

The Love Center Bylaws

ARTICLE I – ORDER

For the purpose of conducting business, the pastor/president shall have authority over all of the affairs of the church, a non-stock corporation.

ARTICLE II – GOVERNANCE - COUNCIL OF ELDERS

A Council of Elders is the foundational leadership team for the church and shall be made up of such qualified men as the pastor shall appoint to serve and the congregation affirms. The pastor is the lead elder among equals. The term "Council of Elders" shall be assigned to this group.

- A. Qualifications: The elders must meet the qualifications as set out in the New Testament and additional qualifications significant to The Love Center.
1. [2] Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, [3] not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. [4] He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, [5] for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? [6] He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. [7] Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Timothy 3:2-7 ESV)
 2. [5] This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—[6] if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. [7] For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, [8] but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. [9] He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. (Titus 1:5-9 ESV)
 3. [2] shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; [3] not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:2-3 ESV)



4. Believe the Statement of Faith and agreeing to be governed by the constitution and bylaws of this church by signing the membership agreement
 5. In addition, the pastor must possess, as a minimum, a four-year bachelor's degree, preferably from a Bible college or seminary; and have a minimum of 5 years ministry experience, preferably 2 years as a lead pastor.
- B. Duties: The church is led by Elders. In the early church, Elders were individuals who were raised up and qualified by the Word of the Holy Spirit and appointed to have the spiritual care of, and to exercise oversight over, the local church. They were appointed to serve as shepherds of the body (1 Peter 5:1-3).
1. They will minister in accordance with their gifts, talents, and abilities as overseers and leaders (Acts 20:28; Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:2).
 2. They will teach and preach, instruct, exhort, admonish.
 3. They will serve as spiritual ministers to the congregation.
 4. They will guard the purity of doctrine and spiritual life of the church.
 5. They will assist in administering the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
 6. They will counsel and care for all who are received for membership in the church.
 7. They will act as arbiters in disputes, reserving final arbitration by appeal to the members.
 8. They will demonstrate that character of Christ. In their modes and practices, they will model the pattern of behavior that is the necessary example for all leaders and members to follow as they carry out their calling to lead, exhort and encourage one another to conform to the image of Christ, and to minister the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and according to the Word of God.
 9. They will communicate to the body using as many means as practicable in order to facilitate strong relationships, teach, lead, and build the body of Christ.
 10. They will pray for members' healing and other needs.
- C. Manner of Appointment:
1. The elders shall be appointed by the pastor/ president with advisement of current council of elders and affirmed by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center, known as "church". The number of elders must depend upon the number of men in the body that evidence maturity and ministerial qualities indicating that the Lord has raised them up to be elders.
 2. The pastor shall be recommended by the council of elders and affirmed by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center.
- D. Term of Office: The term of office shall be for an indefinite period of time, however, an elder may take a sabbatical for a period a time for spiritual, emotional and physical refreshment, yet remain as an elder; he is subject to dismissal by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center if



he violates the constitution and bylaws of Reformation Christian Fellowship or is lax in fulfilling the duties outlined in paragraph B.

ARTICLE III – DEACONS

A Deacon (*diakonos*) is one who renders service to the needs of another (Acts 6:2-4). The Deacons will lead the service ministries of the church, to include leading committees, under the oversight of the elders, within the scope and authority of their defined responsibilities and budget (if applicable). They will be ordained (that is, set apart) as Deacons, conferring upon them the distinction, confidence, responsibility of confidentiality, and discretion reserved to those who are directed by the Holy Spirit rather than as mere men.

- A. Qualifications: The deacons must meet the qualifications as set out in the New Testament and additional qualifications significant to The Love Center.
- [8] Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. [9] They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. [10] And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. [11] Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. [12] Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. [13] For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:8-13 ESV)
 - Believe the Statement of Faith (Appendix A), subscribe to the Relational Commitments (Appendix B), and agreeing to be governed by the constitution and bylaws of this church by signing the Membership Agreement (Appendix C).
- B. Duties: A deacon is one entrusted with and commissioned to accomplish a specific task (John 2:5- His mother said to the servants, Do whatever he tells you). It includes, but is not limited to the following:
- Bringing of the Gospel (Matthew 20:28, 2 Corinthians 3:3)
 - Spiritual comfort and strengthening (Matthew 4:11, Philemon 1:13)
 - Edification (1 Peter 4:10)
 - Meeting of financial needs (Luke 8:3, Romans 15:25, 2 Corinthians 8:19-20, Hebrews 6:10)
 - Serving tables (Matthew 8:15, John 12:2, Acts 6:2)
 - Meeting of a practical need (Matthew 25:44)
 - Delivery of a message (Ephesians 6:21)
- C. Manner of Appointment: Deacons shall be identified, examined and their desires determined, affirmed by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center Elders.



