SAVIOR COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ORANGE COUNTY CONSTITUTION

Revision Date: 9/13/2024

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Savior Community Church (the “Church”), having searched the Scriptures, recognize the need to reconstitute ourselves to more closely conform to His will and prepare ourselves for greater efforts in His name.

Therefore, we, the members of the Church, do hereby organize ourselves in accord with this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant (1 Corinthians 14:40; Colossians 3:17).

ARTICLE 1 | NAME

The name of this church shall be Savior Community Church of Orange County.

ARTICLE 2 | PURPOSE

This Corporation (referred to hereon as "church") is organized for exclusively religious purposes. Our great commandments and great commission are summarized as follows:

"And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself’" (Matthew 22:37-39, ESV).

"And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age’" (Matthew 28:18-20, ESV).

ARTICLE 3 | VISION

Our vision is to be a community that treasures Jesus Christ above all else.

ARTICLE 4 | FOUNDATIONS

Treasure Christ in Worship

We believe the priorities of ministry in this church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6). Our aim is to savor and treasure Christ in worship and to live lives defined by this vision (John 4:24, Romans 12:1).

Treasure Christ through the Word

We desire to be a people who tremble before God's Word as we see His glory (Isaiah 66:2). We believe the Holy Scriptures are inerrant and sufficient (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Our aim is to equip the saints through Christ-exalting expository preaching and Bible study.

Treasure Christ Together in Community

We aim to point each other to the glory of God through the consistent and deepening fellowship of the saints (Hebrews 10:24-25). This type of community is fueled by the Gospel and based upon confession, love, and mutual accountability (Matthew 22:37-39, Galatians 6:1, 1 John 1:9).

Treasure Christ Before the Nations

We are called to treasure and spread the vision of God's glory in Christ Jesus to an unbelieving world. We do this through evangelism, global missions, and loving deeds (1 Peter 2:9, Matthew 28:18-20, Titus 2:14).

ARTICLE 5 | CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Privileges and Duties of Membership

Privileges of membership include recognition and affirmation of faith by a local body. Members will receive spiritual oversight from the Elders of the Church and accountability from its members. Membership also provides opportunities to serve the body with their gifts. Members also participate and vote to affirm important church decisions.

In accordance with the duties specified in the Membership Covenant, members will be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the Church, consistent with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Members shall seek to exercise their spiritual gifts for the mutual benefit of the church body and shall submit to the loving leadership of the Elders.

Only those who are members will be entitled to serve in the ministries of the Church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the Elders for the purposes of administration and external professional consultation.

Members will also be permitted and expected to participate in the observance of communion and membership meetings where the concerns and announcements of church life are addressed.

Section 2 – Voting Rights

Members will be privileged and expected to participate in major decisions of the Church. The vote of the membership of this Church at a properly called Members Meeting shall be required to effect the following actions:

- Affirm new member candidates into membership of the Church as recommended by the Elders.
- Affirm the final removal of members during church discipline as recommended by the Elders.
- Affirm new officers of the Church (Elders and Deacons) as recommended by the Elders.
- Affirm the removal of officers (Elders and Deacons) as recommended by the Elders.
- Approve the annual budget of the Church.
- Approve the budget to open paid positions for church staff
- Approve any transactions regarding real property of the Church.
- Adopt, amend, or repeal the Constitution of the Church.
- Approve the joining of a denomination.
- Accept, reject, or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the Church by the Elders.

Membership will have a minimum of two weeks notice prior to any vote in order to provide ample time to review voting matters. Membership in this Church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in

the Corporation but shall only entitle the member to vote at meetings of the members on those matters submitted to the church membership by the Elders. Those admitted to the church membership shall not have any equity in the real property of the Corporation. Said property of the Corporation is dedicated to religious and charitable purposes as outlined in this constitution.

Only persons whose names stand in good standing on the membership records of the Church on the day of any meeting of the church members shall be entitled to vote at such a meeting on matters submitted to the church membership by the Elders. Members who are not in good standing are defined as those who have not repented of sin that has been brought before the church.

Section 3 – Admission of Members

In order to become a member of the Church, a person must believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ and show evidence of true faith, including obedience to the Holy Scriptures in both personal and communal life as outlined in the Membership Covenant. Candidates for membership who have not been baptized as a believer also agree to be baptized within one year or at the earliest opportunity presented by the Church.

Candidates for membership must agree to submit to the teaching of the Scripture as expressed in the primary doctrines outlined in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Membership Covenant. Members agree to maintain unity and not teach defiantly against the official doctrinal positions of Savior Community Church on secondary issues.

