



# THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF LAKEVIEW CHURCH

Ratified September 22, 2019

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## ARTICLE I – NAME

This church shall be known as Lakeview Church of Zion, Illinois.

## ARTICLE II – STATEMENT OF FAITH

### SECTION 1 – The Triune God

We teach that there is one living and true God<sup>1</sup>, an infinite, all-knowing Spirit<sup>2</sup>, perfect in all His attributes, one in essence, eternally existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup>—each equally deserving worship and obedience.

### SECTION 2 – God the Father

We teach that God the Father, the first Person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace<sup>4</sup>. As the only absolute and omnipotent Ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption<sup>5</sup>. His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator, He is Father to all men<sup>6</sup>, but He is spiritual Father only to believers<sup>7</sup>. He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass<sup>8</sup>. He continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and events<sup>9</sup>. In His sovereignty He is neither the author nor approver of sin<sup>10</sup> nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures<sup>11</sup>. He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own<sup>12</sup>; He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ; He adopts as His own all those who come to Him; and He becomes, upon adoption, Father to His own<sup>13</sup>.

### SECTION 3 – God the Son

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these, He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father<sup>14</sup>. We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation<sup>15</sup>. We teach that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second Person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-Man<sup>16</sup>. We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness<sup>17</sup>. We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born<sup>18</sup>; that He was God incarnate<sup>19</sup>; and that

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<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4

<sup>2</sup> John 4:24

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14

<sup>4</sup> Psalm 145:8-9; 1 Corinthians 8:6

<sup>5</sup> Psalm 103:19; Romans 11:36

<sup>6</sup> Ephesians 4:6

<sup>7</sup> Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18

<sup>8</sup> Ephesians 1:11

<sup>9</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:11

<sup>10</sup> Habakkuk 1:13; John 8:38-47

<sup>11</sup> 1 Peter 1:17

<sup>12</sup> Ephesians 1:4-6

<sup>13</sup> John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9

<sup>14</sup> John 10:30; 14:9

<sup>15</sup> John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2

<sup>16</sup> Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9

<sup>17</sup> Micah 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9

<sup>18</sup> Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23, 25; Luke 1:26-35

<sup>19</sup> John 1:1, 14

the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men and rule over God's kingdom<sup>20</sup>. We teach that, in the incarnation, the second Person of the Trinity laid aside His right to the full prerogatives of coexistence with God and took on an existence appropriate to a servant while never divesting Himself of His divine attributes<sup>21</sup>. We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through the shedding of His blood and sacrificial death on the cross and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory, and redemptive<sup>22</sup>. We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and adopted into the family of God<sup>23</sup>. We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest<sup>24</sup>. We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the atoning work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers<sup>25</sup>. We teach that Jesus Christ will return in glory and will establish His millennial kingdom on earth<sup>26</sup>. We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the One through whom God will judge all mankind<sup>27</sup>: Believers<sup>28</sup>, living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return<sup>29</sup> and unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne<sup>30</sup>. As the Mediator between God and man<sup>31</sup>, the Head of His Body the church<sup>32</sup>, and the coming universal King, who will reign on the throne of David<sup>33</sup>, He is the final Judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior<sup>34</sup>.

## SECTION 4 – God the Holy Spirit

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, eternal, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity, including intellect<sup>35</sup>, emotions<sup>36</sup>, will<sup>37</sup>, eternity<sup>38</sup>, omnipresence<sup>39</sup>, omniscience<sup>40</sup>, omnipotence<sup>41</sup>, and truthfulness<sup>42</sup>. In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son<sup>43</sup>. We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation<sup>44</sup>, the incarnation<sup>45</sup>, the written revelation<sup>46</sup>, and the work

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<sup>20</sup> Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19

<sup>21</sup> Philippians 2:5-8

<sup>22</sup> John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Peter 2:24

<sup>23</sup> Romans 3:25; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1

<sup>25</sup> John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23

<sup>26</sup> Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 20

<sup>27</sup> John 5:22-23

<sup>28</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10

<sup>29</sup> Matthew 25:31-46

<sup>30</sup> Revelation 20:11-15

<sup>31</sup> 1 Timothy 2:5

<sup>32</sup> Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18

<sup>33</sup> Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33

<sup>34</sup> Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 17:30-31

<sup>35</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:10-13

<sup>36</sup> Ephesians 4:30

<sup>37</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:11

<sup>38</sup> Hebrews 9:14

<sup>39</sup> Psalm 139:7-10

<sup>40</sup> Isaiah 40:13-14

<sup>41</sup> Romans 15:13

<sup>42</sup> John 16:13

<sup>43</sup> Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3-4; 28:25-26; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 10:15-17

<sup>44</sup> Genesis 1:2

<sup>45</sup> Matthew 1:18

<sup>46</sup> 2 Peter 1:20-21

of salvation<sup>47</sup>.

We teach that the work of the Holy Spirit in this age is to initiate and complete the building of the Body of Christ, which is His church<sup>48</sup>.

