

Roots Church Bylaws

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Bylaws of Roots Church

Adopted this 25th day of August, 2019

Preamble

As a people called by God, our purpose is:

To form spiritual families of believers
Who actively participate in each other's
Spiritual, emotional, and physical lives;

And to train, equip, and send out every believer
As representatives of Jesus
In character, in love, and in power—
Both locally and abroad.

To this end, we the members of this Assembly
Do hereby establish this organization
To the glory of God.

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Assembly shall be **Roots Church**.

ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES AND PURPOSES

1. To Govern

This Assembly shall have the right to govern itself and to conduct its own affairs according to the standard of the New Testament Scriptures and of the Michigan District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God. This right shall specifically include such matters as the calling of pastors and other ministers, the establishment of the church Board, the discipline of its members, the planting and operation of House Churches, and the conducting of its own services and church programs.

2. To Acquire and Dispose

In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, this Assembly shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease, or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes, and to exercise all other powers conferred upon it by its charter or by the applicable nonprofit corporation law of this state; all in accordance with its Bylaws as the same may be hereafter amended.

3. To Worship, Fellowship, and Propagate

The purpose of this Assembly shall be to establish and maintain places for the worship of Almighty God, both in large groups and small. Through a network of “House Churches” and designated large gatherings of people from throughout the Network (hereafter termed “Gatherings”), this Assembly exists to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony, and to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both locally and abroad.

4. To Cooperate

This Assembly shall cooperate with the Michigan District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God to extend the work and kingdom of God throughout the world. It shall support the missionary program as agreed upon. It shall participate in District Council and General Council sessions through its chosen delegates and share in the support of the ministries of these bodies.

5. To Recognize

This Assembly shall recognize that the District Council and the General Council have the authority and right to approve scriptural doctrine and conduct; also to disapprove unscriptural doctrine and conduct and to withdraw their certificates of membership if deemed necessary. (See Article IX of the Bylaws of The General Council of the Assemblies of God.)

ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs as herein set forth, this Assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith, associated in the Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God, and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation. Officers of the District Council and General Council shall be recognized and respected by the ministers and members of this Assembly.

As a member of the General Council, this Assembly has the right to request the assistance of both the General Council and the District Council in dealing with any of its problems, upon the request of the Leadership Director, a majority of the church Board, or a petition signed by at least twenty percent (20%) of the active voting members of the Assembly. Only those members who have regularly attended services of, and supported, this Assembly for a period of at least six consecutive months prior to signing the petition shall be counted.

By its affiliation, the Assembly—directors, officers, and members—agree that no provision of these Bylaws shall be inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of both the Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God and the General Council of the Assemblies of God as now in effect or hereafter amended.

ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10, 11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

The Adorable Godhead

(a) Terms Defined

The terms *trinity* and *persons*, as related to the Godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting the Being of God, as distinguished from "gods many and lords many." We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

(b) Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the Godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

(c) Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Accordingly, therefore, there is **that** in the Father which constitutes Him **the Father** and not the Son; there is **that** in the Son which constitutes Him **the Son** and not the Father; and there is **that** in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him **the Holy Spirit** and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the Godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9).

(d) Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never **identical** as to **person**; nor **confused** as to **relation**; nor **divided** in respect to the Godhead; nor **opposed** as to **cooperation**. The Son is **in** the Father and the Father is **in** the Son as to relationship. The Son is **with** the Father and the Father is **with** the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not **from** the Son, but the Son is **from** the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation, and authority. Hence no person in the Godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30, 32, 37; 8:17,18).

(e) The Title, Lord Jesus Christ

The appellation **Lord Jesus Christ** is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the **Son of God** (Romans 1:1-3, 7; 2 John 3).

(f) The Lord Jesus Christ, God with us

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is "Immanuel," God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

(g) The Title, Son of God

Since the name *Immanuel* embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title *Son of God* describes His proper deity, and the title *Son of Man*, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title *Son of God* belongs to the **order of eternity**, and the title *Son of Man* to the **order of time** (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

(h) Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title *Son of God* solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

(i) Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

(j) Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the **express duty** of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an **unspeakable** joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the Godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- (a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- (b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

(a) Conditions to Salvation

Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).

(b) The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

(a) Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

(b) Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements--bread and the fruit of the vine--is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16).

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general Assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a. To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b. To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c. To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- d. To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason for being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a. Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- b. Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- c. Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world (Galatians 5:22-26; Matthew 25:37-40; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20), (2) worship of God (John 4:23,24), (3) building a Body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16), and (4) meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5:14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52).

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11:26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21 and 22).

Note: Pursuant to the General Council of the Assemblies of God Bylaws, Article IX. Doctrines and Practices Disapproved, Part B. List of Doctrines and Practices Disapproved, Section 3. Eschatological Errors, Subsection e. "Credentials jeopardized if made an issue": Just as Assemblies of God ministers are permitted to hold to perspectives on the "end times" that deviate from the above statement of faith, provided they do not "persist in emphasizing these doctrines to the point of making them an issue," so Mission Partners (members) of Roots Church are held to the same standard. A diversity of perspectives are allowed with regard to points 13, 14, 15, and 16 above, provided they are recognized strictly as "perspectives" or "opinions" and not propagated as unquestionable fact.

ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES

Section 1. Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:19-22).

Section 2. Holy Communion

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

ARTICLE VI. MEMBERSHIP / MISSION PARTNERS

The members of this Assembly (hereafter termed interchangeably as “Mission Partners”) shall consist of those who have met the requirements for membership as stated in Section 1 of this Article VI, have been received into membership, and have not been removed from the membership roll. They shall be classified as defined in the Bylaws.

Section 1. Membership Eligibility

Active voting membership in this Assembly shall be open to all those who possess the following qualifications:

- a. Reach at least 16 years of age.
- b. Attend one *official* House Church’s or Digital House Church’s weekly gathering consistently for at least three months OR attend one *unofficial* House Church’s or Digital House Church’s weekly gathering for at least three months prior to that group’s application for official approval (see Article X, Sections 2 and 4).
- c. Give a clear testimony of having been born again (Jn. 3:3, 5-7; 2 Cor. 5:17);
- d. Follow the Scriptural command to be baptized in water by immersion (Matt. 28:19; Acts 8:12);
 - Express an ongoing lifestyle of growing Christian maturity and love. (Rom. 6:4; 8:1-4; 13:13, 14; Gal. 2:20; 5:22-26; Eph. 4:17-32; 5:1, 2, 15; Titus 2:11-12; 1 Jn. 1:6,7).
- e. Acknowledge the Baptism in the Holy Spirit as an experience to be earnestly desired and sought after, subsequent to the New Birth (Acts 2:2-4; 8:17; 19:2-6);
- f. Commit to growing and abiding in the Biblical principle of holiness, including such precepts as:
 - 1) Separation from the world (2 Cor. 6:17; 1 John 2:15-17)
 - 2) Expediency (1 Cor. 6:12; 10:23-24)
 - 3) God’s glory and the wellbeing of others (1 Cor. 10:31-33)
 - 4) Consciousness of others’ weaknesses (Rom. 14:13-14, 19-23)
 - 5) Honoring God with one’s physical body (1 Cor. 6:19-20)
 - 6) Not being enslaved to any earthly activity (1 Cor. 6:12b)
- g. Read the Roots Church “Who We Are” document in order to understand our Assembly’s vision, ministry philosophy, statement of faith, and culture.
- h. Indicate a willingness to contribute regularly to the financial support of Roots Church and lovingly helping those within one’s local House Church (regular or digital) (1 Cor. 9:13-14; 2 Cor. 8:7, 13-15; 9:6-8; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).
- i. Indicate a willingness to cooperate in the mission, vision, and work of this Assembly and to be governed by its Bylaws.

Section 2. Application and Reception

The Organizational Oversight Board (hereafter termed “Board”) shall serve as a membership committee to review applicants for membership in this Assembly. Those individuals desiring to apply for membership shall:

- a. Read the Roots Church “Who We Are” document, describing our culture, beliefs, vision, mission, and ministry philosophy;
- b. Fill out and submit to one’s House Church Overseer the application form provided (which the Overseer shall sign and convey to the Executive Director); and
- c. Be approved by majority vote of the Board.

Upon approval, the applicant's name shall be added to the active membership roll, effective as of the date of the Board’s action. The applicant shall receive written certification of membership with Roots Church and be publicly received as a Mission Partner at a designated gathering of the larger church Network.

Section 3. Senior Leadership Team and Spouses

By virtue of office, the Leadership Director, Executive Director, Director of Operations, Spiritual Life Director, Student Ministries Director (or Family Life Director), and any other roles officially added to the Senior Leadership Team shall be considered active voting Mission Partners of the Assembly during their tenures. Each minister’s spouse shall become an active voting Mission Partner simultaneously with the minister, subject to section 9 of this Article VI.

Section 4. Members Abroad (and Digital Mission Partners)

Members who meet the criteria for membership but do not physically live in a location close enough to regularly attend the large gatherings of the Roots Church Network in person shall be considered “Members Abroad.” Such membership shall be granted only if the person considers Roots Church to be their primary “home church,” even if they only attend digitally. Members Abroad are not eligible to serve on the Board but may vote in the annual business meeting only if they attend physically (in person).

