WORD OF TRUTH IN CHRIST CHURCH

BYLAWS



PREPARED BY

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PRESENTED TO

Word Of Truth In Christ Church
Followers, Leadership and
Executive Team

Article 1:
Name & Purpose

A. **Name:** This Congregation of believers shall be known as "Word of Truth in Christ Church", The church is incorporated through the state of Georgia as a Non-Profit organization.
B. **Purpose:** Preserve the comprehension of the Holy Word as revealed in the Old and New Testaments. Impart the Gospel of Jesus Christ to extend its reach and empower souls towards salvation. Provide educational avenues for individuals to cultivate and apply the teachings of the Word of God. Specifically address societal issues such as homelessness, incarceration, youth services, rehabilitation for various causes, and engage in efforts that foster ongoing salvation.
C. **Mission:** Our mission is building relationships with God and demonstrating the Word of Truth. We strive to embrace souls to salvation by teaching and presenting an atmosphere to practice the Word of God.

Article 2:

A. **Purpose and Vision:** The Word Of Truth In Christ Church Ministry Leadership & Development Program is established to develop, equip, mentor, and prepare spiritually mature ministry leaders through biblical education, discipleship, prayer, practical ministry experience, accountability, and spiritual oversight. The program is intended for leaders who desire to grow in their calling, receive ministry development and preparation, pursue ordination when appropriate, and, when properly prepared and approved, establish or lead a church, ministry, or Christian program.

B. **Leadership Development and Training:** Individuals participating in the program may receive instruction and development through Word Of Truth In Christ Church educational programs, discipleship opportunities, mentoring, ministry assignments, prayer, and practical training. Participants are expected to demonstrate spiritual maturity, integrity, teachability, faithfulness, and agreement with the Church's Statement of Faith and bylaws. Completion of training requirements does not automatically guarantee ordination, appointment, or approval to establish a ministry.

C. **Ordination and Ministry Establishment**: A participant who desires to pursue ordination or establish a church, ministry, or Christian program shall be evaluated according to the biblical, spiritual, educational, and ministry requirements established by Word Of Truth In Christ Church. Leaders preparing to establish a ministry may be required to submit a ministry or church plan and participate in an evaluation process determined by the appropriate Church leadership. Ordination and ministry establishment shall be subject to

final approval by the leadership authority designated by these bylaws and applicable Church policies.

D. **Spiritual Oversight, Accountability, and Restoration**: Participants in the Ministry Leadership & Development Program shall remain accountable to the spiritual oversight established by Word Of Truth In Christ Church while they are participating in the program. Concerns regarding conduct, doctrine, leadership, or compliance with the Church's Statement of Faith and bylaws shall be addressed in a manner consistent with Article 2, including biblical correction, humility, gentleness, grace, prayer, and a genuine effort toward restoration. Removal from the program may occur when a participant persistently fails to uphold the Church's beliefs, responsibilities, or standards after appropriate counsel and review. Removal shall not be used as a means of condemnation, humiliation, or retaliation.

E. **Church Partnership**: Word Of Truth In Christ Church may establish partnerships with churches, ministries, Christian organizations, ministry leaders, and other appropriate organizations or individuals for the purpose of advancing shared Christian objectives. Partnerships may include worship services, Bible teaching, conferences, evangelism, discipleship, community outreach, youth and family initiatives, educational programs, digital and media ministry, studio production, charitable assistance, and other projects consistent with the mission and Statement of Faith of the Church.

1. **Defined Roles and Responsibilities**: Each partnership or joint project should identify, as appropriate, the individuals or organizations responsible for planning, ministry leadership, finances, communications, marketing, media and production, volunteers, facilities, and other project responsibilities.

2. **Shared Services and Projects**: Before a joint service, event, program, or project begins, participating parties should establish the agreed-upon responsibilities, including service or program format, speakers and teachers, worship participants, promotional materials, branding, livestreaming and recording, media production, financial responsibilities, and other matters necessary for orderly execution.

3. **Organizational Authority**: Partnership creates collaboration and does not automatically transfer governing authority from one organization to another. Each participating church or ministry retains authority over its own internal governance, doctrine, finances, personnel, property, branding, teaching, media assets, and ministry operations unless a written partnership agreement expressly provides otherwise.

4. **Joint Decision-Making**: Decisions affecting a joint project shall be made by the individuals designated by the participating organizations for that project. No partner may independently make decisions that bind Word Of Truth In Christ Church without authorization from the appropriate Church leadership.

5. **Written Partnership Agreements**: For significant or continuing partnerships involving finances, long-term commitments, shared personnel, intellectual property, media or recording rights, equipment, facilities, or ongoing programming, Word Of Truth In Christ Church may require a written partnership agreement approved by the appropriate Church leadership. Detailed partnership procedures may be established in a separate Church Partnership & Ministry Collaboration Policy.

6. **Spiritual and Ministry Alignment**: All partnerships involving ministry activities shall be consistent with the mission and Statement of Faith of Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Church reserves the right to decline, modify, suspend, or end a partnership when a proposed activity or partner is inconsistent with the Church's biblical convictions, mission, responsibilities, or established leadership direction.

Statement of Faith:

A. <u>Scripture:</u>

We believe that the entire Bible is the Word of God, written perfectly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and is to be strictly and reverently understood according to the author's original intent. Taken as such, we believe the Bible is sufficient to have supreme authority (superseding even this document) in all matters of life and faith.