The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ<sup>49</sup>. We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ<sup>50</sup>. The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption<sup>51</sup>. We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine Teacher, who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible<sup>52</sup>. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit<sup>53</sup>. We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith<sup>54</sup>. We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints<sup>55</sup>.

## SECTION 5 – The Bible

We teach that the Bible (66 books) is God's written revelation to man, given to us by the Holy Spirit and is the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God<sup>56</sup>. The Bible is verbally inspired in every word<sup>57</sup>, inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed. We teach the literal, grammatical-historical interpretation of Scripture, which constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice<sup>58</sup>. The Holy Spirit so superintended the human authors that, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, composed and recorded God's Word to man<sup>59</sup> without error in the whole or in the part<sup>60</sup>. We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one true interpretation. It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture.

## SECTION 6 – Man

We teach that God, in His image and likeness, created man directly and immediately. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God<sup>61</sup>. We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's

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<sup>47</sup> John 3:5-7

<sup>48</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13

<sup>49</sup> John 16:7-9; Acts 1:5; 2:4; Romans 8:29; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22

<sup>50</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:13

<sup>51</sup> Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14

<sup>52</sup> 2 Peter 1:19-21

<sup>53</sup> John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 1 John 2:20, 27

<sup>54</sup> John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>55</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4

<sup>56</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21

<sup>57</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16

<sup>58</sup> Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21

<sup>59</sup> 2 Peter 1:20-21

<sup>60</sup> Matthew 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16

<sup>61</sup> Genesis 2:7, 15-25; James 3:9

fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world.<sup>62</sup> We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death, became subject to the wrath of God, and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>63</sup> We teach that, because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all people of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration.<sup>64</sup>

## SECTION 7 – Salvation

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of the redemption of Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, and not on the basis of human merit or works<sup>65</sup>.

## SECTION 8 – Regeneration

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given.<sup>66</sup> It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God<sup>67</sup> when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Good works are the proper evidence and fruit of regeneration<sup>68</sup> and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faithful obedience to the Word of God.<sup>69</sup> This obedience causes the believer to be increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>70</sup>. Such conformity is climaxed in the believer's glorification at Christ's coming<sup>71</sup>.

## SECTION 9 – Election

We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies<sup>72</sup>. We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord.<sup>73</sup> Nevertheless, since sovereign grace includes the means of receiving the gift of salvation as well as the gift itself, sovereign election will result in what God determines. All whom the Father calls to Himself will come in faith, and all who come in faith the Father will receive.<sup>74</sup> We teach that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part or to God's anticipation

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<sup>62</sup> Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11

<sup>63</sup> Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8

<sup>64</sup> Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12

<sup>65</sup> John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19

<sup>66</sup> John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5

<sup>67</sup> John 5:24

<sup>68</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10

<sup>69</sup> Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10

<sup>70</sup> 2 Corinthians 3:18

<sup>71</sup> Romans 8:17; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:2-3

<sup>72</sup> Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:1-2

<sup>73</sup> Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11; John 3:18-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 9:22-23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12;

Revelation 22:17

<sup>74</sup> John 6:37-40, 44; Acts 13:48; James 4:8

of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy.<sup>75</sup> We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign, but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love<sup>76</sup>. This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>77</sup>

## SECTION 10 – Justification

We teach that justification before God is an act of God<sup>78</sup> by which He declares righteous those who, through faith in Christ, repent of their sins<sup>79</sup> and confess Him as Lord.<sup>80</sup> This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man<sup>81</sup> and involves the imputation of our sins to Christ<sup>82</sup> and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us.<sup>83</sup> By this means God is "the just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus"<sup>84</sup>.

## SECTION 11 – Sanctification

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God by justification and is therefore declared to be holy and is therefore identified as a saint. This sanctification is positional and instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. This sanctification has to do with the believer's standing, not his present walk or condition.<sup>85</sup> We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the state of the believer is brought closer to the standing the believer in position enjoys through justification. Through obedience to the Word of God and the empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to live a life of increasing holiness in conformity to the will of God, becoming more and more like our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>86</sup> In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict—the new creation in Christ doing battle against the flesh—but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended, but the Holy Spirit does provide for victory over sin.<sup>87</sup>

## SECTION 12 – Security

We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever.<sup>88</sup> We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion

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<sup>75</sup> Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2

<sup>76</sup> Romans 9:11-16

<sup>77</sup> Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9

<sup>78</sup> Romans 8:33

<sup>79</sup> Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7

<sup>80</sup> Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 2:11

<sup>81</sup> Romans 3:20; 4:6

<sup>82</sup> Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24

<sup>83</sup> 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21

<sup>84</sup> Romans 3:26

<sup>85</sup> Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2

Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2

<sup>86</sup> John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23

<sup>87</sup> Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 4:22-24; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 3:5-9

<sup>88</sup> John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 4:30; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 1:24

for sinful living and carnality.<sup>89</sup>

## SECTION 13 – Separation

We teach that separation from sin is called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase<sup>90</sup>. We teach that, out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us, and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that God commands separation from all religious apostasy and worldly and sinful practices<sup>91</sup>. We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>92</sup> and affirm that the Christian life is one of obedient righteousness resulting in a continual pursuit of holiness.<sup>93</sup>

## SECTION 14 – The Church

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual Body, the church<sup>94</sup>, the bride of Christ<sup>95</sup>, of which Christ is the Head.<sup>96</sup>

We teach that the formation of the Church, the Body of Christ, will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own<sup>97</sup>.

