

**THE  
CONSTITUTION  
AND  
BYLAWS OF  
PARADISE  
CHURCH  
2013**

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# **ARTICLE 1**

## **NAME AND PURPOSE**

### **SECTION 1.01-NAME**

This congregation of believers shall be known as the PARADISE CHURCH OF FLORIDA.

### **SECTION 1.02-PURPOSE**

This congregation is organized as a church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational 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, planting new churches or satellite campuses, the building of church buildings, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord JESUS Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of 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 2

## STATEMENT OF FAITH AND COVENANT

### SECTION 2.01—STATEMENT OF FAITH

The following comprise the Scriptural beliefs of this church and its members.

**1. The Holy Scriptures.** We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the verbally and plerarily inspired Word of God. The Scriptures are inerrant, infallible and God-breathed and, therefore, are the final authority for faith and life. The sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament are the complete and divine revelation of God to Man. The Scriptures shall be interpreted according to their normal grammatical-historical meaning, and all issues of interpretation and meaning shall be determined by the pastor. The New American Standard version of the bible shall be the official translation used by the church. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

**2. Dispensationalism.** We believe that the Scriptures interpreted in the natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensations or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather are divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Four of these dispensations- Israel under promise, Israel under the law, the church age and the kingdom age- are the subject of detailed revelation in scripture. (Genesis 1:28; Genesis 12, Genesis 15, 1 Corinthians 9:17; 2 Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10, 3:2-10; Colossians 1:24-25, 27; Revelation 20:2-6)

**3. The Godhead.** We believe in one triune God, eternally existing in three persons- Father, Son, Holy Spirit- each co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)

#### **4. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ**

A. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man. (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Luke 1:35; John 1:1-2, 14; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-8)

B. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and, that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead. (Acts 2:18-36/ Romans 3:24-25; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

C. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate. (Acts 1:9-10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24, 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2)

## 5. **The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit**

A. We believe the Holy Spirit is a person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and, that He is the Supernatural Agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14)

B. We believe that He is the divine Teacher who assists believers to understand and appropriate the Scriptures and that it is the privilege and duty of the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 1:17-18; 5:18; 1 John 2:20,27)

C. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowal of spiritual gifts to every believer. God uniquely uses evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip believers in the assembly in order that they can do the work of the ministry. (Romans 12:38; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11,28; Ephesians 4:7-12)

D. We believe that the sign gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as speaking in tongues and the gift of healing were temporary. Speaking in tongues was never the common or necessary sign of the baptism or filling of the Holy Spirit. Ultimate deliverance from sickness or death awaits the consummation of our salvation in the resurrection, though God frequently chooses to answer the prayers of believers for physical healing. (1 Corinthians 1:22; 13:8; 14:21-22)

6. **The Total Depravity of Man.** We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God; but that in Adam's sin the human race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God. Man is totally depraved and, of himself, utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26-27; Romans 3:22-23; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3; 4:17-19)

7. **Salvation.** We believe that Salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of sins. We believe that all sins, except the blaspheming of the Holy Spirit are forgivable. We believe that God in his foreknowledge chose us, supra history, for His own good pleasure, to be a child of God and accomplished that through his irresistible call on our lives as we repent of sin, confess Him as Lord and believe in His resurrection and finished work on the cross. The justification of a Christian results not only in the pardoning of sin but also the imputation of the righteous acts of Christ. Righteousness is therefore gained not by any work of man but by the work of Christ alone. (Matthew 12:31-32; John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 1 John 1:9; John 15:16)

## 8. **The Eternal Security and Assurance of Believers.**

A. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever. This will be evidenced by the perseverance of believers in their walk with Jesus Christ for their entire lifetime. (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1; 38-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; 1 Peter 1:4-5)

B. 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, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to live continually in the flesh. (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15)

## 9. The Church.

A. We believe the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is solely made up of born-again believers. (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27)

B. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; 1st Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11)

C. We believe in the autonomy of the local church free of any external authority or control. (Acts 13:1-4; 15:19-31; 20:28; Romans 16:1,4; 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16; 5:4-7, 13; 1 Peter 5:1-4)

D. We recognize water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper as the Scriptural ordinances of obedience for the church in this age. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42; 18:18; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

