

**CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS  
OF  
NEWELL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**

**Newell,  
South Dakota**

**Approved  
1/17/2016**

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# **Constitution**

## **Article 1— Name**

The name of this church is Newell Christian Fellowship Church. Newell Christian Fellowship Church is located in the City of Newell in the State of South Dakota.

## **Article 2--Mission Statement, Motto and Purpose**

### **Section 2.01—Mission Statement**

*Encouraging People to Become Fully Devoted Followers of Jesus Christ*

### **Section 2.02-Motto**

*Preach the Word, Love the People*

### **Section 2.03—Purpose**

This church exists to celebrate God's presence in worship (magnify); communicate God's Word through evangelism (mission); incorporate God's family into our fellowship (membership); educate God's people through discipleship (maturity); and demonstrate God's love through service (ministry). The purpose of this church is drawn directly from the Great Commandment found in Matthew 22:37-40 and the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19-20.

This church is organized as a church exclusively for religious, educational and charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, thrift shops, rescue missions, daycare centers, counseling centers and educational facilities; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

## **Article 3-Statement of Faith**

### **Section 3.01-Statement of Faith**

As a body of believers, this church accepts the Bible, as the revealed will of God, that which is the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice. Yet, for the purpose of maintaining unity, harmony and

understanding; the following statement of basic truths are set forth as the biblical beliefs of this church and its members:

(A) **Bible** - We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are given by the verbal and plenary inspiration of God, and are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. All Scripture leads us to our Lord Jesus Christ in His person and works and is designed for our practical instruction. The New American Standard Version of the Bible is the official translation of this church, when an official translation is called for. 2 Pet. 1:16-21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Rom. 15:4; Heb. 4:12

(B) **Godhead** - Our God is revealed to us Triune - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our God is infinite, eternal, unchangeable and holy in nature, attributes and purpose. Our God is also invisible as the Father, manifested as the Son, and active as the Holy Spirit. Deut. 6:4; Isa. 44:6; Matt. 28:18-19; Jn. 1:1-3; 14:10-26; 2 Cor. 13:14; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:8,18

(C) **God** - We believe God is one God, the eternal, unchangeable, Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. He is the Sovereign Ruler who is self-existent, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, holy, just, loving, gracious, merciful. God is indescribable. Gen. 1:1; Deut. 6:4; James 1:17; Mai. 3:6; Exod. 15:11; 18:11; Psa. 139:7-12; Matt. 6:13; Rev. 19:6; Isa. 40; Gen. 18:25; Rom. 3:21-30; Isa. 54:10; Jn. 3:16; Heb. 4:16; Rev. 1:8; 21:6

(D) **Jesus Christ** - We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God. He is both Son of God and Son of Man, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. We believe in His virgin birth, sinless life, miraculous works, vicarious death for the sin of all mankind, physical resurrection from the dead; ascension into Heaven for His high-priestly work; coming again for His saints, and to judge all people righteously. Isa. 7:14; Jn. 1:1-14; Col. 2:9; Lk. 1:31-35; Heb. 7:17-27; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; 2:22; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Jn. 5:25-29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18

(E) **Holy Spirit** - We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, is God. Though present with the Father and the Son from all eternity; He abides in believers in a special sense since the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit dwells in every believer, at the moment of belief, convicting them of sin, righteousness and judgment. By His baptism, He places them in Christ at the same instance. He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption, and placing all in acceptable worship and service. The Holy Spirit teaches believers to understand the Bible and bestows spiritual gifts. Jn. 14:16-17; 16:7-15; Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 12:4-14; 2 Cor. 3:5-6; Eph. 1:13-14; 4:30

(F) **Man's Creation and Fall** - We believe that mankind was originally created in the image and after the likeness of God, but in Adam's sin the human race fell into sin, inherited a sin nature and became alienated from our holy God. Mankind is totally depraved and, in

themselves, utterly unable to remedy their lost condition. Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 3:10-28; 8:6-7; Eph. 2:1-10

(G) **Salvation** - We believe that, owing to universal spiritual death through sin, no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless "born again"—saved. Salvation is a gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins. We believe that when an unregenerate person exercises faith in Jesus Christ, they pass immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life. They pass from the old creation into the new; being justified from all things and are accepted before the Father accordingly, as Christ His Son is accepted.

No degree of reformation, however great; no attainments in morality, however high; no culture, however attractive; no water baptism or other ordinance, however administered; but a new nature imparted from God, a new life implanted by the Holy Spirit through the Word, is absolutely essential to salvation. We believe also that our redemption has been accomplished solely by the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, who was made to be sin and was made a curse for us, dying in our place. No feeling, no good resolutions, no sincere efforts, no submission to rules and regulations of any church, can add in the very least degree to the value of His finished work on the cross. Jn. 3:16; 19:30; 1 Jn. 1:9; Lev. 17:11; Jn. 3:5, 17-18; Rom. 5:6-11; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:18-19

(H) **Doctrines of the Cross** - We believe that the cross is the place where our Christian lives originate. Therefore, these scriptural teachings are essential to our understanding of Christ's work on the cross on our behalf:

Imputation - At the cross, Jesus' righteousness was transferred (imputed) to us and our unrighteousness was transferred (imputed) to Him. 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:12-21; 3:23

Substitution - God has ordained that all who sin die spiritually. Jesus Christ, in love, died in our place. Rom. 6:23; Matt. 20:28; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:18

Propitiation - Jesus Christ satisfied the wrath of a holy and righteous God thereby allowing God's love to reach us through Christ. 1 Jn. 2:2; 4:9-10; Rom. 3:25-26

Justification - Through Jesus Christ, we are declared righteous as a legal act in which God pronounces that the believing sinner has been credited with divine righteousness. Rom. 3:21-26; 8:31-34

Reconciliation - Through sin, man was alienated from God, but through Christ's death, peace with God and salvation, itself, was made possible for all who believe in Jesus Christ. 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Col. 1:20-22

Redemption - To fulfill God's plan, Jesus died and paid the price (redeemed) the believer, freeing them from enslavement to sin. Rom. 3:24; Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 5:9; 1 Pet. 1:3-20

