

# THE LINK CHURCH

## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

REV 12/1/2024

# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I

### OBJECT AND NAME

As believers in Christ, associated to maintain public worship, provide religious instruction, and promote the Kingdom of God according to the Scriptures, this Church is organized as The Link Church, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the Church). By such name, it shall have the power to contract and be contracted with, to own, buy or sell real estate or to mortgage, or pledge its property, real or personal, and to receive gifts or devises, to sue and be sued and all other powers in connection with its corporate existence which are not inconsistent with the laws of the State of Kentucky. This Constitution governs all campuses and any other properties of the Church.

## ARTICLE II

This Church adheres to and recognizes the canonical writing of the Old and New Testament as the revealed word of God and as the only unerring guide and standard of Christian faith and life. The members of the Church are known as Christians only and shall have a strictly congregational form of government and shall have no creed or articles of faith other than those contained in the Holy Bible, and in which Church ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall be observed, the former by immersion only and the latter each Lord's Day. The Church is a local autonomy and shall be legally and ecclesiastically independent of any and all denominations or quasi-religious organizations, by whatever names now or hereafter known, or mergers thereof, as well as denominational or interdenominational agencies, societies, funds, and bureaus.

All officers, staff, and Bible teachers must be immersed believers in Jesus Christ as the Son of the Living God.

## ARTICLE III

All rights and powers granted to charitable and religious corporations by the State of Kentucky by virtue of the law of the State, not herein mentioned, shall be included in the powers of the corporation, and form a part of this Constitution.



#### ARTICLE IV

Article II of this Constitution shall not hereafter be amended, altered, or rescinded, in whole or in any part thereof, without the unanimous vote of all duly enrolled members of the Church, which vote shall be taken at a meeting duly called for that sole purpose, of which meeting, written notice shall be given to each member of the Church at least once a week for three (3) weeks prior to said meeting. The voting at the meeting shall be by secret ballot.

#### ARTICLE V

Articles I and V can only be changed by a unanimous vote of the Board of Elders followed by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority of ballots cast by the members of the Church.



# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE I

### MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1.** The New Testament teaches that everyone who commits to Christ through repentance, belief, confession, and baptism becomes a “member” of the “Body of Christ” (Romans 12:4-5). This is a common biblical metaphor for the Universal Church, which includes everyone who experiences salvation. Therefore, there is only one requirement to be a member at The Link Church, and that is being a baptized follower of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:37-41).

The New Testament does not reference becoming a “member” of a specific local church, but formal membership is helpful in a culture of individualism and consumerism. It produces spiritual growth through accountability and defines who can be counted on and who is partnering with this local church (see Philippians 1:3-6). For The Link Church to make disciples of Jesus who go, grow, and multiply we need a sacrifice of time, energy and resources with a community of people.

Therefore, The Link Church encourages and expects all members to grow as disciples who are committed to our Vision, Mission, Core Values and Goals. Individual members (i.e. all family members 18 years and older) of The Link Church will formally commit to membership by completing a “Membership Commitment Form.” All members shall be considered Active Members who are supporting this Church by attendance at meetings of worship and by contributions, either monetary or personal service.

The word “Church” as herein found shall for all matters of business mean the congregation of members found on the Active Member Roll as kept by the church office. The list of such members with their addresses shall herein be known as the Active Member Roll. If a member has not attended a regular service of the Church or has not communicated with the minister or elders of the Church in such a way as to reveal interest or sincerity over a period of one year, after due effort had been made during the year to encourage him or her, his or her name shall be automatically removed from the Active Member Roll. Anyone removed from the Active Member Roll shall not be entitled to vote in any Church issues. Any Active Member, eighteen (18) years of age or over, shall have the right of voice and vote at all congregational meetings of the Church.