All persons uniting with this Church shall previously be made acquainted with the Membership Covenant, Constitution, and the Statement of Faith. A person desiring to become a member of the Church shall make their request known to one of the Elders after having consistently attended a Discipleship Group for three months.

To be admitted into church membership, an applicant must agree to the Membership Covenant and the doctrinal statement, and complete the membership courses and requisite assignments/reading. New members shall pledge themselves to fulfill the Membership Covenant to the best of their ability, which includes worship, belief, gathering, giving, fellowship, evangelizing, submitting, and serving as detailed in the Membership Covenant. It’s our aim as a community to live out these covenant commitments in response to God’s mercy and grace.

The Elders, in collaboration with the Discipleship Group (DG) leader, will be primarily responsible for determining each person’s qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person’s profession of faith, personal testimony, or other such evidence as the Elders deem appropriate.

In the first week of Membership Courses, the Elders will announce to the current church membership roll who the prospective membership applicants/candidates are. Any member with reason to believe that an

applicant/candidate should not be admitted to membership should express their concern to the Elders, upon which an applicant's qualification for membership will be reviewed.

The process of review will include the following: (1) Elders will receive input from members and the DG leader of the prospective candidate. (2) Elders will examine the candidate's understanding of the Gospel and his/her testimony during membership courses. (3) Elders will seek to discern the member candidate's presence and direction of faith in applying Scripture in his/her life.

In general, during the review process it will be the posture of the Elders to accept someone's profession of faith unless there's evidence of ongoing disobedience to Scripture and unrepentant sin.

During the course of membership courses, an Elder or representative of the Elders will evaluate and recommend the applicant for admission to membership to the congregation. If recommended by the Elders, the member candidates will share in written form their testimony and why they want to join the church with the current membership roll. The congregation will vote to accept and affirm (with a 75% vote needed to affirm) the new member into membership. Upon admission, the new member will be presented before the members of the congregation at any regular or special members' meeting.

Formal membership is granted when the applicant signs the Membership Covenant, the representing Elder signs the covenant, and the congregation affirms the new member. Applicants admitted to membership shall, if possible, present themselves at a worship service designated by the Elders, at which service such applicants shall publicly affirm their Membership Commitment and be publicly acknowledged as members.

Section 4 – Denial of Membership

If, upon review of an application for membership or after meeting with a prospective church member, the Elders determine that the applicant does not confess Jesus Christ as his or her Lord and Savior, or that there is evidence of ongoing disobedience to Scripture and unrepentant sin, membership shall be denied. The decision made by the Elders shall be final for that round of membership applications, and there shall be no appeal to any court of law from that decision. After 6 months the denied application can be resubmitted and reviewed for membership.

Section 5 – Renewal of Membership

There shall be an annual renewal of membership at the first members' meeting of every new calendar year. This yearly renewal will be an important time for members to remember and examine their hearts and commitment to the Church and to the Lord. Members will pray over the Membership Covenant, re-sign and submit it to the Elders to have their membership renewed.

Those who choose not to renew will be removed from the membership roll. After the annual renewal, the current membership roll will receive an updated list of those who have recommitted to membership at Savior Community Church.

Section 6 – Removal of Members

The Church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death. It shall also recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her self-professed apostasy.

Additionally, the Church may recognize the termination of a person's membership after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church. A member of this Church may ask to be removed from the membership roll with a written request. Members in good standing may request a letter of recommendation to present to a different church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (See the process for Church Discipline in Article 6) Members whose conduct consistently or grievously contradicts the commitments outlined in the Membership Covenant may be subject to church discipline under the leadership of the Elders. In such a case, members may be removed from membership upon recommendation by the Elders and the affirmative vote of the church with 75% (abstentions do not count against the vote).

Members who are found to be inactive in the worship, fellowship, and ministry of the Church will be removed from the membership roll. Separate and apart from the process of church discipline, but subject to the discretion and approval of the Elders, the names of any members who have not attended a worship service or fellowship gathering for a period of six months or longer may be removed from the membership rolls. It is the responsibility of the Elders to remind members of their duties in this respect.

Section 7 – Re-activation Into Membership

A member who has been removed from the membership roll (not for excommunication) may reapply for membership. The applicant shall give a written notice of his/her desire to rejoin the Church and shall have a personal interview with an Elder. The Elders shall, at their discretion, may ask the potential member to complete portions of the membership process. Upon such completion, and the Elders recommendation, the membership roll will vote to affirm the previous members re-entry.

In the case of church discipline where a member is removed, if any said member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, he/she may request reinstatement with the Elders. Upon examination and pending the Elders' recommendation, the congregation will vote to affirm the member's reinstatement with a 75% vote needed to affirm.