- (I) **Our Assurance** - We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Jesus Christ forever. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word; which clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for the flesh. Jn. 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Rom. 8:1, 38-39; 13:13-14; 1 Cor. 1:4-8; Gal. 5:13; Titus 2:11-15; 1 Pet. 1:4-5
- (J) **Our Christian Walk** - We believe that Christians are called with a holy calling to walk, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit-to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit. The flesh with its fallen nature needs to be kept by the Spirit constantly in subjection to Christ or it will surely manifest its presence in our lives to the dishonor of our Lord. Rom. 6:11-13; 8:1-13; Gal. 5:16-26; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 2:6-10; 1 Pet. 1:14-16; 2:11-17
- (K) **Christian Service** - We believe that divine, enabling gifts for service are bestowed by the Spirit upon all who are saved. While there is diversity of gifts, each believer is energized by the same Spirit and each is called to his own divinely appointed service as the Spirit wills. In the apostolic church there were certain gifted people who were appointed by God for the perfecting of the saints. We believe also that today some people are specially called by God and that it is the fulfilling of His will and to His eternal glory that the church shall sustain and encourage these in their service for God. Rewards are promised according to the faithfulness of each believer in his service for the Lord. These rewards will be bestowed at the judgment seat of Christ after He comes to receive His own to Himself. Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 3:9-15; 9:18-27; 12:4-11; Eph 4:11-12; 1 Pet 4:10
- (L) **Our Mission** - We believe that it is the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved that they should go forth into the world at His direction, even as He was sent forth into the world by His Father. All believers are divinely called to be related to this world as ambassadors and witnesses with the primary purpose of making Jesus known to all people everywhere. Matt. 28:18-19; Mk. 16:15; Jn. 17:18; Acts 1:8; 2 Cor. 5:18-20
- (M) **Love** - We believe that we should demonstrate love for others, not only toward fellow believers, but also toward both those who are not believers, those who oppose us and those who engage in sinful actions. We are to deal with those who oppose us graciously, gently, patiently and humbly. God forbids the stirring up of strife, the taking of revenge or the threat or the use of violence as a means of resolving personal conflict or obtaining personal justice. Although God commands us to abhor sinful actions, we are to love and pray for any person who engages in such actions. Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:44-48; Lk. 6:31; Jn. 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Phil. 2:2-4; 2 Tim. 2:24-26; Titus 3:2; 1 Jn. 3:17-18.
- (N) **Our Hope** - We believe that according to the Word of God, the next great event in the fulfillment of prophecy will be the coming of the Lord to receive to Himself into Heaven both His own who are alive and remain unto His coming and also all who have fallen asleep in Jesus.

The Rapture of the church is the blessed hope set before us in the Scripture, and for this we should be constantly looking. Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-52; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Tit. 2:11-14

- (O) **The Church** - We believe that all believers are members of the "Body of Christ," the Universal Church. The Universal Church includes all regenerate believers from Pentecost to the first resurrection—united by the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit. We believe that membership in an organized local church has nothing to do with the salvation of the believer; but everything to do with being a healthy, functioning Christian. Membership encourages authentic relationships that lead to maturity. 1 Cor. 12:12-13; 15:52; Rom. 6:3-4; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:5; Col. 2:10-12
- (P) **The Ordinances** - We believe that water Baptism and Communion are the only ordinances of the church, and that they are a scriptural means of testimony for the church in this age. Matt. 28:19; Lk. 22:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 10:44-48; 16:32-33; 18:7-8; 1 Cor. 11:23-28
- (Q) **Eternal State** - We believe that at death those who have trusted in our Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior shall pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of their glorified body when Christ comes for His own; whereupon body, soul and spirit are reunited forever in glory. Those who have not exercised faith in Jesus endure everlasting separation from the presence of the Lord. Matt. 25:46; Lk. 16:19-26; 23:42-43; Jn. 5:28-29; 11:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 4:16-17; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; Jude 1:6-7; Rev. 20:11-15
- (R) **Satan** - We believe that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. Job 1:6-7; Isa. 14:12-17; Matt. 4:2-11; 25:41; Rev. 20:10
- (S) **Creation** - We believe God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. Gen. 1-2; Exod. 20:11; Heb. 13:3
- (T) **Civil Government** - We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the church and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the church and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically-assigned spheres of responsibility under God. Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 5:22-24; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 2:13-14
- (U) **Human Sexuality** - We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between one man and one woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and

forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. Gen. 2:24; 19:5, 13; 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4

**(V) Family Relationships**

1. Marriage - We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society and that marriage is between one man and one woman for a lifetime. We believe that men and women were created equal in essence, but distinct in roles, with the husband exercising headship in his family. Sin disrupted these roles into mutually abusive relationships, with the wife tending to resent male headship in marriage and the husband tending to rule in an unloving manner. The redemptive work of Christ restores that relationship by mutual submission in the marriage relationship, the wife willingly submitting and the husband lovingly and sacrificially leading. Gen. 1:26-28; 3:16; Mk. 10:6-12; 1 Cor. 7:1-16; Eph. 5:21-6:4; Col. 3:18-21; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 3:1-7.
1. Parenting - Children are a heritage from the Lord and should honor their parents. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate biblical discipline, which may include corporal correction. Parents are responsible for the education and discipline of their children. Exod. 20:12; Deut. 6:4-9; Psa. 127:3-5; Prov. 13:24; 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14
1. Divorce - We believe that it is God's design for marriage to abide for a lifetime. Divorce is never God's ideal will. However, when sexual infidelity or desertion occur by a spouse, divorce is morally permissible, though not obligatory or encouraged. Divorce should be viewed as a last resort in these instances only after all reasonable attempts towards reconciliation have been spent. Separation should be encouraged when a spouse or children are in physical or mental danger. Matt. 5:31-32; 1 Cor. 7:10-16

**(W) Gender & Ministry Roles** - We believe that men and women were created in the image of God. Men and women were created equal and share equal spiritual standing before God. Men and women are equally called to a relationship with Christ. Men and women need each other and both need God. All believers, men and women are gifted by God for the common good of the church. Men and women are encouraged to serve in any office or ministry open to any non-Elder, assuming their qualifications and appropriate gifting. Elders are those who are ultimately responsible for the doctrinal soundness and the spiritual health of the church in teaching, preaching, directing church affairs and accountable shepherding of the flock. The Office of Elder is reserved for qualified men, but the ministries and other offices of the church may be carried out by men or women. Gen. 1:27-28; Lk. 8:1-3; 10:38-42; 13:20-27; Gal. 3:24-29; Eph. 2:8-10; 5:21; 1 Thess. 5:12; Titus 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:8-3:13; 5:17; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 3:7; 5:1-5; 1 Cor. 4; 11:3-16; 14:33-36; 1 Tim. 2:13

**(X) Human Life** - We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified taking of unborn human life. The direct taking of any innocent human life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Exod. 20:13; 23:7; Job 3:16; Psa. 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Matt. 5:21; Lk. 1:44; Acts 17:28

- (Y) **Lawsuits between Believers** - We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes. We believe the church possesses all the resources necessary to resolve personal disputes between members. We do believe, however, that a Christian may seek compensation for injuries from another Christian's insurance company as long as the claim is pursued without malice or slander. 1 Cor. 6:1-8; Eph. 4:31-32

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the whole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members.