Members Abroad who attend Roots Church meetings via video conferencing software may be referred to as “Digital Mission Partners” in reference to the means by which they participate in the church. For the purposes of these Bylaws, any mention of “Digital Mission Partners” shall be understood legally in the context of Members Abroad.

Section 5. Transfer Members

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI, may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the church Board.

Section 6. Junior Mission Partners

Junior membership shall be available for young people 10-16 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, meet the scriptural standards for membership as specified in these Bylaws, and are approved by majority vote of the church Board. Junior Mission Partners enjoy all the rights and privileges of Mission Partners, except voting rights at Business Meetings.

Section 7. Associate Members

The church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve associate members by a majority vote. Eligibility for associate membership is available to any person who is a member in good standing of an Assemblies of God church in another community, who is in this community on a temporary basis, and who intends to return to his or her home church. Associate members shall be entitled to all the privileges of regular members, except that they shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be eligible for any of the offices described in Article VII of these Bylaws.

Section 8. Honorary Members

The church Board, at any regular or special meeting, may approve honorary members by a unanimous vote of the Mission Partners present. Honorary membership is available to any Mission Partner who has left the Assembly indefinitely. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a consistent Christian life, remains sound in doctrine, and maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. Honorary Members shall not be eligible to vote and shall not be eligible for any of the offices described in Article VII of these Bylaws.

Section 9. Inactive Membership

Those who shall have removed themselves from the local House Church community but have not yet transferred their “membership” to another Assembly, together with those who for any other cause (except physical disability or temporary absence from the community) shall have absented themselves from the regular House Church meetings of the Network for a period of 90 days or more, shall be classified as inactive members and shall not be qualified to participate in the business of the Assembly. A “Mission Partner” shall be notified in advance of being placed on the inactive membership roll. If an inactive member resumes regular attendance at church services, and if he or she has not departed from the standard of Mission Partnership with the Assembly, upon written request of the inactive member, the Board may return his or her name to the active list without formal reception into Mission Partnership again.

Section 10. Discipline and Membership Roll Maintenance

A. Grounds

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible (Mt. 16:19; 18:15-20; Lk. 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 13:17).

The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through addressing sinful behavior in biblically appropriate ways. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any participant in the Assembly is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith of this Assembly, as determined in the sole discretion of the church Board.

The discipline of ministers who hold credentials with the Assemblies of God is administered by the District Council and General Council of the Assemblies of God according to their respective Bylaws.

B. Local Autonomy

The focus of our ministry being vested in local “House Churches,” authority to exercise appropriate church discipline is vested in the appointed Overseers of those House Churches. The Senior Leadership Team is available to offer wisdom, strategies, and oversight to the process as needed, but the Overseers who provide pastoral oversight to their nuclear community are entrusted with application of church discipline according to their discretion and the guidance of Scripture.

C. Network Oversight

While the appointed Overseers of local House Churches shall have the authority to exercise appropriate church discipline according to their discretion, it shall be understood that the Senior Leadership Team bears responsibility for oversight of the entire community and is entitled to intervene in such matters or bring discipline to House Church Overseers as may be deemed necessary.

D. Revisions of Membership Roll

The membership roll of the Assembly shall be revised at least once a year, prior to the annual business meeting or as directed by the Board.

The names of those whose lives no longer conform to the standards of membership, or who willfully cause discord within this Assembly by word or action, may be removed from the Mission Partnership roll (1 Cor. 5:2, 11; Rom. 16:17-18) by majority vote of the Board. A good-faith attempt to notify such individuals shall be made in writing within one week of their removal from the membership roll. It is understood that no such action shall be taken unless and until patient and persistent effort shall have been made to win such individuals back to the standard of faith and conduct of this Assembly (Matt. 18:15-20).

If any individual removed from the membership roll shall protest the action of the Board, he or she shall be entitled to a hearing before the Board. He or she shall, within one week of official notification from the Board, submit a written request for a hearing. A majority vote of the Board shall be decisive.

If the individual shall protest the action of the Board, he or she shall be entitled to a hearing before the membership of the Assembly who attend his or her House Church. He or she shall, within one week of official notification from the Board, request the Executive Director to arrange a special meeting with the person’s House Church Elder and any Mission Partners known to be affiliated with his or her House Church. A majority of the votes cast shall be considered final. If the person cannot

identify his or her House Church, then he or she shall be removed from membership pursuant to Section 8 of this Article VI.

E. Resignations

Mission Partners who are under discipline by this Assembly forfeit and waive the right to resign from membership in this Assembly. Resignations from membership are possible only by those Mission Partners in good standing who are not under any disciplinary action.

ARTICLE VII. GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Vested in Membership

The government of this Assembly shall be vested in the membership whose action by majority vote (except when otherwise specified in the Bylaws) shall be decisive in all matters.

Section 2. The Church Council

The Church Council shall consist of the Senior Leadership Team, Organizational Oversight Board, and official House Church Elders affiliated with the Assembly. They shall have the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Assembly, exercising diligent watchcare as those who must give account.

Section 3. Senior Leadership Team

A. Members

The Senior Leadership Team shall consist of no fewer than five individuals (except as transition seasons may require an absent seat for a time). At minimum, this team shall consist of the Leadership Director, the Executive Director, the Director of Operations, the Spiritual Life Director, and the Student Ministries (or “Family Life”) Director.

The Leadership Director shall be the President of the Corporation and shall be considered as the spiritual overseer of the Assembly. He or she shall be responsible to cast and maintain vision for the Assembly and direct all of its activities. The Leadership Director shall be responsible for selecting personnel to fill other ministerial offices, subject to approval by the Organizational Oversight Board. He or she shall act as Chairperson of all business meetings of the Assembly and meetings of the Board.

For purposes of compliance with the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God and the Michigan District of the Assemblies of God, the Leadership Director shall be understood to be the Senior Pastor of Roots Church and shall hold ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God.

The Executive Director shall be the Vice President of the Corporation and shall oversee and maintain the financial and legal health thereof. In the absence of the Leadership Director, he or she may be appointed to act as temporary Chairperson of any business meetings of the Assembly and meetings of the Board. The Executive Director shall be responsible to offer final approval of new Mission Partners and maintain records and documentation for the Assembly.

The Director of Operations shall organize Gatherings, large events, and other uniting activities held by the Assembly. He or she shall direct any church staff not found on

the Senior Leadership Team and shall oversee and manage any equipment or facilities that need to be rented or maintained.

The Spiritual Life Director shall build purposeful relationships with House Church Elders throughout the Network, offering personal advice and counsel and helping House Churches to thrive, grow, and multiply. He or she organizes focused training and fellowship for House Church Overseers and is responsible for (1) approval of House Churches, (2) approval of Elders, and (3) organizing and overseeing the overall relational structure and health of the House Church Network.

The Student Ministries Director or Family Life Director shall coordinate children's ministers throughout the House Church Network, organize training opportunities for leaders and parents, select and approve curriculum, and oversee volunteer-led, church-wide events for children and families. He or she arranges occasional events and gatherings for teens in the Assembly and helps interested teens strategize and engage in ministry to their peers and schools.

B. Selection

Each member of the Senior Leadership Team shall be elected to serve until he or she resigns or is otherwise removed pursuant to these Bylaws. New Senior Leadership Team members shall be nominated by the Leadership Director and presented to the rest of the Board for ratification by a vote of approval. If approved, the candidate will then be presented to the rest of the Assembly at an annual or special business meeting for ratification by the Mission Partners of the Assembly. Only one name shall be placed in nomination at one time.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team, selected by the Senior Leadership Team, shall preside at the business meeting for election of the new Senior Leadership Team member. Election shall be by secret ballot, and seventy-five (75) percent of all votes cast shall be in the affirmative in order to constitute an election.

Should the Leadership Director's position be vacant, a new Leadership Director shall be selected according to the procedures found in Article III, Section 1A.

Section 4. The Organizational Oversight Board

A. In General

The government of this Assembly shall be vested in the Organizational Oversight Board (hereafter termed interchangeably as "Board" or "church Board") as described herein, to the extent that such authority is not limited by district supervision as provided for under the Bylaws of the Michigan District Council.

The Board shall be comprised of ten people. Five shall be the members of the Senior Leadership Team, and five shall be appointed with ratification from among the Mission Partners of the Assembly. In the event that two people, such as a husband and wife, work together in their role on the Senior Leadership Team, they may both

attend meetings of the Board, but the two may only cast one vote as a couple. If the Assembly should choose to add additional members to the Senior Leadership Team in the future, they shall also add an equal number of additional Board Members from among the general membership to keep the Board balanced.

The Board shall be responsible for the approval of persons selected by the Leadership Director to fill other ministerial offices. They shall act in the examination of applicants for Mission Partnership and also in the official removal of membership in the Assembly.