**Section 2.** A member at The Link Church is a brother or sister in Christ, agreeing to serve as an ambassador of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:20) as well as an upstanding representative of The Link Church. If the leadership at The Link feels there is a misrepresentation of Jesus or behavior

detrimental to The Link's kingdom work, this body of believers is committed to attempt to restore this individual in a Matthew 18:15-17 model. Issues requiring The Link to confront and attempt restoration (Hebrews 3:12-13) may include but are not limited to divisiveness and immorality. The goal of this confrontation is to lovingly restore them to a lifestyle of faithfulness, unity, repentance, good news, and holiness. If attempts at restoration are unsuccessful, the last attempt at restoration shall be exclusion from membership and fellowship (Titus 3:10, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13, Matthew 18:17).

## ARTICLE II

### ELDERS

**Section 1.** The Board of Elders (hereinafter referred to as the Board) has the authority and responsibility to create and maintain a vision, set direction and policy consistent with New Testament Scriptures and work with the ministry teams to foster and assure operations consistent with the Church goals. In the main, Elders are to shepherd, feed, guard, and watch the flock as set forth in New Testament scriptures. The Board has the final say in any and all matters concerning the overall direction and conduct of the Church, its officers, and staff.

**Section 2.** Elders shall be elected by the Board to serve for the term of four (4) years. All newly elected Elders will assume their duties on July 1. The number of Elders may increase with the size of the congregation or as men become willing and meet the requirements. However, the Board shall never number less than five (5) Elders, including the Lead Pastor. In case of a vacancy appearing for any reason, the Board may fill the vacancy for the unexpired term of the member causing the vacancy.

A candidate for the Board must have been an active member of The Link Church (or Lakeside Hebron Campus) for at least two (2) years, be at least eighteen (18) years of age, and fully subscribe to The Link Church's mission and values.

The process for electing Elders shall be as follows:

A nominating committee comprised of two (2) Elders, the Lead Pastor (or his designee), and two (2) at large active members shall be formed.

- Candidates will be considered and vetted by the nominating committee. Any candidate for the Eldership must declare to the nominating committee that he agrees with and promises to uphold without reservation Articles I and II of The Link Church Constitution.
- Once a candidate has been recommended to the Board by the nominating committee, he must receive a unanimous vote from the voting members of the Board to be elected.
- When an Elder's term has expired, he shall not be eligible to be re-elected to the Board for a period of at least one (1) year unless fulfilling a vacancy for an unexpired term.

**Section 3.** At the first regular or called meeting after the election of new members of the Board, the Elders shall organize as follows: The new Board shall install from their number the Vice-Chairman from the prior year as Chairman for the new year. The Board shall also elect from their number a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. A summary description of the Board offices are as follows:

**Chairman** - An Elder installed as Chairman will serve at least one (1) year but not more than two (2) years as Chairman. The Chairman does not need to be re-elected for the second (2nd) year of his term. An Elder initially installed as Chairman in the fourth (4th) year of his term on the Board may serve a fifth (5th) year on the Board if he so decides. The Lead Pastor is ineligible to be installed as Chairman or Vice-Chairman. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Board. He may call special meetings when in his judgment, the urgency of the situation demands, or at the request of two or more of the members of the Board. For special meetings, all the members must be positively notified and given reasonable notice. A quorum of three fifths (3/5) of the voting members of the Board must be present for any official business to be conducted.

**Vice-Chairman** – An Elder is eligible to be elected as Vice-Chairman in any of the first three (3) years of his four-year term. It shall be the duty of the Vice-Chairman to preside in the absence of the Chairman and assist in any way consistent with his abilities as requested by the Chairman. The Vice-Chairman shall be installed as Chairman the following year unless the sitting Chairman has opted to serve a second term pursuant to Article II of the Bylaws.

**Secretary** – It shall be the duty of the Secretary to note the members present at all regular and special meetings, to keep the minutes of the Board, and to promote other duties as required of him by the Board not inconsistent with the position of Secretary. Also, the Secretary shall preside in the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman.

