitude and principles of Matthew 18:15-20 and follow the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 and Galatians 6:1-2. Severance pay shall be governed by Article XII, section 3C.

B. Secretary and Treasurer

The offices of secretary and treasurer shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of the officer's active membership, whichever shall occur first. Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the pastor) may be terminated by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at a special business meeting called for the limited purpose of removal of such member from office or position of leadership which he or she holds or by a majority vote of the church board.

Any steps of removal must follow the attitude and principles of Matthew 18:15-20 and follow the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 and Galatians 6:1-2. Grounds for cause in declaring vacancy in such office may be any of the following:

- (a) Sows discord in the congregation or is otherwise divisive in behavior and attitude towards the Lead Pastor, other leadership, and/or members of the assembly.
- (b) Unscriptural conduct (i.e. acting in a way that is illegal, immoral, and/or unethical).
- (c) Departure from the Tenets of Faith (see Article IV).
- (d) Contentious or uncooperative spirit with leadership and or with others.
- (e) Abandonment or failure to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- (f) Incompetence in office.
- (g) Any other good and sufficient cause.

C. Deacons (Board Members)

The office of deacon shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of a deacon's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

A member of the church board may be removed from office before the end of his or her term by a majority vote of the church board. A recommendation can be made by the Lead Pastor, or a church board member, or any member in good standing for his or her removal from office. Any steps of removal must follow the attitude and principles of Matthew 18:15-20 and follow the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 and Galatians 6:1-2. Grounds for cause in declaring vacancy in such office may be any of the following:

- (a) Sows discord in the congregation or is otherwise divisive in behavior and attitude towards the Lead Pastor, other leadership, and/or members of the assembly.

- (b) Unscriptural conduct (i.e. acting in a way that is illegal, immoral, and or unethical).
- (c) Departure from the Tenets of Faith (see Article IV).
- (d) Contentious or uncooperative spirit with leadership and/or with others.
- (e) Abandonment or failure to fulfill the responsibilities of the office.
- (f) Incompetence in office.
- (g) Any other good and sufficient cause.

In the event that the board member desires to appeal such removal, the individual may appeal for binding arbitration according to Article XIV.

D. Filling Vacancies

Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the Lead Pastor) may be filled by appointment of the current nominating committee for the unexpired term.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings for Worship

Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day, and during the week as may be provided for under direction of the Lead Pastor or the church board if there is no Lead Pastor.

Section 2. Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place, and the report of all officers shall be presented. This meeting shall be held in the month of October of each year. The time and place shall be announced by the Lead Pastor. Notice of the date, time, and place of each annual business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings of the assembly may be held as need arises, to conduct or implement the business of the church, and for other reasons mentioned elsewhere in these Bylaws. These meetings may be called by the Lead Pastor, by a majority of the church board, or by a petition signed by not less than twenty percent (20%) of the active voting members of the assembly. Only those active voting members who have regularly attended services of, and supported, this assembly for a period of at least 3 consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

- (a) Petitions pertaining to the business affairs of the church shall be submitted to the Lead Pastor or the secretary of the church board.
- (b) A petition pertaining to the status of the Lead Pastor shall be directed to the District Superintendent, who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the assembly. No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any 12-month period (see Article VI, Section 9.A).
- (c) Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during morning worship services on each of the two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.
- (d) No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the assembly.

Section 4. Parliamentary Order

In order to expedite the work of this church and to avoid confusion in its deliberations, all meetings of the church board, all annual business meetings, and all special business meetings of the membership of this church, shall follow the general guidelines and parliamentary authority of the current

edition of Robert's Rules of Order Revised, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Roberts Rule's shall not supersede our Bylaws. See Newly Revised Roberts Rules of Order General Guidelines in the NLAG Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 5. Voting Constituency

A. Qualifying of Voters

The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present and who are 18 years of age or older (Article VI, Section 1, f).

B. Transfer Members

Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership (Article VI, Section 4).