ARTICLE 6 | CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1 – Overview

The Scriptures outline various scenarios where sin is confronted lovingly and gently for the sake of accountability and restoration (Matthew 18:15-16; Galatians 6:1). Such loving confrontation between members is normative and healthy for the Church and necessary for growth and correction (Hebrews 3:12-13).

There may also occur more extreme situations where church discipline is necessary against Christians who have practically denied their profession of faith in the Gospel by living a life of unrepentant sin (Matthew 18:17).

The purposes of church discipline include the following:

- Repentance, reconciliation, and the spiritual growth of the disciplined individual (Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Hebrews 12:1-11; Psalm 119:115; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26-27; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13-14; James 1:22).
- The purity and the protection of the Church as a whole (1 Corinthians 5:6-7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24).
- The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:34-35; Acts 5:1-14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10).
- Supremely, the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; Romans 2:24; 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).

In the process of church discipline, the members will pursue the sinning individual with 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 or the doctrines of the Church. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of Christian accountability and the Church's loving mission to the world. All matters of church discipline shall be handled with the utmost confidentiality (Matthew 18:15-16), shared only with those directly involved or able to contribute positively to the situation, until appropriate (Matthew 18:17) and conducted with the aim of protecting the dignity of

all parties and the integrity of the Church. Such a process should be undertaken with slowness, prayer, and absolute seriousness.

The member that is under church discipline agrees that there will be no appeal to any court of law because of dismissal or public statements to the congregation made in fulfillment of the disciplinary process. It is understood that the disciplinary process will continue to conclusion whether the erring member leaves the Church or otherwise seeks to withdraw from membership to avoid the discipline process. The Church reserves the right to disclose disciplinary details to the leadership of new church(es) attended by the member under discipline.

Section 2 – Discipline Against Private Sins (Matthew 18:15-20)

In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus outlines the four-step process by which the Church is to seek the restoration of a believer who has fallen into private sin.

First, when a brother or sister sins, he or she is to be confronted privately by a single individual (v. 15).

Second, if he or she refuses to repent, the confronting individual is to take one or two other believers along to confront him or her again (v. 16).

Third, if the sinning brother refuses to listen to the two or three, the issue is to be brought before the church leadership/Elders if they have not already been informed. When church discipline escalates to the third step, the Elders will lead the process (cf. Galatians 6:1). After a thorough investigation, in accordance with the procedures prescribed by Scripture, if the Elders determine that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that an individual has sinned or is continuing to sin, that he or she has been appropriately confronted, and that he or she has refused to repent, then the Elders will inform the Church members with pertinent information at a members' meeting so that the Church may call the erring individual to repentance. Prior to informing the Church membership, the Elders will provide a written statement to the member in sin to clearly state the call to repentance, next steps in the discipline process, as well as the date of the warning.

After a certain duration of time, if the erring individual does not repent in response to the entire Church in its collective call to repentance, then the membership will vote upon the final removal of the sinning member. Any motion to remove a member under discipline will require a 75% vote cast by members who are present at the members' meeting; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

In the case of church discipline where a member is removed by vote, if any said member, after dismissal, heeds the warning, demonstrates repentance, then he/she may request reinstatement. Upon examination, and pending the Elders' recommendation, pertinent information relevant to evaluating the individual's

repentance will be shared with the congregation. The congregation will then vote to affirm the member's reinstatement with a 75% vote needed to affirm.

Section 3 – Discipline Against Public Sins (1 Corinthians 5:9-13)

In 1 Corinthians 5, the Apostle Paul calls for members who are guilty of public sins to be excommunicated from the church. Paul described that a man was unashamed and publicly committing sexual immorality where the entire congregation knew about it, but it was not addressed. Due to the severity and unashamed public display of sin, Paul doesn't have the church follow the process in Matthew 18, but instead commands the church to publicly rebuke and call the man to repentance in the gospel. The situation was at a level where this person's public unashamed sin was poisoning and threatening the entire congregation's understanding of living in faithful obedience to Scripture and its gospel testimony to the world. Additional examples of public sins include, but are not limited to: cases of members publicly causing toxic divisions, cult influence, false teachers, abuse, and threatening behaviors.

Since public sins are not hidden from the congregation, there is no need to proceed with the first two steps of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20, which is intended to conceal the shame of sin from the public eye. For this reason, the Elders will immediately proceed with step three of church discipline.

Section 4 – Discipline Against The Disqualifying Sin of an Elder (1 Timothy 5:19-20)

1 Timothy 5:19-20 says that Elders are to be disciplined publicly in cases of disqualifying sin. Any accusation against them should be confirmed by the mouth of "two or three witnesses." Such a grievance may be brought before the Elders by any two members in good standing. Any charges will be properly checked and verified to be credible by a minimum of 4 elders who are not under accusation. An accusation of disqualifying sin of an elder is described in Scripture with seriousness and potential damage to Christ's reputation and the spiritual health of the congregation, therefore requiring a minimum of 4 elders is to provide additional discernment and accountability.