## **Article 4—Membership**

### **Section 4.01—Qualifications and Process for Membership**

Membership in this church begins with the recommendation of the Pastor and Elders based upon a personal relationship that is established with an individual over time. The following steps generally outline the membership process:

- (A) A person is considered for membership upon recommendation of the Pastor and Elders when they are led by the Holy Spirit to unite with this church family; profess a public confession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and have been baptized.
- (B) A person attends a Membership Class and expresses agreement with our Constitution & Bylaws (including, but not limited to, our Statement of Faith and Membership Covenant).
- (C) A person meets with other church leadership, generally the Deacons and/or Elders, as a friendly opportunity to build relationships and share testimonies.
- (D) Upon the recommendation of the Pastor, Elders and Deacons; the new member is presented to the church and welcomed into membership.

### **Section 4.02—Privileges of Membership**

- (A) Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a properly called meeting of the church shall be entitled to vote. There shall be no proxy or absentee voting. The eligible membership of the church has certain limited areas to exercise a vote. Members will vote on issues pertaining to constitutional changes or amendments (see Article 13). Members may not vote to initiate any church action, rather the vote of a member is to confirm and ratify the direction of the church as determined by the Pastor and the Elders. All quorums shall be

based on the active membership roll. Any references to the voting membership in this Constitution & Bylaws shall be based on this assumption.

- (B) This church functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ and with the direction of the Pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the Elders. Determinations of the internal affairs of this church are ecclesiastical matters and shall be determined exclusively by the church's own rules and procedures. The Pastor and Elders shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The Elders shall give counsel and assistance to the Pastor as requested by him.
- (C) Membership in this church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the church's worship services, the church property remains private property. The Pastor or Elders have the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, at the discretion of the Pastor or Elders, be treated as a trespasser.
- (D) A member may inspect or copy the prepared financial statements of the church and the minutes of the proceedings of church Council meetings and church business meetings. Elder's meetings are private as are their minutes. A member may not, under any circumstances, inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the accounting books or financial records. A member may not use the membership list of the church for personal gain.

#### **Section 4.03—Membership Covenant**

- (A) Each member protects the unity of this church by acting in love toward others; by refusing to gossip and by agreeing to respect our Pastor and Elders—to pray for them, recognizing their authority in spiritual affairs of the church. Rom. 14:19; 1 Pet. 1:22; Eph. 4:29; 1 Tim. 2:1-8; Heb. 13:17
- (B) Each member shares the responsibility of this church by praying for its growth, by inviting the unchurched to attend and by warmly welcoming those who visit. 1 Thess. 1:1-2; Lk. 14:23; Rom. 15:7
- (C) Each member serves the ministry of this church by discovering their gifts and talents, by being equipped to serve and by developing a servant's heart. 1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 4:11-12; Phil. 2:3-4, 7
- (D) Each member supports the testimony of this church by attending faithfully, by living a godly life that affirms the beliefs and practices of the church and by regularly giving prayers, tithes and offerings as the Lord enables and in accordance with the biblical commands. Heb. 10:25; Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 16:2; Lev. 27:30

#### **Section 4.04—Discipline of a Member**

- (A) The Pastor and the Elders shall have sole authority as a Discipline Team in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the church covenant. If the Pastor or an Elder is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the Discipline Team. The Pastor and Elders shall be entitled to the same steps as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.
- (B) Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. The guidelines of Matthew 18:15-20 shall be followed in the spirit of Galatians 6:1. When a member becomes aware of an offense of such magnitude that it hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself. When he goes, he should go with a spirit of humility and have the goal of restoration.
- (C) If reconciliation is not reached, a second member—either the Pastor, an Elder or another member as recommended by the Pastor or Elders; is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- (D) If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, the Discipline Team, as the church representatives biblically responsible for putting down murmuring, shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the Discipline Team, the team shall recommend to the members of the church that they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending member and seek that member's restoration.
- (E) If the matter is still unresolved after steps outlined in subsection (B), (C) and (D) have been taken, such members who refuse to repent and be restored are to be removed from the membership of the church upon recommendation of the Discipline Team.
- (F) No matter will be heard by the Discipline Team unless the steps outlined in subsections (B) and (C) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense (see 1 Cor. 5 to understand a public offense). A public offense may be expedited to prevent any additional shame or contention within the church.
- (G) The procedures provided in this section are based on: Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Cor. 2:1-11; Gal 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6, 10-15; 1 Tim. 5:19-20; and Titus 3:10-11.

#### **Section 4.05—Termination of Membership**

- (A) A member may resign at any time, but no letter of transfer or written statement of good standing will be issued upon such resignation, except at the discretion of the Pastor and Elders.

- (B) Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 4.04 may request a reference to another church.
- (C) The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a regular worship service of the church in the preceding six months. Upon good cause being shown to the Pastor and at the Pastor's discretion, this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual with good cause for not attending.
- (D) No member of this church may hold membership in another church. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member unites in membership with another church.
- (D) The membership of any individual may be automatically terminated without notice if the member states that he or she is unrepentantly involved in any conduct described in Section 3.01 (U) or files a lawsuit in violation of Section 3.01 (Y).

### **Article 5-Polity**

This church may align itself with any association, conference, or fellowship it may choose. We believe that our church, being a complete portion of Christ's Body, is therefore autonomous and independent of ecclesiastical control. We accept the freedom and responsibility of the individual and the right of private judgment in conjunction with God's divine will. The government of this church is vested in its members who exercise the right to call special meetings, select Elder leadership and recall Elder leadership. Pastoral leadership will be provided through Village Missions.

#### **Section 5.01--Governing Body**

The governing body of this church shall be the membership assembled in a properly called meeting. A properly called meeting is a meeting that has been announced in the Sunday service for two weeks prior to the meeting and is called by the Elders at their own request or the request of a petition of 33 1/3% of the church membership. Quorum is a simple majority of the total membership (51%) and the vote of the simple majority of quorum at the meeting shall be the action of the church. Votes involving calling an Elder or recalling an Elder or elected official and amendments to or suspension of this constitution require a super majority of 66 2/3% of quorum.

#### **Section 5.02-Right to Recall an Elected Official**

If after proper disciplinary action by the Pastor and Elders and with the cooperation of the membership in brotherly love; a problem remains unresolved, the church membership shall have the right to recall any elected official of the church. A petition signed by 33 1/3% of the membership for removal of any elected official shall, when submitted to the Elders, be cause for the Elders to call a special church meeting for a recall vote. A recall vote itself would require 66 2/3% of quorum present at a properly called meeting to constitute a recall.