C. Members under Process of Discipline

No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9).

Section 6. Quorum

A quorum shall consist of no less than one-half (1/2) of all active members present at any duly called business meeting (Article IX, Section 9).

Section 7. Order of Business

The Chairman (i.e. Lead Pastor or District Official) shall set the agenda for the annual business meeting. In the spirit of proper order, and to end the meeting in a timely manner, no additional business shall be discussed outside of the agenda. Any additional items shall be discussed with leadership before the annual business meeting for consideration. Last minute items that require extensive research shall not be considered. Should said item require a special meeting (see Article IX, Section 3), one will be called for that purpose. The regular order of business for the annual business meeting of this assembly shall be as follows:

- (a) Devotional
- (b) Reading of previous minutes
- (c) Report of treasurer
- (d) Election of officers
- (e) Report of committees
- (f) Unfinished business
- (g) New business
- (h) Adjournment

Section 8. The Church Board

The church board shall meet with the Lead Pastor, at the call of the Lead Pastor, for the transaction of business for the assembly. Time and place of the meeting will be announced to the board members by the Lead Pastor. A majority of the board members present shall constitute a quorum.

A. Call, Time, and Notice of Special Meetings of the Church Board

- (a) Special meetings of the church board, for any purpose, may be called by the Lead Pastor or a majority of the members of the church board. Every member of the church board, including the Lead Pastor, must be notified in advance of such special meeting to allow reasonable opportunity to attend and participate.

- (b) In emergency situations, church board meetings via telephone/video conference call or by email shall be permitted, and a record of any action taken shall be entered into the minutes of the next meeting of the church board.

B. Agenda

The Lead Pastor is responsible for preparing the agenda for all regular and special called board meetings. In the event of the Lead Pastor's absence, the board's actions must be restricted to the Lead Pastor's approved agenda or an agenda approved by a District Executive Officer.

C. Minutes

Minutes of each board meeting shall be kept for the purpose of having an official record of all the actions and decisions taken by the official board of the corporation. Upon reasonable request, in accordance with Pennsylvania Law (Title 15, 5508.b and 5508.c), "Every member shall, upon written verified demand stating the purpose thereof, have a right to examine...membership register, books and records of account, and records of the proceedings of the members..." etc. Any member that chooses to exercise their lawful right to review and inspect our minutes shall comply with the request specifications of said Law. Any examination of these minutes must be held in strict confidence and the contents of said minutes are not to be duplicated, distributed, and/or discussed with anyone as they may contain sensitive information about other members and/or undecided church business.

D. Invitation Request

No person shall be allowed before the church board in an official board meeting without an approved *Invitation Request Form* by the church board. Any and all concerns, ideas, or opinions from the congregation that requires a decision be made by leadership, shall first be discussed privately with the Lead Pastor or a church board member via email, phone call, or in a face-to-face meeting. Should someone from the congregation feel the need to present themselves before the church board, they shall contact the church board secretary and follow the appropriate steps in the NLAG Policies and Procedures Manual.

Section 9. Membership Roll

The church board shall review the list of active voting members at least annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the board immediately preceding the annual business meeting, and compile a current list of active voting members.

ARTICLE X. DEPARTMENTS

Section 1. In General

This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and sub-organizations as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work, including those mentioned in this Article. All such departments and organizations shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Lead Pastor and church board, and the Lead Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all committees or departments.

A. Departments

If feasible, such departments may consist of an adult discipleship system, children's ministries, youth ministries, men's and women's ministries, and other ministries that contribute to the mission, vision, ministry, and work of the assembly.

B. Background Checks

All volunteers who work with children shall be able to pass a Child Abuse, ePATCH (electronic Pennsylvania Access to Criminal History), and a FBI background check or a signed affidavit. Those with non-abusive or non-federal convictions may still be eligible. The church board shall investigate the circumstances of the offense.