E. We believe it is the duty of every Christian to set aside one day each week and devote that day to worshiping the Lord Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth. We believe scripture teaches that day to be the Lord's Day and is the first day of each week. We honor the Lord's Day, as we believe that on the first day of the week Jesus was resurrected and we celebrate His resurrection each week as we look and long for His imminent return. (Acts 20:7, 1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 16:2, Rev 1:10)

**10. Separation.** We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. God commands His people to separate from all religious apostasy, false apostate teachers as well as professing disobedient brethren who refuse repentance. Separation from sinful people, behavior, and associations should be practiced as we are commanded not to be unequally yoked to non-believers in any close relationship. This would include abstaining from membership in any oath bound secret society. (Leviticus 19:28; Romans 12:1-2; 14:13; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9)

**11. The Second Advent of Christ.** We believe in that *Blessed Hope*, the personal, imminent return of Jesus Christ, Who will rapture or translate His church prior to the seven-year tribulation period. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will personally and visibly return with His saints, to establish His earthly Messianic Kingdom which was promised to the nation of Israel. (Psalms 89:3-4; Daniel 2:31-45; Zechariah 14:4-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:10, 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6)

## 12. The Eternal State.

A. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; 11:25-26; Revelation 20:5-6, 12-13)

B. We believe that the souls of the redeemed, at death, stand before the Bema Seat of Christ as a place of reward, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18; Revelation 20:4-6)

C. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious punishment and torment until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited, they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment, torment and separation.

**13. The Personality of Satan.** We believe that Satan is a created, living being, a fallen angel cast down from heaven, the author of sin and the cause of the fall of Man and entrance of evil into the world; that he 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; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10)

**14. Creation.** We believe that God created the universe in six literal, 24-hour periods. We reject evolution, the Gap Theory, the Day-Age Theory, and Theistic Evolution as unscriptural theories of creation. (Genesis 1-2; Exodus 20:11)

**15. Civil Government.** We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the family, 2) the church, 3) the state or human government. Every person is subject to these institutions or authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The family, the church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14)

## **16. Human Sexuality.**

A. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage which is to be between one man and one woman only. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, pedophilia, incest, fornication, adultery, lust or 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. We believe that co-habitation between those of the opposite sex is also forbidden even if no intimate sexual activity is occurring as we are commanded to abstain from even the appearance of evil. (Genesis, 2:24; Genesis 19:5; Genesis 26-8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:22, John 4:16-18)

B. We believe that the only Scriptural marriage is the joining of one man and one woman for life. Only Christian Marriage ceremonies consisting of a man and woman may be performed by our Pastors. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

## **17. Family Relationships.**

A. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God but that God has ordained distinct and separate spiritual functions for men and women in the home and the church. The husband is to be the spiritual and physical leader of the home, and men are to be

the leaders (pastors and elders) of the church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the church. We also believe God can use women greatly in the church and does, but we affirm that women are not to have spiritual authority over a man in the church, fill the pulpit or teach men.(Galatians 3:38; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5:12)

B. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the church. The wife is to submit herself to the Scriptural leadership of her husband as the church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline, never provoking children to wrath, but raising and shepherding children in the training and discipline of the Lord. (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

**18. Divorce and Remarriage.** We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies. We believe the only biblical grounds for divorce is the practice of fornication or abandonment. Remarriage after divorce would constitute adultery for the offending party. Although divorced and remarried persons may hold positions of service in the church and be greatly used of God for Christian service, they may not be considered for the offices of pastor, elder, minister, or overseer. Those divorced prior to salvation may, after salvation, marry one time, but only in the Lord. (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 7:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:2,12; Titus 1:6; 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:14-18)

**19. Abortion.** We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is the murder of an innocent. We reject any teaching that abortion of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalm 51:5; 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1,5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44)

**20. Euthanasia.** We believe that the direct taking of an innocent life is a moral evil, regardless of the intention. Life is a gift of God and must be respected from conception until natural death. Thus we believe that an act or omission which, of itself, or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder of an innocent contrary to the will of God. Discontinuing medical procedures that are extraordinary or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be a legitimate refusal of over-zealous treatment. (Exodus 20:13; 23:7; Matthew 5:21; Acts 17:28)

**21. Love.** We believe that we should demonstrate unconditional, sacrificial 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 sinful actions.(Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 5:44-48; Luke 6:31; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; 17-21; 13:8-10; Philippians 2:2-4; 2 Timothy 2:24-26, Titus 3:3; 1 John 3:17-18)

