Five Corners
PENTECOSTAL CHURCH
Affiliated with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada

LOCAL CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

2022

This edition of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* contains amendments as approved by the May 2022 General Conference. In order for an affiliated local church to enact any of the amendments herein approved by the General Conference, a congregational meeting must duly adopt either this edition in its entirety or such individual amendments of the General Conference as are approved by the local membership. The adoption of such amendments shall be in accordance with the amending article (or by-law as the case may be) of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws.*

New Constitution (To be adopted on March 12, 2023)

PAOC THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA
APDC LES ASSEMBLÉES DE LA PENTECÔTE DU CANADA

THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF CANADA
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE
2450 MILLTOWER COURT
MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO L5N 5Z6

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
FOR LOCAL CHURCHES

This *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* was authorized by the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and amended in 2022 for local churches, as defined in this constitution and the constitutions of the General Conference and district conferences of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

In this constitution, the terms church, assembly and congregation shall be considered synonymous.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF

Church: Five Corners Pentecostal Church

City: Salmon Arm, BC

Adopted: this 12th day of March 2023

Certified (signed) by:

David Nadon _____
(Chair of Board)

Tim Frazer _____
(Secretary of Board)

Bruce Ingebrigtson _____
(Board member)

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith where the Holy Spirit may be honoured according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands, we, whose names appear on the local church roster under the above date, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local church in fellowship with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and shall adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

All local churches are recognized as self-governing with the inherent right to sovereignty in the conduct of their own affairs. This local church shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with churches of like precious faith associated in the BC Yukon district conference and the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, with headquarters at Mississauga, Ontario; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE 1 **NAME:** The legal name of this local church shall be Five Corners Pentecostal Church

ARTICLE 2 **DEFINITION - LOCAL CHURCH:** A local church desiring to affiliate with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada shall:

2.1 Assume all financial obligations in providing a place of worship and its operation, and adequate salary for its pastor, together with provision for suitable housing and travel reimbursement. Suitable housing shall be understood to mean an adequate dwelling, together with utilities such as heat, water, hydro and telephone or financial provision for such services.

2.2 Assume responsibility in contributing to the support of the district office or branch conference with which it is affiliated, and to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada international missions, Bible colleges, and other responsibilities as may be determined by the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

2.3 Have properly qualified leadership of sufficient maturity available for selection and be able to maintain standards of discipline and doctrine over its members.

2.4 Petition the respective district executive for status as a local church. In order to obtain this status, it is required that a duly called congregational meeting, presided over by the District Superintendent or an appointee(s), be held, in which there shall be:

2.4.1 an adoption of the *Statement of Essential Truths and Positions and Practices;* and

2.4.2 acceptance of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws,* as approved by the General Conference, together with a decision about the required available options; namely, the size of the Board and the decision concerning who shall be the trustees.

2.5 Ensure that a credential holder of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada is established as pastor of the local church or one whom the district executive officers of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada approve.

2.6 Be duly registered as a charity under the *Income Tax Act*.

ARTICLE 3 **PREROGATIVES**

3.1 This local church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace ... till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:3, 13).

3.2 This local church shall have the right to govern itself according to the *General Constitution and By-Laws* and district constitutions and by-laws in force by order of General Conference and district conferences.

3.3 This local church shall have the right to develop policies and procedures which guide its operation as determined by the Board or the congregation.

3.4 This local church shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purpose; all in accordance with its constitution and by-laws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

3.5 This local church shall have the right to borrow any sum or sums of money from a lender upon the credit of the local church either by way of overdraft, discount, loan, line of credit or otherwise, and upon such terms as they may think proper and as security for any money so borrowed or as security for any advances, reliabilities heretofore made or incurred or that may hereafter be made or incurred, to hypothecate, mortgage, pledge and give to the lender all or any stock, bonds, debentures, negotiable instruments, in action or other real property of the local church or other assets of the local church as they may see fit, or as may be required by or on behalf of the lender, and it is expressly declared that any security given pursuant to this article may be by way of chattel mortgage or in such other form as the lender may require, or as this local church sees fit.

3.6 The activities of this local church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members, and any profits or other accretions to the organization shall be used solely to promote its objectives, in accordance with its

constitution and by-laws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

3.7 The decision to formally cease operations as a congregation shall require a simple majority vote of the ballots cast at a duly called meeting.

3.8 In the event of dissolution or winding up of the organization, all its remaining assets after payment of liabilities shall be distributed to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada for its continuing ministries.

ARTICLE 4 **TENETS OF FAITH:** We believe most assuredly that the Holy Scriptures are God's final revelation and constitute our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This local church, by virtue of its affiliation with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, shall accept the current version of the *Statement of Essential Truths and Positions and Practices*, as approved by the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

ARTICLE 5 ORDINANCES AND PRACTICES

5.1 ORDINANCES

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

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

5.2 PRACTICES

5.2.1 Dedication of children

5.2.2 Prayer for the baptism with the Holy Spirit

5.2.3 Prayer for the sick

5.2.4 Christian marriage (as defined by the *Statement of Essential Truths and Positions and Practices* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada)

5.2.5 Christian burial of the dead

ARTICLE 6 MEMBERSHIP

6.1 Persons 18 years of age and over desiring to become members of this local church shall give credible profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. They shall give evidence of compliance with the biblical standard of Christian practice and manifest spiritual growth by giving evidence of the fruit of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22,23 NIV).

They shall refrain from "acts of the sinful nature: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like" (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV). Sexual immorality shall be interpreted to mean common-law marital relationships, pre-marital and extra-marital sexual relationships (1 Corinthians 6:15-18; 7:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4), and all forms of homosexual activity, along with other practices deemed inexcusable for Christian conduct, and which place a person under God's judgment (Romans 1:26-2:11).

They shall indicate a desire to live in harmony with this body of believers, shall accept the doctrinal standards as set forth in the *Statement of Essential Truths and Positions and Practices*, and shall be regular financial supporters of this local church.

6.2 Establishment and maintenance of an official membership list shall be determined by the Board in accordance with the requirements outlined in Article 6.1.

ARTICLE 7 PASTOR AND BOARD

7.1 PASTOR

7.1.1 Nominations for pastor shall be submitted to the local church congregation by the Board, after consultation with the District Superintendent.

7.1.2 The pastor must be one who holds an active credential in good standing with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada or one whom the district executive officers of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada approve.

7.2 OFFICERS: The officers of this local church shall be the pastor, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as may be determined by this local church from time to time.