Upon any issue with the pastor, the elder board should contact the Village Missions District Representative (DR). Issues and concerns can be discussed with the DR and a plan of action made.

Pastors, Elders or Deacons who fail in their accountability, to Christ and His Word, are to be held accountable by the church. If they serve well, they are to be honored. If they fail, they are to be admonished. This interaction of authority and responsibility is pictured in the replacement of Judas, selection of Deacons, appointment of Barnabas and Saul and the Jerusalem Council. Congregational governing derives its authority from God's Word in unity and shared responsibility with the Pastor and Elders of the local body. And is to be carried out in harmony with the Pastor and Elders in choosing qualified leaders to care, oversee, equip, guide and teach them and then giving those leaders the authority to do so. The church holds them accountable to the duties of their office and the ultimate authority of the Word of God while at the same time submitting to their leadership. 1 Tim. 5:17-22; Acts 1:15-26; 6:2-6; 13:1-3; 14:27; 15:2-4, 22; Heb. 13:17

### **Section 5.03- Property**

The church may in its corporate name acquire by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or otherwise; and own, hold, invest, reinvest or dispose of property, both real and personal for such work as the church may undertake, and may purchase, own, receive, hold, manage, care for, and transfer, mortgage, or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, transfer, and convey such property for the general purpose of the church. It may receive and hold in trust, both real and personal property, and invest and reinvest the same, make contracts for promoting the objects and purposes of the church.

### **Section 5.04-Elders**

The Elders shall be members of the church and are the executive body of this church. They shall have the general oversight of all areas of ministry. The Pastor is the Shepherding Elder. The Moderator is the Administrative Elder.

### **Section 5.05~Council**

- (A) The Council shall be a communication and advisory vehicle for the smooth functioning of the ministry of the church. It shall be composed of the Pastor(s), 3 Elders, Moderator, 3 Deacons, 3 Trustees, Sunday School Superintendent, Treasurer and Secretary.
- (B) All Council members will be members of the church and will be installed in January, as with all newly elected officers. Any church member or nonmember is welcome to sit in on council meetings provided they conduct themselves in a respectful manner as a guest.
- (C) The Council shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings.
- (D) The Council shall meet at least once each month as a means of communication and reporting. Special meetings are subject to the call of the Pastor and Elders.

### **Section 5.06-Budget Team**

(A) A Budget Team shall be appointed by the Moderator and Elders at least eight (8) weeks prior to the annual meeting. This team shall consist of at least five (5) persons. The Moderator will chair this team and the Pastor will be a member. The Treasurer and at least one (1) Trustee must be appointed.

(B) They will study and analyze the church's needs for the upcoming year and present the new fiscal budget to the Elders for final approval and then to the Secretary three (3) weeks prior to the annual meeting for inclusion in the Annual Report.

### **Section 5.07—Nomination Team**

(A) A Nomination team shall be appointed by the Moderator at least eight (8) weeks prior to the annual meeting. This team shall consist of five (5) persons of which the Moderator is to appoint one as chairperson. The Pastor shall be a member.

(B) They should ask the Lord's guidance and carefully select persons for office. This nomination slate shall first be approved by the Elders before seeking the candidate's agreement as to holding an office and then be presented to the Office Secretary three (3) weeks prior to the annual meeting for inclusion in the Annual Report. No nominations from the floor will be received for any elected offices.

### **Section 5.08—Church Business Meetings**

(A) The annual business meeting of the church shall be held on a Sunday of January. Annual Reports shall be submitted in writing from the Pastor(s), Elders, elected officers, and the leaders from each team or ministry to the Secretary three (3) weeks prior to this meeting. A comprehensive Annual Report will be compiled for distribution to the membership prior to the Annual Meeting.

(B) The Moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The Moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final. The following are elements common to the annual business meeting: Prayer, minutes, reports (previously distributed), business, nominating team presentation of officers, election of officers, budget, prayer, and adjournment.

(C) For any meeting of the church, the Moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require nonmembers to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the Moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The Moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children if the Moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that the circumstances so warrant. If the Moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the

Moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 4.02.(C) and treat the person as a trespasser.

- (D) Special meetings may be called by the Pastor and Elders; or by a petition to the Elders signed by not less than 33 1/3% of the membership. The Elders shall call such meetings within three (3) weeks from receipt of the petition. Such notice shall be read at the Worship Service two (2) Sundays prior to the fixed day for such a meeting.

### **Section 5.9-Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall begin January 1<sup>st</sup> and end December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **By-Laws**

### **Article 6—Church Officers**

#### **Section 6.01-Church Officers**

The church officers are Pastor (see Section 7.01), Elder (see Section 7.03), Deacon (see Section 7.04 ), Trustee (see Section 7.05), Moderator (see Section 7.06), Treasurer (see Section 7.07), and Secretary (see Section 7.08 ). The Pastor is considered an Elder, the Shepherding Elder. The Pastor and Elders, from time to time as they deem appropriate, may appoint other church officers such as Associate Pastor (see Section 7.02), subject to a confirmation vote of the church membership.

#### **Section 6.02—Designation of Corporate Officers**

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the Moderator shall serve as president of the "corporation", the church; the Secretary shall serve as secretary; the Treasurer shall serve as treasurer.

#### **Section 6.03-Eligibility for Office**

- (A) The church shall not install or retain an officer who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. All church officers, upon request of the Pastor, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article 3).
- (B) Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office.

#### **Section 6.04—Election and Installation of Officers**

The annual election of officers by the church membership shall occur during the month of January at the annual church business meeting. A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are dedicated to their respective office shall follow.

## **Article 7—Duties and Functions of Officers and Terms of**

### **Service Section 7.01-Pastor**

- (A) The Pastor has his membership in the church. Disciplinary removal of a Pastor automatically terminates his membership.
- (B) The Pastor is the Shepherding Elder. He is the spiritual leader of the church. His central task is prayer, modeling, discipling, preaching, teaching, and equipping saints for ministry (Jn. 21:15-17; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; 1 Pet 5:1-3; Matt. 20:25-28; Eph. 4:11-12). He shall cooperate with all groups in fulfilling his duties. The Pastor shall guard the high calling of his office faithfully and perform all his tasks to glorify Jesus Christ.
- (C) The Pastor shall work with the Elders to oversee the training of newly elected officers as to the particular functions and responsibilities of their respective offices. He shall extend the right hand of fellowship to all new members on behalf of the church and perform such other duties as generally pertain to such a position. He shall provide for Sunday services, Communion, Baptisms, weddings and funerals. The Pastor shall be free to choose, within biblical guidelines, the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.
- (D) As long as the church is affiliated with Village Missions the placement and/or dismissal of the minister shall conform to the procedures established by Village Missions. The relationship of the Pastor and the church can be dissolved by the Pastor, the church body, or by Village Missions. Village Missions may act as moderator at any meeting to dissolve this relationship.
- (E) In the event Village Missions can no longer provide pastoral leadership or the church chooses to no longer affiliate with Village Missions, the selection of a minister will be set forth as an addendum to the by-laws of this constitution.

