

# BYLAWS

OF

## THE RIVER OF LIFE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

### A. Statement of Faith

We believe that the Bible is the only divinely inspired Word of God, and is the absolute standard for a believer's behavior and is the only comprehensive truth, beneficial for teaching, reproof, correction, and for training in righteousness.

We believe that there is one God, who is eternally existent in three (3) persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

We believe that God, the Father, is the creator of heaven and earth and the designer of the eternal plan of salvation.

We believe that God, the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is the Father's Only Begotten Son. To complete the work of Salvation, He came into the world and became flesh, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin (Mary), and represents the same essence and nature of the Father, and is uniquely God and Man. He preached Good News on Earth, healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons, and was crucified and died on a cross for the sin of the world. He took the punishment for sin upon Himself so that we may enjoy peace. By His wounds we are healed. On the third day He rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father, and will return to judge the world.

We believe that God, the Holy Spirit, has been given to believers as an assurance of salvation and indwells every believer, empowering them to know, understand, and walk in truth and to experience a sanctified life of love and service to God, His people, and the world. The Holy Spirit also graciously grants the use of gifts to believers, as He wills, for the edification of the Church, the Body of Christ.

We believe that the Church is the Body of Christ, consisting of every born-again Christian, and is the chosen instrument of God in fulfilling the Great Commission on Earth.

We believe that Mankind is a fallen creation as a result of sin and remains in a degenerate state, devoid of a personal relationship with God and can only be restored and justified through faith in Jesus Christ, Mankind's only hope for the forgiveness of sin, sanctification, and eternal life.

We believe in the imminent, glorious return of Jesus Christ to the Earth when He will judge the world, through the resurrection of both believers and unbelievers, with

believers being granted the blessing of everlasting life and unbelievers being condemned to everlasting separation from God and damnation of hell.

#### A.1 Final Authority for Matters of Belief and Conduct

River of Life Christian Church's statement of faith stated here does not exhaust the extend of the church's belief. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purpose of River of Life Christian Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our Executive Pastoral Team is River of Life Christian Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

#### A.2 Statement of Belief on Marriage

We believe God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, and that these two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:27).

We believe that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman (Genesis 1:28, 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-5).

### **B. Vision & Mission**

#### B.1 Vision

*“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and His servants will serve Him. They will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.” (Revelation 22: 1-5; NIV)*

#### B.2 Mission Statement

We shall follow the vision as revealed in the Book of Revelation, chapter twenty-two (22), to build the glorious Church of Jesus Christ through the demonstration of personal and corporate worship, renewal of the Holy

Spirit, cell-church development and involvement, and the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ through individual evangelism as well as in gatherings and outreaches, locally and abroad, thus becoming a “blessing to all nations.”

### B.3 Ministry Strategies

#### I. Praise & Worship

- 1) To make this church a center for spreading the vision of worship ministry and training worship leaders.
- 2) To send worship teams to locations both local and abroad with the purpose of training and assisting other believers in worship ministry.
- 3) To spread the vision of worship by utilizing multi-media resources.

#### II. Renewal of the Holy Spirit

- 1) To equip believers with the teaching of the Word, to continue in the renewal of the Holy Spirit.
- 2) To provide an environment where the gifts of the Holy Spirit can be exercised freely by believers as He wills.
  
- 3) To engage in intercession, both individually and with others, for revival of the Church of Jesus Christ.

#### III. Cell Church

- 1) To establish and encourage a holistic, caring ministry through loving relationships in cell groups.
- 2) To create a training and resource center where believers can be trained and sent into ministry.
- 3) To train and send effective ministry teams that will be diverse in makeup but united in purpose.
- 4) To exist as a dynamic cell church fit to serve as a model to others.

#### IV. Glocal Impact

- 1) To aggressively, strategically and globally plant glorious churches of a common vision;
- 2) To expand God's kingdom with our mission ministry focusing on prayer, financial support, short mission and worker-dispatch;
- 3) To commission ourselves to local community and city building with community services and charity activities, and to

participate disaster relief globally.

- 4) To develop diversified IT and media resources to support church planting and evangelism.

## **C. Membership & The Assembly of Representatives**

### **C. 1 Membership**

#### Membership Qualifications

- 1) Has experienced the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, following our Lord in water baptism.
- 2) Has consistently attended River of Life Christian Church's Sunday worship services and regular cell group meetings for a period of more than three (3) months.
- 3) Agrees with and fully accepts the Bylaws of this church.