7.3 BOARD: The Board shall consist of the pastor and not fewer than three (3) Board Members (if more, the exact number and the resolution authorizing the same must be duly recorded in the minutes of a congregational business meeting). After the setting in order of the church and the creation of the Board, the lay members of the Board shall be selected in accordance with the resolution of this church. The pastor shall act as chair of the Board. When a pastorate becomes vacant, the District Superintendent or the District Superintendent's authorized representative shall be empowered to act in the full legal capacity of the pastor in consultation with the Board. The District Superintendent shall arrange to supply the pulpit with suitable ministry until such time as a new pastor has been duly installed.

7.4 The local church may extend membership privileges to a district leader, or another Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada credential holder, and may invite the individual to serve on the Board.

ARTICLE 8 BUSINESS MEETINGS

8.1 METHOD OF CONDUCTING BUSINESS MEETINGS:

8.1.1 A member present in a business meeting shall be understood to mean:

8.1.1.1 In person; or

8.1.1.2 Electronically, that permits participation by registered voting members, subject to any rules regarding participation in an electronic meeting that the Board may declare; or

8.1.1.3 A combination of in-person and electronic means that satisfies the requirements prescribed in By-Law 8.1.1.2

8.2 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING: The annual congregational business meeting shall be held in the month of March each year on a suitable date unless otherwise decided by the Board.

8.3 SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS: Special business meetings may be called by:

8.3.1 The pastor;

8.3.2 The secretary of the Board upon written order of a majority of the Board;

8.3.3 By petition by no less than one-half (1/2) of the regular members of the congregation. Such petition shall be handed to the Board, whose duty it shall be to give notice of such meeting.

8.4 NOTICE OF BUSINESS MEETINGS: Two weeks (14 days) notice shall be given of the annual congregational business and special business meetings with a public announcement in the main service(s) as well as being posted and publicized in the local church. It shall include date, time and purpose of the meeting.

8.5 AGENDA: The agenda shall be prepared by the pastor and Board. An agenda item may be submitted for consideration to the Board by a member of the congregation in good standing. It must be in writing, signed, and in the possession of the Board at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE 9 PROPERTY: All real estate owned by this local church shall be held in the name of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada according to the terms of the *Declaration of Trust*, or, by the trustees of the local church as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada or, in the case of an

incorporated local church, may be held by the local church in its corporate name as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

The acquiring and disposal of real property shall be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the eligible votes cast at a duly called congregational business meeting. Where property is placed in trust with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, a 75 percent majority of eligible votes cast at a duly called congregational business meeting shall be required.

In the matter of disposing of any real property of this local church, this congregation shall be subject to the property regulations in force from time to time in the by-laws of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and the district constitution and by-laws, the applicable provincial laws, and the *Declaration of Trust*, where applicable.

ARTICLE 10 **DEPARTMENTS:** The departments of this local church may be Christian Education, Youth Ministries, Men's Ministries, Women's Ministries, and Children's Ministries. The Board shall have authority to institute such other departments of this local church as deemed necessary from time to time.

ARTICLE 11 **AMENDMENTS:** This constitution may be amended at any annual congregational business meeting of this local church or at any special congregational business meeting duly called for that specific purpose, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the Board and to the District Superintendent at least 30 days before the date of the congregational business meeting, and providing that notice of said proposed amendment shall have been given in the announcements of the said congregational business meeting.

A copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be available to any voting member between the time of the announcement and the time of the congregational business meeting on application to the secretary of the Board.

An amendment to be adopted shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of ballots cast at the meeting. Such amendment shall not be contrary to the regulations of the General Conference or the *General Constitution and By-Laws* or district constitution and by-laws or *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the applicable provincial laws, and the *Declaration of Trust*, where applicable.

BY-LAWS

BY-LAW 1 MEMBERSHIP

1.1 MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE: A membership committee composed of the pastor and the Board shall receive applications for membership, shall make investigation relating thereto as it deems proper, and shall approve for admission into the local church those applicants who meet membership requirements.

1.2 PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

1.2.1 Application for membership shall be received on a signed application form whereby the applicant agrees to abide by the provisions of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* including the terms of membership as stated in Article 6.1.

1.2.2 Applicants who have been approved by the membership committee for membership in this local church shall be publicly received into the local church (Galatians 2:9) and may receive notification confirming membership. Membership may be reviewed annually by the membership committee.

1.3 TRANSFER: Members who move from another local church and desire to have their membership transferred should request a certificate or letter of transfer from the membership committee of the former local church for presentation to the membership committee of this local church. Members who move to another local church shall be given, upon written request, a certificate or letter of transfer by the membership committee of this local church.

1.4 DISMISSAL OF MEMBERSHIP: Grounds for dismissal of membership in this local church shall include the following:

1.4.1 VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1.4.1.1 Voluntary withdrawal from membership in this local church or reception into the membership of another congregation;

1.4.1.2 Issuance of a transfer letter;

1.4.1.3 Absence from the regular services of the local church for three (3) consecutive months, upon issuance of a letter from the membership committee noting this voluntary withdrawal.

1.4.2 DISCIPLINARY DISMISSAL OF MEMBERSHIP: Upon the conclusion of disciplinary procedures according to By-Law 6 of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* which finds a member responsible for a failure under the causes of disciplinary action.

BY-LAW 2 PASTOR AND BOARD

2.1 PASTOR

2.1.1 APPOINTMENT AND CALL: A call shall be extended to a pastor when the pastor receives a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the ballots cast at a meeting duly convened for that purpose. Upon acceptance of the call or confirmation of the appointment, a ministry agreement shall be established.

2.1.2 DUTIES: The pastor shall be considered the primary spiritual overseer of the local church and shall, with the Board, direct all of its activities. (The pastor shall consult with the Board regarding the ongoing health and wholeness of the congregation and to ensure the appropriate ministries and programs are in place to accomplish the same). The pastor shall arrange for all special meetings and events. The pastor shall act as chair of all the business meetings of the local church, and of the Board. The pastor shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees and departments. The pastor shall provide for all the services of the local church, and no person shall be invited to speak or preach in the local church without the approval of the pastor (and as provided in *General Constitution and By-Laws* 10.5.5 and 10.5.6). No congregational or Board meeting shall be held in the absence of the pastor without the written authorization of the pastor.

2.1.3 CONCLUSION OF MINISTRY AGREEMENT: The pastor may conclude their ministry agreement by giving a minimum of one (1) month written notice to the congregation or to the Board by a letter addressed to the secretary of the Board of the local church. The pastor must also immediately notify

the District Superintendent of this conclusion of ministry agreement.

2.1.4 VACANCY: When the pastorate becomes vacant, the District Superintendent or the authorized representatives of the District Superintendent shall be empowered to act in the full legal capacity of the pastor, who shall arrange to supply the pulpit with suitable pulpit ministry until such time as a new pastor has been duly installed.

2.1.5 EXTENDED ABSENCE: In the event that the pastor is or may be absent for an extended period due to inability or ineligibility to serve, the District Superintendent or their authorized representative may, in conjunction with the board, assist in arranging for pulpit supply and chair the board.