### **Section 7.02-Associate Pastor(s)**

- (A) The church may, at its discretion, hire additional pastoral staff as recommended by the Pastor and Elders. All pastoral staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the Pastor and Elders who have the sole authority to dismiss the same without a recall vote. No pastoral staff shall be hired, appointed or retained who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith. An Associate Pastor must meet the same qualifications as that of an Elder and is a member of the Elders.
- (B) Under the direction and guidance of the Pastor and Elders, the Associate Pastor(s) of the church shall assist the Pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church. The Associate Pastor's job description is to be defined by the needs of the church and the gifting of the person.

### **Section 7.03 Elders**

- (A) The Elders are the executive body of this church. They are to be members of this church. The Elders are men who have the general oversight of all areas of ministry and as such are ex officio members of all organizations and ministries in the church. They shall steer the direction of the

ministry. There shall be as many Elders as are biblically qualified and is wise. They shall serve as long as they remain biblically qualified and continue to be willing to serve.

- (B) The Elders, including the Pastor and Associate Pastor(s), shall constitute the board of trustees of the corporation (not to be confused with the Office of Trustee). The Elders shall exercise only the following specific power, upon authorization by a majority vote of the members present at a properly called church business meeting:
1. To purchase, hold or otherwise acquire real and personal property on behalf of the church, and to take real and personal property by will, gift, or bequest on behalf of the church;
  2. To sell, convey, alienate, transfer, assign, exchange or otherwise dispose of and to mortgage, pledge or otherwise encumber the real and personal property of the church, to borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose and the use of the church; to cause to be executed, issued, and delivered for the indebtedness, in the name of the church, promissory notes, bonds, debentures or other evidence of indebtedness; and to secure repayment by deeds of trust, mortgages or pledges; and
  3. To exercise all powers necessary for the dissolution of the church corporation.
- (C) In addition to the standing ministries such as Trustees and Deacons, the Elders may appoint such ministry teams, as they may deem necessary. The Elders shall be the policy making body, overseeing all the official business of the church. The Elders shall be responsible for maintaining a Policy & Procedure Manual.
- (D) The Elders shall be the spiritual leaders of the church. The Elders are charged with the responsibility and oversight of the doctrinal soundness and spiritual health of the church. The Pastor is the Shepherding Elder. The Moderator is the Administrative Elder. The Pastor and Elders are responsible to oversee the ministry of the church as part of their Pastoral care and lead the church in wise decision-making. The Elders may authorize expenditures if funds are available. However, borrowing of funds for any purpose must receive the approval of the church at a properly called congregational meeting. Acts 6:3-2; 20:28-30; Titus 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:2; 5:17, 19-20; 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:17
- (E) An Elder is appointed by: 1) the recommendation of the Pastor and 2) the recommendation of the Elders and 3) the recommendation of the Council and 4) an affirmative vote of 66 2/3% of quorum present at a properly called congregational meeting to constitute appointment. The qualifications for Elder are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. They must have a clear call of God to serve with eagerness. 1 Pet. 5:1-3
- (F) The Elders, with the Pastor, are responsible for the style, forms and number of services held for the church to worship. They shall heed the high calling of their office, guarding faithfully the spiritual things that edify the Body of Christ. They shall meet as often as is needed to properly function. They shall have final approval of all teachers, budgets, nominations, etc. In case of the Pastor's absence, resignation, or dismissal; the Elders will be responsible for the spiritual leadership, regular services, and Interim Pastor(s).

- (A) The Moderator shall be elected by the Elder Board. Three Elder members will serve on the Council.

#### **Section 7.04—Deacons/Deaconesses**

- (B) The Deaconate shall consist of as many Deacons and Deaconesses who are biblically qualified and are needed to effectively care for the welfare of the church. Deaconate members are to be elected at the annual meeting for a three-year term. As church membership grows, additional Deacons and Deaconesses shall be added, as the Elders deem necessary. Three Deaconate members will serve on the Council.

(C) Members of the Deaconate assist and support the Pastor and Elders in the spiritual affairs of the church and assist in providing a smooth functioning of the body (Acts 6:1-6; Phil. 1:1). Each member of the Deaconate shall, with the Lord's guidance, choose their specific ministry in the church. They shall prepare and aid in the distribution of the Lord's Supper. They shall review the membership list on an annual basis and update it. They shall be on the lookout for new members and make a recommendation to the Elders. They shall oversee the Deacon's Fund to help with financial needs of the church family. They shall plan for special holidays, decorations, socials, greeting, events, fellowship, etc. They shall be the custodians of the church records, working with the Secretary in this regard.

- (C) The Deacons shall meet at least quarterly for regular business. They report each month to the Pastor and Elders through Council and one Elder shall be on the Deaconate.

#### **Section 7.05--Trustees**

- (A) The Trustees shall consist of at least Three (3) members or as many as are needed to effectively meet the needs of this office. Trustees shall be elected at each annual congregational meeting to serve three (3) years. Three Trustee members will serve on the Council.

(B) They shall hold in trust all church's property (monetary, real and personal), in accordance with the Constitution & Bylaws and under the direction of the Elders. They shall be responsible for adequate records on all property and for maintaining proper insurance on all facilities. They are to oversee all maintenance and that none of the property deteriorates. They are to insure that an annual audit is made of all church financial records and properties. A Trustee is to be appointed to schedule ushers for taking the offering each week at worship services. The Trustees are to review the annual budget each mid-year to ascertain recommendations or changes and report that to the Elders.

- (C) The Trustees shall meet at least quarterly for regular business. They report each month to the Pastor and Elders through Council and one Elder shall be a Trustee.

#### **Section 7.06- Moderator**

The Moderator is the Administrative Elder. He shall be a member of the church. He is to preside at Annual and Special meetings and all Council meetings. It is his duty to keep informed of the activities

and to assist in coordinating all activities of all organizations in the church. He is an ex officio member of all organizations in the church. The Moderator is an Elder and will hold no other office in the church. In the absence of the Moderator at Council and special meetings another Elder will preside. He is to mediate any problems or misunderstandings between the Pastor(s) and the church should these arise. He is also to work closely with the Pastor if the need should arise to form a discipline team (see Section 4.04) or help with arbitration (see Article 11).