If there are less than 4 elders who are not under accusation, then the deacons will nominate amongst themselves the remaining number required to meet the 4 person minimum. These 4 individuals will be a temporary committee in which will oversee the process to verify the credibility of the accusation, investigate if the sins are disqualifying, and follow the process of church discipline according to this document as needed.

If upon the assessment of the charges through thorough investigation, prayer, and consideration, the Elders or temporary committee believe the accusations against the Elder to be true or highly credible, the Elders or temporary committee will confront the sinning Elder and call him to repent.

If he repents, he may still be voted upon to be dismissed from the office of Elder if the remaining Elders or temporary committee put forth a motion to remove him based on the Elder no longer meeting the qualifications of Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3. Such a motion may be put forth upon a 75% vote from the remaining Elders or temporary committee. If the motion is affirmed, the congregation will then affirm or not affirm the final removal of the Elder by a vote of 75%

If the sinning Elder refuses to repent, the remaining Elders or temporary committee will lead the process of church discipline and removal not only as an Elder but potentially as a member from the Church.

In cases of grievous and disqualifying moral failure, the remaining Elders may rebuke the sinning Elder before the entire congregation so that all others may stand in fear and not follow the same grievous sinning pattern in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-21.

ARTICLE 7 | MEETINGS

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship services will be held on Sundays and may also be held throughout the week as the Church determines. In every meeting together, members shall act in the spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Members' Meetings

Members' meetings will be regularly held shortly after worship on Sundays or on another day as determined by the Elders. Members' meetings will be held no fewer than two times a year.

An Elder designated by the other Elders shall preside as moderator at all Members' meetings of the Church. The Elders shall ensure that the stated meetings of the Church are regularly held for the purpose of providing updates on the priorities and matters of the Church.

A budget will be approved by membership at a Members' meeting no more than two months after the start of the church calendar year. Congregational affirmation shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in its entirety. The members will have at a minimum two weeks to review prior to the vote. Until the proposed budget is affirmed, any expenditures may continue at the prior year’s level.

The proposed budget is to be approved by a 75% vote by members of this Church who are present at the Members' meeting or vote by absentee ballot. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Elders. In the event that the initially proposed budget is not affirmed by the congregation, the Elders will seek input from the congregation and then resubmit a revised budget for congregational affirmation. The Elders, with the Finance team, will review the financial health of the church throughout the year. The Elders can propose budget amendments for members to approve at a member's meeting.

On a regular basis, no less than once a year, members will have the opportunity to officially provide input to the Elders regarding potential Elder and Deacon candidates as long as relevant constitutional requirements have been met. The current Elders will proactively solicit such input. The initiation of such a process will be announced at a regular Members' meeting.

Section 3 – Quorum

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum (i.e., the number of people necessary for a regular Members' meeting with no voting) shall be understood to be met by those members present. Any number of members shall constitute a quorum at any ordinary meeting of the Church.

A quorum shall be required at all Members' meetings where voting takes place unless otherwise specified in the Constitution. The quorum will consist of a minimum of 50% of the current membership roster (in active good standing) being present in the Members' meeting or voting by absentee ballot before the Members' meeting; otherwise, no vote will take place.

All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present or by absentee ballot. Members who are not in good standing are defined as those who have not repented of sin that has been brought before the church.

Section 4 – Special Members' Meetings

Special Members' meetings may be called as required by the Elders. Ordinarily, a special meeting will be called with at least two weeks' notice. The location, date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced to the membership at a minimum of two weeks preceding the meeting or for as much time as is available if a meeting must be called with fewer than two weeks' notice.

In situations where the Elders call an emergency Members' meeting with fewer than two weeks' notice, a notice shall be sent to the membership indicating the location, date, time, and purpose of the meeting. No meeting shall be called with fewer than 48 hours' notice.

Section 5 – Meeting Disruptions

Any person deemed by the Elders or Deacons to pose a physical threat to any person or to the Church, or to be causing disruption of the religious services and activities of the Church, shall be considered a trespasser on Church property and may be ejected summarily.

ARTICLE 8 | ELDERS

Section 1 – Overview

The terms Pastor and Overseer are other biblical terms to describe the office of the Elder. The Elders shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. No Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure. Only men shall hold the office of Elder as instructed by Scripture (1 Timothy 2:8-15; 1 Corinthians 14:33-35).

