

# JOURNEY CHURCH | CHATTANOOGA | TN

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

### *Preamble*

*I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. 1 Corinthians 1:10 (NLT)*

This Constitution and Bylaws are made to:

1. Preserve and secure the principles of our faith.
2. Preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church inside the will of Christ.
3. Ensure freedom of action of independence from any religious body or organization.
4. Provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.

### I. Name

The name of this church shall be Journey Church of Chattanooga.

### II. Business Location

The address of the principal office of this church shall be: 1200 Mountain Creek Road #200, Chattanooga, TN 37405.

### III. Why We Exist (Purpose)

Journey Church exists to proclaim the excellencies of God, the incredible gift of Jesus Christ as our Savior, and lead others to know the gospel and become disciples of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:9, Matthew 28:18–20, 1 Corinthians 15:3–5)

### IV. What We Believe (Articles of Faith)

1. We believe in being guided by core values.
2. In essential beliefs, we have unity.

*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesians 4:4–6 (ESV)*

3. In non-essential beliefs, we have liberty.

*“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters...Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls...So then each of us will give an account of himself to God...So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.” Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22 (NIV)*

4. In all our beliefs, we show charity.

*And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 1 Corinthians 13:2 (ESV)*

#### Four Essential Truths

1. The Bible is the Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16–17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13)

God’s Word is the only completely reliable and truthful authority and we accept the Bible as our manual for living. Our first question when faced with a decision is, “What does the Bible say?” We practice daily Bible reading and Bible study. The Bible is the basis for all we believe.

2. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Matthew 1:23, John 14:6, Acts 4:11–12)

*Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity, is fully God and man, was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life on earth, and voluntarily paid for our sin by dying on the cross as our substitute. This accomplished salvation for all who receive grace by trusting in Him alone. He rose from the dead and is the only mediator between God, the first person of the Trinity, and us. He baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the the Trinity, and will return again to create a new heaven and a new earth.*

3. You must be Born Again. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Matthew 16:25)

*God created humans to have fellowship with Him, but they rebelled against God by sinfully going their own way. As a result, we need God’s saving grace to end our alienation from Him. Salvation comes only through God’s grace - not human effort - and must be received personally by repentance and faith. At the end, everyone will experience bodily resurrection and the judgment. Only believers will enjoy eternal fellowship with God.*

4. Believers can be Spirit-Filled and Spirit-Led. (Acts 1:8, John 14:16–17, Luke 11:13, Romans 8:26–27)

*We believe the only way possible to live the Christian life is by God’s power within us. Every believer can be filled with the Holy Spirit by simply asking. We seek to practice a*

*daily dependence on God's Spirit to enable us to do what is right and have daily fellowship with God.*

## V. Core Values

### 1. Biblical Authority

God has spoken to us through the Bible and we recognize it as the final authority for our lives. It is trustworthy and without error.

### 2. Intimacy with God

God desires an intimate relationship with each of us.

### 3. Intentional Discipleship

It shouldn't be complicated to lead people to know the ways of Jesus and follow in his steps.

### 4. Engaging Environments

Innovative environments that reflect creativity and connect with our community better communicate the gospel.

### 5. Relational Evangelism

God's message of forgiveness through Christ is most effectively conveyed within the context of personal relationships from someone that has experienced it first hand.

### 6. Authentic Community

Accountability, belonging, care, and spiritual growth happen best with relationally connected believers.

### 7. Community Impact

Caring for those that need help in our community demonstrates the gospel being lived out to "the least of these".

### 8. Stewardship

We believe in the wise stewardship of God's gifts to bear fruit, impact the world, and expand the Kingdom of God.

## V. Journey Church Government

### 1. Guided by a Council of Elders

The Council of Elders is responsible for ensuring that we maintain biblical integrity in all things we do. The council is made up of members of the staff and congregation.

## 2. Led by Staff and Non-Staff Leaders

The staff and non-staff leaders are responsible for leading the day to day ministries and operations of the church. They are accountable to the Lead Pastor and the Council of Elders.

## 3. Affirmed by the Body

Members are responsible for affirming the choice of Elders and staff leaders as proposed by the Council of Elders. They have the authority to affirm or deny and may bring concerns to any member of the Leadership Council.

## VII. Non-profit Status and Liquidation

This church is not organized for profit. In the event of liquidation or dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be paid over and transferred at the direction of the trustees to the North American Mission Board, PO Box 116543, Atlanta, GA 30368-65432.