### **Section 7.07-Treasurer**

- (A) The Treasurer is a member of the church elected for a one (1) year term at the annual meeting. The Treasurer is an ex officio member of the Trustees and shall attend their meetings. The Treasurer shall:
1. Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the church, and deposit, with the help of the Secretary, all funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies or other depositories as shall be selected by the Elders.
  2. Shall collect and distribute the church mail.
  3. Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts and donations to the church.
  4. Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the church as may be directed by the Pastor, the Elders or the budget adopted by the members of the church at the annual business meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements.
  5. Keep and maintain adequate and correct accounts of the church's properties and business transactions including account of its assets, liabilities, receipts, disbursements and capital.
  6. Make all expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check.
  7. When and as requested, render to the Pastor and the Elders accounts of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.
  8. Present a written report of itemized disbursements at the monthly Council meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual business meeting.
  9. Keep all church financial records available and/or deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- (B) The Treasurer will report to the Trustees.

### **Section 7.08 Secretary**

- (A) The Secretary is a member of the church elected for a one (1) year term at the annual meeting at the recommendation of the Pastor and Elders. The Office Secretary shall:
1. Keep the church office files, equipment, and supplies up-to-date and in good working order. Handle church correspondence. Assist when needed, all ministries of the church and make office equipment available as is appropriate.

2. Work closely with the Pastor and aid his ministry in any way requested.
  3. Function as "church clerk" in keeping a complete record of the transactions of the annual business meeting, special meetings, and Council meetings. Maintain a current membership list and record a history of all baptisms, dedications, marriages and deaths. Work with the Pastor in compiling an Annual Report composed of reports from officers and ministries, budget, agenda, etc. in preparation for the annual congregational meeting. Keep at the office of the church the original Constitution & Bylaws, making copies available as needed.
  4. Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.
- (B) The Secretary will report to the Pastor and Moderator.

### **Section 7.09—Duties of all Officers**

- (A) All officers shall make reports as requested and shall surrender all records or church property in their possession at the close of their term of office. All records are the property of the church.
- (B) Any officer who neglects his duties as outlined in the Bylaws for a period of three months may be removed from his office, at the discretion of the Pastor and Elders, and another may be appointed by the Pastor and Elders to serve the un-expired term.

## **Article 8—Indemnification**

### **Section 8.01—Actions subject to Indemnification**

The church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a pastor, elder, officer, employee or agent of the church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suite or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

### **Section 8.02—Expenses Subject to Indemnification**

To the extent that a pastor, elder, officer, employee or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suite or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue or matter in that action, suite or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit or proceeding

### **Section 8.03—Limitations of Indemnification**

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the pastor, deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 8.01. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Pastor and Elders who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable or if a majority vote of a quorum of disinterested Elders so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

### **Section 8.04—Timing of Indemnification**

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit or proceeding, as authorized by the Elders in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the Pastor, Elder, officer, employee or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the church.

### **Section 8.05—Extent of Indemnification**

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Pastor, Elder, officer, employee or agent any may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of that person.

### **Section 8.06—Insurance**

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is a Pastor, Elder, officer, employee or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

## **Article 9—Designated Contributions**

From time to time the church, in the exercise of its religious, educational and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their

contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Pastor and the Elders. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes stated in Section 2.03.

## **Article 10—Binding Arbitration**

### **Section 10.01—Submission to Arbitration**

Believing that lawsuits between believers are prohibited by the Bible, all members of this church may agree to submit to binding arbitration any matters which cannot otherwise be resolved, and expressly waive any and all rights in law and equity to bringing any civil disagreement before a court of law, except that judgment upon the award rendered by the arbitrator may be entered in any court having jurisdiction thereof.

### **Section 10.02—Notice of Arbitration**

In the event of any dispute, claim, question or disagreement arising out of or relating to these Bylaws or any other church matter, the parties shall use their best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions or disagreements as befits Christians. To this effect, they shall consult and negotiate with each other in good faith and, recognizing their mutual interests not to disgrace the name of Jesus Christ, seek to reach a just and equitable solution. If they do not reach such solution within a period of sixty (60) days, then upon notice by either party to the other, disputes, claims, questions or differences shall be finally settled by arbitration as described in Section 10.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 10.04, below.

### **Section 10.03—Limitations on Arbitration Decisions**

- (A) Should any dispute involve matters of church discipline, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures for church discipline as outlined under Section 4.04, were followed.
- (B) Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the Pastor or any church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 4.04 and 5.02 were followed.

### **Section 10.04—Arbitration Procedures**

The Procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the Pastor and Elders.

## **Article 11—Tax Exempt Provision**

### **Section 11.01—Private Inurement**

No part of the net earnings of the church shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers or other private person, except that the church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for the services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Section 2.03 hereof.

### **Section 11.02—Political Involvement**

No substantial part of the activities of the church shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation. The church shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any select candidate for public office.

### **Section 11.03—Racial Nondiscrimination**

The church shall not discriminate against members, applicants, students and others on the basis of race, color or national or ethnic origin.

### **Section 11.04—Limitation of Activities**

Notwithstanding any other provision of these bylaws, the church shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any power that are not in furtherance of the purposes stated in Section 2.03.

## **Article 12—Amendments**

Amendments to or suspension of this Constitution and/or By-laws may be made at any properly called church meeting by a super majority of 66 2/3% of quorum present.

# **Policy & Procedure Manual**

This Policy and Procedure Manual is designed to contain important information that pertains to our structure and healthy ministry functioning, but is not suitable for the Constitution and Bylaws of our church. As such, it is a flexible document that may be changed to reflect current ministry needs as they arise and as the Pastor and Elders deem beneficial without the necessity of congregational meeting or vote. This is not a legal document.

## **Policy 1 – CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

To help protect children, Newell Christian Fellowship (NCF) Church has adopted the following Child and Youth Abuse Prevention Program. It is important that all NCF paid staff and volunteers understand and implement these guidelines to help prevent sexual abuse against children. The following includes the Purpose and Definitions for these guidelines, the outlines of Protection and Prevention, and an Acknowledgement to be signed by those people working with children.

### **Purpose**

These procedures are designed to reduce the risk of child sexual abuse in order to:

1. Provide a safe and secure environment for children, youth, adults, members, volunteers, visitors, and paid staff.
2. Assist NCF in evaluating a person's suitability to supervise, oversee, and/or exert control over the activities of children and youth.
3. Satisfy the concerns of parents and staff members with a screening process for paid staff and volunteers.
4. Provide a system to respond to alleged victims of sexual abuse and their families, as well as the alleged perpetrator.
5. Reduce the possibility of false accusations of sexual abuse made against volunteers and paid staff.