The offices of the Church shall be Elder and Deacon. The purpose of the officers of the Church is to lovingly govern, care for, and equip the membership to do the work of the ministry.

The leadership of the Church shall be vested in the Council of Elders, who are responsible for governing the Church, teaching the Word, and tending the flock of God in this Church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.

Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of ministry, advice, administration, implementation, and other such services as the Elders deem necessary.

Section 2 – Qualifications

Elders and nominees for Elder shall be men of demonstrable godly character, above reproach in public and private, and committed to shepherding the flock of God and to teaching and guarding sound doctrine, as expressed in the Savior Community Church Statement of Faith. Elders and nominees will exemplify the biblical characteristics of elder-overseers in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. More specifically, he shall be:

- Blameless as a steward of God; and above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)
- Husband of one wife; a one-woman man (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- Temperate, sober, vigilant (1 Timothy 3:2)

- Sober-minded, prudent (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- Of good behavior; orderly, respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- Able to teach, exhort believers, and refute false teaching (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- Not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- Not violent; not argumentative (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- Patient, moderate, forbearing, gentle (1 Timothy 3:3)
- Not a brawler, not contentious; not soon angry or quick-tempered (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- Not covetous; not a lover of money; not greedy (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- Rules well his own house; his children are faithful (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6)
- Not a novice; not a new convert (1 Timothy 3:6)
- Has a good reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
- Not self-willed (Titus 1:7)
- A lover of good men and things (Titus 1:8)
- Just, fair (Titus 1:8)
- Holy, devout (Titus 1:8)
- Self-controlled (Titus 1:8)

In addition to these character qualifications, any Elder candidate must have been a member of Savior Community Church for a minimum of 2 years before they can be considered for candidacy as an elder. (1 Timothy 3:10)

Section 3 – Responsibilities

The Elders are responsible for governing the Church as godly servant leaders. They must teach the Word and tend the flock of God in this Church. The responsibilities and authority of the Elders shall include:

examining prospective members and candidates for baptism and acquainting them with the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, overseeing the process of Church discipline, examining prospective candidates for office, providing for reporting and recording of official Church business, overseeing and hold accountable the work of the Deacons and appointed church members and committees , conducting worship services, administering the ordinances of the Gospel, equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry, teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally, correcting error, overseeing, coordinating, and promoting the ministries of the Church, and mobilizing the Church for world missions. The Council of Elders will meet at least once a month to oversee the matters of the Church and to pray.

To promote efficient handling of church matters, the Elders may appoint various councils and volunteer committees from within its membership, the staff, and from the church at large. These councils and committees shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with powers specifically delegated by the Elders for the time period required to handle the duties.

Each year the Elders shall present to the Church an itemized budget to be voted upon and approved by the membership. This budget shall be presented for discussion at our first regularly scheduled Members' meeting of the calendar year. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Elders.

Section 4 – Authority and Accountability

The authority to oversee or lead this local church has been delegated by Jesus Christ in the Bible to the Elders. This God-given authority carries both high prerogatives and important limitations.

Passages such as 1 Timothy chapter 2 speak of the Elders' God-given spiritual authority over the household of faith. In 1 Timothy 5:17 they are called to "direct the affairs of the church/rule well". In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 it's the Elders who are "over you in the Lord". Hebrews 13:17 calls members to "obey and submit" to their Elders. Scripture is clear that Elders are called by God to lead and given spiritual authority.

Elders are called to shepherd the flock of God, not out of compulsion nor with a domineering spirit (1 Peter 5:1-15). They are called to shepherd the flock of God humbly, willingly, and eagerly. Elders are called to be servants, and not lord their authority as the Gentile leaders did (Mark 10:42-45). They are called to persuade, teach and serve the body rather than expect raw obedience. The Elder's God-given authority should only be utilized while fearing the Lord and for the good and blessing of the people. (2 Sam. 23:1-4)

The Elder Council as a whole shall have primary responsibility and authority for the spiritual oversight, supervision, and accountability of paid staff as well as non-paid leaders and volunteers(1 Thes. 5:12-13).

The authority of the Elders is limited to the sphere of the local church. They will not require discipline for sin beyond that of biblical church discipline, will not invade the biblically defined spheres of other divinely ordained human authorities (such as husbands, fathers, civil rulers, and employers), and will not command God's people regarding matters not specified in Scripture except to order the house of God by the application of His Word.

The authority of the Elders is also accountable. Elders are members of the local church themselves and should fully participate as God has called them to. Elders in particular should not live outside of God's ordained means of spiritual growth. While they shepherd the flock, they are also members of the flock, and called to follow Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. Elders are participants in the same privileges, obligated by the same responsibilities, and subject to the same discipline as all other church members.