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all true believers in this present age<sup>98</sup>. The church is distinct from Israel<sup>99</sup>, a mystery not revealed until this age<sup>100</sup>. We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures<sup>101</sup> and that the members of the one spiritual Body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies<sup>102</sup>. We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ<sup>103</sup> and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as found in the Scriptures. The biblically designated officers serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers<sup>104</sup>) and deacons, both of whom must meet biblical qualifications.<sup>105</sup> We teach that these leaders lead or rule as servants of Christ<sup>106</sup> and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership<sup>107</sup>. We teach the importance of discipleship,<sup>108</sup> mutual accountability of all believers to each other<sup>109</sup>, as well as the

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<sup>89</sup> Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14

<sup>90</sup> 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5

<sup>91</sup> Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 1:9-11

<sup>92</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2

<sup>93</sup> Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10

<sup>94</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:12-13

<sup>95</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8

<sup>96</sup> Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18

<sup>97</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

<sup>98</sup> Ephesians 2:11-3:6

<sup>99</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:32

<sup>100</sup> Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32

<sup>101</sup> Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1

<sup>102</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25

<sup>103</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18

<sup>104</sup> Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11

<sup>105</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5

<sup>106</sup> 1 Timothy 5:17-22

<sup>107</sup> Hebrews 13:7, 17

<sup>108</sup> Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2

<sup>109</sup> Matthew 18:5-14

need for discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accord with the standards of Scripture.<sup>110</sup> We teach the autonomy of the local church, free from any external authority or control, with the right of self-government and freedom from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations<sup>111</sup>. We teach that it is scriptural for true churches to cooperate with each other for the presentation and propagation of the faith. Each local church, however, through its elders and their interpretation and application of Scripture, should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation. The elders should determine all other matters of membership, policy, discipline, benevolence, and government as well.<sup>112</sup> We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God<sup>113</sup> by building itself up in the faith<sup>114</sup>, by instruction of the Word,<sup>115</sup> by fellowship<sup>116</sup>, by keeping the ordinances<sup>117</sup> and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world.<sup>118</sup> We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service.<sup>119</sup> We teach the need of the church to cooperate with God as He accomplishes His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry<sup>120</sup>, and He also gives unique and special spiritual abilities to each member of the Body of Christ.<sup>121</sup> We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: baptism and the Lord's Supper<sup>122</sup>. Christian baptism by immersion<sup>123</sup> is the solemn and beautiful testimony of a believer showing forth his faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, and his union with Him in death to sin and resurrection to a new life<sup>124</sup>. It is also a sign of fellowship and identification with the visible Body of Christ<sup>125</sup>. We teach that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination<sup>126</sup>. We also teach that, whereas the elements of Communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, participation in the Lord's Supper is nevertheless an actual communion with the risen Christ, who indwells every believer, and so is present, fellowshiping with His people<sup>127</sup>.

## SECTION 15 – Last Things

### PART A – Death

We teach that physical death involves no loss of our immaterial consciousness<sup>128</sup>, that the soul of the redeemed passes immediately into the presence of Christ,<sup>129</sup> that there is a separation of soul and body<sup>130</sup>, and that, for the redeemed, such separation will continue until the rapture<sup>131</sup>, which initiates the first resurrection<sup>132</sup>, when our soul and body will be reunited to be glorified forever

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<sup>110</sup> Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16

<sup>111</sup> Titus 1:5

<sup>112</sup> Acts 15:19-31; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4

<sup>113</sup> Ephesians 3:21

<sup>114</sup> Ephesians 4:13-16

<sup>115</sup> 2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17

<sup>116</sup> Acts 2:47; 1 John 1:3

<sup>117</sup> Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42

<sup>118</sup> Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8; 2:42

<sup>119</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4:12; Revelation 22:12

<sup>120</sup> Ephesians 4:7-12

<sup>121</sup> Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11

<sup>122</sup> Acts 2:38-42

<sup>123</sup> Acts 8:36-39

<sup>124</sup> Romans 6:1-11

<sup>125</sup> Acts 2:41-42

<sup>126</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:28-32

<sup>127</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:16

<sup>128</sup> Revelation 6:9-11

<sup>129</sup> Luke 23:43; Philippians 1:23; 2 Corinthians 5:8

<sup>130</sup> Philippians 1:21-24

<sup>131</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

<sup>132</sup> Revelation 20:4-6

with our Lord<sup>133</sup>. Until that time, the souls of the redeemed in Christ remain in joyful fellowship with our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>134</sup>. We teach the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life,<sup>135</sup> and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment.<sup>136</sup>

We teach that the souls of the unsaved at death are kept under punishment until the second resurrection<sup>137</sup>, when the soul and the resurrection body will be united<sup>138</sup>. They shall then appear at the Great White Throne Judgment<sup>139</sup> and shall be cast into hell, the lake of fire<sup>140</sup>, cut off from the life of God forever.<sup>141</sup>