B. <u>God's Deity</u>

We believe that the one true God exists eternally in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and that these, being one God, are equal in deity, power, and glory. God is infinite in love, perfect in judgments, and unchanging in righteousness and mercy. We believe that God not only created the world, but also now upholds, sustains, governs, and providentially directs all that exists, and that He will bring all things to their proper consummation in Christ Jesus, to the glory of His name. (Ps. 104:1–35; 139:1–24; Mt. 10:29–31; 28:19; Acts 17:24–28; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:9–12; 4:4–6; Col. 1:16–17; Heb. 1:1–3; Rev. 1:4–6)

1. **God the Father**

   We believe God the Father is eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. We believe the heavenly Father is the source of all that exists, whether of matter or spirit. With the Son and the Holy Spirit, He made man, male and female, in His image. By intention He relates to people as Father, thereby forever declaring His goodwill toward them. In love He both seeks and receives penitent sinners. (Ps. 68:5; Isa. 64:8; Mt. 5:45; 7:11; Jn. 3:17; Rom. 8:15; 1 Pet. 1:17)

2. **God the Son**

   We believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God; that He is God incarnate, fully God and fully man; that He was eternally preexistent with the Father and the Holy Spirit; and that He was conceived and born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and offered Himself as a penal, substitutionary sacrifice for sinners. By His blood shed at the cross, He obtained for us eternal redemption, the forgiveness of sins and life everlasting. He was raised bodily on the third day and ascended to the right hand of the Father, there to make intercessions for the saints forever. He will return to earth again to reign in righteousness. (Mt. 1:18–25; Jn. 1:1–18; Rom. 8:34; 1 Cor. 15:1–28; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:10–14; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 2:6–11; Col. 1:15–23; Heb. 7:25; 9:13–15; 10:19; 1 Pet. 2:21–25; 1 Jn. 2:1–2)

3. **God the Holy Spirit**

   We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit, in whom we are also sealed for the day of redemption. The Holy Spirit regenerates, forever indwells, and graciously equips the Christian for godly living and service. Subsequent to conversion, the Spirit fills, empowers, and anoints believers for ministry and witness. We also believe that signs and wonders, as well as all the gifts of the Spirit described in the New Testament, are operative today and are designed to testify to the

presence of the kingdom of God and to empower and edify the Church to fulfill its calling and mission. (Mt. 3:11; Jn. 1:12–13; 3:1–15; Acts 4:29–30; Rom. 8:9; 12:3–8; 1 Cor. 12:12–13; 2 Cor. 1:21–22; Gal. 3:1–5; Eph. 1:13–14; 5:18)

4. **Salvation**
   We believe that all sin is ultimately against God alone and that any transgression can only be atoned for by the blood of Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ is the only saving grace, whereby we receive Him alone for salvation as He is offered to us in the Gospel as defined by God's Word. Those who are forgiven in Christ Jesus (in this or those in past generations) therefore can have no proper condemnation from man or God, as he is no longer condemned by God. This new life of salvation from the wrath of God, forgiveness of sin, and eternal life cannot be earned, deserved, inherited, or bought. The fruit of the new life in Christ is not exemplified in the adherence to the law of the Old Covenant but in fruits of the law of the Spirit under the freedom of the New Covenant.

5. **Sacraments**
   We believe these two symbolic ordinances of the Church are to be observed until the time of Christ's return.

   a. Water Baptism. A pledge of a believer's covenant with God. It identifies them with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is a sign of their cleansing and freedom from sin, and their commitment to walk in the ways of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. Full immersion is our primary mode of baptism. Rom. 6:1-6, Matt. 28:19, Acts 2:22-24, 36-41, 8:26-39, Gal. 3:26-29, Col. 2:10-15 2.
   b. Holy Communion. Communion bread represents Christ's body and the fruit of the vine, either grape juice or wine, represents Christ's blood given sacrificially to redeem us from sin. Through communion, we proclaim the life and death of Jesus Christ until he comes. 1 Cor. 11:23-32, 10:16-17, Lk. 22:15-30, Jer. 31: 31-34

6. **The Church**
   The church is a community of redeemed people worldwide under the Lordship of Jesus who meet regularly to worship, be discipled, partake of the sacraments, fellowship, and carry out the great commission together.

   a. Jesus established the local church to function with ordained leaders and a form of governance that protects, guides, and releases people in their gifts to minister. The church functions under the theocratic rule of God with clearly defined elders.
   b. We believe that the Church is God's primary instrument, through which He is fulfilling His redemptive purposes in the earth. To equip the saints for the work of ministry, God has given the Church apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.
   c. We also affirm the priesthood of all believers and the importance of every Christian being joined with and actively involved in a local community of the

saints. (Mt. 16:17–19; Acts 2:17–18, 42; Eph. 3:14–21; 4:11–16; 1 Tim. 2:11–15; Heb. 10:23– 25; 1 Pet. 2:4–5, 9–10

7. **Marriage and Human Sexuality**
We believe a sexual relationship is only appropriate in a monogamous, heterosexual marriage covenant, and therefore should only be practiced in such a covenant. We believe that any sexual practice outside of the previously described marriage covenant is sin.

We believe that God created humankind in His image, intentionally and exclusively male and female, with each bringing unique qualities to sexuality and relationships. Sex is a wonderful gift from God to be expressed in marriage for procreation, union, and mutual delight or in celibacy in devotion to God. We believe that marriage is the union of one man (husband) and one woman (wife) through a sacred covenant designed by God to be a lifelong relationship and commitment between a husband and a wife.