Elders are first to be held accountable before God to whom they will have to give an account (Hebrews 13:17; James 3:1). They are also to be held accountable by a plurality of other Elders who meet together not just to oversee the church but for personal soul care (1 Peter 5:1; Galatians 2:11; Acts 14:23). They are also to be held accountable and to a higher standard before the entire membership of the Church (1 Timothy 5:19-20).

The authority of every Elder is shared equally. Every Elder has equal rule in the Church, despite the diversity of gifts and functions among them. As additional accountability to the authority of the Elders, church members will exercise their voting rights for the final decision on voting matters.

ARTICLE 9 | INPUT, NOMINATION, AND ELDER ORDINATION PROCESS

Section 1 – Congregational Input

The Elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. At a minimum of once a year, the current Elders will solicit and receive congregational input on potential Elder candidates.

Section 2 – Elder Nomination

The Elders, taking into consideration congregational input, may nominate to the Church men gifted and willing to serve in the office of an Elder as Elder-Candidates. Nominations for new Elder candidates must be an affirmation by 75% vote from the current Elders with zero NO votes. (Elders may abstain)

Section 3 – Elder Candidacy Process

Members will then have no less than three months to assess the character and abilities of the Elder-Candidate. During those three months, the elder candidate will go through training to be equipped in systematic theology, shepherding, leadership development, and counseling. The Elders will give feedback to the elder candidate of areas they should be growing in character and spiritual maturity. Elder candidates will receive opportunities to share and teach the Word as well as lead small groups to ensure that the Elder candidate is able to teach and is theologically sound.

Section 4 – Elder Ordination

After three months, pending the Elders' final approval and the candidate's final acceptance of the nomination, Elder candidates will be publicly voted upon by the membership and will need to receive a minimum of 75% vote of cast votes (in person or by absentee ballot) to officially be affirmed as an Elder. Abstentions will not count against the overall vote. If the Elder-Candidate is publicly affirmed, he will be publicly ordained and received into the position of an Elder.

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; nominations should proceed with the support of the Elders; all candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; the election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 5 – Terms and Reaffirmation for Elders

Elders shall serve a term of three years from the date of their ordination. After completing their term of three years, Elders will have up to 3 months to rest and pray about their decision to serve another term. Elders can serve an indefinite number of terms.

If they elect to serve another term, they will need to be reaffirmed by the congregation again with the same voting conditions in Article 9 Section 4. If they elect to not serve another term within those 3 months, they will no longer be an officer of the church and will go through the regular processes in Article 9 Sections 1-4 if they would like to serve in the office of Elder in the future.

Section 6 – Plurality/Number of Elders

The New Testament norm is for the office of Elder in each local church to be shared by more than one qualified and called man at any given time. As the congregation grows larger, the elders will aim to

increase the number of biblically qualified elders to provide oversight. The New Testament also instructs that the process of appointing Elders be careful and not hasty, as putting unqualified men into the position of Elder can be disastrous (1 Timothy 5:22).

The Elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office as listed above. The pastoral staff Elders may not outnumber the volunteer Elders. If there's less than the minimum to meet plurality see Article 9 Section 7.

Section 7 – Process to Meet the Minimum for Plurality

In the event that there are only two current Elders (or fewer), the congregation will immediately be sought to provide input on potential new Elder-Candidates. Afterwards, the two remaining current Elders will nominate at minimum one new Elder-Candidate within one month. The Elder candidate(s) will then have one month to pray and decide if he accepts the nomination. The congregation will then have one month to pray and vote to affirm or not to affirm (a 75% affirmation needed). If the Elder-Candidate(s) is affirmed, then he will immediately be ordained as an Elder. If the Elder-Candidate either declines the nomination or is not affirmed, the current Elders will start the process again in three months.

The same process proceeds with one remaining Elder. In that case, the Deacons will select two Deacons to participate in the nomination process. The Elder and the selected two Deacons will nominate two Elder candidates.

In the case of zero Elders, then any remaining Deacons will nominate Elder candidates.

In the case of zero Deacons and zero Elders, the congregation will nominate candidates amongst themselves and vote for their affirmation (pending the candidate's acceptance of the nomination).

If the church membership falls below 40 members, the requirement for a plurality of Elders is waived but recommended as a goal to be immediately pursued and prayed for. In this case, the number of Elders shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men in the Church.

Section 8 – Removal of Elders

An Elder's role as Elder may be terminated by resignation, by dismissal, or lack of reaffirmation.

Subject to the provision of Section 9226 of the California Nonprofit Religious Corporation Law, any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the other Elders unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation.