#### PART B – The Rapture of the Church

We teach the personal, bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>142</sup> to glorify His people and establish His Kingdom<sup>143</sup> and to reward believers according to their works.<sup>144</sup>

#### PART C – The Tribulation Period

We teach that God will pour out His righteous judgments upon an unbelieving world<sup>145</sup>, and that these judgments will be climaxed by the return of Christ in glory to the earth.<sup>146</sup>

#### PART D – The Second Coming and the Millennial Reign

We teach that Christ will come to earth to occupy the throne of David<sup>147</sup> and establish His messianic kingdom for 1,000 years on the earth<sup>148</sup>. During this time the resurrected saints will reign with Him over Israel and all the nations of the earth.<sup>149</sup>

#### PART E – The Judgment of the Lost

We teach that following the 1,000-year reign of Christ<sup>150</sup>, Satan will deceive the nations of the earth and gather them to battle against the saints and the beloved city, at which time Satan and his army will be devoured by fire from heaven<sup>151</sup>. Satan will then be thrown into the lake of fire<sup>152</sup>, whereupon Christ, who is the Judge of all men<sup>153</sup>, will resurrect and judge the great and small at the Great White Throne Judgment. We teach that this resurrection of the unsaved dead to judgment will be a physical resurrection, whereupon receiving their judgment<sup>154</sup>, they will be committed to

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<sup>133</sup> Philippians 3:21; 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, 50-54

<sup>134</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:8

<sup>135</sup> John 6:39; Romans 8:10-11, 19-23; 2 Corinthians 4:14

<sup>136</sup> Daniel 12:2; John 5:29; Revelation 20:13-15

<sup>137</sup> Luke 16:19-26; Revelation 20:13-15

<sup>138</sup> John 5:28-29

<sup>139</sup> Revelation 20:11-15

<sup>140</sup> Matthew 25:41-46

<sup>141</sup> Daniel 12:2; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

<sup>142</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:16; Titus 2:13

<sup>143</sup> John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:51-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:15- 5:11

<sup>144</sup> 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10

<sup>145</sup> Jeremiah 30:7; Daniel 9:27; 12:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12; Revelation 16

<sup>146</sup> Matthew 24:27-31; 25:31-46; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-12

<sup>147</sup> Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11; 2:29-30

<sup>148</sup> Revelation 20:1-7

<sup>149</sup> Ezekiel 37:21-28; Daniel 7:17-22; Revelation 19:11-16

<sup>150</sup> Revelation 20:7

<sup>151</sup> Revelation 20:9

<sup>152</sup> Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10

<sup>153</sup> John 5:22

<sup>154</sup> John 5:28-29

an eternal conscious punishment in the lake of fire.<sup>155</sup>

#### PART F – Eternity

We teach that at the close of the millennium, the temporary release of Satan, and the judgment of unbelievers,<sup>156</sup> the saved will enter the eternal state of glory with God, after which the elements of this earth are to be dissolved<sup>157</sup> and replaced with a new earth, wherein only righteousness dwells.<sup>158</sup> Following this, the heavenly city will come down out of heaven<sup>159</sup> and will be the dwelling place of the saints, where they will enjoy forever fellowship with God and one another.<sup>160</sup> Our Lord Jesus Christ, having fulfilled His redemptive mission, will then deliver up the kingdom to God the Father<sup>161</sup>, that in all spheres the triune God may reign forever and ever<sup>162</sup>.

### ARTICLE III – STATEMENT OF PRACTICE

#### SECTION 1 – Ordinances

We teach that God gave two ordinances to the church, the ordinance of baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are the outward rites appointed by Christ to be administered in each local church. They are not a means of salvation, but visible signs and seals of its reality.

##### PART A – Baptism

We teach that baptism by water is the symbol of one's union by faith with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection, and constitutes the public confession of these spiritual realities to the world and is the answer of a good conscience toward God. Immersion is the mode of baptism. All who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and give evidence of the genuineness of their salvation should follow Christ's command to be baptized.<sup>163</sup>

##### PART B – The Lord's Supper

We teach that Christ instituted communion on the night of His betrayal. We teach that communion is as a memorial of Christ's death and a testimony to saving faith. It is to be observed by believers and consists in partaking of the emblems of bread and the fruit of the vine, which symbolize the incarnation and the death of Christ for the remission of our sins and our dependence upon Him for life and sustenance until He comes. Each believer is exhorted to "examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup."<sup>164</sup>

#### SECTION 2 – The Lord's Day

The Lord's Day is of divine origin. The Jewish Sabbath was obligatory upon those who lived under the Jewish

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<sup>155</sup> Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:11-15

<sup>156</sup> 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 20:7-15

<sup>157</sup> 2 Peter 3:10

<sup>158</sup> Ephesians 5:5; Revelation 20:15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21

<sup>159</sup> Revelation 21:2

<sup>160</sup> John 17:3; Revelation 21-22

<sup>161</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:24-28

<sup>162</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:28

<sup>163</sup> Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38-41, 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12