**22. Lawsuits between Believers.** We believe that Christians are prohibited from bringing civil lawsuits against other Christians or the church to resolve personal disputes between members. 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, perjury or slander. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Ephesians 4:31-32)

**23. Missions.** We believe that God has given the church a great commission to proclaim the Gospel to all nations so that there might be a great multitude from every nation, tribe, ethnic group and language group who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. As ambassadors for Christ we must use all available means to go to the foreign nations and not wait for them to come to us. (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20)

**24. Giving.** We believe that every Christian, as a steward of that portion of God's wealth entrusted to him, is called upon to financially support his local church. We believe that every Christian should give as an act of worship to God, both in financial resources and of his time, generously, sacrificially and cheerfully to support the work of the church, for the relief of those in need, and the spread of the Gospel. We believe that a Christian relinquishes all rights to direct the use of his gifts or offerings once the gift has been made. (Genesis 14:20; Proverbs 3:9-10; Luke 11:42; Acts 4:34-37; 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; Galatians 6:6; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; 1 John 3:17)

**25. Evangelism.** We believe that every Christian is biblically commanded to share the Good News of the Gospel to all they meet and that it is God's will that all come to repentance and be saved. We believe that God is sovereignly involved in every aspect of salvation but not to the total exclusion of the free moral agency of man. We reject any form of teaching that so overemphasizes the sovereignty and irresistible grace of God that it destroys or negates any responsibility or accountability of man to believe or the responsibility of Christians to proclaim the Gospel through a general call. (Matt 11:28; Matt 22:14; Matt 28:19-20; 2 Peter 3:9)

**26. God's Temple.** We believe that the human body is the temple of the living God as he indwells Christians with His spirit and as such we are members of Christ. Our bodies are not our own. They belong to the Lord. As such, we were bought at a very high price, the shed blood of Jesus Christ. We are therefore commanded to honor and glorify God in and through this holy temple. We believe that in view of God's mercy, we must offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—as this is our spiritual act of worship. In light of this, we believe we are commanded to limit our Christian liberty and abstain, based on the law of love, from anything that may put a stumbling block in the path of another believer; from anything that harms, desecrates and defiles this temple; from anything that hinders the administration or preaching of the Gospel; or anything that hinders or blocks the filling of the Holy Spirit in us. (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:18-20; 8:8-13, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 6:16-18, Romans 14:13-23, Ephesians 5:18; Romans 12:1-2)

**27. Worldliness.** We believe that the Bible commands Christians not to love this world or the things of this world – the continual lust for and pursuit of sinful pleasures, the lust of the eyes which leads to coveting and greed, and pride which leads to boasting about material possessions or worldly accomplishments. Worldliness is external evidence of a heart in rebellion against God and is enmity against God. We believe the Church, through our salt and light ministry, as well as our good works, is to influence the world for Christ, and must not mimic nor be conformed to the patterns or behaviors of this world. Therefore, we believe in order that we may be most glorifying to God, we must live lives of

holiness in front of the Lord in godly conduct and character. (1<sup>st</sup> John 2:15-17; 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:3-5; James 4:4; James 1:27; Titus 2: 11-12; 2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 2:19-22, 2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy 3:1-5, Ephesians 5:1-10)

**28. Essentials of our Faith.** We believe that there are essential doctrines and core beliefs that every Christian must hold and ascribe to. Every member of this congregation must therefore, agree on the essentials of our faith. Although we recognize that certain teachings in the bible such as the timing and manner of the return of Christ can be debated among good and sincere Christians, these essentials are immutable.

A. The Deity of Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, fully man yet fully God and by His power all things that exist were created by Him. (Matt 1:23; John 1:1-3, 14; John 20:27-28; Romans 9:5; Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 1:15-16; Colossians 2: 8-10)

B. The Virgin Birth. We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin having no earthly father and that He directly fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies concerning the birth of a Savior through a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:27)

C. The Impeccability of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ had a sinless nature and lived a sinless life in order that he could be the perfect, spotless Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Christ could only be the penal, substitutionary, blood atonement for all the sin of mankind if He Himself was sinless. We believe that Jesus Christ paid the penalty our sins deserved by dying in our place on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice. We believe the atonement of Jesus Christ brought about reconciliation between man and God by replacing enmity between man and God with peace. (2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 7:26-28; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5)