2.1.6 PASTOR/CONGREGATION RELATIONSHIP: When difficulties have arisen between the pastor and the Board or congregation which do not involve the credentials of the pastor, but only the position as pastor, and which apparently cannot be resolved at the local level, the pastor, the Board or a quorum consisting of not fewer than one-third (1/3) of the regular members of the local church shall have the right to appeal to the district executive for help in resolving the impasse.

The refusal of a pastor to call a meeting of the Board shall constitute the Board's right to appeal to the district executive.

If a satisfactory settlement cannot be reached, the District Superintendent may call a congregational meeting, to be presided over by the District Superintendent or the authorized representative of the District Superintendent.

If the District Superintendent, or their representative, calls for a vote of confidence in the pastor, the roster for the vote shall include only those members who held membership 60 days prior to the vote of confidence and shall exclude the pastor and members of the pastoral staff, as identified in the minutes of the Board, and their spouses, who shall not be included in the quorum necessary to have a congregational meeting. The vote shall require a simple majority in support of the pastor, for the pastor to retain the position as pastor. If such is not achieved, the pastor's duties shall be terminated immediately, and the pastor shall be given a minimum of one (1) month salary but not more than three (3) months salary with benefits and the use of the parsonage during that period, or the regular housing allowance if the pastor is not living in the church parsonage. If the pastor has served for a period of a minimum of two (2) years and has failed to receive the required majority in the confidence vote, or has complied with a request from the Board to conclude their ministry agreement, the pastor shall be given a maximum of three (3) months salary with benefits and the use of the parsonage during that period, or the equivalent housing allowance if the pastor is not living in the church parsonage.

2.1.7 CHARGES INVOLVING CREDENTIALS: Allegations leading to charges in matters involving the right of a credentialed staff member to hold credentials with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada as defined in By-Law 10.6.2 of the *General Constitution and By-Laws* must be made to the district in writing, and properly signed by one who is willing to appear and give testimony concerning the charges. Charges brought against a credential holder shall be dealt with according to provisions made in the *General Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

2.1.8 CHARGES INVOLVING THE *CRIMINAL CODE* OF CANADA: In the event that ministry is restricted by the District Superintendent as a result of a credential holder being charged under the *Criminal Code* of Canada, the credential holder shall continue to receive remuneration for a maximum of three (3) months.

2.2 OFFICERS

2.2.1 SECRETARY – TREASURER: The secretary-treasurer shall be capable of performing such clerical duties as this office requires, and shall be appointed annually by the Board, and may be one (1) of its own members. The offices of secretary and treasurer may be filled by the same person, who may or may not be a member of the Board.

2.2.2 DUTIES – SECRETARY: The secretary shall be custodian of the records of the various congregational meetings and shall record the same in record books provided for that purpose. The secretary shall preserve the records of the local church and prepare reports as directed by the Board.

2.2.3 DUTIES – TREASURER: The treasurer shall be the custodian of the general funds of the local church and shall ensure the deposit of the same in a chartered bank or credit union in the name of the local

church, and shall ensure the disbursement of such funds as authorized by the Board. The treasurer shall ensure that an accurate record of accounts is kept, and shall present a financial statement at the annual congregational meeting and at any other time when requested to do so by the Board or the local church congregation. The books shall be reviewed before the annual congregational meeting by financially qualified individuals appointed by the Board.

2.2.4 DUTIES - OTHER OFFICERS: Departmental officers' terms of reference shall be outlined in the departmental constitution, as adopted by this congregation.

2.3 BOARD

2.3.1 QUALIFICATIONS: The qualifications for service on the Board shall be determined and approved in accordance with the policy of this local church, as guided by such scriptural provisions as are cited in Acts 6:3, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, and Titus 1:5-9. The official Board shall be comprised of members who are of good report and sound judgment, examples to the congregation in matters of stewardship, church attendance, and spiritual maturity, and seeking constantly, as sanctified vessels, to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18).

2.3.2 DUTIES

2.3.2.1 The Board is chosen to serve the church with the pastor in matters pertaining to the operation of the local church. They shall assist in the ministry of its ordinances and shall act in the examination of applications for membership, and also in the administration of the discipline of the local church. They shall appoint a recording secretary from among their members to record the minutes of their meetings.

2.3.2.2 A majority present in any meeting of the Board shall constitute a quorum, provided that all the members have been notified to be present.

2.3.2.3 It shall be the duty of the Board to ensure that an adequate compensation package is provided for the pastor, together with suitable housing facilities. Suitable housing facilities shall be understood to mean an adequate dwelling in good repair, together with utilities such as heat, water, electricity and telephone or financial provision for such services, and a vehicle allowance. An annual salary review shall be made.

2.3.2.4 A majority of the Board shall have the right to ask the pastor to convene an official Board meeting.

2.3.2.5 Where there is need for trustees, the Board shall name at least three (3) of its members to act in that capacity.

2.3.2.6 The Board, with the pastor, shall meet regularly for the transaction of routine business for the local church, the time and place to be announced by the pastor.

2.3.3 ACCOUNTABILITY

2.3.3.1 TO THE PASTOR: To support the pastor in his/her primary responsibility to his/her family; encourage and enable the pastor to a continual growth in leadership through continuing education, development, courses, seminars, and resources; assure administrative excellence in financial reporting, strategic planning, communication, labour relations and other assigned duties; assist in creating and implementing a vision and strategy for the church; assist in the development of that church as a disciple-making, equipping community; ensure a global missions strategy and commitment; respect and understand mutual accountability (Rom. 1:8); and provide covering, care, and nurture for the pastor.

2.3.3.2 TO OTHER MEMBERS OF BOARD: Support the Board in their primary responsibility to their family; encourage and enable the Board to a continual growth in leadership through prescribed courses made available through The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada; assume responsibility for areas of expertise and giftedness to assure administrative excellence in the church; fulfill assigned duties as directed by the Board; assist in creating and implementing a vision and strategy for the church; assist in the development of the church as a disciple-making, equipping community; ensure that adequate resources are available for touching, reaching and discipling the community; ensure a global missions strategy and commitment; respect and understand mutual accountability (Rom. 1:8); and

provide covering, care, and nurture for each member of the Board. It is expected that the Board will function in confidentiality and loyalty, and model personal discipleship, which will contribute to the well-being, reputation, and respect of the entire Board.

2.3.3.3 TO THE CONGREGATION: Model healthy family life and teach family values; ensure that adequate resources are available for touching, reaching and discipling the community; ensure clear communication of the vision, strategy and needs to the congregation; ensure that an adequate membership process is in place (including education, ministry, accountability and discipline); assist the congregation in understanding their spiritual responsibility to serve, give, share and be involved; assist the congregation in understanding their responsibility to support the leadership in its vision and direction for the future and health of the church; and assist the congregation to understand its role in, and commitment to, the community, as an agency of grace and spiritual light.