We will teach and uphold God's marriage design as found in the Scriptures, but we also seek to minister to those who suffer the consequences of sexual and marital brokenness. We also affirm that we are called to minister to all who fall short of God’s standards with love and compassion. (Genesis 1:27, Hebrews 13:4, I Corinthians 7:35, Matthew 19:4-6)

As teachers, ministers, and leaders of Word Of Truth In Christ Church, we are responsible for upholding the biblical standards expressed in this Statement of Faith while also teaching, correcting, and ministering according to the character and instruction of Scripture. We are called to avoid unjust judgment and condemnation, respond to those who have fallen with gentleness and humility, seek restoration rather than condemnation, communicate with grace, exercise righteous judgment rather than judgment based solely on outward appearance, and bear with those who may be struggling or spiritually weak. We believe that those entrusted to teach and minister must be led by the Holy Spirit and must demonstrate compassion, patience, humility, truth, grace, and love as they help one another grow in Christ. In all teaching, correction, and ministry, our conduct and communication must reflect the character and teachings of Jesus Christ. (James 4:11–12; 2 Timothy 2:24–25; Galatians 6:1; Colossians 4:6; John 7:24; Romans 15:1)

Article 3
Ministry Leadership & Development Program

A. Definition of Followership: Word Of Truth In Christ Church does not operate under a traditional formal membership model. A “Follower” is a person who voluntarily identifies with and participates in the spiritual mission, teachings, worship, discipleship, fellowship, outreach, and ministry opportunities of Word Of Truth In Christ Church and seeks to grow as a disciple and follower of Jesus Christ. Followership is intended to cultivate spiritual family, belonging, accountability, service, and growth in the Body of Christ.

B. Followership Connection and Discipleship Pathway: Individuals who desire to become connected with the Church may complete the Church’s connection and discipleship pathway, which may include a connection form, New Follower Class, meeting with the Apostolic Leadership Team, orientation with Church administrative staff, and regular participation in worship services, discipleship, and other Church activities. This pathway is intended to provide care, orientation, spiritual development, and connection rather than function as a traditional membership application.

C. Spiritual Growth and Participation: Followers are encouraged to grow in the Word of God, participate in worship and discipleship, fellowship with the Body of Christ, serve others, and demonstrate the character and teachings of Jesus Christ. Participation in the Church does not require that every follower serve in a ministry or hold a leadership position. The Church seeks to meet individuals at their stage of spiritual development and provide appropriate opportunities for growth.

D. Ministry Service and Leadership Eligibility: Participation as a follower does not automatically qualify an individual for every ministry, staff position, leadership role, or other responsibility within the Church. Certain roles may require biblical qualifications, agreement with the Statement of Faith and bylaws, training, spiritual maturity, consistent participation, demonstrated character, background requirements where appropriate, and approval by the designated Church leadership. Leaders shall seek to apply these standards with prayer, wisdom, fairness, compassion, and the Holy Spirit-led principles established in Article 2.

E. Ministry Development and Organizational Growth: Word Of Truth In Christ Church may establish, reorganize, combine, expand, or discontinue ministries, programs, teams, and areas of service as the needs and mission of the Church develop. Ministries may include in-person, online, digital, media, studio, educational, discipleship, community outreach, and other ministry environments. The Church may create new ministries or ministry opportunities as determined by the appropriate leadership.

F. Governance and Voting: Word Of Truth In Christ Church does not provide for congregational voting or voting membership. Followers do not possess voting rights in official organizational matters solely by virtue of their participation, service, attendance, or identification with the Church. Governance and official organizational decisions shall be entrusted to the leadership structure established in these bylaws, including the Executive Team and the advisory and ministry leadership bodies described in subsequent Articles. No individual follower, ministry, team, or auxiliary may independently make decisions that bind the Church unless authorized by the appropriate Church leadership.

G. Church Community and Belonging: The absence of a traditional membership structure shall not diminish the value, dignity, or importance of those connected to Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Church seeks to cultivate a spiritual family in which individuals are welcomed, discipled, supported, encouraged, corrected in love, and equipped to grow into the image of Jesus Christ. The Church recognizes that believers may participate through different ministry environments, including in-person and digital communities, while remaining connected to the mission and fellowship of the Body of Christ.

Article 4

Followership and Church Community

A. Governing Authority: The Executive Team shall serve as the governing board of Word Of Truth In Christ Church and shall be responsible for the executive, administrative, financial, organizational, and strategic governance of the Church in accordance with these bylaws and the Church's Statement of Faith. The Executive Team shall work in unity with the spiritual and pastoral leadership established in this Article and shall exercise its authority in a manner consistent with the mission, vision, and biblical principles of the Church.

B. Leadership Hierarchy: The primary pastoral and spiritual leadership structure of Word Of Truth In Christ Church shall be: (1) Overseer/Apostle; (2) Executive Pastor; and (3) Lead Pastor. The Overseer/Apostle provides apostolic and spiritual oversight; the Executive Pastor serves under the Overseer/Apostle and coordinates the execution of the Church's ministry vision and pastoral/operational leadership; and the Lead Pastor serves under the Executive Pastor in designated pastoral and ministry responsibilities.

C. Composition of the Executive Team: The Executive Team shall consist of the executive and governance positions designated by the Church's governing leadership. The Executive Team may include the Overseer/Apostle, Executive Pastor, Lead Pastor, Elder/Bishop, Chief Financial Officer, Financial Director, Director of Outreach, Director of Media Services, Director of Marketing, Dean of Discipleship School Ministry, IT Director, and other executive or ministry leadership positions established as the needs of the Church develop. The governing leadership may establish, combine, discontinue, or

add functional executive positions as the ministry develops, provided that such changes remain consistent with these bylaws. The current composition and reporting relationships shall be documented in the Church's applicable leadership or staff policies.

D. Overseer/Apostle: The Overseer/Apostle shall provide primary apostolic and spiritual oversight for Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Overseer/Apostle shall provide direction concerning the Church's biblical doctrine, spiritual mission, ministry vision, leadership development, ordination, and long-term ministry direction. The Overseer/Apostle shall oversee the Executive Pastor and may delegate appropriate responsibilities while retaining the authority and responsibilities assigned to the office by these bylaws.

E. Executive Pastor: The Executive Pastor shall serve under the Overseer/Apostle and shall assist in carrying out the spiritual vision and ministry direction of the Church. The Executive Pastor shall coordinate pastoral and operational leadership, work with the Executive Team and other leadership bodies as appropriate, and provide oversight to the Lead Pastor and designated ministry leaders. The Executive Pastor may preach, teach, lead ministry initiatives, and make executive or ministry decisions within the authority assigned by these bylaws, the Overseer/Apostle, and the governing leadership.