They shall be the custodians of church property and shall be responsible for its maintenance and the regulations of its use. They shall serve as good stewards in the handling of the finances of the Assembly in their areas of responsibility. They shall periodically review and establish the salaries and benefits of the staff (with Senior Leadership Team members excusing themselves appropriately, so as to avoid conflict of interest) as well as the regular financial support of church-sponsored missionaries.

The Board shall arrange for its own meetings as may be necessary for the discharge of its duties. Meetings may be called by the Leadership Director, or by request of at least two members of the Board. A simple majority of the Senior Leadership Team plus a simple majority of the other five officers shall constitute a quorum. Every effort shall be made to notify all Board members well in advance of meetings by verbal communication (personal contact or telephone call) and/or written communication (email, text message, social media, or mail.)

In the event that neither the Leadership Director nor the Executive Director can be available for a meeting of the Board, an acting Chairperson shall be selected from among the Senior Leadership Team by the quorum present.

Members of the Board selected from among the general Assembly shall recognize that they have been chosen to serve, not to govern, this Assembly and that it is their responsibility to uphold the Bylaws established by the membership.

B. Qualifications

Mission Partner candidates for selection as members of the Board shall:

- (1) Meet the requirements for Membership as stated in the Bylaws (Article IV, Section 1);
- (2) Be men or women of godly character, whose lives exemplify the whole of Scripture and who aim to be more Christ-like in all that they do;
- (3) Meet the scriptural qualifications for Deacons as stated in Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13 and Titus 1:6-9;
- (4) Be at least twenty-one (21) years of age; and
- (5) Have been an active member of the Assembly for at least six months prior to the nomination.

C. Selection and Appointment

The Organizational Oversight Board shall be comprised of ten people—five from the Senior Leadership Team and five from among the Mission Partners throughout the Assembly. Reasonable care should be taken to ensure that a variety of House Churches in the Network are represented on the Board.

The five Mission Partners from the Assembly shall be selected according to the examples found in Acts 1:23-26 and 6:3-4 as follows:

- (1) Any Mission Partners of the Assembly may nominate names of qualified candidates no more than 60 days and no fewer than 30 days before the annual or special business meeting where the selection shall take place. All Mission Partners in good standing of the Assembly shall be considered as potential nominees, though Mission Partners are encouraged to select people from among themselves who are “known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3).
- (2) Twenty-one to thirty (21-30) days before the business meeting, the Organizational Oversight Board shall review nominated names and may remove names by majority vote if issues or concerns are known to leadership that may not have been known to the person making the nomination.
- (3) Fourteen to twenty-one (14-21) days before the business meeting, the Spiritual Life Director (or a designee) shall contact the House Church Elder of each nominee who is not presently serving as an Elder. The House Church Elder shall serve as a character reference for the nominee. In the event that a House Church Elder is nominated, the Spiritual Life Director shall serve as his or her character reference. The Spiritual Life Director shall present any concerns to the Organizational Oversight Board for discussion and a decision as to whether or not to let the name remain. If there are no concerns, the name stands without needing to be presented again to the Board.
- (4) Seven to fourteen (7-14) days before the business meeting, the Executive Director (or a designee) shall be responsible to contact all qualified candidates who have been nominated so that each candidate may decide whether or not to let their name stand. Each candidate shall have three (3) days to notify the Executive Director of his or her decision.
- (5) There shall be at least two nominees for each seat to be filled.
- (6) At the appointed business meeting, those names remaining shall be written or printed on evenly-sized pieces of paper and placed in a bowl, bag, or other such container. Prayer shall be offered in the pattern of Acts 1:24, and names shall be drawn blindly and at random until the vacant seat or seats on the Board are filled.
- (7) When a name is presented to fill a role on the Board, the assembled membership shall ratify the selection by majority vote.

D. Terms and Limitations

Members of the Senior Leadership Team shall serve as permanent members of the Board for as long as they shall remain appointed in their leadership role by the Assembly.

Members selected from among the other Mission Partners of the Assembly shall serve as follows:

- (1) Each member shall serve a three year term.
- (2) On alternating first, second, and third years, two seats, two seats, and one seat shall be filled respectively.
- (3) When a person is nearing the end of his or her term, he or she may choose whether or not to let their name stand for possible re-selection at the business meeting. A person may remain on the Board for as long as his or her name continues to be drawn to serve.

In the event the number of available qualified Board members from the general membership should fall below four (4), the Assembly will revert to District Supervised status.

The Board, during times of emergency or significant transition, may present a resolution to a Business Meeting to extend the terms of particular Board members or make special provisions concerning the filling of vacancies. These resolutions must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Mission Partners at the Business Meeting.

E. Duties of the Organizational Oversight Board

- (1) The Board shall have general charge and management of the affairs, funds, and property of the Assembly. The church Board shall have the authority to carry out the purposes of the Assembly according to its charter and these Bylaws.
- (2) The Board shall act in the examination of applications for membership and in the administration of discipline pursuant to the Bylaws.
- (3) For so long as the Assembly is temporarily without both a Leadership Director and an Executive Director, the remaining members of the Board shall be empowered to select a temporary Chairperson of the church Board.
- (4) The Board shall elect or ratify a Secretary from among its members.
- (5) The Board shall elect or ratify a Treasurer from among the active voting members who meet the qualifications for such office.

Section 5. Officers

A. In General

There shall be a President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Leadership Director, by virtue of office, shall be the President and Chairperson of the church Board. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be held simultaneously by the same individual and are generally held by the Executive Director by virtue of office.

B. Qualifications

(1) Leadership Director

The Leadership Director shall be in good standing with both The General Council of the Assemblies of God and the Michigan District Council, holding a current fellowship card.

(2) Secretary

The Executive Director shall serve as Secretary of the Corporation (hereafter referred to as Secretary) by virtue of office. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the Board and of the annual and special business meetings of the Assembly. He or she shall keep a record of the membership of the Assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his or her duties. He or she shall be the custodian of all legal documents and be in possession of the corporate seal. He or she shall be responsible for posting in a conspicuous place, a list of all eligible voters, one week in advance of the annual business meeting. He or she shall also provide and maintain a permanent voting register to record membership attendance at all business meetings. The secretary shall be an active voting Mission Partner of this Assembly for at least 1 year immediately preceding election to office, and shall be a member of the church Board.

(3) Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the general treasury and shall receive and disburse same under the direction of the Leadership Director and the Organizational Oversight Board. He or she shall deposit all funds in his or her care in a responsible bank in the name of the Assembly and make all disbursements by check or direct deposit, as applicable. He or she shall keep a true and accurate record of all monies received and disbursed. He or she shall make reports as may be requested. The financial records shall be reviewed annually and at the change of Treasurer. The Executive Director shall serve as the Treasurer unless the Board should select by majority vote another qualified individual. The Treasurer shall be an active voting Mission Partner of this Assembly for at least 1 year immediately preceding election to office, and shall currently support the Assembly with regular financial gifts, and shall have a cooperative spirit, and shall be faithful in attendance at House Church meetings and Gatherings.

C. Duties of Officers

(1) Leadership Director

- (a) Shall be the spiritual overseer of the Assembly and shall direct its activities.
- (b) Shall be recognized as a member of the church Board, president of the Assembly, and shall act as Chairperson of all the business meetings of the Assembly and of the church Board, except as otherwise prescribed in the Bylaws.
- (c) Shall be an *ex officio* member of all committees.

(2) Secretary

- (a) Shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the church Board and of the annual and special business meetings of the Assembly.
- (b) Shall keep a record of the membership of the Assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his or her duties.
- (c) Shall be the custodian of all legal documents.
- (d) Shall file such annual corporation reports with the Secretary of State as may be required by state law.

(3) Treasurer

- (a) Shall be entrusted with all the finances of the Assembly, subject to the supervision of the church Board, and shall deposit all funds as a prudent investor would under the circumstances. All checks issued on behalf of the Assembly must be signed by the Treasurer and one additional officer authorized by the church Board.
- (b) Shall keep an itemized account of receipts and disbursements, shall present a report for each regular meeting of the church Board, and shall present an annual report to the Assembly in its annual business meeting.
- (c) Shall assist the Assembly in acquiring and maintaining available tax exemptions under federal, state, and local law.
- (d) Shall provide a record of all identified giving to each donor at least annually.
- (e) Shall be the primary custodian of all the financial records of the church.

Section 6. Trustees

Three trustees (who may be deacons or officers) shall be elected by the Board for the holding of church property, if required by law. Trustees must be active voting Mission Partners of the Assembly.

Section 7. Fiduciary Duties

The law imposes several fiduciary duties on officers, Board members, and trustees, including the duties of due care and diligence, loyalty, avoidance of self-dealing,

expending designated contributions for the purposes specified, and not commingling personal and corporate funds.

Section 8. Other Ministerial Offices

Additional ministerial offices deemed necessary shall be filled by selection of the Leadership Director with the approval and ratification of the Board.