A motion to remove an Elder may be put forth by the current Elders if 75% of the remaining Elders agree that the Elder under scrutiny is not fulfilling the qualifications of an Elder. Such a motion to vote will then be put forth before the congregation for affirmation, requiring a 75% vote to remove the Elder from eldership.

In cases of an Elder's grievous sin, see the section on Church Discipline for the discipline and removal of an Elder.

An Elder will be removed from office if he does not receive a minimum of 75% vote of cast votes (in person or by absentee ballot) by the congregation to be reaffirmed.

Section 9 – Staff Elders

The Elder Council shall be comprised of Staff and Non-Staff Elders. Staff Elders are men who receive financial compensation from the Church as they fulfill God's call to the specific ministries of the Word, prayer, and shepherding the flock. In addition to the duties of their office as described, Staff Elders shall perform the duties determined by the Council of Elders and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of employment and substantial changes shall be approved by the Church.

If a member fulfills the qualifications for eldership and excels in the work of the ministry, he may be employed by the Church as a Staff Elder to fulfill the responsibilities of an Elder as his full-time work.

Although he will do more work in the Church, he will not have any more authority than non-employed Elders. His vote shall be counted the same as any non-staff Elder.

Any person receiving compensation directly or indirectly from Savior Community Church shall not be in a position to determine the nature or amount of said compensation. Compensation packages will be determined by the non-staff Elders.

In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated. The Elders will seek an interim Lead Pastor which the congregation would affirm and initiate the pastoral search process for a permanent pastor. The Elders will seek interim preachers to fill the pulpit until a permanent Pastor is selected and affirmed.

ARTICLE 10 | DEACONS

Section 1 – Overview

Deacons and nominees for Deacon shall be men and women who are members in good standing, demonstrate godly character, and possess particular gifts of service. Deacons will exemplify the godly characteristics set forth in 1 Timothy 3:8-12.

The Deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the Elders in any service that supports and promotes the ministry of the Word, new and existing ministries of the Church, and the care for the members of the congregation. Deacons shall assist the Council of Elders by performing services of ministry, advice, administration, and other such services to the church as the Elders deem necessary.

Deacons may be both men and women. Deacons may or may not be employed by the Church. The number of Deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and by the call and qualification of men and women in the Church. A Deacon candidate also must be a member of Savior Community church for a minimum of 2 years before being considered as a Deacon.

The qualifications for the office of Deacon are almost identical with those for the office of Elder (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5). The only contrast between the qualifying standards for both offices is that the Elders must be “able to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2). Scripture indicates that Elders have authority over diaconal concerns (Acts 6:2-4; 11:30). The Deacons, therefore, must fulfill the duties of their office in cooperation with, and in subjection to, the Elders.

ARTICLE 11 | INPUT, NOMINATION, AND DEACON ORDINATION PROCESS

Section 1 – Congregational Input

The Elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. At a minimum of once a year, the current Elders will solicit (in the first quarter of the year) and receive congregational input on potential Deacon candidates.

Section 2 – Deacon Nomination by Elders

The Elders, taking into consideration congregational input, may nominate to the Church men and women gifted and willing to serve in the office of a Deacon as Deacon-Candidates. Nominations for new Deacon candidates must be an affirmation by 75% vote from the current Elders. (Elders may abstain)

Section 3 – Deacon Candidacy Process

Members will then have no less than three months to assess the character and abilities of the Deacon-Candidate. During those three months, the current Elders will receive congregational input on the Deacon-Candidate. Deacon-Candidates will participate in Biblical and ministry-specific training (if necessary).

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the Elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the Elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. Elders have the discretion to extend the duration of the evaluation period.

Section 4 – Deacon Ordination

After three months, pending the Elders' final approval and the candidate's final acceptance of the nomination, Deacon candidates will be publicly voted upon by the membership and will need to receive a minimum of 75% vote of cast votes (in person or by absentee ballot) to officially be affirmed as a Deacon. If the Deacon-Candidate is publicly affirmed, they will be publicly ordained and received into the position of a Deacon.

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; nominations should proceed with the support of the Elders; all candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; the election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 5 – Terms and Reaffirmation for Deacons

Deacons shall serve a term of three years from the date of their ordination. After completing their term of three years, Deacons will have up to 3 months to rest and pray about their decision to serve another term. Deacons can serve an indefinite number of terms.

If they elect to serve another term, they will need to be reaffirmed by the congregation again with the same voting conditions in Article 11 Section 4. If they elect to not serve another term within those 3 months, they will no longer be an officer of the church and will go through the regular processes in Article 11 Sections 1-4 if they would like to serve in the office of Deacon in the future.

Section 6 – Removal of Deacons

A Deacon's role as Deacon may be terminated by resignation, by dismissal, or lack of reaffirmation.