<sup>164</sup> Matthew 26:26-30; Luke 22:15-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:23-24

economy. Desecration of this day invoked the wrath and judgment of God. In this present age, the first day of the week has been set aside as the Lord's Day for rest and worship. This observance is commended to the followers of the Lord Jesus in commemoration of His glorious resurrection. The first day of the week has been kept as the Lord's Day by the church from apostolic times.<sup>165</sup>

### SECTION 3 – Christian Stewardship

God's ownership of all things is unquestioned in the Scriptures. Since we are saved by grace and the death of Christ provided our ransom, our whole being, body, soul, and spirit should be freely given to God, which is our reasonable service of worship. God has made us stewards of what we have in time, talent, and temporal goods. Giving of our means to support the Lord's work is a scriptural injunction and an act of worship. The New Testament indicates that our giving is to be proportionate and generous. Our stewardship in material things is to be motivated by the spirit and example of our Lord who freely gave Himself for us.<sup>166</sup>

### SECTION 4 – Dedication of Children

The Scriptures teach the divine concern for the wellbeing of children and their commitment to God. We, therefore, encourage the formal dedication of children in a public service of the church.<sup>167</sup>

### SECTION 5 – Marriage and the Home

#### PART A

Marriage is a sacred institution ordained of God and is an indissoluble union of one husband (born male) and one wife (born female) until parted by death. Marriage is the foundation of the family. A believer should not be united in marriage with an unbeliever.<sup>168</sup>

#### PART B

Elders and parents have an obligation to teach the sanctity of marriage and to warn against believers being yoked with unbelievers. Elders should not knowingly officiate at the marriage of a believer and an unbeliever.

#### PART C

Elders are forbidden from encouraging, blessing, or officiating same-sex "marriages" or unions.<sup>169</sup>

#### PART D

The home is a God-ordained institution in which the husband is the head and serves its members in love. Filial obedience is to be rendered by children in the spirit of mutual respect and love. The home is the most important institution in which to nurture children in the faith, and great care is to be exercised by elders and parents in building homes that are genuinely and consistently Christian.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2; compare Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Numbers 15:32-36

<sup>166</sup> Genesis 14:20, 28:22; Matthew 23:23; Acts 4:32; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:9, 9:6-7

<sup>167</sup> 1 Samuel 1:24-28; Matthew 19:13-15

<sup>168</sup> Genesis 2:24; Deuteronomy 7:3; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17

<sup>169</sup> Genesis 2:24; Leviticus 18:22; Matthew 19:4,5; Romans 1:26,27; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10

<sup>170</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 78:4-6; Ephesians 5:22, 5:25, 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21.

## SECTION 6 – Divorce

Divorce is viewed in the Scripture as contrary to God's will. Christians shall seek by forbearance and forgiveness to preserve the marriage bond.<sup>171</sup> Persons divorced and remarried who give evidence of being genuinely born again are eligible to be received into membership of the church. Divorce between members of the church is an occasion of great tragedy. Such conduct brings the teaching and reality of Christian reconciliation under reproach and offenders are to be disciplined. Elders are to refrain from performing marriage ceremonies where one or both parties are divorced.

## SECTION 7 – Practices and Conduct

The Scriptures command that believers are not to be conformed to the worldview and lifestyle of the world of which they are a part, but, on the contrary, are to function as salt to prevent the spread of moral corruption and as light to dispel spiritual darkness. It is therefore imperative that they set high standards for their personal and collective life.

## SECTION 8 – Attitude Toward Civil Government

Civil government is ordained of God for the welfare of society to promote and protect the good and to restrain and punish evil. It is the duty of Christians to pray for rulers and for those that are in authority over them and to give due respect, and obedience to them. Christians are also encouraged to take an active interest in government at all levels. Where the demands of civil law would militate against the supreme law and will of God, Christians “obey God rather than men.”<sup>172</sup>

## ARTICLE IV – OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this church shall be to maintain the public worship of God; to build up the church through Christian fellowship and Biblical teaching, to carry the command of evangelization by the propagation of the Gospel throughout the world.

## ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

### SECTION 1

The procedures outlined below are designed solely for the purpose of maintaining scriptural and accountable local church government,<sup>173</sup> such that the affairs of Lakeview Church are conducted in decency and in order.<sup>174</sup> We desire nothing that would disrupt our Christian unity and fellowship with true believers who attend church elsewhere.<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Genesis 2:24; Malachi 2:15-16; Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-12; Mark 10:11-12; 1 Corinthians 7:10-16.

<sup>172</sup> Daniel 4:17; Matthew 22:17-21; Acts 4:19, 5:29; Romans. 13:1-4; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14

<sup>173</sup> Hebrews 13:17

<sup>174</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:40

<sup>175</sup> Galatians 3:28; 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

## SECTION 2

The membership of Lakeview Church shall be composed of those individuals who are 16 years of age or older, have been baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit<sup>176</sup> and do not contradict their profession of faith through their manner of life.<sup>177</sup> The elders may admit eligible individuals into membership at Lakeview upon personally meeting with the individual seeking membership at Lakeview, hearing their profession of faith, and ascertaining that they have been baptized by a Christian church. Those seeking membership who make a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, but who have not been baptized in a Christian church may be considered for membership after being baptized. Letters of transfer from another Christian church will be accepted but will not mitigate the requirement to meet with the elders.