F. Lead Pastor: The Lead Pastor shall serve under the Executive Pastor and provide designated pastoral leadership, care, teaching, discipleship, and ministry leadership. The Lead Pastor shall work cooperatively with the Executive Pastor, Executive Team, Elder Board, Deacon Board, and ministry leaders within the responsibilities assigned to the office. The Lead Pastor may be designated to serve as Interim Executive Pastor when the Executive Pastor's office is vacant, subject to the provisions of this Article.

G. Elder/Bishop and Elder Board: The Elder/Bishop and Elder Board shall provide spiritual counsel, prayer, biblical examination, doctrinal accountability, and other responsibilities assigned by these bylaws. The Elder Board shall work cooperatively with the pastoral and executive leadership and shall not be construed as a separate competing chain of pastoral authority. Specific matters requiring Elder Board examination, recommendation, or approval shall be identified in these bylaws or applicable Church policies.

H. Deacon Board: The Deacon Board shall provide servant leadership and support for the spiritual, practical, community, and ministry needs of the Church. Responsibilities may include care for individuals and families, community assistance, visitation, outreach, and other ministry support assigned by the governing leadership. The Deacon Board shall not be construed as a separate competing chain of pastoral authority.

I. Qualifications and Alignment: Every person serving on the Executive Team shall adhere to the beliefs of Word Of Truth In Christ Church as expressed in Article 2 and shall demonstrate spiritual maturity, integrity, faithfulness, humility, teachability, and

commitment to the mission of the Church. Additional qualifications, duties, tenure, appointment procedures, and expectations may be established in the Church's Staff & Teams Manual and other applicable policies.

J. Appointment and Executive Leadership Vacancies: When an Executive Team position becomes vacant through resignation, death, removal, or other circumstances, the governing leadership shall prayerfully initiate an appropriate process for identifying and appointing a qualified individual. The process shall consider the qualifications of the office, the needs of the Church, the candidate's spiritual character and ministry experience, and the responsibilities assigned to the position.

K. Pastoral Succession: Upon the vacancy of the Executive Pastor or Lead Pastor position, the Executive Team shall initiate a prayerful succession process. Candidates shall be evaluated through an appropriate interview and examination process. The Elder Board may conduct a spiritual and biblical examination of a pastoral candidate and provide its findings and recommendation to the governing leadership. The final appointment shall be made according to the authority established by these bylaws and applicable Church policy. The process shall be conducted with prayer, wisdom, unity, and careful attention to the qualifications and character required for pastoral leadership.

L. Interim Executive Pastor: In the absence or vacancy of the Executive Pastor, the Lead Pastor may be designated as Interim Executive Pastor by the Overseer/Apostle or the governing leadership until a permanent Executive Pastor is appointed. The Interim Executive Pastor shall exercise only the authority necessary to maintain orderly pastoral and ministry operations unless additional authority is expressly delegated.

M. Accountability and Removal: Executive Team members and other Church leaders shall remain accountable to the leadership structure established by these bylaws. Concerns regarding doctrine, conduct, leadership, financial stewardship, or failure to fulfill assigned responsibilities shall be addressed through prayer, appropriate investigation, biblical counsel, and an opportunity for correction and restoration when appropriate. Removal shall be based on legitimate leadership, doctrinal, ethical, fiduciary, or organizational concerns and shall not be used for personal retaliation, humiliation, or unjust condemnation.

N. Ministry and Organizational Oversight: The Executive Team shall provide governance and oversight for the Church's developing ministry infrastructure, which may include pastoral ministry, discipleship and education, community outreach, digital ministry, media and studio production, marketing and communications, information technology, finances, ministry partnerships, facilities and resources, and other ministries or programs established by the Church.

O. Staff & Teams Manual: Detailed job descriptions, reporting relationships, tenure requirements, appointment procedures, operational responsibilities, and ministry workflows for Executive Team members, staff, volunteers, and ministry teams may be maintained in a separate Staff & Teams Manual. Such policies shall remain subordinate to these bylaws and the Church's Statement of Faith.

Article 5

Executive Team and Church Governance

A. Purpose and Spiritual Role: The Elder Board shall serve as a body of spiritual counsel, prayer, biblical examination, doctrinal accountability, and pastoral support within Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Elder Board shall work cooperatively with the Overseer/Apostle, Executive Pastor, Lead Pastor, and Executive Team and shall not function as a separate or competing chain of pastoral or governing authority.

B. Appointment, Ordination, and Installation: Elders shall be appointed, ordained, and installed through a prayerful process led by the appropriate pastoral leadership. The Executive Pastor shall oversee the process in consultation with the Overseer/Apostle and, where appropriate, the existing Elder Board. Candidates shall be examined concerning their biblical qualifications, spiritual maturity, character, doctrine, calling, and commitment to the mission and Statement of Faith of Word Of Truth In Christ Church.

C. Qualifications: An Elder shall be spiritually mature, knowledgeable in the Word of God, devoted to the work of Christ, characterized by a Christ-like attitude, and committed to serving the Church with integrity and pure motives. Elders shall demonstrate humility, wisdom, faithfulness, teachability, sound judgment, and a willingness to lead and correct according to Scripture with gentleness and love.

D. Prayer and Spiritual Counsel: The Elder Board shall regularly pray for the Church, its leaders, followers, families, community, and ministry. Elders may provide spiritual counsel and recommendations to the Executive Pastor and Executive Team when requested or when matters arise that affect the spiritual health, doctrine, unity, or mission of the Church.

E. Biblical and Doctrinal Examination: The Elder Board shall assist in examining matters involving the Church's Statement of Faith, biblical teaching, pastoral qualifications, ministry leadership, and ordination. The Elder Board shall help ensure that candidates for ordination meet the biblical and spiritual requirements of the office for which they are being considered.