**Treasurer** – It is the duty of the Treasurer to serve as Chairman of the Finance Committee and Lead Trustee. The Treasurer will ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the Board on a timely basis. He is responsible for reviewing financial policies on an ongoing basis.

**Section 4.** Any Elder may be removed from the office of Elder for valid cause consistent with the standards set forth in Article II Section 1 of these Bylaws. The Board will determine the specific procedure for removal of an Elder. This procedure may be altered, amended, repealed or restated by a resolution of the Board. The Board shall have the sole authority to remove an Elder.

A written notice of the proposed removal of any Elder shall be given to the Elder at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting at which action to effectuate such removal is to be taken to ensure that the Elder is given a reasonable opportunity to defend himself. At that meeting the Elder shall have the opportunity to defend himself, but he shall not be present during the discussion of his removal. Such removal shall take place only upon

and after a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the voting members of the Board. The Elder under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered.

## ARTICLE III

### TRUSTEES

**Section 1.** The Trustees must be active members and will have signing authority for certain financial matters, as delegated by the Board. These duties shall and do hereby include, but are not limited to, the authority to execute instruments evidencing the borrowing of money for the purpose of the mortgaging of real property and improvements thereon, and the granting of a security interest in all types and kinds of fixtures, furnishings, and personal property on behalf of the corporation. A minimum of two (2) Trustee signatures is required on all legal documents and papers.

**Section 2.** The Board Treasurer will serve as a Lead Trustee and oversee the instructions for the signing of all documents requiring signatures and confirm approval of the Board.

**Section 3.** Trustees shall be elected by the Board annually to serve for the term of three (3) years. All newly elected Trustees will assume their duties on July 1. In case of a vacancy appearing for any reason, the Board shall fill such a vacancy. One Trustee shall be elected each year for a three (3) year term. There shall be a total of three (3) Trustees.

**Section 4.** All candidates for Trustee must sign an Agreement stating the requirements and major duties of a Trustee. All Trustees must believe, agree with, and promise to uphold without reservation the Constitution of the Church.

## ARTICLE IV

### MINISTERS/PROFESSIONAL STAFF

**Section 1.** In the event of a Lead Pastor vacancy (meaning acceptance of call, death, resignation or termination) the Chairman of the Board shall appoint a Pulpit Committee consisting of at least six (6) active members of the Church of whom three (3) must be Elders and one (1) must be a staff member. An Elder must chair the Pulpit Committee. No Elder who has an immediate family member on staff may serve on the Pulpit Committee.

The Pulpit Committee must conduct a thorough search for candidates. After all candidates have been vetted, the committee shall present their final candidate to the Board for approval. The Pulpit Committee must agree with a three fourths (3/4) majority on the candidate to be submitted to the Board.

Upon review by the Board of the Pulpit Committee's recommendation, a vote shall be taken. A unanimous vote by the Board is required to elect a Lead Pastor. After the candidate is elected, his name shall be announced to the congregation.

In the case of a unanimous Board approval of a suitable, known, and existing, in good standing, internal candidate for a Lead Pastor vacancy, the Board may appoint a Lead Pastor, without appointing a Pulpit Committee.

During the time of the vacancy, the Board shall arrange for interim preaching.

The Lead Pastor's services may be terminated by the Board for any reason with thirty (30) day notice or immediately for cause only upon and after a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the Board membership. The Lead Pastor under consideration for removal shall not have voting rights while such removal is considered. A resigning Lead Pastor should give a minimum of thirty (30) day notice in writing to the Board.

**Section 2.** The process to call or replace any member of the professional staff shall be governed by the Church's Human Resources (HR) policies. Any change in the Church's hiring process must be approved by a three fourths (3/4) majority vote of the Board. Any member of the professional staff may be terminated by the Board for any reason with thirty (30) day notice or immediately for cause.