Section 9. Vacancies

A. Senior Leadership Team

- (1) In the event a member of the Senior Leadership Team has serious charges preferred against him or her, or he or she propagates doctrine deemed errant by the remaining Board members, or his or her ministry has ceased to be effective, or no provision has been made for the termination of his or her ministry, power is vested in the remainder of the Organizational Oversight Board to ask for the resignation of the person at any of its regular Board meetings. If such resignation is refused, the role shall not be considered vacant until the action of the Board has been confirmed by a majority vote of the membership present at a meeting called for that purpose, such meeting to be presided over by a District Officer.

When a vacancy in the Senior Leadership Team shall occur, a new person shall be searched out, interviewed, and selected according to the instructions described in this Article VII, Section 3B and Article VIII, Section 1A.

In such case as a Senior Leadership Team member who holds credentials with the Assemblies of God and is removed from office, a report of such action shall be made to the District Secretary by the Secretary or another designated member of the Board.

- (2) It shall be agreed between each Senior Leadership Team Member and this Assembly that, should he or she resign, he or she will give the Assembly at least thirty (30) days notice before vacating the position. It shall be further agreed that, should the Assembly request the minister's resignation, it will grant him or her (except in cases involving moral turpitude) at least thirty (30) days in which to vacate the position or else pay him or her thirty (30) days salary in advance (if applicable).
- (3) Upon submission of the Minister's resignation, the remainder of the Board has the discretion to relieve the minister of all his or her duties and responsibilities immediately.

B. Other Offices

(1) Any office may be declared vacant by an act of a majority of the Board at any of its regular or special meetings.

(a) Grounds for such action shall be:

1. Unscriptural conduct;
2. Doctrinal departure from the Statement of Fundamental Truths as presented in these Bylaws;
3. Incompetency in office; or
4. For any good and sufficient cause.

(b) Anyone under charges shall have opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing of his or her case before the Assembly if he or she so desires.

(2) In the event of a single vacancy among the five general Mission Partners on the Board, prior to the annual meeting, the Board may, at their discretion, call a special meeting of the church Mission Partners to fill the unexpired term created by the vacancy. In the event of two or more offices becoming vacant less than six months from the last Annual Business Meeting, the Board shall call a special meeting of the Mission Partners to fill the vacancies. In either case, such a meeting shall be held roughly 60 days from the creation of the second vacancy, following the selection process set forth in this Article VII, Section 4C.

If the office of Secretary becomes vacant, the Board shall appoint a replacement from its own members.

Section 10. Temporary Church Board

Should irreconcilable differences arise between the Leadership Director and other members of the church Board, destroying the unity and the successful ministry of the local Assembly, the District Executive Presbytery along with the Sectional Presbyter (the investigating committee), upon request from the Leadership Director or a majority of the church Board members, shall investigate such differences. Upon a two-thirds majority vote of the investigating committee they may declare the Assembly under District supervision. The term "District supervision" means that the investigating committee has the authority to (1) suspend some or all of the Bylaws of the Assembly, (2) suspend the church Board, (3) reclassify the Assembly as a District Council affiliated church, and (4) appoint and establish a temporary church Board invested with the authority to manage both the secular and ecclesiastical affairs of the Assembly until such strife shall cease. If the Leadership Director is also the Sectional Presbyter, the Assistant Sectional Presbyter shall be a member of the investigating committee in his or her place.

Section 11. Local Church Credential

This Assembly may grant a local church credential to persons wishing to pursue ministerial recognition pursuant to guidelines established by the General Presbytery of The General Council of the Assemblies of God and the Michigan District Council. It is understood that this credential is to endorse ministry that is undertaken under the auspices of this Assembly and implies no certification by the Michigan District Council or the General Council, and is not transferable to other churches or ministries.

Such a credential may be bestowed only by unanimous approval of the Senior Leadership Team. It may be suspended or revoked by a simple majority action of the Board.

ARTICLE VIII. ELECTIONS, VACANCIES, AND REMOVALS

Section 1. Elections

A. Leadership Director

- (1) A nominee for Leadership Director shall be selected by the Board. Recommendations may be made to the church Board by any Mission Partner of the Assembly.
 - i. To create an even vote between the Senior Leadership Team (who will need to work with the new Leadership Director) and the Board (who represents the membership of the Assembly), the Executive Director's vote shall count as two (2) votes.
 - ii. A majority vote of the Board is necessary to nominate a potential Leadership Director.
- (2) The Board shall present the nominee to the Assembly for ratification in a Special or Annual Business Meeting.
- (3) The Leadership Director shall be elected to serve for 1 or more years or for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at time of election. When a term length is not specified, an indefinite period shall be assumed.
- (4) The ratifying election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the Assembly or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.
- (5) A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute a ratifying election.
- (6) In the event either the nominee or any other Mission Partner or Mission Partners of the Assembly shall challenge the validity of an election, the validity of the election shall be arbitrated by the District Executive Presbytery, and its decision shall be final.

B. Secretary

The Executive Director shall fill the office of Secretary by virtue of office, pending annual ratification by the Board, but may choose to delegate this role to another party selected by the Board. The term of office shall be one year, and the Secretary may serve consecutive terms without limitation.

C. Treasurer

The Executive Director shall fill the office of Treasurer by virtue of office, pending annual ratification by the Board, but may choose to delegate this role to another party selected by the Board. The term of office shall be one year, and the Treasurer may serve consecutive terms without limitation.

D. Senior Leadership Team Members

The Executive Director, Director of Operations, Spiritual Life Director, and Student Ministries Director (or Family Life Director) shall be selected by the Leadership Director and elected to office according to the guidelines described in Article VII, Section 3B.

E. Board Members Selected from the General Membership

Members of the Board shall be nominated and elected according to the details of Article VII, Section 4C. Active voting Mission Partners may recommend nominees according to the instructions here cited; however, nominations for the Board shall not be accepted from the floor during any business meeting. Board members selected from among the general membership shall be elected for a 3-year term, and shall hold office until the annual business meeting at which their successor is selected and ratified. The terms of these Board Members shall be staggered appropriately.

F. Trustees

Trustees shall be elected by and from among the Church Board. Trustees shall be elected for a three-year term and may serve consecutive terms without limit.

Section 2. Vacancies and Removals

A. Leadership Director

When a vacancy in the office of the Leadership Director shall occur, a temporary replacement shall be arranged for by the Board until a new Leadership Director shall be chosen as prescribed in this Article VIII, Section 1A. The counsel of the Michigan District Superintendent will be sought as needed.

If a Leadership Director's credentials are withdrawn by the District or General Council, the minister's term of office shall be automatically terminated.

In the event a special business meeting is called by petition as provided in Article IX, Section 3, for the purpose of considering the status of the Leadership Director, a majority vote of all voting Mission Partners present and voting shall be required to remove a Leadership Director from office before his or her term expires. Severance pay shall be governed by Article XII, Section 3D.

B. Secretary and Treasurer

The offices of Secretary and Treasurer shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of the officer's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

C. Board Members from among the General Membership

The office of Board Member (from among the general membership) shall be vacant upon the expiration of the term of office, or upon the termination of a Board Member's active membership, whichever shall occur first.

D. In General

Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the Leadership Director) may be terminated by a majority vote of the active Mission Partners present and voting at a special business meeting called for the limited purpose of removal of such member from office or position of leadership which he or she holds.

E. Filling Vacancies

Any office or position of leadership in the Assembly (other than that of Leadership Director) may be filled by appointment of the church Board for the unexpired term.

ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS

Section 1. Meetings for Worship

Meetings for worship, fellowship, and discipleship shall be held weekly in multiple small groups at decentralized locations such as homes, parks, and rented or borrowed rooms. Regardless of a meeting's location, all such meetings shall be termed "House Churches" for the purposes of these Bylaws. The House Churches will come together as one larger family (termed "Gatherings") at scheduled times each month, as determined by the Senior Leadership Team.

Section 2. Annual Business Meeting

There shall be an annual business meeting of this Assembly within sixty (60) days of the end of the fiscal year, at which time reports shall be provided and selection of officers shall take place. The time and date of this meeting shall be set by the Board, and adequate announcement shall be made in at least two Sunday Gatherings prior to the date of the meeting, and all House Church Elders shall be informed by email, phone, or other medium at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting with the expectation that they will disseminate the announcement in their respective House Churches.

Section 3. Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings may be called by the Leadership Director, by majority vote of the Senior Leadership Team, by majority vote of the general Mission Partners on the Organizational Oversight Board, or by petition signed by not less than one fourth of the active Mission Partners of this Assembly. Adequate announcement, including purpose of the special meeting, shall be made in at least two Sunday Gatherings prior to the date of the meeting, and all House Church Elders shall be informed by email, phone, or other medium at least two weeks prior to the scheduled meeting with the expectation that they will disseminate the announcement in their respective House Churches; or four-days written notice may be given to all active Mission Partners by mail.

A petition pertaining to the status of the Leadership Director shall be directed to the Michigan District Superintendent, who shall arrange for a special business meeting of the Assembly.

No more than one petition on a given subject shall be recognized in any 12-month period. Notice of the date, time, place, and purpose of each special business meeting shall be announced from the pulpit during two Gatherings immediately preceding the date of the meeting.

No business other than that specified in the notice of meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting of the Assembly.