#### Revocation and Termination of Membership

- 1) Continuing in a behavior or lifestyle that brings reproach upon and/or harms the reputations of Jesus Christ and the members of His Church, and/or refusing to agree with the Bylaws of this organization can cause a person's membership to be revoked.
- 2) Membership shall be automatically terminated if a member has not attended a regular church service or cell group meeting in the preceding six (6) months.

#### Membership Rights and Privileges

- 1) Has the honor to identify oneself as a member of the River of Life Christian Church;
- 2) Is eligible for being nominated and selected as a cell group leader or other church leadership positions; and
- 3) Has the right to vote on important church matters such as the election of the Board of Directors.

### **C.2 Member Representatives & the Assembly of Representatives**

A. Definition

The Assembly of Representatives is a body that decides matters of great importance in the church, and shall be defined as the authorizing board of the organization consisting of current zone pastors and cell group leaders authorized by the church or their designees. The Representatives shall cast their votes in accordance with the wishes of their respective cell group(s). If there is any unresolved dispute, the matter shall be mediated and/or resolved by the Board of Directors.

B. Function

- 1) Elects members to the Board of Directors.
- 2) Approves or disapproves the hiring and/or dismissal of the Senior Pastor upon the recommendation of the Board of Directors.
- 3) Approves amendments to the Bylaws as recommended by the Board of Directors.
- 4) Approves or disapproves major motions presented by the Board of Directors.
- 5) Annual budget and financial reports are to be approved only by zone pastors, whom are appointed and authorized by the EPT.

C. Appointments of Members

- 1) The Board of Directors, beginning each October 1 and ending December 31, shall conduct appointments of members to the Assembly of Representatives.
- 2) The chairperson of the Board of Directors shall serve as chair of the Assembly of Representatives. When considering matters of great importance, the Board of Directors can authorize the chairperson of the Board of Directors to call an ad hoc meeting for the Assembly of Representatives.

D. Voting

- 1) The candidate with the highest vote total shall be elected to the Board of Directors.
- 2) Annual budgets and financial reports shall be passed by a simple majority.
- 3) The position of Senior Pastor shall be filled by a vote greater than 2/3 of the total number of cell groups.
- 4) Other motions shall be passed by a vote of greater than 1/2 of the total number of cell groups.

- 5) All voting shall be conducted by signed but secret ballot and shall be archived by the Board of Directors.

## **D. The Executive Pastoral Team (EPT)**

### **D.1 Definition**

The EPT is the decision-making body that exercises oversight of all ministry areas of the organization. The number of members shall be determined by the Senior Pastor and will consist of the Senior Pastor, full-time ministry staff and member representatives. The Senior Pastor shall chair the meetings unless he/she is unable to officiate at which time an interim chair shall be elected by the members of the EPT. In addition, an invitation shall be extended to a non-voting designee of the Board of Directors to attend each meeting of the EPT. The EPT reports to the Board of Directors via the Senior Pastor.

### **D.2 Qualifications of Member Representatives**

A Member Representative of the EPT is a person who:

- 1) Has been a member in good standing of River of Life Christian Church for a period of at least one (1) year.
- 2) Has lived a life above reproach and one of good reputation with those within and outside of the organization.
- 3) Has served in the organization and is familiar with and abides by the Bylaws of the organization.
- 4) Is able to attend the meetings of the EPT.

### **D.3 Appointment Process**

- 1) Member Representatives of the EPT shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and comprise a minimum of two (2) of the total number of members of the EPT.
- 2) The list of nominees must be completed by the Senior Pastor and submitted to the Board of Directors by the end of October of each year.
- 3) Nominees shall be appointed after being approved by the Board of Directors.
- 4) The Senior Pastor shall discuss with the Board of Directors those nominations that are of concern to the Board of Directors. The appointing process should be completed before the end of December. If for any reason the appointing process cannot be completed in time, the current team members should remain until a new team is appointed. If an EPT member who is a Member Representative leaves, the Senior Pastor should

nominate a replacement within seven (7) days and should complete the appointment in coordination with the Board of Directors within thirty (30) days.

- 5) Member Representatives shall serve for a term of one (1) year and shall be eligible for reelection.
- 6) The EPT shall meet monthly, with all meeting records being submitted to the Board of Directors.