F. Baptisms, Funerals, and Pastoral Ministry Support: Elders may assist with baptisms, funerals, prayer, visitation, teaching, discipleship, and other pastoral or ministry

responsibilities as directed or authorized by the Executive Pastor or designated pastoral leadership.

G. Leadership and Ordination Examination: When a pastoral or ministry leader is being considered for ordination, the Elder Board may conduct an examination of the candidate's doctrine, character, calling, spiritual maturity, ministry conduct, and agreement with the Church's Statement of Faith and bylaws. The Elder Board shall provide its findings and recommendations to the appropriate governing leadership.

H. Accountability and Restoration: If an Elder is alleged to have violated the biblical qualifications of the office, the Statement of Faith, these bylaws, or the responsibilities of the position, the matter shall be addressed through prayer, appropriate examination, biblical counsel, and an opportunity for correction and restoration when appropriate. In keeping with Article 2, correction shall be handled with gentleness, humility, grace, righteous judgment, and a sincere desire to restore rather than condemn.

I. Removal from Office: An Elder may be removed from office for legitimate doctrinal, ethical, moral, leadership, fiduciary, or organizational reasons, including failure to maintain the biblical qualifications of the office or violation of these bylaws or the Statement of Faith. Removal shall be determined through the appropriate pastoral and governing leadership after careful prayer, examination, and consideration of the facts. Removal shall not be used for personal retaliation, humiliation, or unjust condemnation.

J. Relationship to Church Governance: The Elder Board shall not exercise independent authority over Church finances, property, personnel, contracts, business operations, or other matters assigned by these bylaws to the Executive Team. When an issue requires Elder Board input, the Board shall provide spiritual counsel, examination, recommendation, or other responsibility specifically assigned by these bylaws or applicable Church policy.

K. Meetings: The Elder Board shall meet regularly for prayer, spiritual discussion, and consideration of matters brought before it by the pastoral or executive leadership. The Executive Pastor or a designated member of the Executive Team may meet with the Elder Board when spiritual counsel, examination, or recommendations are needed. Meeting records shall be maintained as appropriate under the Church's administrative procedures.

L. Service and Conduct: Elders shall model the character expected of those who teach and serve within Word Of Truth In Christ Church. They shall seek to be Holy Spirit-led teachers and servants who do not use their position to judge or condemn others unjustly, but who help one another grow in Christ through truth, compassion, patience, wisdom, and love. The principles stated in James 4:11–12; 2 Timothy 2:24–25; Galatians 6:1; Colossians 4:6; John 7:24; and Romans 15:1 shall guide the Elder Board's correction, counsel, and ministry.

Article 6

Elder Board

A. Purpose and Servant-Leadership Role: The Deacon Board shall serve as a body of servant leaders dedicated to meeting practical, spiritual, pastoral, and community needs in support of the mission of Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Deacon Board shall serve under the spiritual and organizational leadership established in these bylaws and shall not function as a separate or competing governing authority.

B. Appointment, Ordination, and Installation: Deacons and Deaconesses shall be appointed, ordained, and installed by the Executive Pastor or Lead Pastor with guidance and spiritual counsel from the Elder Board, consistent with the leadership structure established in Article 5. Candidates shall be prayerfully considered based on biblical qualifications, spiritual maturity, character, faithfulness, humility, willingness to serve, and agreement with the Church's Statement of Faith and bylaws.

C. Qualifications and Character: Deacons and Deaconesses shall be devout men and women of God who are devoted to the work of Christ and demonstrate a humble servant attitude. They shall seek to serve with integrity, compassion, faithfulness, wisdom, discretion, and respect for the dignity of those they serve. They shall maintain conduct consistent with the biblical principles of servant leadership and the ministry standards of the Church.

D. Congregational and Community Care: The Deacon Board may assist with practical and pastoral care needs, including hospital visits, home visitation, prison ministry, care for elderly or vulnerable individuals, family assistance, prayer support, benevolence-related service, community outreach, and other needs identified by Church leadership. The Deacon Board may also assist with community-assistance initiatives as the Church expands its service to the surrounding community.

E. Ministry Support: Deacons and Deaconesses may assist ministries, programs, services, events, and projects when additional support is needed. This may include helping with worship services, outreach, educational programs, youth and family activities, digital ministry, media or studio projects, community events, and other ministry assignments approved by the appropriate leadership.

F. Relationship to Pastoral and Executive Leadership: The Deacon Board shall work cooperatively with the Overseer/Apostle, Executive Pastor, Lead Pastor, Executive Team, Elder Board, and ministry leaders. Deacons shall carry out responsibilities assigned to them and shall communicate significant pastoral, safety, financial, or organizational concerns to the appropriate leadership. The Deacon Board shall not independently bind the Church, establish policy, commit Church funds, or make organizational decisions outside the authority delegated to it.

G. Decision-Making and Disagreements: The Deacon Board shall not function primarily as a tie-breaking body between the Executive Team and Elder Board. When a disagreement or unresolved matter arises, the issue shall be addressed through prayer, clarification of authority under these bylaws, consultation among the appropriate leadership, and, when necessary, a defined resolution process established by the governing leadership. The Deacon Board may provide a servant-leadership perspective or recommendation when requested, but shall not assume governing authority merely because another leadership body has not reached agreement.

H. Meetings and Service Coordination: The Deacon Board shall meet as needed for prayer, planning, coordination of service, review of community and congregational needs, and consideration of assignments received from pastoral or executive leadership. The Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor, or designated leader may participate in meetings when appropriate.

I. Accountability and Restoration: If a Deacon or Deaconess is alleged to have violated the biblical qualifications of the office, the Statement of Faith, these bylaws, or the responsibilities of the position, the matter shall be addressed through prayer, appropriate examination, biblical counsel, and an opportunity for correction and restoration when appropriate. Consistent with Article 2, correction shall be handled with gentleness, humility, grace, righteous judgment, and a sincere desire to restore rather than condemn.