2.3.3.4 TO THE COMMUNITY: Understand their role of modeling Christian values of grace, love and acceptance to the community; raising church awareness of the community's needs, and the responsibility of the church to the community; to pray for and encourage the leadership of the community; and uphold and communicate justice and truth in the community.

2.3.4 TERM OF OFFICE

2.3.4.1 The term of office of all lay members of the Board shall be for either one, two or three years, as determined by the local congregation. After a member has served for six consecutive years, the member will not be considered eligible to serve on the Board for a period of one (1) year.

2.3.4.2 Termination of membership on the Board shall occur if any Board member, during the term of office, shall resign, move away, and cease to be a member of the congregation or be disqualified according to By-Law 1.4 of these by-laws. Provision is hereby made for the remaining members of the Board to appoint a successor until the next annual meeting.

2.3.5 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

2.3.5.1 Board members shall not place themselves in a position where there is conflict of interest between their duties as Board members and personal interests. Every Board member who is in any way directly or indirectly interested in, or may become interested in, an existing or proposed contract, transaction, or arrangement with the church or who otherwise has a conflict of interest by virtue of involvement of a family member or the involvement of an employer, partner, business associate, or a corporation that the member is involved with as either a director, shareholder, officer, employee, or agent, then such Board member shall declare a conflict of interest fully at a meeting of the board and withdraw from any discussion or vote.

2.3.5.2 The pastor, who serves as a member of the Board, or any member of the pastoral staff, shall absent himself/herself from a Board meeting when salary and allowance review is being considered.

2.4 SERVANTS COUNCIL

2.4.1 DUTIES

The purpose of a Servants Council is to assist the pastor and Board to effectively serve the local church in practical ways. The Servants Council will:

2.4.1.1 Be appointed by the members of Board, for an unlimited tenure.

2.4.1.2 Serve in other ministries in the local church for a minimum of two (2) years prior to becoming a member of the Servants Council. Consideration provided for transferees.

2.4.1.3 Meet regularly for instruction, direction, accountability, evaluation and assignment of duties (e.g. department heads, usher, Women's Ministry, sound technician, Men's Fellowship, youth, young adults, treasurer, children, building maintenance), oversight of the administration of *Plan to Protect.*

2.4.2 QUALIFICATIONS

2.4.2.1 Character qualifications (1 Timothy, Acts 6): servant heart, ministry orientation

2.4.2.2 Skills required to complete the assigned task

2.4.2.3 Covenant of agreement with vision and direction

BY-LAW 3 SELECTION OF BOARD AND BUSINESS MEETINGS

3.1 NOMINATIONS

3.1.1 The nominating committee shall be comprised of the pastor and Board or a committee appointed by the Board, which shall be constituted of the pastor, one (1) Board member and two (2) non-Board members.

3.1.2 The nominating committee, after its appointment, shall invite submissions from members of the congregation, until 14 days prior to the annual congregational business meeting, or a longer period as approved by resolution of the membership and recorded in minutes of a congregational business meeting. The submissions shall be in writing, signed by the local church member, and submitted without the knowledge of the person.

3.1.3 It shall be the duty of the nominating committee to receive submissions for each office to be filled and, after determining if such individuals are qualified and willing to serve, shall present a slate of nominees for consideration at the congregational business meeting.

3.1.4 The membership may empower a nominating committee to set aside the submission process and agree on the names of members who are qualified and willing to serve on the leadership team. Such names shall be presented as the slate of nominees for consideration at the congregational meeting.

3.2 VOTING: All candidates for the Board of this local church, except the pastor, shall be declared elected upon receiving more than 50 percent of all votes cast for the office at the annual congregational business meeting. If the candidate is not elected on the first ballot, voting shall continue until an election is declared. If no election is declared as a result of the second election ballot, the name receiving the lowest number of votes shall be eliminated on each succeeding ballot.

When the church congregation is voting on business matters, a definite voting bar shall be made between those who are entitled to vote and those who are not so entitled. A member of the congregation wishing to challenge the right of another to vote may do so. In the event of such a challenge, a majority vote of the congregation shall decide.

3.3 APPOINTED OFFICES: It shall be the duty of the newly elected Board to fill all appointed offices for the ensuing year without delay.

3.4 ORDER OF BUSINESS: The regular order of business for the annual congregational business meeting of this local church shall be determined by the pastor and Board which may include such items as:

- Devotional
- Reading of previous minutes by the secretary
- Report of treasurer
- Report of committees
- Unfinished business
- Selection of Board
- New business
- Adjournment

3.5 QUORUM: Twenty-five (25) percent of the voting membership shall be required to constitute a quorum. Those members who by reasons of health are unable to regularly attend church meetings may be omitted from the quorum calculation.

3.6 PARLIAMENTARY ORDER: In order to expedite congregational business meetings this local church shall be governed by the spirit of Christian love and fellowship and by the accepted rules of parliamentary procedure as

outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*, or *Code Morin*.

BY-LAW 4 **DEPARTMENTS:** All departments of this local church shall be responsible to the pastor and the Board and shall present annual reports to the annual congregational business meeting.

BY-LAW 5 MEETINGS

5.1 **REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES:** The time and place of the regular church services shall be determined by the Board and the pastor.

5.2 No member or any number of members shall call any private, secret, business or devotional meetings without the knowledge and consent of the Board and the pastor.

BY-LAW 6 DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATION

6.1 **NATURE AND PURPOSES OF DISCIPLINE:** Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the local church is responsible. The aims of discipline are that God may be honoured, that the purity and welfare of the local church may be maintained, and that those under discipline may be brought to repentance and restoration.

Discipline is to be administered for the restoration of local church members, while fully providing for the protection and advancement of the spiritual welfare of our local churches. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective, and is to be exercised as under a dispensation of both justice and mercy. The following actions shall be administered with gentleness.

6.2 **CAUSES OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION:** Any proven act or conduct which, in the opinion of the Board, after a full investigation of the evidence may be determined to be in contradiction of the actions and principles as stated in Article 6.1 of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* may give just cause for disciplinary action by the Board. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, among such causes for action shall be:

6.2.1 Any moral failure involving sexual misconduct or sexual deviation (including, but not limited to adultery, homosexuality, incest, sexual assault, pornography and improper contact with the opposite sex).

6.2.2 Any moral or ethical failure other than sexual misconduct or any conduct unbecoming to a local church member (including, but not limited to deception, fraud, theft and assault).

6.2.3 Any act or action of a local church member, which is the cause of serious discord or dissension, with or without malicious intent (Romans 16:17, 18; Proverbs 6:19).