### **Definitions**

The following terms used herein and are defined as follows:

1. *Paid Staff*: Any pastor, minister, preacher, cleric, or employee who is paid.
2. *Children/Youth/Minor*: Any person who has not reached his/her 18th birthday or the age of majority as defined by state law.

3. *Adult*: Any person who has reached his/her 18th birthday or as defined by state law.
4. *Volunteer*: Means any unpaid person engaged in or involved in activities and who is entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors or adults.
5. *Sexual Abuse*: The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement, or coercion of any minor or adult to engage in, or assist any other person to engage in, any sexually explicit conduct or any simulation of such conduct for the purpose of producing any visual depiction of such conduct or rape, and in cases of caretaker or inter-familial relationships, statutory rape, molestation, prostitution, or other form of sexual exploitation of minor or adult, or incest with a minor or adult, or as defined by federal and state law. This includes and is not limited to unwelcome sexual remarks, jokes, advances, leering, whistling, or sexual gestures; sexual touching, fondling, molestation, assault, or other intimate physical contact; compelling another person to engage in a sexual act by threats or fear or undue influence; and providing or displaying pornographic materials to another person.
6. *Child Emotional Abuse*: Verbal or nonverbal conduct including mental exploitation, degrading communication, or humiliating or threatening conduct that may or may not include bullying or as defined by state law.

## **Protection and Prevention**

### **Volunteer and Employee Screening Procedures**

The following screening procedures are to be used with paid staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors. All information collected should be maintained in confidence.

1. *Employment Application and Volunteer Application*: Any paid staff and volunteers who will work with a minor must complete the Employment Application and/or the Volunteer Application. The release statement attached to the Application must be signed by the individual completing the Application to apply for and qualify for service.

Our Employment Application includes questions regarding:

- Current and previous residence addresses.
- Current and previous employment, including addresses, dates, duties, titles, and reasons for leaving.
- Names and addresses of schools attended and degree(s) earned.
- References from previous employers and organizations that serve children.
- Pending criminal charges (where not prohibited by state law).
- Criminal history information.

Our Volunteer Application includes questions regarding:

- Current address.

- Volunteer experience.
- Criminal history information.
- Personal references.

Applications include a statement, which the applicant should acknowledge in writing, certifying that statements provided in the application are true and complete, and any misrepresentation or omission may be grounds for rejection of the applicant or for dismissal if he or she is employed. This statement authorizes NCF to contact any individual or organization listed in the application.

2. Review all statements made in the application, paying specific attention to any gaps in time and irregular employment patterns or unexplained absence. Pursue these gaps with employers listed and in a subsequent interview.
3. Conduct interviews with qualified applicants.
4. If detrimental information is uncovered but the applicant remains desirable, discuss this information with the applicant. In the event the applicant is ultimately hired or accepted as a volunteer, document the reasons for overriding the prior information.
5. Whenever possible, NCF will have an associate participate in the interview.
6. Contact at least two listed references for volunteers. Contact each of the volunteer applicant's references and ask for any information that might help determine the applicant's suitability for the position. These references should be of an institutional nature as opposed to personal or family references, preferably from organizations where the applicant has worked with children in the past. If a response is not received within a reasonable period of time, follow up and keep notes if possible. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at NCF.
7. Contact all listed references and employers for paid staff. Inquire as to the reason the applicant left and ask for any information that might help determine the applicant's suitability for the position. If a response is not received within a reasonable period of time, follow up and keep notes if possible. Documentation of the reference checks will be maintained in confidence on file at NCF.
8. *Criminal Background Check*: NCF will conduct a criminal background check on all paid staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or a person who directly oversees and/or exerts control or oversight over minors. All criminal background checks will be updated periodically.
9. *Six-Month Rule*: No volunteer will be considered for any position involving contact with minors until s/he has been involved with NCF for a minimum of six (6) months. This time of interaction between our leadership and the applicant allows for better evaluation and suitability of the applicant for working with children.

### **Confidentiality**

Information obtained through the screening, application, reference check, interview, and criminal background check will be kept in confidence, unless otherwise required by law. All information discovered or obtained through the above-referenced means will be kept in a secure location and access to it will be restricted if possible. These materials will be archived.

## **Supervision Procedures**

Unless an extenuating situation exists, NCF:

1. Will have adequate number of screened and trained paid staff or volunteers present at events involving minors. Supervision will increase in proportion to the risk of the activity.
2. Will monitor facilities during activities involving children.
3. Will release minors below grade 3 only to a parent or guardian and utilize sign-in and sign-out sheets.
4. Will obtain written parental permission, including a signed medical treatment form and emergency contacts, before taking minors on trips and should provide information regarding the trip.
5. Will use two paid staff or volunteers when transporting minors in vehicles.
6. Will require that young children be accompanied to the restroom and the paid staff or volunteer wait outside the facility to escort the child back to the activity. Whenever possible, the escort will be the same sex as the minor.
7. Will encourage minors to use a "buddy system" whenever minors go on trips off of NCF property.
8. Will screen all paid staff and volunteers and approve those individuals in advance for any overnight activities.
9. Will designate a "confidential counselor" to whom any minor can go at any time, without special permission, to discuss any problems he or she is having.

### **Teenage Workers**

We recognize that there may be times when it is necessary or desirable for babysitters (paid or volunteer) who are themselves under age 18 to assist in caring for children during programs or activities. The following guidelines apply to such workers:

- Teenage workers must be at least age 14
- Teenage workers will be screened as specified above.
- Teenage workers must be under the supervision of an adult and must never be left alone with children.

### **Behavioral Guidelines for Religious Organization Paid Staff**

All volunteers and paid staff will observe the following guidelines:

1. Do not provide alcoholic beverages, tobacco, drugs, contraband, or anything that is prohibited by law to minors.
2. To the extent possible, NCF events that are co-educational will have both male and female chaperones.

3. Whenever possible, at least two unrelated paid staff or volunteers will be in the room when minors are present. Doors will be left fully open if one adult needs to leave the room temporarily and during arrival to the class or event before both adults are present. Speaking to a minor or minors one-on-one should be done in public settings where paid staff or volunteers are in sight of other people.
4. Avoid all inappropriate touching with minors. All touching shall be based on the needs of the individual being touched, not on the needs of the volunteer or paid staff. In the event a minor initiates physical contact and/or inappropriate touching, it is appropriate to inform the minor that such touching is inappropriate.
5. Never engage in physical discipline of a minor. Volunteers and paid staff shall not abuse minors in any way, including but not limited to physical abuse, verbal/mental abuse, emotional abuse, and sexual abuse of any kind.
6. If you recognize an inappropriate relationship developing between a minor and adult, maintain clear professional boundaries and refer the minor to another individual with supervisory authority.
7. If one-on-one pastoral care is necessary, avoid meeting in isolated environments.
8. Anyone who observes abuse of a minor will take appropriate steps to immediately intervene and provide assistance. Report any inappropriate conduct to the proper authorities and officials of NCF for handling.

