

Excerpt from Bylaws regarding Membership

ARTICLE 4. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 4.1 Membership: Universal and Local. The Church follows the New Testament concept of church membership: that each person regenerated by the Holy Spirit and responding in repentance and faith toward Jesus Christ is a unique and indispensable part of the organism which is Christ's body, and all such persons are members of the universal body of Christ. The Bible also identifies local churches as those Christians in a locality, who, by the leadership of God and common agreement, join together under recognized local leadership and governance for the purpose of worship, instruction, mission, and fellowship.

SECTION 4.2 Membership Requirements. The Church shall have only one class of members, who shall have no voting rights. The requirements for attaining and maintaining membership in the Church congregation consist of the following six criteria:

4.2.1 That one confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;

4.2.2 That the controlling influence of Jesus Christ over one's life be apparent from one's outward actions and attitudes;

4.2.3 That one agree with the Church's tenets of faith, as set forth in or pursuant to, these Bylaws, including its Statement of Faith;

4.2.4 That, so long as one desires to remain a member of the Church, one agrees to abide by the Church's charter, Bylaws and Membership Commitment;

4.2.5 A person must sign a Membership Commitment form, and be accepted by the Board of Trustees. It is encouraged that they also attend a membership course before signing a Membership Commitment form, but it is not absolutely required. A person's membership never expires unless there is a request to be removed from membership. The person's membership will also expire if the member has quit attending Summitview Church for 6 months and hasn't contacted the office requesting continuing membership (see section 4.2).

4.2.6 An agreement with and commitment to the following statements:

Statement of Biblical Authority

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Board of Trustees consisting of our elders (pastors) is the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other.

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as, but not limited to, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one’s gender, or disagreement with one’s biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the Church in any capacity, or who serve as non-paid leaders, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the Church.

SECTION 4.3 Reception of members. The following is the procedure for the reception of members:

4.3.1 Persons desiring to become members will make such desires known to the Pastor or Pastors who will examine the applicant according to the standards for membership.

4.3.2. The Pastor or Pastors will render final decision on the reception of a member based on satisfactory evidence of all six criteria of SECTION 4.2. All persons who have met the membership requirements and have been passed on favorably by the Pastors will be received into the membership of the Church.

SECTION 4.4. Ceremonial Ordinances. Any Christian may serve to officiate any of the Church’s four ceremonial ordinances: Baptism, The Lord’s Supper (communion), Marriage, and Funerals. If the state’s laws require an ordained pastor to officiate or authenticate a marriage, couples will be advised to comply. The Pastors of Summitview Church reserve the right to decline or refuse officiating any

particular ordinance if they believe they have sufficient evidence that a person (or persons) is not qualified to participate in a specific ordinance on biblical grounds, as interpreted by the pastors of the church. Furthermore, Summitview Church pastors are restricted to officiate weddings and funerals for church members only who have fulfilled the membership requirements, as described in SECTION 4.2 of these bylaws. Any exceptions to this restriction must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

4.4.1 Facility Use. The use of Summitview Church's facility, property and grounds for the ceremonial ordinances listed in SECTION 4.4 is limited to groups or individuals who are in agreement with both the Statement of Faith in these Bylaws, and the Statement on Marriage and Sexuality in SECTION 4.2.1-4.2.6. Furthermore, the Board of Trustees reserves the right to decline facility use to any group or individual that they believe will use it for purposes that are not in accord with the church's mission, values, or beliefs.

SECTION 4.5 Membership Removal. Members may be removed from membership at their own request by informing a pastor or the church office in written form (email or letter) of their intention to withdraw and the reasons therefore. If a member requests to withdraw because of specific problems or disappointments with the church, the Board of Trustees shall attempt to resolve those matters so that the member may remain in the church and enjoy greater fruitfulness and personal spiritual growth. If it appears to the Board of Trustees that a member has requested removal merely to avoid church discipline, that request shall not be given effect until the disciplinary process has been properly concluded (see Matthew 18:12-20; Bylaw Section 4.8 Procedure for Discipline). If a person has quit attending the church for 6 months, a letter will be sent to them informing them they will be removed from membership unless they contact the office requesting otherwise.

SECTION 4.6 Member Duties. Although all governing authority of the Church is vested in its Board of Trustees, pursuant to Scripture and these bylaws, the members of the church are vital to its success in bringing the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ to a dying and sinful world. Members shall seek to stimulate one another to love and to good works, and shall submit to one another in love for mutual edification, for accountability, and in the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry. Members shall provide a framework of love and acceptance, in which truth and righteousness may prosper, and the gospel may be proclaimed. Members shall not be factious or divisive, and shall agree to submit to the spiritual authority of the Trustees as leaders of the Church.

SECTION 4.7 Restoration. If any member of the congregation is overcome in a fault, it is the commission of the body of Christ, through those who are spiritual, to restore such member in a spirit of gentleness. The church shall be entitled to act in the process of restoration, which may include discipline, in order to prevent a brother or sister from further harm to himself or herself, and in order to protect the integrity and purity of the membership. The process of restoration by the local congregation shall be exercised only in accordance with the Word of God, in a spirit of love, and not in a spirit of self-righteous judgment or vindictiveness.

SECTION 4.8 Procedure for Discipline. Trustees shall be responsible for admonishing members who willfully neglect their responsibilities to the church or who err in doctrine or conduct.

- a. Mutual accountability and discipline within the church is commanded by God in Scripture and is one of the most important responsibilities of a true church of Jesus Christ (see Matt. 18:12-20; Romans 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-11; Gal. 2:11-14; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6-15; 1 Tim. 1:20; 5:19-20; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Titus 3:10; Heb. 10:24-30; 12:5-17; 2 John 7-11; Rev. 3:19).
- b. Church discipline is the exercise of that authority that the Lord Jesus Christ has committed to the visible church for the preservation of its purity, peace, and good order. All members of the church are under the care of and subject to the discipline of the church. The ultimate goal of all discipline is to train Christians to be self-disciplined so that they may share in the holiness of God (see Heb. 12:7-13).
- c. Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in the New Testament Scriptures. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the erring member. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Trustees, which shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore the member.
- d. After the above process has been completed, dismissal of a member remaining in gross error in doctrine or conduct may result by an unanimous vote of all current Trustees.