D. The Exclusivity of Salvation only through Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life and that no man has access to God or can be saved apart from faith and belief in Jesus Christ. He is the door, the gate and the narrow way to heaven. (John 14:6; Matthew 1:21; John 3:16-17; John 4:42)

E. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus was put to death on a Cross, literally died and was buried. He was subsequently resurrected bodily by the power of God Himself. Without the resurrection we would still be in our sins and condemned to spend eternity in hell separated from God. (Psalm 2:7; Psalm 16:9-10; Isaiah 26:19; Matthew 12:40; Matthew 26:32; Matthew 27:52-53; Matthew 27:63; Matthew 28:6-7)

F. The Ascension of Jesus. We believe that Jesus Christ ascended bodily into heaven in all His glory, after His resurrection and currently sits at the right hand of God the Father acting as mediator and advocate. He is also preparing a place for all believers in Heaven. (Psalm 110:1; Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-51; John 14:2-4; Acts 1:9; Acts 3:21)

G. The Second Coming of Jesus. We believe that Jesus Christ is returning physically and bodily to earth to set up a literal 1,000 year reign on earth. The purpose of His return is to

redeem and restore the nation of Israel and judge the world in righteousness. (Job 19:25-26; Matthew 16:27-28; Matthew 23:29; Matthew 24:1-51; Matthew 25:1-13, 19, 31-46; Matthew 26:64)

## **SECTION 2.02- AUTHORITY OF STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole 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. All literature used in the church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **SECTION 2.03- COVENANT**

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive JESUS Christ as our Savior by confessing Him as Lord and believing in His resurrection on the third day, on profession and possession of our faith as evidenced by a new spirit and a changed life, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love, to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; and to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to see the salvation of our kindred, acquaintances, and all others, to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful to our engagements, and exemplary in our deportments; to avoid all tattling and backbiting as well as any action that causes disunity or harm to the body of Christ, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior as we seek to live lives that glorify Jesus Christ.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy of speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior, and to secure reconciliation without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with some other church congregation where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

# **ARTICLE 3**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 3.01- QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Upon a majority vote of the members present at any church service or meeting, membership shall be extended to all who have had and whose lives evidence a genuine experience of regeneration through faith in and acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior and through their confession of Him as Lord; who renounce sin; who endeavor to live a consecrated life wholly unto the Lord; who fully subscribe to the Statement of Faith contained herein; who enter into the church covenant contained herein; who agree to submit to the authority of the church and its leaders as set forth herein; and upon compliance with any one of the following conditions:

- A. By baptism (immersion) as a true believer in Jesus Christ, confessing Him as Lord and receiving Him as Savior;
- B. By transfer of letter from another Evangelical Church of like faith and practice, or other written statement of good standing from the prior church if the applicant has been baptized by immersion subsequent to a profession of faith;
- C. By testimony or statement of faith, having been baptized by immersion; or
- D. By restoration, if having been removed from membership, upon a majority vote of the congregation after confession is made publicly before the church membership of the sin or sins involved, and satisfactorily evidencing repentance to the Pastor and Leadership Team.

### **SECTION 3.02- DUTIES OF A MEMBER**

On becoming a member of this church, in addition to the covenant contained in Section 2.03, each member further covenants to love, honor, and esteem the pastor and staff; to pray for them; to recognize their authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church.

## **SECTION 3.03- PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERSHIP**

A. Only members at least eighteen years of age who are physically present at a duly 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 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 Leadership Team.

B. This congregation functions not as a pure democracy, but as a body under the headship of the Lord JESUS Christ and the direction of the senior pastor as the under-shepherd with the counsel of the Leadership Team. 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 Leadership team shall oversee and/or conduct all aspects of this church. The Leadership Team 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 Leadership Team (or an individual designated by the Leadership Team) 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 (or an individual designated by the Leadership Team), 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 meetings and of board meetings, provided he shall have made a written request upon the church and the church has received the written request at least five business days before the requested inspection date.

1. A member may not, under any circumstances inspect or copy any record relating to individual contributions to the church, the list of names and addresses of the church members, or the accounting books and financial records of the church.

2. The church may impose a reasonable charge, covering the costs of labor and/or material, for copies of any documents provided to the member before releasing the copies to the member.