J. Removal from Office: A Deacon or Deaconess may be removed from office for legitimate doctrinal, ethical, moral, leadership, fiduciary, or organizational reasons, including failure to maintain the biblical qualifications of the office or violation of these bylaws or the Statement of Faith. The Lead Pastor may bring the matter before the Elder Board for spiritual examination and recommendation. Final action shall be taken by the appropriate pastoral and governing leadership in accordance with the authority established in Article 5 and applicable Church policy. Removal shall not be used for personal retaliation, humiliation, or unjust condemnation.

K. Service in Times of Need: The Deacon Board may be called upon to assist with special ministry needs, emergency support, community response, or other service opportunities. Such assignments shall be consistent with the mission of the Church and the authority delegated by the appropriate leadership.

L. Biblical Model of Service: The Deacon Board shall seek to model the biblical character of servant leadership by serving with humility, compassion, faithfulness, wisdom, and love. Deacons and Deaconesses shall seek to help people rather than judge or condemn them and shall approach correction, care, and service in a manner consistent with the Holy Spirit-led principles established in Article 2.

Article 7

Deacon Board

A. Purpose: Meetings of the Church's leadership bodies shall provide an orderly setting for prayer, planning, administration, accountability, ministry coordination, and decision-making consistent with the authority established in these bylaws.

B. Executive Team Meetings: The Executive Team shall meet regularly, ordinarily at least once each month, and may be called into special session by the Overseer/Apostle, Executive Pastor, or other authorized executive leadership when circumstances require. Meetings shall address executive, administrative, financial, organizational, strategic, and ministry matters within the authority of the Executive Team.

C. Attendance and Participation: Executive Team members are expected to participate consistently in scheduled meetings. When a member cannot attend, the member should communicate the absence in advance when reasonably possible. The governing leadership may establish procedures for attendance, remote participation, excused absences, and other meeting requirements in the Staff & Teams Manual or applicable policies.

D. Minutes and Records: Minutes shall be recorded for Executive Team business meetings and other formal board meetings when appropriate. Records shall be maintained in the Church's designated secure physical or virtual records system. Sensitive personnel, pastoral, financial, or disciplinary matters shall be handled with appropriate confidentiality and access controls.

E. Elder Board Meetings: The Elder Board shall meet regularly, ordinarily at least once each month, for prayer, spiritual counsel, biblical examination, doctrinal accountability, and consideration of matters properly brought before it. The Executive Pastor or a designated member of the Executive Team may meet with the Elder Board when spiritual counsel, examination, or recommendation is needed.

F. Deacon Board Meetings: The Deacon Board shall meet regularly, ordinarily at least once each month, to pray, coordinate servant ministry, review congregational and community needs, plan care and outreach, and receive assignments from pastoral or executive leadership. The Lead Pastor, Executive Pastor, or designated leadership may participate when appropriate.

G. Joint Leadership Meetings: The Executive Team, Elder Board, and Deacon Board may meet jointly when a matter requires coordinated discussion, prayer, counsel, or planning. Joint meetings shall not change the authority assigned to each body by these bylaws.

H. Matters Requiring Consultation: When an issue materially affects doctrine, pastoral leadership, spiritual health, ministry direction, community care, significant organizational change, or another area specifically assigned by these bylaws, the appropriate leadership body shall be consulted. Consultation does not automatically transfer governing authority from the Executive Team to another body.

I. Decision-Making: Decisions shall be made by the body or leader having authority under these bylaws. The Church shall seek unity through prayer, Scripture, respectful discussion, wise counsel, and careful consideration before a decision is made. Leaders shall avoid personal retaliation, coercion, humiliation, or unjust condemnation in the decision-making process.

J. No Congregational Voting: Word Of Truth In Christ Church does not conduct congregational voting or maintain voting membership. Attendance at a business meeting, participation in ministry, or status as a follower does not create voting rights. Official organizational decisions shall be made by the leadership body or officer authorized under these bylaws.

K. Resolution of Disagreements: When leadership bodies disagree, the matter shall first be addressed by clarifying the authority assigned by these bylaws and seeking prayerful discussion and counsel. The Elder Board may provide spiritual counsel or examination when appropriate, and the Deacon Board may provide a servant-leadership or community perspective when requested. Neither board shall assume governing authority solely because another body has not reached agreement.

L. Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called when urgent or significant Church matters require timely consideration. Reasonable notice shall be provided to the leaders expected to participate, except when circumstances make advance notice impracticable. The purpose of a special meeting should be communicated when reasonably possible.

M. Quorum and Voting Procedures: Because the Church does not use congregational voting, quorum and voting requirements shall apply only where a specific leadership body or provision of these bylaws expressly requires a vote. The governing leadership may establish reasonable quorum and voting procedures for the Executive Team, Elder Board, or Deacon Board when such procedures are necessary and consistent with these bylaws.

N. Confidentiality: Leaders shall maintain appropriate confidentiality concerning pastoral care, personnel matters, financial information, disciplinary matters, private family

circumstances, and other sensitive information. Confidential information shall be shared only with individuals who have a legitimate ministry or governance need to receive it.

O. Meeting Procedures: The Church may maintain meeting procedures, agendas, minutes standards, electronic meeting procedures, records practices, and other administrative details in the Staff & Teams Manual or applicable policies, provided that such procedures remain subordinate to these bylaws.

Article 8

Business Meetings and Board Meetings

A. Purpose: Word Of Truth In Christ Church shall manage all financial resources as a sacred trust for the purposes of advancing the Gospel, supporting ministry, caring for people, serving the community, and carrying out the mission of the Church. Financial decisions shall be made with integrity, transparency, wisdom, accountability, and faithful stewardship.

B. Financial Leadership: The Chief Financial Officer shall provide executive financial oversight and financial guidance to the Church. The Financial Director shall be responsible for designated financial administration, recordkeeping, transaction processing, reporting, and other duties assigned by the Executive Team. The two roles shall work together while maintaining appropriate separation of duties and accountability. Detailed responsibilities may be established in the Staff & Teams Manual.