Section 4. Parliamentary Order

All business meetings of the Assembly shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Revised*, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

Section 5. Voting Constituency

A. Voting Constituency

The voting constituency shall consist of all active members, eighteen (18) years of age and over, who are in good standing.

B. Absentee Ballots

Any eligible voting Mission Partner who, because of work schedule, sickness, or an unavoidable out-of-town absence, cannot attend a regular or special business meeting, may cast an absentee ballot on non amendable resolutions with the Secretary. This ballot must be in the hands of the Secretary at least twenty-four (24) hours before the announced date and time of the business meeting.

C. Members Under Process of Discipline

No Mission Partner under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9).

Section 6. Quorum

The active Mission Partners responding to the call for a regular or special business meeting shall constitute a quorum. However, the business meeting will be canceled should there be a travelers' advisory warning in effect.

Section 7. Order of Business

The regular order of business for the annual business meeting of this Assembly shall be as follows:

- A. Devotional and prayer
- B. Reading of previous minutes
- C. Report of Leadership Director
- D. Report of Treasurer
- E. Report of Committees
- F. Unfinished business
- G. Selection and ratification of officers
- H. New business
- I. Adjournment

Section 8. The Church Board

The Board shall meet quarterly without exception, monthly as needed, or at the call of the Leadership Director or Executive Director for the transaction of business for the Assembly, time and place to be announced by the Leadership Director or Executive Director. A simple majority of the Senior Leadership Team plus a simple majority of the other five officers shall constitute a quorum.

Section 9. Membership Roll

The church Board shall review the list of active voting Mission Partners at least annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board immediately preceding the annual business meeting, and compile a current list of active voting Mission Partners.

ARTICLE X. HOUSE CHURCHES

Section 1. In General

Roots Church is an Assembly of God church that is best defined as an organized network of House Churches who share a common VISION, common MISSION, and common RESOURCES throughout our local region.

Our common VISION is:

To form spiritual families of believers who actively participate in each other's spiritual, emotional, and physical lives; and to train, equip, and send out every believer as representatives of Jesus in character, in love, and in power.

Our common MISSION is the one and only Commission that Jesus gave to His followers:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-20).

Our common RESOURCES are defined as whatever is needed to care for one another and advance the Kingdom together. This could refer to finances, time, material goods, talents, and so forth.

Included in this is each House Church's agreement to contribute financially to the overall Network of Roots Church...

- to facilitate global missions, local outreaches, large events, and large gatherings;
- to rent, purchase, and maintain needed equipment and facilities; and
- to enable our leadership team to devote their time and attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word (See Acts 6:4; 1 Corinthians 9:14; and 1 Timothy 5:17-18). This includes financially blessing the House Church elders and children's ministers throughout our Network.

A “House Church” affiliated with Roots Church is a small community with five or more adult believers (from different households) who (1) meet weekly for purposeful spiritual interaction, (2) care about each other's lives, and (3) partner together with the larger ministry of Roots Church.

House Churches in our Network are established to meet the most important components of Christian church-life described in the New Testament (Heb. 10:24; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:26). Accordingly, membership in the Assembly is not affected by one's attendance or involvement at large Gatherings but only at the small, weekly House Church meetings.

Section 2. Stages of Development

- A. Birth Stage – This is the ground level of a House Church. It happens when one or two believers lead someone to Jesus and begin to meet with him or her on a weekly basis to talk about the Bible and how to know and interact with Jesus.
- B. Early Growth Stage – In time, the little group of two or three will grow to a regular attendance of at least five. This stage allows the process of early growth to happen unencumbered by other requirements or expectations.
- C. Maturation Stage – The group discusses the larger vision of Roots Church, the biblical concepts behind how a House Church functions, and their responsibilities as a family of believers. They then begin to implement each of the requirements to become an approved House Church (defined in Section 4 of this Article).
- D. Approval Stage – When all of the requirements are being met and attendance is averaging at least five people (from different households), the House Church may apply for official approval by Roots Church. They are then entitled to all the rights and privileges of an official House Church within our Network (see Section 3 of this Article), and participants in the House Church may become official Mission Partners of Roots Church, as described in Article VI, Sections 1 and 2.
- E. Expansion Stage – The House Church is expected to continue to grow and thrive with people being regularly added to their number. New converts are baptized in homes and welcomed into community.
- F. Multiplication Stage – As a House Church continues to reach people who need to know Jesus, and as the attendance continues to grow, the group will eventually reach a size where meaningful fellowship is no longer easy to maintain among every person attending. This generally happens somewhere between twelve and twenty people, or often 80% of typical seating capacity. Therefore, when a group reaches 75% of seating capacity or approximately 15 people, it is recommended that one of five actions be taken:
 - (1) Multiplication by Division – Just as a cell in the human body splits in two to accomplish growth of the body, so too can a House Church choose to divide into two (or more) groups for the sake of expanding the effectiveness of the overall ministry. In this case, the group that remains with the original Elder maintains approval status with the overall Network of Roots Church. The second group receives a new Overseer (who has apprenticed the original elder for a time), immediately begins the Formation Stage, and soon applies for approval. This entire transition can happen in a matter of a couple weeks and tends to be the strongest form of multiplication (though it can sometimes be the most relationally difficult).

- (2) Multiplication by Pioneering – In some cases, a House Church recognizes that a large division would not be relationally or functionally healthy, but something still must be done to facilitate growth without the meeting becoming too large. In these cases, evangelistic efforts simply shift gears. Rather than inviting new converts to an already existing church meeting, they are invited to meet with the person(s) who led them to Jesus, and the new meeting begins at the Birth Stage. The Christian(s) who led the person to Jesus now attend two House Church meetings per week: the House Church that sent them and their own budding House Church. When their new House Church reaches the Approval Stage, they can be officially “sent” by their former House Church and begin to minister exclusively at their new House Church as a fully-appointed Elder.
- (3) Multiplication by Apprenticeship – This is similar to the previous but involves substantially more mentoring. In this case, the elder of the first group takes another mature believer as an apprentice. After partnering for a time in leading the first group, the two of them start a second group at a different time during the week, practice evangelism together, and build the new group up to the approval process (the first elder is attending two meetings each week at this point, leading the first group and supporting in the second). When it’s time for the new group to be approved, the apprentice becomes the overseer fully responsible for the new group, and the elder goes back to leading only one meeting (until choosing another apprentice).
- (4) Multiplication by Succession – This is technically the opposite of the previous. Rather than the Elder remaining with the first group, an apprentice is raised up within that group to become the new elder, and the original elder leaves to plant a new House Church elsewhere. The original group retains approval status, and the new overseer is appointed as an elder.
- (5) Multiplication by Network Replication – Similar to multiplication by division, but on a larger scale. In some cases, a House Church may find itself geographically distant from the central operation of our Network, making it difficult for most participants to gather for the large meetings. When this happens, the overseer of the House Church begins to meet with our Senior Leadership Team about turning their growing House Church (and perhaps some other House Churches in their area) into a brand new network with its own new Senior Leadership Team and large gatherings. The sending Assembly (us) and the new Assembly can continue to share various ministries and overall resources while still becoming two legally separate organizations with separate leadership, separate boards, and separate finances, depending upon the agreement between Roots Church and the newly forming Assembly.

All five methods of multiplication will result in the most effective “House Church leaders” becoming “network leaders” who naturally and relationally become a sort of elder to elders as they continue to offer experience-based advice and friendship to those who were sent out from their groups. Thus authority roles in our Assembly are developed

organically through serving others and encouraging expansion of the Kingdom, and people recognize authority not because of mere position but because the person in authority has invested so much into their lives (much like a family).

Section 3. Benefits Afforded an Official House Church

- A. Participants can become Mission Partners or Digital Mission Partners of Roots Church and enjoy all the rights and privileges of membership afforded by these Bylaws.
- B. The officially appointed Pastor of the House Church will receive a share of regular Ministry Disbursements (see Article XII, Section 3C).
- C. The House Church will be able to avail itself of the certified Children's Ministers from Roots Church.
- D. The appropriate portions of the insurance policy covering Roots Church will be applied to protect against situations covered in the policy.
- E. As known, approved, and insured representatives of Roots Church, official House Churches and Digital House Churches may be recommended to members of the public who would like to connect to our Assembly but do not yet know anyone already attending a House Church in their area.

Section 4. Requirements to Become an Official House Church

- A. **REGULAR HOUSE CHURCHES.** In order for a House Church to transition into the Approval Stage, it must meet the following criteria:
 - 1. The House Church shall sustain a regular, weekly attendance average of at least five people over the age of 15 years from different households in each regular meeting over the course of six consecutive weeks. At least three of those five people shall have come consistently during that time, and the other two may be interchangeable guests or sporadic attendees.
 - 2. The House Church shall be led by someone who regularly attends the large Gatherings of Roots Church (and shall have done so regularly for at least two months). This leader shall meet the requirements of a House Church Overseer outlined in Section 6 of this Article X.
 - 3. The House Church shall subscribe to a culture that values every believer (not merely being a meeting centered around the gifts or talents of one or two people), is open to the gifts and operation of the Holy Spirit, and supports the cultural and doctrinal common ground described in the "Who We Are" document.
 - 4. The House Church shall select a minimum of one approved missionary to help support on a monthly basis, and its participants shall together

determine the amount of money they intend to pledge as a group (no less than \$10 monthly as a group).