## **SECTION 3.04-DISCIPLINE OF A MEMBER**

A. There shall be a disciplinary committee consisting of the Leadership Team. These men shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith and violations of the church covenant. If the pastor or a member of the Leadership Team is the subject of a disciplinary matter, he shall not sit as a member of the disciplinary committee. The pastor and Leadership Team shall be entitled to the same procedures as other church members and be subject to the same discipline.

B. Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another. 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 restoration is not reached, a second member, who is spiritual, 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 Leadership 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 Leadership Team, the Leadership 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 person's restoration.

E. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections 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 a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering disciplinary action.

F. No matter may be heard by the Leadership Team or the church unless the steps outlined in subsections B, C, have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.

G. If an unrepentant offending party is removed from the church membership, all contact with him from that point forward (except by family members) should be for the sake of restoring them into the fellowship of the church out of love..

H. The procedures provided in this section are based on Matthew 18:15-20; Romans 16:17-18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 2:1-11; Galatians 6:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 10-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20 and Titus 3:10-11.

### **SECTION 3.05-TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Members not under the disciplinary process of Section 3.04 may request that letters of transfer be sent to another church.

### **SECTION 3.06-TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

A. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice if the member in question has not attended a corporate worship service of the church in the preceding twelve months nor will that member have any voting rights on any matter brought before the Church. Upon good cause being shown to the pastor (the member in question can provide proof of attendance within the prior twelve month period), this provision for termination may be waived in the case of any individual member at the discretion of the pastors.

B. 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.

C. The membership of any individual member shall automatically terminate without notice member states that he or she is actively involved in any conduct described in Section 2.01P or files a lawsuit in violation of Section 2.01U.

D. No provision contained in this section shall be subject to or governed by the procedures regarding discipline of members set forth in Section 3.04.

E. 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.

F. A special designation known as our Watch Care Program is available to those who hold membership in another church or denomination but desire fellowship with Paradise Church and seek to come under the leadership of our staff and spiritual protection of our congregation.

## **ARTICLE 4**

### **OFFICERS**

#### **SECTION 4.01-CHURCH OFFICERS**

The church officers are Pastor (see section 5.01), Leadership Team (Ministry Team of Elders, see section 5.02), Ministry Teams (see section 5.03), Minister of Finance (see section 5.04) and Minister of Records (see section 5.06) One person may hold two or more offices except that of Pastor. The Pastor, from time to time as he deems appropriate, may appoint other church officers, subject to confirmation vote of the church membership.

#### **SECTION 4.02-DESIGNATION OF CORPORATE OFFICERS**

As an accommodation to legal relationships outside the church, the Elders/Leadership Team shall designate the president of the corporation; the vice-president of the corporation; the minister of records; and the treasurer of the corporation.

#### **SECTION 4.03-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 Elders/Leadership team, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement of Faith (as set forth in Article 2).

B. All church officers must be approved initially and thereafter annually by the Elders/Leadership Team in order for them to commence or continue their offices.

C. Only church members are eligible for election or appointment to any church office or position.

#### **SECTION 4.04-TERMS OF OFFICE**

A. The relationship between the pastor and the church shall be permanent unless dissolved at the option of either party by the giving of a month's notice, or less by mutual consent. The calling of a pastor or severance of the relationship between the pastor and the church may be considered at any regular church

administration meeting, provided notice to that effect shall have been given from the pulpit to the church two Sundays prior to said regular church administration meeting. A three-fourths majority of the eligible members present and voting shall be required to call a pastor or to sever the relationship between the pastor and the church. Disciplinary removal of the pastor from office automatically terminates his membership. A restoration to membership after disciplinary removal will be subject to the requirements of Section 3.01D.

B. The term of service for all offices and positions in the church shall be an ongoing one with continued employment or appointment until the Elders/Leadership Team along with the Pastor decide to change the appointment.

C. A vacancy occurring in any office or team, except in the case of the pastor, may be filled at any regular church administration meeting.

D. All elected and appointed officers shall serve in the respective offices until their successors are duly elected or appointed.

E. Members of the Leadership Team may be removed from their position for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other members, and shall be carried out by the remaining majority of the Leadership Team Members.

F. Members of the Ministry Teams may be removed from office for unbiblical conduct, as determined by the other members, upon a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of deacons.

## **SECTION 4.05-ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

The annual election of Minister of Records and Minister of Finance by the church membership shall occur during the month of December at the annual church administration meeting.