C. Annual Budget: Each fiscal year, the Executive Pastor, in coordination with the Chief Financial Officer and Financial Director, shall oversee the preparation of an annual operating budget based on the mission, ministry priorities, anticipated income, expected expenses, community-assistance needs, and other obligations of the Church. The proposed budget shall be reviewed by the Executive Team and, where appropriate, receive spiritual counsel from the Elder Board and servant-ministry input from the Deacon Board. Final budget authority shall remain with the governing leadership established in Article 5.

D. Staff Compensation: Compensation for paid staff or ministry positions shall be determined through an appropriate review of responsibilities, qualifications, available resources, and reasonable compensation standards. Compensation decisions shall be documented and approved by the authorized governing leadership. No person shall unilaterally establish or increase their own compensation.

E. Banking and Authorized Signers: Church funds shall be maintained in accounts established in the legal name of the Church or its properly established ministry entities.

Authorized signers shall be designated by the Executive Team. The Church should maintain more than one authorized financial officer and appropriate dual-control procedures for significant transactions.

F. Separation of Financial Duties: To the extent reasonably practicable, responsibility for authorizing expenditures, processing transactions, maintaining accounting records, reconciling accounts, and reviewing financial reports shall be distributed among more than one qualified person. No individual should have sole control over the complete financial transaction cycle.

G. Offerings, Donations, and Contributions: All offerings, tithes, donations, grants, designated contributions, and other receipts shall be recorded and deposited in a timely manner according to established financial procedures. Contributions shall be used consistently with their lawful designation and the purposes for which the Church is authorized to receive them. The Church may establish procedures for electronic, online, mailed, in-person, and other forms of giving.

H. Designated Funds: The Church may establish designated or restricted funds for approved ministry purposes, including community assistance, outreach, missions, education, media and studio development, or other initiatives. Designated funds shall be tracked separately as appropriate and used consistently with applicable restrictions and Church policy.

I. Emergency Relief and Community Assistance Fund: The Church shall seek to maintain an Emergency Relief and Community Assistance Fund as resources permit and as included in the annual budget or otherwise authorized by the governing leadership. The fund may assist individuals or families experiencing qualifying needs and may support approved community-assistance efforts. Requests shall be reviewed according to established criteria and approved by the authorized leadership. Assistance shall be administered with compassion, dignity, confidentiality, wisdom, and appropriate accountability.

J. Expenditures and Financial Authorization: Church expenditures shall be consistent with the approved budget, ministry purpose, and authority delegated under these bylaws. Significant, unusual, unbudgeted, or extraordinary expenditures shall require approval by the appropriate governing leadership before the obligation is incurred, except for genuine emergencies where immediate action is necessary to protect people, property, ministry operations, or the Church’s legal interests.

K. Financial Records and Reporting: Accurate financial records shall be maintained for income, expenses, assets, liabilities, designated funds, payroll or compensation, and other material financial activity. Regular financial reports shall be provided to the Executive Team at intervals established by Church policy. The Executive Team may request additional reports, supporting documentation, or financial reviews when appropriate.

L. Financial Review and Accountability: The Church shall conduct periodic internal financial reviews and may obtain an independent accounting, tax, audit, or financial review service when appropriate or required. Financial records shall be made available to authorized reviewers. Any suspected misuse, fraud, conflict of interest, or material financial irregularity shall be reported promptly to the appropriate governing leadership and addressed through appropriate investigation and corrective action.

M. Conflict of Interest: Leaders, staff, and persons involved in financial decisions shall disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest. A person with a material personal interest in a transaction should not be the sole person authorizing or approving that transaction. The Church may establish a separate conflict-of-interest policy.

N. Loans, Debt, Contracts, and Major Commitments: The Church shall exercise prudence before entering into loans, debt arrangements, leases, major contracts, or other significant financial commitments. Such commitments shall require approval by the appropriate governing authority and shall be documented in accordance with Church policy.

O. Property and Ministry Resources: Church funds and property shall be used for authorized ministry and organizational purposes. Assets acquired for ministry—including technology, media and studio equipment, furnishings, vehicles, supplies, intellectual property, and other resources—shall be managed and safeguarded according to Church policies and the authority established by the Executive Team.

P. Financial Assistance and Benevolence: Assistance shall not be distributed on the basis of favoritism, personal retaliation, discrimination, or improper influence. Requests shall be considered with compassion and wisdom and, where appropriate, through established criteria. The Church may decline or limit assistance when resources, eligibility, safety, legal requirements, or ministry considerations require it.

Q. Confidentiality: Financial information involving individual donors, recipients of assistance, payroll, personnel compensation, bank information, or other private financial matters shall be treated confidentially and accessed only by persons with a legitimate ministry or administrative need.

R. Compliance: The Church shall seek to comply with applicable laws, tax requirements, charitable regulations, banking requirements, employment requirements, and other legal obligations applicable to its activities. When specialized legal, tax, accounting, or financial guidance is necessary, the governing leadership may engage qualified professional advisors.

S. Financial Policies and Procedures: Detailed procedures for budgeting, check writing, electronic payments, deposits, reconciliations, expense reimbursement, purchasing, cash handling, record retention, financial reporting, and other financial operations may be maintained in a separate Financial Policies and Procedures Manual. Such policies shall remain subordinate to these bylaws and the Church's Statement of Faith.

Article 9

Financial Stewardship and Management

A. Purpose: These bylaws are intended to provide a stable biblical and organizational framework for Word Of Truth In Christ Church while allowing the ministry to develop responsibly as its mission, leadership, community service, digital ministry, studio, partnerships, and other ministry needs grow.

B. Governing Foundation: Scripture is the supreme authority for the doctrine, faith, conduct, and spiritual life of Word Of Truth In Christ Church. The Statement of Faith in Article 2 expresses the Church's foundational beliefs. These bylaws shall be interpreted consistently with Scripture and the Statement of Faith.