6.2.4 The propagation of doctrines and practices contrary to those set forth in the *Statement of Essential Truths and Positions and Practices* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

6.3 INITIATIVE

6.3.1 **AUTHORITY:** Occasions sometimes arise which make it necessary to deal with local church members who have reached the place where, in the opinion of the Board, endorsement can no longer be given. The Board, which has the authority to approve church membership, also has the right to withdraw their approval and to dismiss church membership.

6.3.2 **BOARD RESPONSIBILITY:** The Board is responsible to deal with allegations of misconduct according to the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws*.

In the event that the Board finds itself compromised in any manner, or appearing to lack impartiality, it shall have the right to appoint a substitute committee to hear charges against a church member.

6.3.3 **STATEMENT OF CONDUCT:** Should a local church member admit to, or confess to a wrongdoing or misconduct to the board, such as should require disciplinary action, then the Board shall exercise discretion as to the appropriate form of discipline.

6.3.4 **REPORTS, RUMOURS OR COMPLAINTS:** Should there be reports, rumours or complaints, written

or unwritten, which appear to be persistent, serious, becoming publicly known and posing a detriment to the testimony of the individual or church, then the pastor shall use their judgment to discuss the matter with the respondent member, always in the presence of a member of the Board. The pastor and Board member shall exercise their discretion as to whether or not to commence an official investigation.

6.3.5 INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS OR COMPLAINTS OF ALLEGED VIOLATIONS: Written and signed allegations involving a local church member as referenced in By-Law 6.2, shall be investigated. The pastor shall appoint two (2) members of the Board to investigate the allegation, having in mind that it is their responsibility to safeguard the member, the local church and the fellowship. This shall be done to determine the credibility of the allegation.

6.3.5.1 Signed written allegations shall be filed with the Pastor and/or a member of the Board, by the complainant(s) describing the alleged violations.

6.3.5.2 The persons making the allegation shall be interviewed in order to ascertain the facts in the case and the reasons underlying the allegation.

6.3.5.3 The respondent local church member shall be given an opportunity to be interviewed to discuss the allegation.

6.3.5.4 Should a local church member, when presented with the allegations, acknowledge a wrongdoing that requires disciplinary action, then the Pastor or the Pastor's designate shall report the acknowledgment of wrongdoing to the Board who shall initiate appropriate disciplinary action and a restoration program.

6.3.5.5 Should the local church member deny the allegations made, the investigators shall determine if the evidence merits a disciplinary hearing.

6.3.5.6 Where a respondent local church member serves in a leadership capacity in the local church, such ministry may be restricted during the investigation at the discretion of the Pastor.

6.3.6 LEGAL CHARGES

6.3.6.1 Where a local church member has been legally charged under the *Criminal Code* of Canada:

6.3.6.1.1 No disciplinary procedures will be followed until the legal proceedings, including appeal, have run their course.

6.3.6.1.2 Continuing involvement in the local church leadership may be subject to restriction during the time of the legal proceedings at the discretion of the Board.

6.3.6.1.3 A guilty verdict of a local church member following the legal proceedings, including appeal, shall automatically precipitate disciplinary procedures by the Board.

6.3.6.1.4 Local church members may be eligible for participation in a restoration program upon request for reconciliation.

6.3.6.2 Should the allegations against the local church member be one of a violation which is required by law to be reported (including, but not limited to, offences against minors), the Board shall report the respondent to the appropriate legal authorities and delay their own investigation, until the appropriate legal authorities have opportunity to investigate.

6.3.7 PREPARATION AND FILING OF CHARGES: Allegations shall only be investigated when they have been made in writing, dated and signed by the complainant.

If, after due investigation, it is determined by the investigators that a disciplinary hearing should occur, charges should be filed with the Board.

The person against whom charges have been filed shall be informed in writing of the charges made according to By-Law 6.2, including a signed copy of the charges; either by registered mail or hand delivered to the individual on behalf of the investigating committee at least 15 days before being

called to appear before the Board for a disciplinary hearing. The hearing shall take place within 40 days of formal charges being delivered to the local church member, or the entire proceeding shall be rescinded. A copy of the charges shall be sent to the District Superintendent.

The local church member must confirm attendance at the disciplinary hearing no later than seven (7) days prior to the date established for the disciplinary hearing. Failure to confirm or appear at the disciplinary hearing may constitute voluntary withdrawal from membership. A hearing may proceed as outlined in By-Law 6.3.9.

The said local church member may be relieved immediately from local church involvement upon being notified of the charges.

6.3.8 DISPOSITION OF ALLEGATIONS

6.3.8.1 If written allegations are made and signed, but the investigators conclude under the guidelines of the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* that no reason exists for a hearing, then the matter shall be dropped.

6.3.8.2 The pastor, or the pastor's appointee, may seek to counsel all parties involved and to bring to an end any continuation of rumours or conflicts related to the matter.

6.3.8.3 The complainant shall be informed in writing that the investigation has been concluded and the allegations dismissed.

6.3.8.4 There shall be no record of the investigation kept.

6.3.8.5 The church member shall be informed in writing that the investigation of the allegations has concluded, and no charges have been laid.

6.3.9 DISCIPLINARY HEARING: In the event the investigators find the charges merit a hearing they shall request the pastor to arrange for a disciplinary hearing by the Board for the respondent local church member. The local church member shall be requested to appear at the hearing.

To ensure the ability of the hearing committee to render an impartial judgment, no member of the Board of the local church may sit on the hearing committee when they have been party to the details of the investigation or any event or incident related to the alleged offence.

The pastor may attend the hearing as an observer but shall not participate nor be present when a vote is taken in the decision as to guilt or innocence. The role of the pastor is to be redemptive to all parties involved.

If the respondent local church member refuses to appear at the hearing to offer a defence, the hearing may proceed, and the respondent member may be disciplined if found guilty of the charges preferred.

6.3.9.1 CHAIR: A member of the hearing committee shall be appointed by the pastor to serve as chair.

The chair of the hearing committee along with the pastor shall prepare an agenda and arrange for all matters of the hearing.

The chair shall appoint a recording secretary from the membership of the hearing committee.

6.3.9.2 ROLE OF INVESTIGATORS

6.3.9.2.1 The investigators shall bring a report to the hearing and offer evidence as discovered during the investigation procedures.

6.3.9.2.2 They shall not participate nor be present when a vote is taken in the decision as to guilt or innocence.

6.3.9.2.3 No evidence or comment regarding the evidence shall be given by the investigators or accusers in the absence of the respondent local church member,

unless the respondent local church member has failed to, or has refused to, appear at the hearing.

6.3.9.3 LOCAL CHURCH MEMBER'S SUPPORT: The respondent local church member shall have the right to have a member of this local church present for support but not as an active participant in the hearing process. The supporting person may be the spouse of the respondent local church member.

Legal counsel shall not be present for either side at the hearing.