## **SECTION 4.06-PASTORAL/LEADERSHIP TEAM OVERSIGHT OF OFFICERS AND STAFF**

A. Subject to the approval of the church membership and on the condition that they shall become a member of the church upon assuming their duties, the pastor along with approval of the Leadership Team may hire associates and assistants to assist him in carrying out his God-given responsibilities.

B. All church staff, whether paid or volunteer, shall be under the supervision of the pastor along with the Leadership Team who have the sole authority to dismiss the same. No employee or volunteer shall be hired, appointed, or retained who fails to adhere to or expressed disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

# **ARTICLE 5**

## **DUTIES AND POWERS OF OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 5.01- THE PASTOR**

A. The pastor shall preach the Gospel regularly and shall be at liberty to preach the whole counsel of the Word of God as the Lord leads him. He shall administer the ordinances of the church, act as moderator at all church meetings for the transaction of church matters, supervise the teaching ministries of the church, and tenderly watch over the spiritual interests of the membership.

B. The pastor along with approval from the Leadership Team shall appoint the members of the various ministry teams at the annual church administration meeting. He shall publicly inform all newly elected officers of the particular function and the 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 appertain to such a position. The pastor shall be free to choose the means and methods by which he exercises the ministry that God has given him.

C. All appointments for public worship and Bible study and the arrangements thereof, including time and place and the use of the property belonging to the church for purposes other than the stated appointments, shall be under the control of the pastor and the Leadership Team.

### **SECTION 5.02-THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

A. The Leadership Team shall consist of a Ministry Team of Elders who will provide wise counsel and direction of leadership to the Pastor. Leadership Team meetings shall be called by the elders at any time the pastor needs wise counsel or leadership advice.

B. The Leadership Team shall consist of laymen who have been nominated by the pastor or other Leadership Team members, and presented to the church and voted in by a show of hands as affirmation of his call. Leadership Team Members may be ordained ministers of the Gospel as well as lay people who have shown wisdom in the past. No leadership team member may be a compensated employee of the church. The number of Leadership Team Members shall be determined by the Pastor and the Leadership Team and new members shall be called at his behest with Leadership Team approval. All leadership team members must meet the biblical qualifications of an elder in 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

C. The Leadership Team shall provide wise counsel to the pastor at his request. They shall aid the pastor in fulfilling the strategic vision of the church and providing counsel as to the direction of the church. In the event that the pastor resigns or is terminated, they shall provide for the needs of the pulpit during that time as well as form a pulpit ministry team to fill the vacancy. They shall also aid the pastor in protecting the unity of the church.

## **SECTION 5.03-MINISTRY TEAMS**

A. The Ministry Teams shall assist the pastor, in such manner as he shall request, in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church, in conducting the religious services, and in performing other work of the church. They shall make provision for the ordinances of the church, including the baptism ministry as well as the preparation and service of the Lord's Supper. They shall continually be aware of the needs of any widows and be diligent to ensure that those needs are met, as well as ministering to the needs of those wives of active duty military personnel while their spouse is stationed overseas or out of town. They shall aid the pastor in evangelism and outreach and any other areas that are deemed appropriate.

B. Once annually, the Ministry Teams shall assemble and elect, from within their own number, a chairman, who will then appoint a vice chairman, secretary and service ministry chairmen. The term of service of all officers to the Ministry Teams shall be from July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>.

C. The Ministry Teams shall have no authority or oversight in the calling or termination of any pastoral staff. Should it become necessary to discipline or terminate the lead pastor or associate pastors, that function is reserved exclusively to the Leadership Team. The Leadership Team shall also provide oversight and counsel to the Ministry Teams where needed.

D. The observance of the Lord's Supper will typically be conducted on a regular basis, no less than once per month but weekly if possible. The date and time of the Lord's Supper will be set by the Lead Pastor.

## **SECTION 5.04-THE MINISTER OF RECORDS**

The Minister of Records shall:

- A. Certify and keep at the office of the church, the original bylaws or a copy, including all amendments or alteration to the bylaws;
- B. Keep at the place where the bylaws or a copy are kept a record of the proceedings of meetings of the Board of Deacons, with the time and place of holding, the notice of meeting given, the names of those present at the meetings;
- C. Sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law;
- D. See that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provision of these bylaws. (In case of the absence or disability of the secretary, or his or her refusal or neglect to act, notice may be given and served by the pastor or by the Chairman of the Deacons.
- E. Be custodian of the records of the church, including the membership roll, baptisms, and certificates of ordination, licenses and commissions;
- F. See the reports, statements, certificates and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed;
- G. Exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law, the bylaws and minutes of proceedings of the board of deacons or the minutes of the meetings of the church members.
- H. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the church which are of historical interest and give a report at the annual church administration meeting of the status of the church membership roll in the past year;
- I. Keep all records at the office of the church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office; and
- J. Serve as the secretary of the corporation.