5. The House Church shall together agree to join and support the larger mission and vision of Roots Church through regular prayer, encouragement, communication, multiplication of House Churches, and joy-filled financial support as the Holy Spirit directs.
6. An approved House Church shall begin with at least three Mission-Partners of Roots Church. This could alternatively mean that:
 - a) The new House Church shall have been started with at least three Mission Partners already present (most likely in the case of Multiplication by Division), or
 - b) Three people must apply for Mission-Partnership in conjunction with the application for House Church approval (most likely in the case of Multiplication by Pioneering, Apprenticeship, or Succession), or
 - c) Some combination of the above two (example: two people are already Mission-Partners, and one person applies for Mission-Partnership during the approval process).

B. PROBATIONARY HOUSE CHURCHES. In any situation where a new house church is being started by a Mission Partner of Roots Church with the help of at least one other Mission Partner from another household, the liability insurance of Roots Church shall cover incidents at their meetings, even during the 6-week trial period, provided an application has been submitted and received prior to the incident in question.

C. DIGITAL HOUSE CHURCHES. Any house church in which a majority of the members regularly meet via online conferencing software shall be identified as a Digital House Church. In order for a Digital House Church to become an official House Church of Roots Church, the following criteria must be met:

1. The Digital House Church shall sustain a regular, weekly attendance average of at least five people over the age of 15 years from different households in each regular meeting over the course of six consecutive weeks. At least three of those five people shall have attended consistently during that time, and the other two may be interchangeable guests or sporadic attendees.
2. The Digital House Church shall be led by someone who regularly attends or watches the video content from large Gatherings of Roots Church (and shall have done so regularly for at least two months). This leader shall meet the requirements of a House Church Overseer outlined in Section 6 of this Article X.
3. The Digital House Church shall subscribe to a culture that values every believer (not merely being a meeting centered around the gifts or talents of

one or two people), is open to the gifts and operation of the Holy Spirit, and supports the cultural and doctrinal common ground described in the “Who We Are” document.

4. The Digital House Church shall select a minimum of one approved missionary to help support on a monthly basis, and its participants shall together determine the amount of money they intend to pledge as a group (no less than \$10 monthly as a group).
5. The Digital House Church shall together agree to join and support the larger mission and vision of Roots Church through regular prayer, encouragement, communication, multiplication of House Churches, and joy-filled financial support as the Holy Spirit directs.
6. An approved Digital House Church shall begin with at least three Mission-Partners or Digital Mission Partners of Roots Church. This could alternatively mean that:
 - a) The new Digital House Church shall have been started with at least three Mission Partners or Digital Mission Partners already present (most likely in the case of Multiplication by Division), or
 - b) Three people must apply for Mission-Partnership or Digital Mission-Partnership in conjunction with the application for Digital House Church approval (most likely in the case of Multiplication by Pioneering, Apprenticeship, or Succession), or
 - c) Some combination of the above two (example: two people are already Digital Mission-Partners, and one person applies for Digital Mission-Partnership during the approval process).

D. SATELLITE HOUSE CHURCHES. House churches and digital house churches that meet the criteria above but whose overseer does not live close enough to physically attend the Leadership Forums of Roots Church shall be considered Satellite House Churches. Qualified Mission Partners shall fit the category of “Members Abroad,” according to *Article VI, Section 4. Members Abroad*. Should a new network form in the geographical region of a Satellite House Church, plans shall be discussed to possibly form a new Senior Leadership Team in that region and begin a new organization that can serve the local needs.

Section 5. Network Oversight and Discipline

The Board, including the Senior Leadership Team, shall hold the authority to approve, deny, suspend, or revoke official House Church status according to that House Church’s faithfulness to the commitments made at the time of approval.

The Senior Leadership Team shall provide oversight to House Churches and their Overseers, seeking and promoting the spiritual and relational health of the entire Network. Accordingly, the Senior Leadership Team shall hold the right to enact appropriate church discipline.

If official House Church status is removed from a specific group, that House Church's Overseer and any Mission Partners regularly attending will be notified. The Overseer's official status as an Elder will be simultaneously removed, and the Mission Partners will have six weeks to find and commit to another House Church or else have their Membership status with Roots Church removed.

House Church Overseers who disagree with actions taken by members of the Senior Leadership Team are entitled to a hearing before a minimum of 5 members of the Board not involved directly in the dispute. If 5 uninvolved members cannot be found, a hearing may be held before the membership in a Special Business Meeting, pursuant to the guidelines set forth in Article IX, Section 3. An uninvolved party from the Board shall serve as Chairperson at the meeting. If none can be found, a District official designated by the District Office shall serve as Chairperson over the Business Meeting.

Section 6. Leadership

A. Terms

Roots Church utilizes four terms for House Church leadership: Elder, Leader, Pastor, and Overseer.

“Elder” is the term used in these Bylaws for an officially affirmed shepherd in a House Church. It should be noted that the word “affirmed” here does not refer to a top-down installment or appointment of a minister over a congregation. Rather such official “affirmation” is just that—a recognition of God’s ministry of shepherding through an individual. Such a person meets the “Standards of Pastoral Ministry” outlined in Subsection 2 below and has been officially affirmed by the Senior Leadership Team of Roots Church

“Leader” is the term used for anyone who shepherds or co-leads a House Church but is not yet officially affirmed as an official House Church Elder in the Network.

“Pastor” is the practical term used to describe both official and unofficial House Church shepherds throughout the Network. House Church participants are not expected to use the title of “Pastor” for the person leading their group, but the regular use of the term is encouraged in order to help everyone—both participants and the pastors themselves—to remember that these ministers have taken responsibility to watch over God’s flock in their care.

“Overseer” is a more technical term typically used in documents and in-house communications and is interchangeable for “pastor,” denoting both official elders and unofficial leaders of House Churches connected officially or unofficially to Roots Church.

B. Code of Conduct for Overseers

The “Roots Church Code of Conduct for Overseers” is derived from three main passages of Scripture and applies to all ministers associated with Roots Church:

1 Timothy 3:1-12 – Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap.

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. (NIV)

Titus 1:6-9 – An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God’s work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. (NIV)

1 Peter 5:1-5 – To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ’s sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

“God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the humble.” (NIV)

In the above scriptures, gender-specific terms shall be understood as applying non-exclusively to either gender, noting that the ancient patriarchal culture at the

time these words were written leveraged different limitations on church governance than the more egalitarian culture of the present day. Roots Church officially affirms the role of women in ministry, according to the scriptural and doctrinal guidelines laid out in the Assemblies of God position paper about women in ministry. (<https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers/The-Role-of-Women-in-Ministry>)

Besides this gender issue, the only exceptions to the biblical criteria in the preceding scriptures come when a minister is not married or does not have children. In such cases, he or she is not evaluated on those matters but is still held to the rest.

Beyond these three Scriptures, we add the expectation of all ministers being Christ-like in word, attitude, and action. As First John 2:6 says, “Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did.”

C. Prerequisites for Affirmation as an Elder

Before the Senior Leadership team will officially lay hands on a House Church Leader and affirm him or her as an official Elder in Roots Church, he or she must meet the following criteria:

1. Be or become a Mission Partner or Digital Mission Partner of Roots Church in good standing.
2. Either (1) be a Mission Partner of Roots Church for one full year, (2) successfully complete the Roots School of Ministry (RSOM), or (3) serve in the capacity of House Church Leader or Co-Leader (regular or digital) for three months and hold any level of active ministerial credentials with the General Council of the Assemblies of God.
3. Have three people from one’s own House Church or Digital House Church fill out a confidential Character Reference form that will be sent to the Spiritual Life Director. (If married, one character reference shall be one’s spouse, otherwise no character references shall be from one’s own family.)
4. Regularly attend large Network-wide Gatherings and Pastors and Leaders Forums (in person or online) for at least three months. (Pastors of Digital House Churches may attend Gatherings in person or regularly watch the video content from those meetings, but local pastors are expected to attend in person unless excused by the Senior Leadership Team.)
5. Meet in person or online, along with one’s spouse (if applicable), with at least two members of the Senior Leadership Team for an interview and discussion about life, family, and ministry.

Section 7. Extension Ministries

Any meeting of believers for any purpose other than that of a standard House Church meeting shall fit the category of “Extension Ministry.” Such ministries may include affinity groups, prayer meetings, Bible studies, extracurricular children’s activities (such as Royal Rangers or Mpack Girls’ Ministries), age-focused groups, annual events, etc.

All such meetings are not, by definition, “House Churches,” although meetings that fulfill House Church criteria (see Sections 1 and 4 of this Article X) may organize for the purpose of a shared foreign language or may target a specific neighborhood, campus, apartment building, etc. The Senior Leadership Team shall have the right and authority to define whether a specific group shall be identified as a House Church or an Extension Ministry.