## VIII. Amendment

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended provided the proposed amendment shall have been presented in writing to the Council of Elders, at a regular church business meeting and then circulated to the membership. Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws shall be two-thirds vote of members of the church who are qualified to vote and are present in the business meeting with a quorum to discuss and vote for this matter.

## BYLAWS

### I. Church Membership

#### A. Qualifications

Membership of Journey Church shall consist of people having made a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who, having been scripturally baptized by believers baptism, are in agreement with the Articles of Faith as presented in this Constitution and Bylaws, and are striving to live a Christ-Like lifestyle.

#### B. Reception

Membership in the church may be attained by fulfilling the qualifications above in one of the following ways.

1. By Believer's Baptism through the scriptural practice of immersion after a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior.
2. By a statement of faith of their prior experience of conversion and Believer's Baptism in another evangelical church of like faith and practice.

#### C. Termination

Membership in this church shall be terminated when a member:

1. Is dropped from the roll of membership when he or she joins another church, requests their membership be terminated, or has not attended for a period of 12 months.
2. The member dies.
3. Is dismissed by a vote of the church due to reasons and circumstances provided in Section VII. Church Discipline. The pastor and Council of Elders will do all they can to counsel the member for restoration prior to action of dismissal or a request of the member to be dismissed from the church membership.

#### D. Orientation of New Members

Candidates for membership and new members need to attend Starting Point to learn and understand the privileges and responsibilities of belonging to a local church community.

### II. Church Officers

All church officers must be members of the church in good standing.

#### A. The Pastor:

1. The qualifications for pastor shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership.
2. His responsibilities:
  - a) These generally fall into the following areas: preaching, teaching, pastoral

counseling, administration, planning, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes.

b) He shall lead the church, the organizations, and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks in worship, proclamation, education, and evangelism.

c) The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church standing committees, except the Pastor's Selection Committee.

d) He shall assist the Council of Elders and Staff in securing pulpit supply for times in his absence.

### 3. Call

a) A pastor shall be chosen and called whenever a vacancy occurs.

b) A Pastor's Selection Committee shall be appointed by the church to seek out a suitable pastor and this committee's recommendation will serve as a nomination.

c) The Pastor's Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.

d) The pastor's election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week notice shall be given to the members.

e) An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those present is necessary for a choice.

### 4. Terms of Service

a) The chosen pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated by either his request or that of the church. In either case, at least sixty (60) days' notice shall be given unless otherwise mutually agreed.

## B. Church Staff

These positions will be filled as needed but are not mandatory.

1. Staff members other than that of the pastor shall be recommended for employment by the Council of Elders.

2. A written job description and mutual contract/agreement will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

## C. Elder Council

### 1. Overview of the Office of Elder

The council is comprised of 2-5 members, including the lead pastor. The council functions primarily as discerners and shepherds, and as such serve as the conscience and guardians of the church. Acts 20:28 states, "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood."

### 2. The council functions in 3 primary ways:

...Instruct in sound doctrine

...Oversee the activities and ministries of the church

...Pray for the faithfulness of the church

### 3. Functions of the Council of Elders

The Elder Council has final say concerning the overall direction of the church.

### 4. Scriptural Basis of the Office of Elder

The passages in 1 Timothy 3:1-11, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-7 form the basis for Council Member qualifications.

#### 1. Number and term of office

There shall be up to 5 council members and they shall be elected for a term of service of three years or longer as voted upon by the church.

#### 2. Qualifications

- a) A member of the Council of Elders must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- b) A member of the Council of Elders shall demonstrate an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; a committed Christian elder and partner of the pastor; supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.
- c) Candidates must be in agreement with Journey Church's belief statements and core values.

#### 3. Election

- a) When a vacancy on the Elder Council is imminent, candidates may be submitted by the current church membership.
- b) Candidates will be informed of their consideration by the Elder Council and asked to complete an Elder Council Application.
- c) Candidates will be interviewed and selected by the Elder Council
- d) Those selected must be brought before and affirmed by the congregation in a majority vote.

#### 4. Ordination

- a) Selection, election, and ordination of council members is a privilege of the local church.
- b) When ordination of council members is planned by the church, it shall authorize the pastor to assemble a council to examine the candidates concerning their qualifications to serve as council members.
- c) The council directed to examine the elders shall be composed of the pastor, invited ordained pastors and existing and past elders.
- d) When the council recommends the ordination of council members, the ordination service shall be scheduled and led by the pastor.