ARTICLE XI. CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Section 1. Christian Marriage

- (a) Marriage was established by God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:18, 21-25) and confirmed by Jesus Christ to be a permanent relationship between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4-6). Because marriage is not only a commitment to a spouse, but also to God (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:9; Ephesians 5:31), a believer should marry only another believer (2 Corinthians 6:14). Christian marriage is a reflection of the love, purity, and permanence between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:23-33). Even though some marriages may fall short of the biblical ideal, husbands and wives who devote themselves to God (Ephesians 5:21) and find encouragement and instruction in the body of Christ (Hebrews 10:25) can realize the strength and blessing of God in their marriage.
- (b) To maintain the purity of our assembly as defined in scripture (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:24-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Timothy 1:10), we will not permit the services of our Pastor(s) or facilities to be used in the marriage of anyone who is in conflict with our beliefs in the Assemblies of God.

ARTICLE XII. FINANCE

Section 1. In General

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions, tithes, and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the church board and shall be administered by the treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

Section 2. Handling of Offerings

All offerings shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the church building. An offering receipts form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering, with one copy going to the treasurer and the other to the Lead Pastor. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving.

Section 3. Pastoral Remuneration

A. Regular Remuneration

The pastor shall be remunerated for his or her services by a salary or by other means agreed upon by the church board and himself or herself. The church board shall review the pastor's remuneration at least annually.

B. Reimbursement for Expenses

The pastor shall be given consideration by the church board for expenses incurred by his or her attendance at District Councils, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church as determined by the church board.

C. Severance Pay

In the event a pastor is removed from office by a vote of the active voting membership of the church, he or she shall be given a minimum of 2 months regular or average remuneration and access to the parsonage for sixty (60) days as severance pay, except in the case of moral turpitude.

Section 4. Annual Church Budget

A. Annual Budget:

The church board shall prayerfully set and approve a projected annual budget in the last quarter of the year, which advances, by faith, the vision and mission of the church for the following year. This budget shall consist of, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Projected level of income
- (b) Vision fund
- (c) Operational Expenses
- (d) Ministry and Department expenses
- (e) Maintenance and Depreciation expenses
- (f) Debt repayment
- (g) Savings

B. Board Spending Allowance

The church board shall have a spending limit of \$10,000.00 per project or purchase. Should a project or purchase exceed this amount, the project or purchase must be presented to, and ratified by the assembly in a special meeting or at the annual business meeting (Article VI, Section 10.A.3b; Article IX, Section 3 and Section 7; Article XII, Section 2).

C. Pastor Spending Allowance

The church board shall set a spending limit per month to purchase non-personal items for the church without the direct approval of the board. All receipts shall be submitted to the Treasurer for his or her report. This amount set shall not compound from month to month should the limit not be spent.

E. Support of District and General Council

- (a) It is recommended that this assembly send a monthly contribution to the Pennsylvania-Delaware District general fund.
- (b) The General Council recommends that each church send at least one offering per calendar year toward the administrative offices of the General Council. This offering shall be called a Fellowship Partnership offering, and shall be included with the Annual Church Ministries Report.
- (c) This assembly shall provide a regular monthly missions offering for Assemblies of God World and U. S. Missions and Pennsylvania-Delaware District Home Missions.
- (d) This assembly shall share in the support of all district department ministries.

ARTICLE XIII. PROPERTY**Section 1. Title**

All property of the assembly shall be deeded to the assembly and held in its name or, if required by law, to trustees acting on behalf of the assembly and their successors in office. Should the assembly choose to do so, it may request the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God to act as its trustee to hold title.

Section 2. Purchases and Sales of Property

All purchases of furnishings, equipment, and other items of tangible personal property, exceeding \$10,000 in cost, and all purchases and sales of real property shall be authorized by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership who are in attendance at a regular or special meeting of the assembly.