6.3.9.4 The agenda and proceedings shall provide sufficient opportunity for the complainant and complainee to speak, offer evidence, cross examine, present witnesses, and to make a summation statement. It will be the role of the hearing committee to question and make inquiry of the participants and to seek to have all the facts, evidence and testimony duly presented and examined to ensure an objective decision.

6.3.9.5 The verdict shall be made by secret ballot in the absence of investigators, the complainant and the supporting member if present and the complainee. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote shall be required to determine guilt.

6.3.9.6 If it has been determined that guilt has been established, discipline shall be administered prayerfully and in the fear of God, in accordance with the Scriptures and as set forth in the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws*.

6.3.9.7 ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VERDICT

6.3.9.7.1 The verdict shall be communicated to the pastor and placed in the minutes of the Board. If the verdict is one of guilt, then the minutes of the hearing and any other relevant documents shall be maintained in a confidential file until the disciplinary process has been completed.

6.3.9.7.2 The pastor shall communicate the verdict in writing to the local church member and the complainant within five (5) days of the decision of the hearing committee.

6.3.9.7.3 If a guilty verdict is reached, the local church member shall be informed in writing of the right and process of appeal.

6.3.9.7.4 If the verdict is one of not guilty, then no record of the hearing shall be maintained.

6.3.10 DISCIPLINE: A local church member who has been found guilty of violating or who has confessed in writing to having violated any of the principles set forth in the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws*, shall be subject to disciplinary action by the Board. Said discipline shall be administered in Christian love and kindness. The Board shall weigh decisions on the basis of the offence itself.

A local church member who has confessed to, or been found guilty of, the charges may have their membership placed on probation, or suspended.

A local church member who refuses to enter the restoration program and does not complete the same shall have their membership dismissed.

6.3.11 RIGHT OF APPEAL: The local church member shall have the right of appeal. The written request must specifically state the nature, purpose and reason for the appeal based on the process leading to the judgment rendered.

Any appeal of the decision by the hearing committee must be made in writing within 30 days of receiving the decision of the committee to the secretary of the Board. The Board shall request the District Superintendent to appoint a committee to hear the appeal.

The appeal will be heard within 60 days of receiving the request for an appeal in writing.

The respondent person will appear at this appeal, but if the respondent person neglects or refuses to attend the hearing, it may proceed in the absence of the respondent person. The decision of this

appeal committee will be final.

The decision of the appeal committee will be communicated in writing to the church member by the chair of the appeal committee within five (5) days of the appeal hearing.

Legal counsel shall not be present for either side at the appeal hearing, nor in any other investigative or disciplinary hearing provided for in these by-laws.

If the church member has chosen to not attend the hearing, then the member will not be eligible to appeal the decision that has been rendered.

6.3.12 **RESTORATION:** In the event a local church member who has been found guilty of offence shows repentance and indicates a desire for continued fellowship with the local church, the Board shall determine an appropriate restoration program, which would have in view the completion of a suspension period or the reinstatement of membership as applicable.

The program of restoration shall be administered in Christian love and kindness.

The restoration program may include limitations of ministry involvement during the term of restoration.

6.3.13 **REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP:** Persons who have had their membership suspended and have successfully completed the restoration program may apply for reinstatement of membership by communicating their request to the secretary of the Board.

6.3.14 **WAIVER OF CLAIM:** Notwithstanding the provisions hereinbefore contained, certificates of membership of this local church shall be issued upon the condition that suspension of the member and withdrawal of the certificate of membership in the manner herein provided shall not give the suspended member cause for legal action against the pastor or any member taking part in the suspension proceedings; and the acceptance of the certificate of membership or fellowship in this local church shall be evidence of a waiver by the member of all rights of action, causes of action, and all claims and demands against the local church or any member or officer of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada by virtue of suspension proceedings and withdrawal of the certificate of membership or fellowship in this local church under the foregoing provision.

BY-LAW 7 RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES OF AFFILIATION

7.1 Accepting our responsibility under the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, as stated in Matthew 28 and Mark 16, this local church shall support the missions programs and policy of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and shall take one (1) missions offering each month for this purpose.

7.2 Recognizing the responsibility of this local church to adequately provide for those who are employed in pastoral and staff services to this local church, including adequate provision for current ministry and future retirement support; and recognizing that The Pension Fund (1969) of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada exists to serve retired ministers, missionaries, and employees of local church, as an affiliated local church, the Board shall ensure that each credentialed pastor and qualifying local church employee shall regularly participate in a retirement income plan such as The Pension Fund (1969) of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and the local church shall match the contributions of its employees in accordance with Canadian pension legislation and regulations.

7.3 Recognizing the important services rendered to this congregation by the international and district offices of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, this local church shall support the ministry and fellowship services of the international and district offices, the international missions objectives of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Bible college serving this district, and other responsibilities as may be determined by the General Conference of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

This shall be done in accordance with the General Conference resolution that each local church forward an amount equal to ten (10) percent of its general fund offerings (does not include missions offerings, building fund, or any other special fund) to the district office at regular intervals to support the ministry and fellowship services. The district office will forward ten (10) percent from these funds to the International Office for ministry and fellowship services.

7.4 This local church assumes the responsibilities of paying the moving expenses of an incoming pastor and the

elected pastor's expenses incidental to attending the district conference and to any district-sponsored convention held for the benefit of its ministers.

7.5 FINANCES

7.5.1 This local church shall consult with and obtain the approval of the district executive before proceeding with the requirements of By-Law 7.5.2 hereof, and prior to the making of application for loan from any source or incurring indebtedness on a purchase plan or otherwise when repayment is not to be made in full within 12 months of the date of the intended loan or where the intended indebtedness, together with all other indebtedness of the said local church, in the aggregate will exceed ten (10) percent of the total amount of the previous year's gross revenues.

7.5.2 This local church shall then obtain the approval of its congregation to the proposed action by resolution, passed at a duly called special or regular annual congregational business meeting.

7.5.3 If the property title of the local church is held in trust by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, according to the terms of the *Declaration of Trust*, the local church may be eligible to negotiate a Pension Fund mortgage with the International Office or receive investment funds from the district office. Exceptions may be made when deemed appropriate.

A district office shall have the option of lodging a lien with the International Office where the title is being held or when registering a mortgage in the regional land titles office on the title of the local church for the amount of money invested in the local church by the district office. In the event a lien is lodged against the said property at the International Office, the executive officers who have the constitutional right to bind the corporation shall provide a written undertaking to the district office that the title of the said local church shall not be released without the written consent of the district office.

7.6 The district executive has the privilege to create policies which will allow local churches to request care and intervention from time to time.

BY-LAW 8 **AMENDMENTS:** These by-laws may be amended at any annual congregational business meeting of this local church or any special congregational business meeting duly called for that specific purpose, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been presented in writing to the Board and to the District Superintendent at least 30 days before the date of the business meeting, and providing that notice of said proposed amendment shall have been given in the announcements of the said business meeting.