- D. Term of Office: The term of office shall be for an indefinite period of time; however, Deacons may take a sabbatical after three years for a time for spiritual, emotional and physical refreshment, yet remain as a Deacon. He or she is subject to dismissal by a 3/4 vote of the The Love Center.

ARTICLE IV – ADDITIONAL OFFICES

A. Corporate Secretary

1. Qualifications: The corporate secretary must meet the qualifications as set out in ARTICLE III of these Bylaws.
 2. Duties: By virtue of the office, the secretary shall keep a true and accurate record of all meetings, including business meetings of the church. He or she shall perform clerical duties, and shall be the custodian of all legal documents. He or she shall deposit funds in a manner prescribed in ARTICLE V of these bylaws.
 3. Manner of Appointment: The pastor/president shall nominate and the board of directors shall confirm the secretary to office.
 4. Term of Office: The term of office shall be for an indefinite period of time, subject to dismissal if he violates the constitution and bylaws of The Love Center.
- B. Other Employees. Employees may be hired from time to time in order to carry out the work of the ministry. The pastor/president must approve an employee. An employee is hired for an indefinite period of time and may be dismissed at any time by the pastor/president and board of directors.

ARTICLE V - FINANCES

- A. Budget. The funds for the maintenance of the church shall be provided for by the freewill offerings of friends of the church, established places of worship, by all other subordinate groups affiliated with The Love Center, known as "church" and by recognized fund-raisers. All offerings are subject to approval by the board of directors as provided in the Holy Scriptures. If approved, an offering shall be passed on to the secretary and no less than one other member appointed by the council of elders for deposit in the church's treasury.



- B. Audit. The treasurer and/or other board appointed person shall complete an internal audit. This audit of all financial records shall be made after the close of the calendar year, prior to the end of January. An external audit will be conducted once every five years.
- C. Deposits/Withdrawals. The church will employ a two person integrity in the receipt/deposit and disbursement/ withdrawal to and from the church treasury. The secretary and no less than one other member appointed by the council of elders shall complete receipts/deposits, while the treasurer and no less than one other member appointed by the council of elders shall disburse/withdraw funds.
- D. Salaries. The pastor/president shall be given a regular and reasonable salary as determined by agreement of the council of elders. His salary shall be reviewed each year during the last meeting of the calendar year. The salaries of all other officers and employees shall be determined by the council of elders.

ARTICLE VI - PROPERTY RIGHTS

- A. All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the corporation's name.
- B. No real or chattel property of the corporation shall be purchased, sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without authorization of the council of elders and approved by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center.
- C. The pastor/president of the corporation shall certify in such conveyances, leases, or mortgages.

ARTICLE VII - LOANS

- A. Authority. The church shall have the authority to enter into transactions with banks, lenders and other providers of financial services to further its exempt purposes.
- B. Guidelines. The church must follow the guidelines set forth below in order to enter into such transactions.
 - 1. In addition to a board approved resolution, the transaction must be approved by the pastor/president.
 - 2. The church board of directors and pastor/president must perform their own inquiry to ensure that the loan they seek is the best one available to the church and have determined that the church can afford such transaction, including all monthly payments and any additional expenses which may be incurred.
 - 3. The closing documents must be signed by the pastor/president and the secretary.

ARTICLE IX - PRIVACY

- A. This church shall diligently watch to keep private all records concerning polity, doctrine, counseling and information on membership. This church must not disclose any records that may compromise information about a member's attendance, membership status, giving and counseling records. Additionally, no request shall ever be released to any government authority without due process and a valid subpoena delivered by the proper government agency.



- B. Any church owned computer that has internet access must install and maintain filtering software to reduce the potential of harmful content being accessed.

ARTICLE X - INDEMNIFICATION

The church shall indemnify the board of directors, officers or employees, or former directors, officers or employees of the church against expenses actually and necessarily incurred by him/her in connection with the defense of any action, suit or proceeding in which he/she is made a party by reason of being or having been such directors, officers or employees, except in relation to matters as to which he/she shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty.

ARTICLE XI - EXEMPTION REQUIREMENTS AND DISSOLUTION

This corporation is organized exclusively for religious purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

- A. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit, or be distributable to its covenant partners/members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its purposes.
- B. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.
- C. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on
1. by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any future federal tax code or,
 2. by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any other corresponding provision of any future federal tax code.
- D. In the event that the church ceases to exist, all assets of The Love Center, known as "church," under the discretion of the council of elders and the congregation, be given to organizations of similar purpose, that also apply the Statement of Faith (in the Bylaws) as essential tenets of the Christian faith, and that are exempt as described in section 501(c)(3) and/or 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.



ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these bylaws, provided they are not inconsistent with the constitution or articles of organization, are brought forward to the council of elders for review and discussion with the submitter before presenting to the congregation. The amendment may be made by a 3/4 vote of the members of The Love Center, known as "church."

Signed and certified this 15th day of March, 2017 to be effective immediately.