## SECTION 3

If a baptism was administered by an apostate church, or a non-Christian sect or cult, as formally decided by the elders, the individual seeking membership will be instructed on the responsibility to be baptized at the first opportunity. A valid baptism does not depend upon the personal integrity of the minister conducting the baptism or the doctrinal and moral integrity of the administering church. Nevertheless, if the doctrinal and moral corruptions are so far advanced as to require the elders to consider that church to be no Christian church at all, then the baptisms administered by such church will not be received. Given the complexity of all such issues, the elders will deal with each situation on a case-by-case basis.

## SECTION 4

The elders shall oversee the membership list, which includes names and baptisms.

## SECTION 5

Those who are members of Lakeview Church are responsible to fulfill their biblical duties to each other and to the elders as well.<sup>178</sup>

## SECTION 6

Lakeview Church will hold regular membership meetings, which will be the normal channel through which the elders and deacons deliver information on the church and receive advice from the members.

## SECTION 7

If any member requests to be released to the care of another Christian church, the elders, after hearing good and sufficient reasons for their departure, will release them with a blessing, except as noted below. If any member requests a release after committing a disciplinable offense, the elders will delay acting on the request until the disciplinary matter is resolved. If members move from the geographical area, they are charged to find a new church home within six months. This time may be extended at the elders' discretion. After this time is expired, they are released from membership. Members of Lakeview Church who shall willfully, without plausible reason or excuse, consistently absent themselves from the regular worship of the church shall be subject to the steps of church discipline.

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<sup>176</sup> Matthew 28:19

<sup>177</sup> Matthew 7:22-23

<sup>178</sup> John 17:23; 1 Timothy 5:17-20; Hebrews 13:7, 17;  
1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

## ARTICLE VI – ELDERS

### SECTION 1

The elders are collectively responsible to oversee the following: ruling and shepherding,<sup>179</sup> equipping,<sup>180</sup> prayer/fasting,<sup>181</sup> teaching/preaching,<sup>182</sup> administering baptism and the Lord's Supper,<sup>183</sup> administering church discipline and restoration,<sup>184</sup> prayer for the healing of the sick,<sup>185</sup> delegating responsibilities to the deacons, hiring and dismissing church staff, defining the responsibilities of church staff, and delegating responsibilities to the staff of subordinate ministries. The elders will approve the annual budget.

### SECTION 2

All usual business of the elders will be conducted at their regular monthly meetings or at special meetings called for a particular purpose. The elders will appoint one of their number to moderate the meetings of the elders, and one to record the minutes of the meetings. In all meetings of the board of elders, each elder has one vote. In their capacity as a board, the elders oversee all the affairs of the church.

### SECTION 3

Elders are responsible for those duties delegated to them by the body of elders, and recorded in the minutes, with due regard to their gifts and desires. Elders with such a charge will serve willingly, and without domineering in the discharge of their assigned duties, whether pastoral or administrative.<sup>186</sup> There is no distinction of rank within the body of elders.

### SECTION 4

Under Christ, the highest authority in the local church is the board of elders. While all the elders are equally involved in ruling the church, some are to be recognized by the church as also given to the labor of preaching and teaching. As elders, all share the same rank and authority without distinction. Nevertheless, the church acknowledges the variety of gifts and callings God gives to men and recognizes that some of the elders, though equal in rank and authority, are especially gifted and called to preach the Word and to teach right doctrine.<sup>187</sup>

### SECTION 5

Those elders whose assigned duties preclude them from providing for their families in the ordinary way must be compensated financially by the church in a manner consistent with church resources, local economy, the size of the elder's family, biblical generosity and the honor due those that labor at preaching and teaching of God's word.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> 1 Peter 5:1-2

<sup>180</sup> Ephesians 4:11-12

<sup>181</sup> Acts 6:4; 13:1-3

<sup>182</sup> 1 Timothy 5:17

<sup>183</sup> Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

<sup>184</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:1-5

<sup>185</sup> James 5:14-15

<sup>186</sup> 1 Peter 5:1-3

<sup>187</sup> 1 Timothy 5:17-18

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

## ARTICLE VII – SELECTION OF ELDERS

### SECTION 1

A man who is a member of Lakeview Church may be considered as a potential elder in several ways. He may aspire to the office himself,<sup>189</sup> the elders may approach him, or the people of the church may suggest his name to the elders. Once he becomes a candidate, the elders will examine the candidate with regard to his doctrine and manner of life. If the candidate has any disagreement or mental reservation about any portion of the church's Confession of Faith or Constitution, then he must inform the elders of it. All candidates must meet the qualifications for the office set down in Scripture.<sup>190</sup>

### SECTION 2

A man may not be considered for the position of elder without the unanimous consent of the current elders.