## **SECTION 5.05-MINISTER OF FINANCE (Treasurer)**

The Minister of Finance shall:

- A. Have charge and custody of, and be responsible for, all funds of the corporation, and deposit all funds in the name of the church in banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the pastor and the Leadership Team;
- B. Receive, and give receipt for all contributions, gifts, and donations to the church;
- C. Disburse, or cause to be disbursed, the funds of the church as may be directed by the pastor, the Leadership Team, or the budget adopted by the members of the church at the annual church administration meeting, taking proper vouchers for the disbursements;
- D. 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;
- E. Make all expenditures of the church (except miscellaneous petty cash disbursements) by check;
- F. When and as requested, render to the pastor and the Leadership Team accounts of all his transactions as minister of finance and of the financial condition of the church;
- G. Present a written report of itemized disbursements at the regular quarterly church administrative meetings and make a general report for the year at the annual church administration meeting;
- H. Keep all church financial records at the church office and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office; and
- I. Serve as treasurer of the corporation.

## **SECTION 5.06-ASSOCIATE PASTORS**

Under the direction and guidance of the pastor and Leadership Team, the associate pastor(s) of the church shall assist the pastor in carrying out the ministries of the church.

## **SECTION 5.07-DUTIES OF ALL OFFICERS**

- A. All officers shall prepare a written report of their work for the annual church administration meeting and shall surrender all records in their possession to the minister of records at the close of their term of office to be filed as a permanent record of the work of the church. All records are the property of the church and must be kept in the church office.
- 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 Leadership Team, and another may be appointed by the pastor to serve the un-expired term.

## **SECTION 5.08-INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

A public installation service in which all newly elected officers of the church are to be dedicated to their respective offices and the ordination of newly elected Leadership Team Members or Deacons shall be held at a public church service following their election at the annual church administration meeting.

# ARTICLE 6

## MEETINGS

### SECTION 6.01- MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP

Unless otherwise determined by the pastor and Leadership Team, the church shall meet each Sunday for public worship both morning and evening and at least once during the week for Bible study and prayer.

### SECTION 6.02- MEETINGS FOR CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

A. The annual church administration meeting shall be held on at which time the regular church administration shall be considered. A quorum shall consist of the members present.

B. All church administration meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer for divine guidance and blessing.

C. 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 and controlling. The following order shall be observed at the regular church administration meeting:

1. Devotions and Prayer
2. Reading of Minutes
3. Reception of members
4. Dismissal of members
5. Report of officers
6. Reports of special committees
7. Unfinished matters
8. Election of officers
9. New Matters
10. Adjournment
11. Benediction

D. For any meeting under this article, the Pastor and/or in his absence a member of the Leadership Team), in their 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 Pastor or Leadership Team to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The Pastor and Leadership Team shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the Pastor/Leadership Team) if the Pastor or Leadership Team determines, in their sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the Pastor or Leadership Team determines that compliance with their order of removal is unsatisfactory, they may, in their sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section 3.03C and treat the person as a trespasser.

## **SECTION 6.03-SPECIAL MEETINGS**

A. The Pastor (or the Leadership Team if the office of Pastor is vacant, or the pastor is the subject of possible disciplinary action) may call a special meeting by giving notice of such a meeting and the purpose for which it is called to the church from the pulpit at least one Sunday and not less than one week prior to said meeting. A meeting for the calling of a pastor or the severance of the relationship between the church and pastor shall be called in accordance with the provision of Section 4.04A.

B. Bible conferences, missionary conferences, and revivals may be held as the pastor deems beneficial.

## **SECTION 6.04-FISCAL YEAR**

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

## **ARTICLE 7**

### **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

#### **SECTION 7.01-PURPOSE**

The church believes that it is to provide the members, their children, as well as all of those who choose to worship at Paradise Church, with an education which is based upon and consistent with Biblical teachings. The church believes that the home and church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates recognizing also that our teaching ministry is the outreach arm of our congregation.