Any Deacon may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Elders, unless the notice specifies a later time for the effectiveness of such resignation.

A motion to remove a Deacon may be put forth by the current Elders if 75% of the Elders agree that the Deacon under scrutiny is not fulfilling the qualifications of a Deacon. Such a motion to vote will then be put forth before the congregation for affirmation, requiring a 75% vote to remove the Deacon from office.

A Deacon will be removed from office if he or she does not receive a minimum of 75% vote of cast votes (in person or by absentee ballot) by the congregation to be reaffirmed.

ARTICLE 12 | SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES

In any dispute arising between church members, pastors, or staff pertaining to any matters of spiritual teaching or practices, church finances, or title to property purchased with church contributions, the dispute shall be resolved by the Elders of the church. A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration in a spirit of humility, with each person regarding one another before himself.

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8), the church shall require its members to resolve ordinary civil disputes among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. In the case of criminal activity within the congregation, the State has a God-given responsibility to protect the peace and security of its citizens that should be supported and encouraged. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or non-Christian, and whether individuals or corporate entities.

Relationships in the church will be guided and governed by the biblical principles set forth in a document entitled “Peacemakers Pledge”. This document establishes our commitments related to peacemaking and reconciliation. These commitments shall apply to members of our church.

ARTICLE 13 | WEDDINGS

Section 1 – Marriages and Weddings

All who are ordained or otherwise authorized by this Church to solemnize marriages may do so, in the exercise of religious freedom, only where the participants are one man (with XY chromosomes) and one woman (with XX chromosomes) (Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Mark 10:6-9). If the Church possesses facilities, the facilities may be used for weddings only if at least one of the prospective spouses is a Church member in good standing subject to the review of the Elders; church facilities are not available to the general public for that purpose.

ARTICLE 14 | LIMITATIONS

Section 1 – Political Activity

No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, and this corporation shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements in connection with) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Section 2 – Property

The property, assets, profits, and net income are dedicated irrevocably to the purposes set forth in this constitution. No part of the profits or net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any of its Elders, trustees, officers, members (if any), employees, or to the benefit of any private individual.

ARTICLE 15 | CORPORATE RECORDS AND REPORTS

Section 1 – Records

The Corporation shall maintain adequate and correct accounts, books, and records of its business and properties. All such books, records, and accounts shall be kept at its principal place of business in the State of California, as fixed by the Elders from time to time.

Section 2 – Inspection of Books and Records

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect all books, records, documents of every kind, and the physical properties of the Corporation, and also of its subsidiary organizations, if any.

Section 3 – Rights of Inspection

Every Elder shall have the absolute right at any reasonable time to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind and to inspect the physical properties of the Corporation of which such person is an Elder, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interest as an Elder.

ARTICLE 16 | OTHER PROVISIONS

Section 1 – Endorsements of Documents, Contracts

The Elders, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized by the Elders, no officer, agent, or employee shall have any power or authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or agreement, or to pledge its credit, or to render it liable for any purpose to any amount.

ARTICLE 17 | CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

Section 1 – Extent

This constitution, as with any other non-inspired document, is not infallible. It does, however, reflect an earnest and sincere attempt to apply the principles of Scripture in ordering the life of this local church. Furthermore, we as members of this church, including the Elders, have solemnly committed ourselves to follow this constitution in ordering the life of this church (see the preamble).

Section 2 – Limitations

Only when we must obey God rather than the provisions of this constitution may its requirements be disregarded (Acts 5:29). If at any time a member of this church becomes aware that adherence to this constitution would violate biblical principle, he should make it known to the Elders. If the Elders conclude that biblical principle requires disregarding a provision of this constitution, they are obligated to

communicate this together with the reason(s) for their conclusion to the church within one month at a duly called meeting of the church.

ARTICLE 18 | REVISIONS, ADDITIONS, AND AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION OR STATEMENT OF FAITH/MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

The Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant may be amended by a 75% vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. Suggestions to amend the Statement of Faith, Membership Covenant or Constitution can be submitted to the Elders through written communication for it to be reviewed and discussed at a following Elders meeting.

This constitution may be amended by a 75% vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

ARTICLE 19 | DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

In the event that the Elders of the church determine that there is reasonable cause to dissolve Savior Community Church as a corporate entity, the Elders shall recommend dissolution to the membership. The Elders shall call a special members' meeting. At least 75% of the members present at the meeting must vote in the affirmative to approve the proposal of dissolution. After approval of dissolution by the members, all the corporation's debts shall be fully satisfied. The Elders shall propose how the remaining assets or holdings shall be dispersed and the congregation shall approve the proposal with a 75% vote of affirmation.