### SECTION 3

Upon examination of the candidate and unanimous approval by the elders, the elders will provide a written letter of intent informing the members of the name and approval of the candidate. The members will be given three weeks to provide any scriptural objections as to why the candidate is biblically unqualified for the position. If the candidate receives the unanimous support of the church members, the elders will ordain the new elder to the ministry of eldership through the laying on of hands<sup>191</sup> and prayer.

### SECTION 4

The requirement for unanimity among the members may be set aside only through the unanimous consent of the elders, and that only after the elders have carefully considered any objections in the light of Scripture. The elders will set aside such objections if it is clear the objections are unscriptural or unwarranted. However, refusal to overturn these objections does not constitute agreement with the objections on the part of the elders.

### SECTION 5

If the objections are overturned, then one of the elders will meet with those who objected to discuss the elders' decision.

### SECTION 6

If a candidate is not approved, then one of the elders will meet with him within one week to discuss the outcome and answer any questions the candidate might have.

### SECTION 7

Once installed, the elder will serve for life unless he resigns or is removed.

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<sup>189</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1

<sup>190</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:2-4

<sup>191</sup> 1 Timothy 5:22

## ARTICLE VIII – REMOVAL OF ELDERS

### SECTION 1

If a Christian believes an elder may be morally or doctrinally unfit for his office, the scriptural requirement for him is clear: he is to approach that elder individually first,<sup>192</sup> and then with one or two others.<sup>193</sup> If the problem remains, then the individual, with the two or three witnesses, should come to the other elders and present the charges.<sup>194</sup>

### SECTION 2

If the charges are doctrinal or moral in nature, and if the other elders unanimously decide that the charges merit investigation and/or trial, then they will (a) inform the members of the nature of the charges, (b) announce the date(s) of the scheduled investigation and/or trial and encourage the members to attend.

### SECTION 3

If the charges are unanimously sustained by the other elders, then that elder, depending on the gravity of the charges and the response to the correction, will be rebuked in the presence of the congregation,<sup>195</sup> or will be removed from the office of elder,<sup>196</sup> or both.

## ARTICLE IX – DEACONS

### SECTION 1

Under the general oversight of the elders, deacons will establish and manage the financial, physical, social and benevolent functions of the church.

### SECTION 2

Individual deacons are responsible for those duties assigned to them by the elders, with due regard to their gifts and desires. There is no distinction of rank among the deacons.

### SECTION 3

Deacons will be prepared to give a general report of their work at each regular membership meeting. The deacon(s) whose responsibility is to oversee the finances of the church will provide a regular financial report to the members, and will provide the elders an annual report, a budget proposal for the upcoming year, and a report of the annual internal audit.

### SECTION 4

In the benevolent functions of the church, the deacons are responsible to maintain the biblical standard of money, charity, work, and related issues.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Matthew 18:15

<sup>193</sup> Matthew 18:16

<sup>194</sup> 1 Timothy 5:19

<sup>195</sup> 1 Timothy 5:20

<sup>196</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

<sup>197</sup> Galatians 6:10; 2 Thessalonians 3:4-16; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:3-4. 8; Isaiah 10:1-4

## SECTION 5

In accordance with the Religious Corporation Act of Illinois, two deacons will be appointed to hold the church property in trust; to act for the church in connection with all legal matters. They shall have the power to mortgage, encumber, sell and convey any real or personal property of the church and enter into all lawful contracts, in the name of and in behalf of the church when so directed and authorized by the elders. It shall be their duty to see that all properties are kept in good repair.

## ARTICLE X – SELECTION OF DEACONS

### SECTION 1

A man who is a member of Lakeview Church may be considered as a potential deacon in several ways. He may aspire to the office himself, the elders or deacons may approach him, or individuals in the church may suggest his name to the elders or deacons. Once he becomes a candidate, the elders will examine him concerning his doctrine and manner of life. If the candidate has any disagreement or mental reservation about any portion of the church's Confession of Faith or Constitution, then he must inform the elders of it. All candidates must meet the qualifications for the office set down in Scripture.<sup>198</sup>

### SECTION 2

Upon examination of the candidate and unanimous approval by the elders, the elders will provide a written letter of intent informing the members of the name and approval of the candidate. The members will be given three weeks to provide any scriptural objections as to why the candidate is biblically unqualified for the position.

### SECTION 3

If, in the unanimous judgment of the elders, the candidate receives the clear and obvious support of the church members, the elders will install the new deacon to the ministry through the laying on of hands and prayer.<sup>199</sup>

### SECTION 4

If a candidate for office is not approved, then an elder will meet with him within one week to discuss the outcome and answer any questions the candidate might have.

### SECTION 5

Once installed, the deacon will serve for life, unless he resigns, is removed or is appointed an elder.

## ARTICLE XI – REMOVAL OF DEACONS

### SECTION 1

If a Christian believes a deacon may be morally or doctrinally unfit for his office, the scriptural requirement for him is clear: he is to approach that deacon individually first,<sup>200</sup> and then with one or two others.<sup>201</sup> If

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<sup>198</sup> 1 Timothy 3:8-13

<sup>199</sup> Acts 6:6

<sup>200</sup> Matthew 18:15

<sup>201</sup> Matthew 18:16

the problem remains, then the individual, with the two or three witnesses, should come to the elders and present the charges.<sup>202</sup>

## SECTION 2

If the charges are doctrinal or moral in nature, and if the elders unanimously decide that the charges merit investigation and/or trial, then they will (a) inform the members of the nature of the charges, (b) announce the date(s) of the scheduled investigation and/or trial and encourage the members to attend.