#### **SECTION 7.02-CHURCH PARTICIPATION**

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the church; however, the pastor may permit non-church members to participate in church educational programs or courses of instruction if he deems it in the best interest of the church.

#### **SECTION 7.03-STAFF MEMBERSHIP**

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

#### **SECTION 7.04-STATEMENT OF FAITH ACCORD**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the church. The church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **SECTION 7.05-UNITY**

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the church. All curriculum taught, whether on campus or off, must be approved by the Leadership Team.

## **SECTION 7.06-TEACHING**

All educational programs or courses of instruction, whether on or off campus, shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief which conflicts with or questions a Bible truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor and teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the only infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

## **SECTION 7.07-CHRISTIAN WALK**

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

# **ARTICLE 8**

## **ORDINATION**

### **SECTION 8.01-ORDINATION QUALIFICATIONS**

Any member of this church or its mission churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

### **SECTION 8.02-ORDINATION PROCEDURE**

- A. Upon a conference with the pastor and after the pastor approves the candidate for ordination, the pastor shall call a council to examine and pass on the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of ordained ministers of like faith invited to participate in the examination of the candidate.
- B. If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the church.
- C. The pastor and the leadership team shall arrange for the ordination service.

# **ARTICLE 9**

## **INDEMNIFICATION**

### **SECTION 9.01-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, deacon, leadership team member, yokefellow, 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 they reasonably believed to be 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 their conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of nolo contendere or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that they 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 9.02-EXPENSES SUBJECT TO INDEMNIFICATION**

To the extent that a pastor, leadership team member, deacon, yokefellow, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, 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 9.02-LIMITATIONS OF INDEMNIFICATION**

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the church only as authorized in the specific case on determination that indemnification of the pastor, leadership team member, deacon, yokefellow, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he or she has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 9.01. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the pastor and leadership team 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 leadership team members so directs, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the church.

## **SECTION 9.04-TIMING OF INDEMNIFICATION**

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article, may be paid by the church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the pastor and leadership team in the specific case, on receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the pastor, leadership team, deacon, yokefellow, 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 9.05-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 or her 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, leadership team member, deacon, yokefellow, officer, employee, or agent and may insure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

## **SECTION 9.06-INSURANCE**

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a pastor, leadership team member, deacon, yokefellow, officer, employee, or agent of the church against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him or her in that capacity, or arising out of this status in that capacity, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify him or her against liability under the provision of this Article.

# **ARTICLE 10**

## **MINISTRY TEAMS**

### **SECTION 10.01-MINISTRY TEAMS**

The Pastor (or the leadership team if the office of Pastor is vacant) shall appoint ministry teams and designate a team leader for each team and, except when otherwise specifically provided in these bylaws, shall determine the membership of each team. In addition, to the disciplinary team (consisting of the Pastor and leadership team) the Pastor may appoint other ministry teams as he deems appropriate.

## **ARTICLE 11**

### **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 the 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 leadership team. 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 1.02.

## **ARTICLE 12**

### **BINDING ARBITRATION**

#### **SECTION 12.01-SUBMISSION TO ARBITRATION**

Believing that lawsuits between individual believers are prohibited by Scripture, all members of this church agree to submit to binding arbitration, which complies with all applicable Florida statutes, 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 12.02-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 the best efforts to settle such disputes, claims, questions, or disagreement 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 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 12.01, above, and such Procedures for Arbitration as are adopted pursuant to Section 12.04, below. (Also see addendum procedures for Arbitration)

## **SECTION 12.03-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 3.04, were followed.

B. Should any dispute involve the removal from office of the pastor, leadership team member, or church officer, the arbitrators shall be limited to determining whether the procedures set forth in Sections 4.04 or 5.06 were followed.

## **SECTION 12.04-ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

The procedures for Arbitration shall be as adopted by the pastor and leadership team. A copy of these procedures is available in the office of the secretary.

# **ARTICLE 13**

## **AMENDMENTS**

These bylaws may be revised or amended by a majority vote of the members present and voting at any regular church administration meeting, provided that said revision or amendment has been submitted in writing and announced from the pulpit fourteen (14) days before the vote is taken.

## **ADOPTION**

These bylaws were adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the church in which a quorum was present.

These bylaws supersede any other bylaws of PARADISE CHURCH.

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Date

Minister of Records