#### D.4 Duties of the EPT

- 1) To discuss and confirm the direction and ministry goals of the organization.
- 2) Create an organizational structure to execute policies approved by the EPT in accordance with the various needs of the organization.
- 3) Authorize the hiring and subsequent annual evaluations of pastors and staff.
- 4) To cooperate with the Board of Directors during the times of crisis.

### E. The Ministry Staff

#### E. 1 General Guidelines

- 1) Potential employees must accept and abide by the Bylaws of River of Life Christian Church.
- 2) The hiring of pastors and ministry staff shall be extended to potential employees by the EPT after an interview of the potential employee(s) and upon the approval of a nomination for employment from the members of the Search Committee whose members are appointed by the EPT.
- 3) The EPT shall conduct annual performance evaluations of all employees, including non-ministerial employees.
- 4) The dismissal of a pastor or member of the ministry staff shall be approved by the EPT (with the exception of the member in question). The hiring of non-ministerial staff (including full and part-time employees) can be made by the EPT after an interview of the potential employee(s) and in accordance with the guidelines of the annual budget.
- 5) A staff member can serve as a representative the River of Life Christian Church in areas such as official written or verbal statements and announcements, external fund-raising, recruitment, and joint ventures with other organizations only upon the written consent of the EPT.

#### E.2 Dismissal of Employees

An employee shall be dismissed from employment after:

- 1) He/she refuses to accept and abide by the Bylaws of the organization, seriously violates the Bylaws, and/or breaches his/her duty.
- 2) He/she has become disreputable in the areas of religious belief and/or personal life, or has committed serious immorality.
- 3) He/she acts in a way that brings serious harm to the reputation of the organization.

E.3 ROLCC abides by the State of California employment laws in relations to hiring and dismissal of employees.

## **F. The Senior Pastor**

F. 1 Qualifications & Guideline for the Position of Senior Pastor

The position of Senior Pastor shall be:

- 1) Filled by a person who has been ordained and has served in a full-time pastoral position for a minimum of seven (7) years. Alternatively, a staff pastor can be promoted to the position of Senior Pastor after having served in the church for a period of three (3) years, with the exception being a pastor who receives unanimous approval of the EPT and Board of Directors.
- 2) Filled by appointment of the Board of Directors in the event of an unexpected vacancy. A Search Committee shall be selected by the Board of Directors for the purpose of identifying potential candidates as expeditiously as possible. The approved candidate shall serve in a probationary status for a period of (1) year at the end of which time the candidate's performance shall be reviewed prior to a possible permanent appointment.
- 3) Considered vacant after the Board of Directors unanimously approves the dismissal of the person filling that position.

## **G. Board of Directors**

G. 1 Function & Oversight

- 1) Reviews and determines annual departmental and organizational budgets and financial reports and manages assets of organization.



- 2) Reviews and determines the compensation, adjustments, employee benefits packages, and contracts of all staff personnel of the organization.
- 3) Evaluates the performance, lifestyle and matters regarding the financial compensation of the Senior Pastor.
- 4) Presides as the final authority in matters regarding the interpretation of the Bylaws of the organization.
- 5) Is recognized as the official representative of the organization regarding legal matters.
- 6) Determines the proper response to matters of serious concern to the organization as recognized and submitted by the EPT or Board of Directors.
- 7) In cooperation with the EPT, commissions and oversees special committees which can be initiated by either body.
- 8) Appoints and approves the corporate officers of the organization pursuant to the following: the Senior Pastor shall be the President of the River of Life Christian Church; the Finance Director of the Board of Directors shall be appointed as the corporate Treasurer; and the Executive Secretary of the Board of Directors shall be the Corporate Secretary. The Board of Directors may appoint an alternative candidate to replace the incumbent officer if that officer is unable to perform his or her duties and obligations as an officer of the corporation due to illness, incapacity or death. The Board of Directors can dismiss an officer if his or her conduct or action clearly disqualified him or her as an officer as determined by the Board of Directors.

## G.2 Qualifications of Directors

A Member of the Board of Directors is a person who:

- 1) Has been a member in good standing of River of Life Christian Church for a period of at least one (1) year.
- 2) Has lived a life above reproach and one of good reputation with those within and outside of the organization.
- 3) Has served in the organization and is familiar with and abides by the Bylaws of the organization.
- 4) Is able to attend the meetings of the Board of Directors.