Extension Ministries shall only be considered official ministries of Roots Church when they meet the following criteria:

- A. Extension Ministries shall be operated by one or more Mission Partners in good standing who are actively involved in their House Church(es).
- B. Extension Ministries shall be made known to the Director of Operations, including planned meeting times and locations, if known. (This enables Roots Church to promote such activities as the Senior Leadership Team sees fit.)
- C. Such meetings shall be Gospel-focused and fulfill at least one portion of “Our Common Vision,” as written in this Article X, Section 1.

Official status shall be granted only after approval by the Director of Operations.

Section 8. Board Discretion

In the event that an established and thriving house church wishes to officially join the Roots Church Network and meets the “heart” of the qualifications for approval, the Board is permitted, on a case-by-case basis, to approve a house church and its Elder at any time, even before all the time constraints are passed.

ARTICLE XI. CHURCH DISCIPLINE POLICY FOR MINISTERS

Section 1. Disciplinary Procedures for Handling Breaches in the Code of Conduct or the Statement of Faith

While the guidelines offered herein can be useful in determining a wise, Scriptural course of action for church discipline in general, this policy shall be understood as being applied to ministers affiliated with Roots Church. House Church Overseers are granted authority to administer appropriate church discipline within their local context, as outlined in Article VI, Section 9.

Roots Church recognizes four categories of offense and determines to handle each category in a different way: (1) Sin against a fellow Christian, (2) Private sin against God, (3) Secret sin, and (4) Sin against the Gospel. Each of these categories is handled differently in Scripture, and so each of these categories is handled differently within the structure of Roots Church.

1. Sin against a fellow Christian
 - a. Meaning: If an individual minister associated with Roots Church violates an area of Christian conduct that primarily only affects that person and one other individual (or family), it should be handled as a sin against a fellow Christian.
 - b. Model: Matthew 18:15-17 – If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. (NIV)
 - c. Method: (1) The offended party should directly confront the offending minister and try to resolve the matter quietly and confidentially. (2) If the offender refuses to change, he or she should be confronted a second time with the help of another mature believer who will stand with the offended party in addressing the improper conduct. (3) If the offender still refuses to change or admit fault, the matter should be brought to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team who will deal with the matter first privately and then openly if necessary.
2. Private sin against God
 - a. Meaning: Breaches of the Code of Conduct include private personal sins that do not appear to directly affect others. Such actions include matters of the heart and personal struggles that the minister is trying to escape, such as bitterness, resentment, anger, fear, lustful thoughts, etc.
 - b. Model: In matters of personal sin between the person and God, Scripture indicates the need to “rid” oneself of such sin:
 - i. Ephesians 4:31 – Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. (NIV)

- ii. Colossians 3:8 – But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. (NIV)
- iii. James 1:21 – Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you. (NIV)
- iv. 1 Peter 2:1 – Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. (NIV)

Ideally, a minister should not have any of these traits present in his or her life; nevertheless, Roots Church recognizes that we live in a world where we must continually and vigilantly purify ourselves from spiritual and physical contamination.

- v. 2 Corinthians 7:1 – Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God. (NIV)

Therefore, Roots Church desires to create a culture where ministers do not need to be afraid to confess their struggles but can openly and honestly model a lifestyle of “perfecting holiness” for those they lead.

- vi. 1 John 1:9 – If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (NIV)
 - vii. James 5:16 – Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. (NIV)
- c. Method: (1) The minister, realizing his or her misconduct, is expected to proactively rid such things from his or her life. (2) If confessing the sin to God and personal prayer do not seem to be producing the desired results, the minister is expected to confess their struggles to another mature believer whom he or she can trust to pray and offer wise counsel. (3) If the minister realizes that his or her misconduct has affected others, he or she should confess to the affected parties and openly repent to them in humility. (4) Struggling ministers are encouraged to take a brief sabbatical from ministry to grant time for sorting out the matter. (5) If the minister refuses to change or gives up trying, his or her leadership position at Roots Church will be revoked or suspended until a restoration process can take place, as described in the “Method” segment of the following subsection.

3. Secret Sin

- a. Meaning: This pertains to breaches of the Code of Conduct that have been deliberately kept secret, indicating the minister’s lack of desire for repentance or change. Clearly, secret sin cannot be addressed until it is exposed, so this category specifically refers to areas of misconduct that have come to light after having been kept secret, apart from the minister confessing and walking through repentance and restoration of their own volition.
- b. Model: 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 9-13 – It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father’s wife. And you are proud! Shouldn’t you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship

the man who did this? Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord....I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat. What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.” (NIV)

- c. Method: If it is believed that a Roots Church minister has been engaging in secret sin without repentance, the matter should be made known to the Board who will conduct an investigation into the matter to determine if the allegations are true. Based on the instruction of First Timothy 5:19-20, accusations must be made by at least two or three people for a case to receive serious attention, unless, in the discretion of the Board, the unique circumstances of the case warrant an investigation with less evidence. While each case is unique and may require a unique response, the default course of action is to remove the person from their leadership position and release him or her from ministry until he or she is ready to repent. At such time, he or she will be lovingly accepted back into fellowship, but will not necessarily have an easy time re-earning the respect of the people he or she let down. Therefore a person’s reinstatement of position will happen only from the ground up, gaining relational trust and influence organically with time and following the same procedures that originally instated the person in their previous official position. Scripturally, a repentant person should be a “new creation,” and therefore it only makes sense to treat such an individual as a new person who has never yet been appointed to leadership.

4. Sin against the Gospel

- a. Meaning: Should a minister be found cheapening the message of the Full Gospel or preaching law over grace, this constitutes a sin against the Gospel and must be corrected in order to maintain doctrinal integrity among the fellowship. This includes blatant divergence from the Statement of Faith.
- b. Model: Following the example of Paul’s rebuke to Peter and His instruction to Titus about those who cheapen the Gospel, such matters are handled with seriousness, and false teachings are corrected publicly.
 - i. Galatians 2:11 – When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. (NIV)
 - ii. Titus 1:13-14 – This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no

attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth. (NIV)

- c. Method: If it is determined that a Roots Church minister has been sinning against the Gospel, the matter will first be addressed with that person in private to give him or her the opportunity to correct the matter and confess the mistake to the people who have been affected by the wrong teaching. If the minister refuses to admit to the error, a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team will address the matter with the minister's House Church (preferably with the minister present) and try to bring the group to a point of decision on the matter. If the people wish to follow the divergent teaching rather than the position held by Roots Church, the group is free to leave the covering of Roots Church, all Mission Partners who wish to remain with the defecting group will forfeit their membership, and the minister will lose his or her official position with Roots Church. If the people agree with Roots Church but the minister refuses to change his or her stance, the House Church will retain Roots Church affiliation only if someone else from the group is received as the new designated leader. The minister in question will not continue to hold an official Roots Church position but may re-apply if he or she later comes to agree with the stance of Roots Church.

Section 2. Assemblies of God Jurisdiction Over AG Credential Holders

Any minister affiliated with Roots Church who holds Certified, Licensed, or Ordained credentials with the Assemblies of God shall also be subject to the rules of conduct, discipline, and restoration established in the Bylaws of the Michigan District of the Assemblies of God and of the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

If known violations exist, the Board shall be responsible to give notice to the Michigan District Secretary's office.

ARTICLE XII. FINANCE

Section 1. In General

All funds for the maintenance of the Assembly shall be provided by the voluntary contributions and offerings of the Mission Partners and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the Assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the church Board and shall be administered by the Treasurer under his or her direction (1 Cor. 9:13-14; 16:1-2 2 Cor. 8:7, 13-15; 9:6-8; Gal. 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).

Individual members of the Senior Leadership Team shall have the right to call for a special offering at their discretion during meetings of any kind. House Church Pastors and Leaders shall have the right to encourage giving and collect offerings in their respective House Churches.

Section 2. Handling of Offerings

A. House Churches

Each House Church is encouraged to collect financial offerings and gifts to support the overall network of Roots Church.

All gifts given in the designated offering container at a House Church are considered property of Roots Church and must be passed along in a timely manner (no longer than 2 weeks) to the main office for proper accounting.

Personal gifts given for such purposes of (1) local benevolence (such as providing for widows, orphans, the needy, or those with unexpected needs), (2) occasional expenses of the House Church not covered by the church budget (such as food costs, evangelism costs, supplies, toys for children, etc.), or (3) personal gifts for the House Church Pastor and family or other individual (considered as taxable gifts), are not to be collected in the Roots Church offering and are to be kept separate from the designated giving container—ideally handed directly to the person receiving such a gift. As these personal gifts do not belong to the Church, such gifts are not tax deductible and are only personal transactions between individuals.

Giving envelopes shall remain sealed until opened by the designated “counting committee” selected by the Board. (House Church Overseers or their designees are encouraged to collect new, empty giving envelopes at all large gatherings.)

Each House Church’s Overseer shall ask a trustworthy participant in his or her House Church not directly related to him or her to help account for the gifts given during that meeting. The completed “Accounting Sheet,” signed by both parties, shall be delivered to the Executive Director in a sealed envelope with any and all funds collected for Roots Church.