A copy of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be available to any voting member between the time of announcement and the time of the congregational business meeting on application to the secretary of the Board.

An amendment to be adopted shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote. Such amendment shall not be contrary to the regulations of the General Conference or *General Constitution and By-Laws* or district constitution and by-laws or *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, or contrary to the *Declaration of Trust*, where applicable.

STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS AND POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

Article 5 and Article 6 of the *General Constitution and By-Laws*
Amended by General Conference, May 2022

ARTICLE 5 STATEMENT OF ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

PREAMBLE

This version of the Statement of Essential Truths represents the result of an extensive collaborative process to rephrase and refresh what is most essential to us. As before, we make no claim that this statement covers all biblical truth, nor that the human phraseology employed here is inspired. We recognize as we did at the outset of our movement that there is some diversity of theological thought among us, but we remain committed as a Pentecostal community to the historic creeds of the church, to evangelical convictions of faith, and to the Full Gospel that Christ is Saviour, Healer, Spirit-Baptizer, and Soon Coming King.

TRIUNE GOD

There is one God, the creator, who exists eternally in unity as three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[1] The triune God is loving, holy, infinite, just, and worthy of all worship.[2]

The Father accomplishes his plan of salvation through both redemption and judgement.[3] All things will be subject to him, and his kingdom will have no end.[4]

The Father sent the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of Mary when she was a virgin.[5] Jesus became fully human while remaining fully God.[6] Anointed by the Spirit, Jesus revealed the Father and the kingdom of God by his sinless life, teaching, and miracles.[7] After he died for our sin, God raised him from the dead, and he is now at the right hand of the Father.[8]

The Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son and gives life throughout creation.[9] The Spirit draws people to repentance and new life in Jesus Christ.[10] Through the Spirit's indwelling, the Father and the Son are present to all believers, making them children of God.[11]

BIBLE

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is the written revelation of God's character and saving purposes for humanity and for all creation.[12] As God's revelation, the entire Bible is true and trustworthy, and is the final and absolute authority for belief and conduct.[13] The Holy Spirit who inspired the Bible enables its interpretation and application.[14]

CREATION

God created and sustains the heavens and the earth,[15] which display God's glory. Formed in the image of God, both male and female, humankind is entrusted with the care of God's creation as faithful stewards.[16] As a result of human rebellion, sin and death entered the world, distorting the image of God and all of God's good creation.[17]

Angels were created as supernatural beings to worship and serve God.[18] Along with Satan, some angels chose to rebel and oppose the purposes of God.[19] Christ gives believers victory over Satan and these demons.[20]

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1 Matt 28:19; 2Cor 13:14
2 Exod 34:6-7; Psa 99:4-5
3 Exod 6:6; Rom 1:16-18
4 Psa 103:19; Rev 11:15; Eph 1:10
5 Matt 1:18-25
6 John 1:1, 14; Col 1:19; Heb 2:17
7 John 1:32; 14:7-10; Luke 4:18-19
8 Acts 2:32-33; Rom 8:34
9 Psa 104:21-30; Acts 2:33
10 John 16:7-15
11 Rom 8:14-17; 1John 3:24
12 Psa 119; John 20:30-31; Rom 15:4
13 2Tim 3:16-17; Heb 4:12
14 2Pet 1:20-21; John 16:13; 1Cor 2:12-13
15 Gen 1:1; Col 1:15-17
16 Gen 1:26-27
17 Rom 5:12; 8:20-22
18 Heb 1:14; Psa 103:20
19 Rev 12:7-9
20 Acts 10:38; Eph 6:10-13

SALVATION
Salvation is available to all people by the loving, redemptive act of the triune God.[21] Through obedience to the Father,[22] Christ gave himself as a ransom.[23] Christ, who had no sin, became sin for us offering himself and shedding his blood on the cross so that in him we might become right with God.[24] The life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ[25] provide the way of salvation for those who, by God's grace, repent from their sin and confess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.[26]

Salvation means to receive the Spirit, to be forgiven, reconciled with God and others, born again, and liberated from sin and darkness, transferring the believer into God's kingdom.[27] Our experience of liberation includes healing — whether spiritual, physical, emotional, or mental — as a foretaste of our future, complete restoration.[28] Those who remain in Christ and do not turn away are assured of salvation on judgement day by the indwelling Holy Spirit,[29] who sanctifies and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.[30]

SPIRIT BAPTISM
On the Day of Pentecost, Jesus poured out the promised Holy Spirit on the church.[31] As his return draws near, Jesus continues to baptize in the Holy Spirit those who are believers.[32] This empowers them to continue his work of proclaiming with speech and action the good news of the arrival and coming of the kingdom of God.[33] This experience is available for everyone, male and female, of every age, status,[34] and ethnicity.[35]

The sign of speaking in tongues indicates that believers have been baptized with the Holy Spirit[36] and signifies the nature of Spirit baptism as empowering our communication, to be his witnesses with speech and action as we continue to pray in the Spirit.[37]

THE CHURCH
Jesus Christ is the head of the church.[38] All who are united with Christ are joined by the Spirit to his body.[39] Each local church is an expression of the universal church whose role is to participate in the mission of God to restore all things.[40]

Central to the church is the shared experience of the transforming presence of God.[41] The church responds with worship, prayer, proclamation, discipleship, and fellowship,[42] including the practices of water baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ in his death and resurrection.[43] The Lord's Supper symbolizes Christ's body and blood, and our communion as believers. Shared together, it proclaims his death in anticipation of his return.[44]

The Spirit gives all gifts to the church to minister to others in love for the purpose of bearing witness to Christ and for the building up of the church.[45] The Spirit also empowers leaders, both female and male, to equip the church to fulfil its mission and purposes.[46]

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21 John 3:16; Gal 4:4-7; Titus 2:11-14
22 John 8:28-29; Phil 2:8; Heb 5:8
23 Mark 10:45; 1Tim 2:6
24 2Cor 5:21; 1John 3:16
25 Rom 4:22-25; 5:19; 6:4-5; Heb 7:24-28
26 Rom 10:9; 1John 1:9; Acts 3:19; 4:12
27 Eph 2:13-16; Col 1:13-14, 19-20; 1Pet 1:3
28 Isa 53:4-5; 1Pet 2:24; Psa 147:3; Rom 8:23
29 Eph 1:13-14; 1John 4:13; Heb 6:5-6; Phil 3:12-14
30 1Thess 4:3-4; 1Cor 6:11; Rom 12:1-2; 1Pet 1:2
31 Luke 24:49; Acts 2:33
32 Acts 2:38-39; 8:14-17; 19:1-6
33 Luke 4:18-19, 43; Acts 1:8
34 Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18, 39
35 Acts 10:45-46
36 Acts 2:4; 10:46; 19:6
37 Acts 1:8; 2:11-43; 4:31; Rom 15:19; 1Cor 14:15
38 Col 1:18; Matt 16:18
39 1Cor 12:12-14
40 Acts 1:8; Matt 28:18-20; Acts 13:1-3; Rev 21:5
41 Acts 2:42-43; 1Cor 12:7; Matt 18:20; 2Cor 3:17-18
42 1Pet 2:9-10; Col 4:2-6; Acts 2:42
43 Rom 6:3-8; Matt 28:19
44 Matt 26:26-29; 1Cor 11:23-26
45 Acts 8:5-7; 1Cor 12:4-11; 14:12; Heb 2:3-4
46 Eph 4:11-16; Matt 20:25-28; Acts 2:17-18; 6:2-4; Rom 16:7