## SECTION 3

If the charges are unanimously sustained by the elders, then that deacon, depending on the gravity of the charges and his response to correction, may be corrected, or removed from the office of deacon.<sup>203</sup>

## ARTICLE XII – RESIGNATION OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

### SECTION 1

If an elder or deacon desires to resign his office or take a leave of absence, he will present a letter expressing this desire and explaining his reasons to the elders. The elders will notify the members of the church at the next membership meeting of their receipt of the letter. If the desire of the elder or deacon concerned is unchanged by the following membership meeting, then the elders will read a statement to the assembled members accepting the resignation or approving the leave of absence.

### SECTION 2

If the resignation is sought for reasons of moral or doctrinal error, then the elders must exercise biblical discipline prior to, or in conjunction with, any consideration of the letter of resignation.

## ARTICLE XIII – DISCIPLINE

### SECTION 1

The purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church<sup>204</sup>, to edify believers by deterring sin<sup>205</sup>, 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<sup>206</sup> thus restoring him or her to the fellowship of the church.

### SECTION 2

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 elders, shall be subject to church discipline, including dismissal according to Matthew 18:15-18. Before such dismissal, however:

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<sup>202</sup> 1 Timothy 5:19

<sup>203</sup> 1 Timothy 3:8-13

<sup>204</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:6

<sup>205</sup> 1 Timothy 5:20

<sup>206</sup> Galatians 6:1

#### PART A

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 issue is resolved through repentance and proper restitution, then discipline is complete.

#### PART B

If the erring individual does not heed this warning, then 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 issue is resolved through repentance and proper restitution, then discipline is complete.

#### PART C

If the erring individual still refuses to heed this warning, then it shall be brought to the attention of the elders. If the elders determine – 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 at a membership meeting 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 membership meeting.

#### PART D

If, however, the erring individual does not repent in response to the church in its collective call to repentance, then he or she shall be publicly dismissed from the fellowship and/or membership of the church and the congregation thereof at a membership meeting. If the erring individual, after such dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement before the elders, then he or she shall be publicly restored to all the rights, duties, privileges, and responsibilities of fellowship and/or membership.

### SECTION 3

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the elders in the exercise of their discretion may proceed directly to Article XIII Section 2 Part C or Part D when one or more of the following have occurred:

#### PART A

When the transgression and the refusal to repent have been public, i.e. openly and to the offense of the whole Church<sup>207</sup>.

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<sup>207</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:1-5

#### PART B

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<sup>208</sup>.

#### PART C

Where the disciplined party has been warned twice to cease from factious and divisive conduct and has chosen to disregard that warning<sup>209</sup>.

### SECTION 4

The members of this church, and all 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 made in accordance with Article XIII Section 2 Part C or Part D. 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 the church. Resignations from membership are possible only by church members who are in good standing and who are not under any disciplinary action.

### SECTION 5

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 XIV – SUBORDINATE MINISTRIES

### SECTION 1

The elders may unanimously delegate to an individual or board the executive authority of any subordinate ministry established by the elders. This executive responsibility continues at the pleasure of the elders. In order to dismiss such an individual, or remove someone from such a board, a unanimous vote of the elders is required. If the individual concerned is also an elder, he is excluded from voting on any matters concerning his own case. If separation of a subordinate ministry from Lakeview Church becomes necessary, that action may be authorized by a unanimous vote of the elders.

### SECTION 2

All formal actions concerning subordinate ministries will be entered in the minutes of the elders' meeting.

## ARTICLE XV – FINANCIAL YEAR

### SECTION 1

The regular church year shall extend from January 1 to December 31.

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<sup>208</sup> Romans 16:17

<sup>209</sup> Titus 3:10-11

## ARTICLE XVI – AMENDMENTS

### SECTION 1

The Constitution and By-Laws may be amended at any time through unanimous consent of the elders, when the following conditions have been first fulfilled.

#### PART A

There is a first reading of the proposed change at the following membership meeting.

#### PART B

A written copy of the proposed change is made available to the congregation in the church.

#### PART C

The elders seek due consultation with the members of the church at a subsequent membership meeting.

## ARTICLE XVII – DISSOLUTION

### SECTION 1

In the event that the elders unanimously decide to dissolve the church corporation, the following conditions must be first be fulfilled before the dissolution will occur:

#### PART A

The proposal of dissolution is read at the following membership meeting.

#### PART B

A written copy of the dissolution proposal is made available to the congregation in the church.

#### PART C

The elders seek due consultation with the members of the church at a subsequent membership meeting.

### SECTION 2

Distribution of all assets and property of the corporation shall be made in accordance with this organization's Articles of Incorporation. Preference shall be given to the mission organizations supported by this local church and any other religious organizations to be determined at the discretion of the elders. No assets will be directed toward any individuals.