Section 3. Discontinuation of Church Services

Should this assembly cease to maintain a weekly worship service for a period of 3 months under the direction of a leader duly authorized by and in good standing with the District Council, it shall be dissolved and its properties disposed of according to Article XII, section 4, of these Bylaws.

Section 4. Disaffiliation

Title to all real property now owned or hereafter acquired by the assembly shall be held in trust as a place of divine worship in full cooperative fellowship and affiliation with The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri, and the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God. In the event that the assembly shall be divided over doctrinal or any other issues, or shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God, all property of the assembly shall remain with those members, whatever their number, desiring continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adhering to its Statement of Fundamental Truths. The determination of which group of members desires continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental Truths shall be arbitrated by the District Presbytery of the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God, and its decision shall be final and binding. If all of the members of the assembly shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God for doctrinal or any other reasons, then all of the property of such assembly shall revert to said District Council and shall be used by the District as an Assemblies of God church if possible, and if not possible, the District may sell the property and apply the proceeds in any manner consistent with its stated purposes.

Section 5. Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the assembly, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any other individual. The church board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the assembly, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the assembly by conveying the same to the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God, for the purposes of the assembly, and provided that said District Council at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

ARTICLE XIV. ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES

Inasmuch as the Scriptures require Christians to take their disputes to the saints and not to the civil courts (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), all disputes which may arise (1) between any member of this church and the church itself, or (2) between any member of this church and any pastor, officer, director, employee, volunteer, or other worker of this church, shall be resolved through efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute. If this has failed, either party in the dispute may initiate an arbitration process or reconciliation through a reconciliation ministry.

The arbitration process is not a substitute for any disciplinary process set forth in these bylaws of the church, and shall in no way affect the authority of the church to investigate reports of misconduct, conduct hearings, or administer discipline.

ARTICLE XV. CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Section 1. Name

The name of the association will be New Life Assembly Cemetery Association.

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of the Cemetery Association is to provide burial plots at a reasonable price for active members of New Life Assembly.

Section 3. President of the Cemetery Association

The Cemetery Association will be under the supervision of the Pastor and the church board. They will appoint a president of the Cemetery Association from among the members of the Assembly. The term of office will be one year. He or She will be responsible for the sale of lots and will be entrusted with all finances of the Association. He or She will repost all funds in a responsible bank in the name of the Association, and will disburse the same by check, as authorized by the Pastor and the church board. The president will keep an itemized account of the receipts and disbursements. A report will be given at the Annual Church Business Meeting. His or Her accounts will be audited under the direction of the Pastor and the church board. A chart of the cemetery will be in his or her possession. A cemetery deed, signed by the president and attested by the Secretary of the church board will be issued to the purchaser upon receipt of full payment. The sale of all lots will be handled and financed through the Bank of Landisburg at the time of sale.

Section 4. Lots

There will be no material change in the natural grade of the surface of the ground made without written consent of the church board of New Life Assembly. Furthermore, in case of evacuation of any lot or lots by removal, or otherwise, the lot or lots will revert back to New Life Assembly without consideration. Furthermore, no lot will be resold, transferred, or given to another party by an individual owner without the consent of the church board. The president, alone, is authorized to sell lots.

Section 5. General Guidelines

No cemetery marker or tombstone will exceed eighteen inches in height. The same will be set on a concrete base exceeding the tombstone base or marker by four inches on all four sides. All tombstones shall face east and shall be well maintained according to the rules set in the NLAG Policies and Procedures Manual.

ARTICLE XVI. AMENDMENTS

The bylaws should be seen as a living document and may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the assembly by a majority vote of the membership present, except as otherwise indicated herein. Articles III of these Bylaws may be amended only by the affirmative vote of 100 percent (100%) of the active voting members present at any annual or special business meeting called for the purpose of amending these Bylaws. Article IV and Article XIII, Section 3 and 4 of these Bylaws is not subject to amendment, except to conform to any amendments made to the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God. All amendments must be consistent with the constitution and bylaws of the District Council.