## G.3 Organization

- 1) The Board of Directors shall be comprised of five (5) elected members of the organization. The members of the Board of Directors shall receive no monetary compensation and shall not be a member of the EPT.
- 2) A member of the Board of Directors shall be elected to a two (2) term and can only serve two (2) consecutive terms if reelected.
- 3) Candidacy shall be determined by a nominating committee, the

members of which are to be selected by the Board of Directors and the EPT. All candidates should be interviewed by a designated interview team before final confirmation before election. The interview team shall consist of designated EPT members and church staff representatives.

- 4) The board of directors will consist of two (2) categories: A General category with three (3) board members; and a Chairperson/Finance category with two (2) board members. All board members regardless of the category have a two (2) year

term duration. The chairperson of the Board of Directors shall be elected to a one (1) term only.

- 5) Upon the resignation of a member of the Board of Directors wherein the remaining amount of time of the term is more than three (3) months, a successor shall be elected to finish the remaining term. The election process shall follow the guidelines found in Section G.2 (3) (above).
- 6) Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be scheduled and/or called by the chairperson of the Board of Directors.
- 7) The resignation of a member of the Board of Directors shall be presented by the chairperson to the full Board of Directors.
- 8) The Board of Directors shall encourage, through invitation, the attendance of the Senior Pastor and other non-voting members of the organization to scheduled meetings.

#### G.4 Financial Responsibilities

- 1) Evaluates the status of financial reports of the organization regarding decisions on employment and compensation in accordance to approved budget(s).
- 2) Advises and counsels individual department heads regarding overdraft and/or shortfalls.
- 3) Determines need and executes contracts with professionally recognized audit firms to periodically examine the finances of the organization.

#### G.5 Resignation and/or Dismissal

A member of the Board of Directors shall resign or be dismissed with the approval of the Assembly of Representatives when:

- 1) He/she refuses to accept and abide by the Bylaws of the organization, seriously violates the Bylaws, and/or breaches his/her duty.
- 2) He/she has become disreputable in the areas of religious belief and/or personal life, or has committed serious immorality.
- 3) He/she acts in a way that brings serious harm to the reputation of the organization.

#### G. 6 Election of the Board of Directors

A member of the Board of Directors shall be elected in accordance with the following provisions except otherwise provided herein:

- 1) The Board of Directors may fix, in advance, a record date for the determination of the Assembly Representatives entitled to vote for the Board of Directors. The record date so fixed shall be not more

than 60 days prior to the date of the election. When a record date is so fixed, only voting members of the Assembly Representatives of the record on that date are entitled to vote for the Board of Directors in the election. If no record date is fixed by the Board of Directors, the record date for determining members entitled to vote for the Board of the Directors shall be the Friday two (2) weeks prior to the Election Day. For the purposes of these Bylaws, "Election Day" shall mean the first Sunday of December of each year.

2) The presence of the majority of the Assembly Representatives on the record date constitutes a quorum for the election of the Board of Directors. Subject to Section C. C2.IV of these Bylaws, the candidates receiving the highest numbers of votes when a quorum is present are elected to the Board of Directors. A member of the Assembly Representatives who is entitled to vote may not cumulate votes for the election of the Board of Directors.

3) Each member of the Assembly Representative who is entitled to vote shall be entitled to one vote for each director position to be elected. Voting rights may not be exercised by proxies. Written and electronic ballot is permitted as specified in Section 5513 of the California Nonprofit Corporation Law.

4) The Board may appoint an Election Committee in advance of an election to oversee and inspect each election as provided in Section 5615(a) of the California Nonprofit Corporation Law. The number of the committee members shall be three. An Election Committee member is not necessarily a member of the Board of Directors. A member of the Board of Directors who is eligible and will participate in a re-election or for running another Board position shall not be a member of the Election Committee for that election. The incumbent Chairman of the Board may serve as the committee chairperson. The committee members shall perform the duties of an inspector as prescribed. All election related disputes shall be resolved by the Election Committee in accordance with the rules as determined by the Election Committee from time to time provided that such rules shall not be in conflict with this Section G 6.

## **H. Bylaws & Amendments**

To amend the Bylaws, the Board of Directors shall appoint a Bylaw Amendment Committee to propose amendments to the Bylaws. After a proposed amendment(s) is accepted and the language of the amendment(s) is approved by the Board of Directors, the amendment(s) must be approved by the Assembly of Representatives.

**I. Dissolution of the Organization**

In the event of the necessity of the dissolution of the organization, the Board of Directors shall act in accordance with California regarding nonprofit religious organizations.