#### 5. Duties

- a) Oversee the ministries of the church.
- b) Pray for specific needs brought to the elders
- c) Hire/Fire staff including Lead Pastor with leniency given to the Lead pastor in hiring of other staff members.
- d) Demonstrate leadership in and involvement with discipleship ministries
- e) Council Members serve in a ministry of encouragement and counsel for the pastor concerning the progress and welfare of the church.

- f) Assist the pastor in ministering to the members.
- g) Seek to solve any fellowship problem of the church.

#### D. Leadership Council

The leadership council shall be made up of elders, staff, and ministry leaders as determined by the Elder Council. It shall serve as an advisory council with the authority to plan and implement approved ministry activities for the church.

#### E. The Finance Team

The Finance Team is given the privilege and responsibility of giving counsel and accountability regarding the financial matters of the church. Their primary responsibility is to give counsel, not make day to day financial decisions.

1. Members of the Finance team are chosen by the Elders and serve three-year terms, which may be renewed indefinitely with the approval of both the Elders and the candidate.
2. The Finance Team will consist of not less than three, but not more than seven members including a Treasurer and Financial Secretary.

- Treasurer

1. The church treasurer shall be elected as the custodian of all moneys of the church and shall disburse these moneys by checks as authorized by the church.
2. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annually written report of this account to the church.
3. The treasurer's report shall be audited annually or as recommended by the Council of Elders.

- Financial Secretary

1. The church financial secretary shall be elected and shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the church's bank account.
2. He or she shall properly credit each contributor and their offerings.
3. He or she shall be responsible for preparing for mailing an annual record of contribution to donors.

3. The Finance Team will work with the Elders in establishing the annual budget and provide accountability in regards to operating within it.

4. New paid staff positions may not be created without the affirmation of the Finance Team.

5. All major financial decisions (personnel and purchases over \$1000) must receive a formal recommendation from the Finance Team. The Council of Elders can, however, override any recommendations made by the Finance Team.

#### F. Special Ministry Teams

From time to time, specific specialty teams may need to be organized for specific projects or ministry needs. These serving teams will be chosen by the Council of Elders. Their term of office ends upon the completion of their stated purpose.

#### E. Moderator

1. A member of the Council of Elders will serve as moderator as needed.
2. A moderator shall preside at all regular and called business meetings of the church.

#### F. Clerk

1. The church clerk shall be chosen by the Council of Elders and be responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the church members, with dates of admission, dismissal, and deaths of members in the church family.
3. He or she shall write letters of transfer of membership, prepare written reports of the church, and keep an accurate history of the church.

#### I. Trustees

1. At least three (3) trustees shall be selected by the Council of Elders and affirmed by the members of the the church to hold in trust the property of the church.
2. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property of the church without a specific instruction from the Council of Elders authorizing each action.
3. It shall be the function of the trustees to sign any, and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents requiring the signature of the trustees for and in behalf of the church.

#### J. Vacancies

In case of vacancy in any office, except that of the pastor and staff members, the Council of Elders may appoint someone on an interim basis.

### III. Ministry Teams

Ministry Teams shall be formed as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purpose of the church. Ministry Team members shall be elected by the church from nominations presented by the Council of Elders.

## V. Regular Business Meetings

A. Regular Town Hall meetings will be held quarterly with church members to discuss any business needs of the church and hold any necessary congregational votes.

B. Special Called Meetings will be called by the Council of Elders when necessary.

C. Quorum

The quorum consists of those who attend the business meeting, provided it is a stated meeting or one that has been properly called. At least one-fourth of the members shall constitute a quorum.

E. Parliamentary Rules

Robert's Rules of Order (revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church and for all business meetings of the church and for all other meetings that demand voting of the church members, including committee meetings.

## V. Church Discipline

The goal of church discipline is to bring restoration of members to Christ and the church.

A. Should any differences arise among members, the aggrieved member shall follow in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

B. Should any case of gross breach of relationship, or unrepentant behavior that damages others or the unity of the church arise, the Council of Elders shall endeavor to resolve the conflict; and if this effort fails, shall report the case to the church.

C. All such proceedings shall be pervaded by a spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance, but should an adverse decision be reached, the church may proceed to admonish or declare the offender to be no longer in the membership of the church.

D. Any person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by vote of the Council of Elders, upon evidence of his repentance and reformation; or if an account of continued absence, upon satisfactory explanation.

Ratified by action of the church in its business meeting on \_\_\_\_\_.  
(date)

Moderator: \_\_\_\_\_

Church: \_\_\_\_\_