C. Order of Authority: For purposes of Church governance, the following order shall guide interpretation and administration: (1) Holy Scripture; (2) the Church's Statement of Faith; (3) these bylaws; (4) formally adopted Church policies and manuals; and (5) administrative procedures. No policy, manual, or procedure may contradict Scripture, the Statement of Faith, or these bylaws.

D. Proposed Amendments: A proposed amendment may be initiated by the Overseer/Apostle, Executive Pastor, or Executive Team. Proposed amendments should be presented in writing and should identify the provision being changed and the reason for the proposed change.

E. Spiritual and Doctrinal Review: Proposed amendments that affect doctrine, spiritual leadership, pastoral qualifications, ordination, the Statement of Faith, or other matters of spiritual significance shall receive appropriate review by the Overseer/Apostle and Elder Board before final consideration by the Executive Team.

F. Approval of Amendments: Because Word Of Truth In Christ Church does not use congregational voting, amendments to these bylaws shall not require a congregational vote. Final approval shall rest with the Executive Team in accordance with the governing authority established in Article 5, subject to the spiritual and doctrinal safeguards contained in these bylaws.

G. Amendments Affecting the Statement of Faith: No amendment to these bylaws shall be interpreted to alter, weaken, or contradict the Church's Statement of Faith without the appropriate formal review and approval required for changes to the Statement of Faith. Any such change shall be clearly identified and documented.

H. Emergency Amendments: When an immediate amendment is reasonably necessary to protect the Church, its people, legal standing, financial interests, ministry operations, or compliance obligations, the Executive Team may adopt an interim amendment or temporary provision. Such action shall be documented and reviewed at the earliest reasonable opportunity for consistency with Scripture, the Statement of Faith, and these bylaws

I. Interpretation: When a provision of these bylaws is unclear, the Overseer/Apostle and Executive Pastor, in consultation with the Executive Team and appropriate spiritual counsel, shall seek an interpretation consistent with Scripture, the Statement of Faith, the mission of the Church, and the authority structure established by these bylaws.

J. Severability: If any provision of these bylaws is determined to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall continue in effect to the fullest extent permitted, unless the invalid provision is essential to the operation of the entire document.

K. Periodic Review: The Executive Team may periodically review these bylaws to determine whether they continue to reflect the mission, governance, ministry structure, and operational needs of Word Of Truth In Christ Church. Such review shall not itself amend the bylaws; amendments must follow the process established in this Article.

L. Effective Date and Record: Approved amendments shall be dated, recorded, and incorporated into the official copy of the bylaws maintained by the Church. The Church shall preserve prior versions as appropriate for historical and organizational records.

Amendments and Interpretation

Article 10

Amendments and Interpretation

Exhibit A. Definition of Followership from the term Membership

<u>Transitioning from Membership to Followership at Word of Truth in Christ Church</u>

For the past seven years, Word of Truth in Christ Church has prayerfully considered the implications and practicalities surrounding the concept of “membership.” Throughout this period, the church has been blessed with a growing community comprised of individuals from diverse denominational backgrounds, newly converted believers, and those who have embraced Word of Truth as their spiritual home. This influx of people, while a testament to the ministry's reach, has prompted a deeper reflection on the meaning and implementation of church membership.

Through consistent prayer and a dedicated seeking of God's direction, the leadership of Word of Truth in Christ Church has arrived at a pivotal understanding regarding the structuring of its community. It has become clear that the core mission of the church transcends mere numerical metrics. Rather, the focus remains steadfastly on serving God, diligently leading in accordance with His divine will and purpose for the salvation of souls. This fundamental principle has led to a significant decision: Word of Truth in Christ Church will be moving away from a traditional model of formal membership.

This shift in approach does not diminish the value or importance of each individual connected to the ministry. Instead, it signifies a renewed emphasis on nurturing and developing individuals into the complete image that the Lord Jesus Christ desires – a unified body, the very Body of Christ. The guiding scripture for this transition is found in Romans 12:4-5:
4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have the same office:
5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one member one of another.

This passage beautifully illustrates the interconnectedness and interdependence of believers within the Christian community. It highlights that while individuals possess diverse gifts and roles, they are ultimately united as one body in Christ, each member belonging to the others. This spiritual reality forms the foundation for the future direction of Word of Truth in Christ Church.

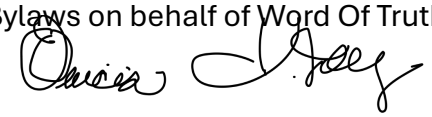
Therefore, the focus moving forward will be on fostering a deep sense of family and belonging within the body of Christ. Guided by the Lord's wisdom and love, the church will dedicate its efforts to establishing a community where individuals are not merely counted as members, but are actively nurtured as followers of Jesus Christ, deeply connected to one another in faith and purpose. Let us embrace this new chapter with open hearts, committed to being one family united in Chr

ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

These Revised Bylaws are adopted by the Executive Team in accordance with Article 10 and shall become effective on the date approved by the authorized governing leadership.

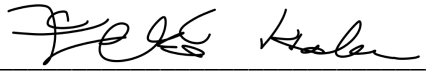
EXECUTION

By signing below, the undersigned acknowledge approval and adoption of these Revised Bylaws on behalf of Word Of Truth In Christ Church in accordance with Article 10.



_____

Ouicia Jolly, Overseer/Apostle (Senior Pastor)
Date: 01/22/2025



_____

Bishop Jethro Harden Executive Pastor
Date: 01/22/2025

_____

Authorized Executive Team Representative
Date: _____

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document: Word Of Truth In Christ Church Bylaws
Version: Execution Copy
Approval Date: 03/05/2026
Effective Date: 03/05/2026
Supersedes: Prior adopted bylaws, upon the effective date stated above.