## ARTICLE V

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

**Section 1.** The Finance Committee is appointed annually by the Chairman of the Board and shall consist of no fewer than two (2) members. The Finance Committee must be chaired by an Elder. Any active member of the Church may serve on the Finance Committee.

**Section 2.** The purpose of the Finance Committee is to oversee the Church's finances. It oversees the preparation of a consolidated budget for approval by the Board. The Finance Committee shall approve, revise, or disapprove all proposed expenditures up to the dollar limits granted it by the Board.

## ARTICLE VI

### COMPENSATION COMMITTEE

**Section 1.** The Compensation Committee is appointed annually by the Chairman, or his designee, and shall consist of no fewer than two (2) active Elders. No member of the committee may have a family member on staff.



**Section 2.** The purpose of the committee is to recommend compensation levels for all staff. The committee shall present their recommendations for Board approval two (2) months before the upcoming fiscal year’s budget is adopted.

ARTICLE VII

STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

**Section 1.** 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 defined in Scripture (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:4-6). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other (Prov. 5:18-19). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage.

**Section 2.** We believe that any form of sexual immorality should be kept outside the Church (1 Cor 5:9-13). This includes, but is not limited to, adultery, fornication, pornographic activity, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex, and is sinful and offensive to God (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9; 1 Tim. 1:10; Jude 1:7).

**Section 3.** 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 volunteers, should abide by all, and agree with 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 (John 6:35-37). 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.

ARTICLE VIII

JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND RELIGIOUS GROUNDS FOR LIMITING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**Section 1.** The Link Church will not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, or age. However, all job descriptions must support and further the religious mission of the Church. The Church shall adhere, in all personnel decisions, to the Employee Handbook.

## ARTICLE IX

### DUE DILIGENCE FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

**Section 1.** Due diligence requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children shall be followed as outlined in the Leader Handbook.

## ARTICLE X

### FACILITY USE

**Section 1.** The Church may make its facilities available for appropriate use by outside groups that

- have a mission and/or philosophy that is consistent with (i.e., not in conflict within any way) our Christian doctrine and beliefs.
- intend to use the facilities in ways that edify the community and would not be embarrassing or shameful to the Church.
- agree to scheduling that does not interfere with normal Church operations.
- agree to take responsibility for the facilities and equipment used and must agree to abide by the Church's rules of conduct listed in Section 4 below and as described in any additional instructions by the Church staff.

**Section 2.** The Church may allow uses for fundraising projects, providing that:

- There is approval by the Facilities Director.
- The funds will be distributed for their intended use(s).
- Church ministries do not fundraise without proper approval.

**Section 3.** The Facilities Manager will make the decisions regarding all usage requests. Non-ministry events will not be placed on the events calendar until a signed Facilities Usage Agreement has been received. The Facilities Manager shall be contacted for the Agreement.

Outside groups, if applicable, must provide a Certificate of Insurance in order to use Church facilities.

**Section 4.** Under no circumstances shall alcoholic beverages be permitted anywhere on the premises. The use of tobacco products shall not be permitted anywhere in any building on the premises. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated, and offenders will be required to leave the premises.

**Section 5.** The Church shall charge no fee except for reasonable cleaning, staffing, or other incidental fees for the use of its facilities.

## ARTICLE XI

### PROCESS FOR CHANGING BYLAWS

**Section 1.** The Board may amend or repeal any bylaws or adopt new bylaws by a seventy-five percent (75%) majority vote.

## ARTICLE XII

### ANNUAL REPORT

**Section 1.** The Minister and Staff will produce an Annual Report to the Congregation by August 31st. The report shall contain but not be limited to:

- a report of the prior fiscal year's budget performance.
- a listing of the approved budget for the new fiscal year.
- a report from the Mission Ministry on the prior fiscal year's supported missions and a listing of the missions to be supported in the new fiscal year.
- the names and biographies of incoming Elders, and the names of Elders going off the Board.
- planned projects for the upcoming fiscal year.
- a report on the progress of implementing the Church's vision.