### **Disqualification**

No person may be entrusted with the care and supervision of minors or may directly oversee and/or exert control or oversight over minors who has been convicted of the offenses outlined below, been on a probated sentence or received deferred adjudication for any offense outlined below, or has presently pending any criminal charges for any offense outlined below until a determination of guilt or innocence has been made, including any person who is presently on deferred adjudication. The following offenses disqualify a person from care, supervision, control, or oversight of minors:

1. Any offense against minors as defined by state law.
2. A misdemeanor or felony offense as defined by state law that is classified as sexual assault, indecency with a minor or adult, assault of a minor or adult, injury to a minor or adult, abandoning or endangering a minor, sexual performance with a minor or adult, possession or promoting child pornography, enticing a minor, bigamy, incest, drug-related offenses, or family violence.
3. A prior criminal history of an offense against minors.

### **Sexual Offender at NCF**

NCF may allow a person known to be a sexual offender to remain or become a member of the congregation but they must adhere to specific guidelines. However, first check with the offender's probation/parole officer for any restrictions regarding attending services or other functions where children are present. Ask the probation/parole officer to put any restrictions in writing. If restrictions don't prohibit participation, implement the following four guidelines.

1. A known sexual offender cannot participate in any of the child or youth programs in any way;
2. A known sexual offender can only participate in a predetermined service each week; and
3. A known sexual offender must report in and be assigned to an escort who will accompany him or her at all times.
4. The identity of the sexual offender will be disclosed to the congregation.

## **Response to Sexual Abuse**

NCF will respond promptly to investigate any accusation of sexual abuse. All accusations of sexual abuse will be taken seriously. It is important to be appropriately respectful to the needs and feelings of those who allege sexual abuse and those who have been accused of sexual abuse.

When an allegation is made involving sexual abuse, the person reporting the complaint is to be told about the guidelines and the procedures to be followed. The pastor or an appointed person will begin investigating the allegations and may use the assistance of legal counsel or other consultants. If the pastor is the individual accused of sexual abuse, then the deacon chairman will conduct the investigation. The investigation will be conducted as follows:

1. Report the incident to appropriate authorities in accordance with the state mandatory reporting laws.
2. Report the matter to NCF's insurance carrier.
3. Cooperate with authorities and the insurance carrier.
4. NCF may suspend (with pay for paid staff) the alleged offender while a confidential investigation is being conducted.
5. An official of NCF (and legal counsel or other consultants) will then meet with the governing body of NCF and present a report on their investigation, which will include findings and recommendations of actions.
6. An official of NCF will meet with the alleged perpetrator and notify him/her of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
7. An official of NCF will meet with the alleged victim, along with his/her parents or guardians, and notify them of the results of the investigation and recommendations for actions.
8. During the investigation, an official of NCF shall maintain contact with the alleged victim and his/her parents or legal guardian, and inform them of the actions taken and assist them in their process of healing.
9. An official of NCF (and legal counsel or other consultants) may meet with the alleged perpetrator, the alleged victim, and any others with knowledge of relevant facts.
10. Communicate with criminal and civil legal counsel of NCF.

11. Communicate with those affected by the ministry of the alleged perpetrator.
12. Hire a consultant or assign a spokesperson to respond to media or prepare a statement for the media if the need shall arise, subject to the approval of NCF attorney.

## **Policy 2 – CHURCH USE POLICY**

Newell Christian Fellowship (“the Church”) owns certain real estate, including a worship facility, fellowship basement and classrooms all of which is used to promote its religious purposes. The Church seeks to exercise wise stewardship over all aspects of the Property. Such stewardship may include occasional guest use from time to time for purposes consistent with the Church religious purposes and doctrinal beliefs. Based on these considerations, the Church shall allow use of its Real Estate by others in accordance with the following requirements and guidelines.

1. Decision-making authority. The Church’s Board of Trustees (“Board”) shall make decisions as needed regarding the use of the Church’s Real Estate, all in the best interests of the Church.
2. Doctrinal Restrictions. The Church’s Real Estate may be used only for purposes and in ways consistent with the Church’s doctrinal beliefs as reflected in the Bible, the Church’s Constitution as stated in Article 3, and otherwise, particularly with respect to sexual activity standards, no tobacco or alcohol use and other conduct. The Church Council shall be the final decision-maker regarding whether any use is in conformity with, or contrary to, the Church’s doctrine.
3. The Church may request donations or charge for cost-sharing contributions (“fees”) in order to defray the estimated cost of facility use. No such fees shall be charged with any impermissible view to profit, and any and all fees are subject to waiver or reduction based on the prospective user’s financial need.
4. The Church’s Board (or a committee delegated thereby) shall be responsible for memorializing guest facility use. Such written agreements shall include identification of the religious purposes served by a guest’s facility usage, with appropriate Scripture references (e.g. worship, strengthening families, outreach to the lost).
5. Insurance coverage shall be maintained for all uses of the Church’s Real Estate, including certificates of coverage from other users as appropriate.
6. The Church’s Board (or a committee delegated thereby) shall be responsible for communicating these requirements and other guidelines to all prospective guests of the Real Estate.

Group Requesting Building Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Group’s Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Use Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Building Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the Purpose for Use Consistent with the Church’s Doctrinal Beliefs? \_\_\_\_\_

A donation for Building Use would be appreciated. Please also replace, repair or pay for any damages or broken items from the Church.

## Policy 3 – WEDDING POLICY

There are few things in life more exciting than a wedding! We want to do everything we can to help make your day a joyous celebration of God’s grace. In the following pages you’ll find everything you need to know about hosting your wedding at Newell Christian Fellowship Church. If you have any questions contact our pastor.

### Basic Requirements

Newell Christian Fellowship Church has the following basic requirements for weddings:

- The couple will successfully complete premarital counseling.
- The wedding must be in accordance with Newell Christian Fellowship’s Statement of Faith and related doctrinal teachings on Biblical marriage (including considerations for divorce and remarriage).

Any questions regarding fulfillment of these requirements shall be determined by the Church’s leadership, in accordance with its governance structure. Fees are charged solely to help cover the Church’s actual wedding-related ministry and facility costs.

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Premarital Counseling: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_