RESTORATION
Our great hope is for the imminent return of Christ in the air to receive his own, both the living who will be transformed, and the dead in Christ who will be resurrected bodily.[47] Christ will complete at his second coming the restoration begun when he initiated God's kingdom at his first coming.[48] Christ will liberate creation from the curse, fulfil God's covenant to Israel, and defeat all powers that oppose God.[49] Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.[50]

Ultimately, God will judge the living and the dead.[51] Such judgement is God's gracious answer to humanity's cry for justice to prevail throughout the earth and is consistent with God's character as loving, holy, and just.[52] The unredeemed will go away into eternal punishment, but the redeemed into eternal life.[53] The redeemed will enjoy the presence of God where there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain.[54] Amen. Come, Lord Jesus![55]

ARTICLE 6 POSITIONS AND PRACTICES

6.1 MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Marriage is a provision of God wherein one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others enter into a lifelong relationship[56] through a marriage ceremony that is recognized by the church and legally sanctioned by the state.

Marriage establishes a "one-flesh" relationship[57] that goes beyond a physical union and is more than either a temporary relationship of convenience intended to provide personal pleasure or a contract that binds two people together in a legal partnership. Marriage establishes an emotional and spiritual oneness that enables both partners to respond to the spiritual, physical and social needs of the other.[58] It provides the biblical context for the procreation of children.

Marriage is to be an exclusive relationship that is maintained in purity.[59] It is intended by God to be a permanent relationship. It is a witness to the world of the relationship between Christ and His church.[60]

Marriage requires a commitment of love, perseverance and faith. Because of its sanctity and permanence, marriage should be treated with seriousness and entered into only after counsel and prayer for God's guidance. Christians should marry only those who are believers.[61] An individual who becomes a believer after marriage should remain with his/her partner in peace, and should give witness to the Gospel in the home.[62]

The Bible holds family life as a position of trust and responsibility. The home is a stabilizing force in society, a place of nurture, counsel, and safety for children.[63]

Marriage can only be broken by *porneia*, which is understood as marital unfaithfulness[64] involving adultery, homosexuality, or incest. While the Scriptures give evidence that the marriage vow and

47 1Thess 4:14-17; 5:1-2
48 Matt 13:24-41; Rev 11:15-17; Acts 1:6-7; 3:20-21; Rom 11:25-27
49 Rom 8:19-21; 1Cor 15:20-26
50 Phil 2:10-11; Isa 45:23
51 Acts 10:42; 1Pet 4:5
52 Mal 2:17-3:1; Rev 6:9-11
53 Matt 25:46; Dan 12:1-2
54 Isa 25:8-12; Rev 21:3-4
55 Rev 22:20
56 Gen 2:24; Matt 19:6
57 Matt 19:5; Mal 2:15
58 Gen 2:18; 1Cor 7:2-5; Heb 13:4
59 Eph 5:3, 26-27
60 Eph 5:25, 31-32
61 2Cor 6:1, 14-15
62 1Cor 7:12-14, 16
63 Eph 6:4
64 Matt 5:32; 19:9

"one-flesh" union are broken by such acts and therefore recognize the breaking of the marriage relationship, the Scriptures do recommend that the most desirable option would be reconciliation.[65]

6.2 DIVORCE

We believe that divorce is not God's intention. It is God's concession to the "hardness of men's hearts." [66]

We, therefore, discourage divorce by all lawful means and teaching. Our objective is reconciliation and the healing of the marital union wherever possible. Marital unfaithfulness should not be considered so much an occasion or opportunity for divorce but rather an opportunity for Christian grace, forgiveness, and restoration. Divorce in our society is a termination of a marriage through a legal process authorized by the State. While the Church recognizes this legal process as an appropriate means to facilitate the permanent separation of spouses, the Church restricts the idea of divorce, in the sense of dissolution of marriage, to reasons specified in Scripture.

The weight of the biblical record is negative and the explicit statement is made, "God hates divorce."[67] Divorce is more than an action of the courts which breaks the legal contract between partners in a marriage. It is also the fracture of a unique human relationship between a male and a female. Divorce has profound consequences for the children. Divorce is evidence of the sinful nature expressed in human failure. Jesus gives one explicit cause for the dissolution of marriage: *porneia* or marital unfaithfulness.

Where all attempts at reconciliation have failed and a divorce has been finalized, we extend Christ's love and compassion.

6.3 REMARRIAGE

Remarriage is the union, legally sanctioned by the State, of one man and one woman, one or both of whom have been previously married. It is regarded as acceptable in Scripture in the event of the death of a former spouse. It is also regarded as acceptable if there has been sexual immorality on the part of the former partner or if the former partner has remarried.

6.4 GENDER

We believe in the biblical teaching of God's original and ongoing design for humanity as two distinct sexes, male and female, determined by genetics. The basis and the intent for this is the conviction that the matter of human sexuality and gender is fundamental to biblical anthropology, not merely biblical morality. Due to human sin and brokenness, our experience of our sex and gender is not always that which God the Creator originally designed. In light of this foundational understanding of creation, fall, and redemption, we will avoid any behaviour or alignment with identity that contradicts the biblical teaching. We do not affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's experience of gender by the adoption of an identity contradictory with one's birth sex.

6.5 TITHING

Tithing was divinely instituted by God under the old covenant and was compulsory upon the people who worshiped God.[68] Under the new covenant we are not bound by arbitrary laws; but the principles of right and wrong, as expressed by the law, are fulfilled in the believer's life through grace. Grace should produce as much as or more than law demanded. Regular systematic giving is clearly taught in the New Testament. It is known as the grace of giving.[69] The gauge or rule of this systematic giving is defined in the Old Testament, known as the law of tithing. All Christians should conscientiously and systematically tithe their income to God.

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65 Eph 4:32
66 Matt 19:8
67 Mal 2:16
68 Lev 27:30-32; Mal 3:10
69 2Cor 9:6-15