B. Large Gatherings

All offerings collected in large meetings (such as Gatherings, Pastors and Leaders Forums, and conferences) shall be counted by at least two authorized persons before the funds are removed from the premises of the meeting. An Offering Receipts Form shall be signed in duplicate by those counting the offering, with one copy going to the Treasurer and the other to the Leadership Director. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local Assembly and of all individual giving.

Section 3. Ministerial Remuneration

A. Regular Remuneration

Each member of the Senior Leadership Team shall be remunerated for his or her services by a salary or by other means agreed upon by the church Board and himself or herself. The church Board shall review the minister's remuneration at least annually. The minister whose remuneration is being established shall excuse himself or herself from the room throughout the discussion and voting to avoid conflict of interest.

B. Reimbursement for Expenses

Members of the Senior Leadership Team shall be given consideration by the church Board for expenses incurred by attendance at professional development conferences, District Councils, General Councils, and other District or National functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the Assembly as determined by the Board.

C. Ministry Disbursements

Each month, a portion of the General Fund, as designated by the Board, shall be distributed to officially approved House Church Elders and officially approved Children's Ministers throughout the Roots Church Network. Shares of the whole shall be equal in size, but House Church Elders shall receive a double share for each officially approved House Church pastored (see 1 Tim. 5:17). Officially approved and appointed Children's Ministers shall receive one quarter (1/4) share for each meeting in which they were known to serve (serving faithfully each week in one House Church shall result in a full share for the month). Those who serve both as House Church Elders and as Children's Ministers (in another House Church) shall be compensated a double share for each official House Church pastored and a quarter share for each individual children's meeting served. Each Senior Leadership Team member shall also receive a double share for his or her service to the entire Network. This shall be in addition to any regular remuneration and/or Ministry Disbursements for serving as a House Church Elder and/or Children's Minister. Any minister entitled to Ministry Disbursements shall have the right to opt out of such remuneration or opt back in as desired. Thirty (30) days notice shall be required before one's decision to opt in or opt out shall go into effect. Ministry Disbursements shall be paid on a regular schedule set by the Board.

D. Severance Pay

In the event a Senior Leadership Team member is removed from office by a vote of the active voting membership of the Assembly, he or she shall be given a minimum of 2 months regular or average remuneration as severance pay, except in the case of proven moral turpitude.

There is no provision for severance pay where Ministry Disbursements to House Church Elders are concerned.

Section 4. Reporting

An annual report of finances for the previous year and an annual budget for the upcoming year will be presented to the Mission Partners of the Assembly present at the Annual Business Meeting. At that time, questions and input shall be accepted, and the annual church budget, as a guideline for spending, will be presented to the Mission Partners for approval. It shall be understood that this budget may be adjusted later by the Board, and the Board shall understand that any such actions are accountable before God and the Mission Partners of the Assembly.

ARTICLE XIII. PROPERTY

Section 1. Property Ownership

This Assembly shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan, and all property, real or personal, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the corporate name of this Assembly.

Section 2. Approval of Property Dispositions

No real property of the Assembly shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated without such action having been authorized by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any duly called business meeting. The proposed action shall be announced in the notice of the business meeting. The Chairman and the Secretary of this Assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized by the vote of the membership. Such certificates shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.

The Board shall have the authority to dispose of any personal property it deems necessary.

Section 3. Approval of Property Acquisitions

A. Real Property

Purchase of real property in the amount of \$100,000 or more shall be authorized by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at any duly called business meeting.

B. Personal Property

The Board of Deacons shall have the authority to purchase or lease personal property within the limits set forth in the annual budget as approved by the congregation.

Amounts in excess of the annual budget limits shall be approved by a majority vote of the voting membership (Mission Partners) present at any business meeting of this Assembly. Necessary replacement of existing personal property can be made at the Board's discretion without a membership vote of approval.

Section 4. Disaffiliation

Title to all real property now owned or hereafter acquired by the Assembly shall be held in trust as a place of divine worship in full cooperative fellowship and affiliation with The General Council of the Assemblies of God, Springfield, Missouri, and the Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God. In the event that the Assembly shall be divided over doctrinal or any other issues, or shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God, all property of the Assembly shall remain with those Mission

Partners, whatever their number, desiring continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adhering to its Statement of Fundamental Truths. The determination of which group of Mission Partners desires continued affiliation with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental Truths shall be arbitrated by the District Presbytery of the Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God, and its decision shall be final and binding. If all of the Mission Partners of the Assembly shall vote to disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God for doctrinal or any other reasons, then all of the property of such Assembly shall revert to said District Council and shall be used by the District as an Assemblies of God church if possible, and if not possible, the District may sell the property and apply the proceeds in any manner consistent with its stated purposes.

Section 5. Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Assembly, none of its funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any other individual. The church Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Assembly, dispose of all of the funds and assets of the Assembly by conveying the same to the Michigan District Council of the Assemblies of God, for the purposes of the Assembly, and provided that said District Council at the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Circuit Court of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as said Court shall determine, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes.

Section 6. Property Use

All property shall be used consistent with the purposes of this Corporation as set forth in these Bylaws. Any requests for use outside of the above must be approved by the Board.

ARTICLE XIV. ARBITRATION OF DISPUTES

Inasmuch as the Scriptures require Christians to take their disputes to the saints and not to the civil courts (1 Cor. 6:1-8), all disputes which may arise (1) between any Mission Partner of this church and the church itself, or (2) between any Mission Partner of this church and any Minister, officer, director, employee, volunteer, or other worker of this church, shall be resolved by binding arbitration if efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute have failed.

Either party to the dispute may initiate the arbitration process by filing with the other party a written request for arbitration within a reasonable time after the dispute has arisen and efforts to mediate or conciliate have failed. In such a case, the Mission Partner and the church shall each name an arbitrator, and the two so selected shall name a third. All arbitrators must be born-again, Spirit-filled believers who are members of an Assemblies of God church.

The third arbitrator chosen by the other two shall disclose, before accepting the appointment, any financial or personal interest in the outcome of the arbitration, and any existing or past financial, professional, family, or social relationships which are likely to affect impartiality or which might reasonably create an appearance of partiality or bias. Either of the parties to the arbitration, on the basis of such disclosures, may disqualify such a candidate from serving as the third arbitrator. A third arbitrator who serves without objection from either party has a continuing duty to disclose relationships or interests which may impair his or her impartiality. Either party, regardless of the stage of the arbitration process, may on the basis of such disclosures disqualify such a person from further participation. The arbitration process shall not proceed until the third arbitrator is selected.

The arbitrators shall appoint the time and place for the hearing and cause notification to the parties to be served personally or by registered mail not less than 30 days before the hearing. Appearance at the hearing waives such notice. The arbitrators may adjourn the hearing from time to time as necessary and, on request of a party and for good cause or upon their own motion, may postpone the hearing to a later date. The arbitrators may hear and determine the controversy upon the evidence produced notwithstanding the failure of a party duly notified to appear. The parties are entitled to be heard, to present evidence material to the controversy, and to cross-examine witnesses appearing at the hearing. The hearing shall be conducted by all the arbitrators, but a majority of them may determine any question and render a final award.

If during the course of the hearing an arbitrator for any reason ceases to act, he shall be replaced in the same manner in which he was originally selected.

The arbitrators may in their absolute discretion admit as evidence any affidavit or declaration concerning the matters in dispute, a copy thereof having been given at least 5 days previously to the party against whom the same is offered, but the person whose evidence is so taken shall be subject to cross-examination by such party. The arbitrators shall have the power to order and direct what they shall deem necessary to be done by either of the parties relating to the matters in dispute.

Cost of the arbitration shall be determined and assessed by the arbitrators.

Any submission of a dispute to arbitration shall not be revoked by the death of any party to the dispute, and any award will be binding upon such person's heirs and successors. The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on both parties, and both parties submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the civil courts in this state (including federal courts), as well as the courts of any other state which may have jurisdiction over any dispute contemplated by this Article, for the entry of a judgment confirming the arbitrators' award.

The arbitration process is not a substitute for any disciplinary process set forth in the Bylaws of the Assembly, and shall in no way affect the authority of the Assembly to investigate reports of misconduct, conduct hearings, or administer discipline.

Any matter not provided for herein shall be governed by the provisions of the Uniform Arbitration Act. If a dispute may result in an award of monetary damages, then use of this arbitration procedure is conditioned on acceptance of the procedure by the liability insurer of the church, and the insurer's agreement to honor any arbitration award up to any applicable policy limits.

ARTICLE XV.

AMENDMENTS

The Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the Assembly by a majority vote of the membership present, except as otherwise indicated herein. Articles III, XII, and XIV of these Bylaws may be amended only by the affirmative vote of 100 percent (100%) of the active voting Mission Partners present at any annual or special business meeting called for the purpose of amending these Bylaws. Articles VI, VIII, IX, X, XI, and XII may be amended by majority vote of the Board. Article IV of these Bylaws is not subject to amendment, except to conform to any amendments made to the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God. All amendments must be consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the Michigan District Council.