

**BYLAWS  
of  
Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship**

# ARTICLE I

## Membership

### SECTION 1: General

Membership in this church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership.

### SECTION 2: Qualifications for Membership

There shall be four qualifications for membership in the Church:

1. A personal commitment of faith in Jesus Christ for salvation;
2. Completion of Baptism as described by the Bible.
3. Completion of the Church's membership class; and
4. A signed commitment to abide by the Membership Covenant as specified in Article I section 4 of these bylaws.

### SECTION 3: Designation of Membership

To properly and accurately reflect the membership of the Church, three records shall be maintained as follows:

1. Members All members who are currently active in the Church as determined by the Elder Leadership Team, and are eighteen years old or older.
2. Children of Members/Minors All persons who have met all qualifications for membership but have not yet attained the age of eighteen years shall become non-voting members of the Church. Upon their eighteenth birthday, children of members shall automatically become voting members.
3. Inactive Members Members who have become inactive in accordance with Section 6 and as determined by the Elder Leadership Team.

### SECTION 4: Membership Covenant

The responsibilities of membership are described in the Membership Covenant as follows:

## Membership Covenant

"I have accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and have demonstrated my love and commitment to Him through the act of Baptism"

"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus," Romans 15:5

As members of Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship all qualified and willing persons will strive to support and protect the unity and mission of the church by agreeing to do the following things:

1. I will honor the reputation of Christ in the community by following Christ and His call on my life in everyday situations.

"Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart." 1 Peter 1:22

"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ." Philippians 1:27a

"As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do" 1 Peter 1:14-16

2. I will protect the unity of this church by observing common spiritual practices of seeking and giving forgiveness, refusing to gossip, following the churches leadership teams, and praying for the health of the church on a regular basis.

"Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble." 1 Peter 3:8

"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Romans 15:7

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Ephesians 4:29

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." Hebrews 13:17

"We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers." 1 Thessalonians 1:2

"I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now" Philippians 1:4,5

3. I will serve in at least one area that utilizes my main gift; and consider serving in other areas as needed.

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" Ephesians 4:11-12

4. I will tithe to Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship as my church home in support of God's work in this community and beyond.

"A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD." Leviticus 27:30

"On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made." 1 Corinthians 16:2

5. I will make it a priority to meet each week for our gathered worship on Sunday morning.

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:25

"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.'" Luke 14:23

6. I will meet with a small group to support community, grow spiritually, and care for the needs of others in my church.

"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.[who] made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant" Philippians 2:3-5,7

## **SECTION 5: Voting Rights of Membership**

Members shall have the right to vote on the following matters:

- annual budget of the Church
- disposition of all or substantially all of the Church's assets
- merger or dissolution of the Church
- acquisition of real property and related indebtedness
- amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution, or Bylaws of the Church
- calling, reaffirmation, and termination of Executive Staff, or full-time salaried positions.
- election and reaffirmation of Elders
- other items as determined by the Elder Leadership Team

#### **SECTION 6: Termination of Membership**

Members shall be removed from the Church records for any the following reasons:

- death
- by written request of the member
- an absence from services for more than 6 months with no response to verification of status letters
- dismissal according to the following conditions:
  1. When the member's conduct, public or private, violates Biblical principles and it is determined by the Elder Leadership Team they demonstrate no effort to change, and
  2. Such dismissal has been communicated to the Church in a timely manner by the Elder Leadership Team.

#### **SECTION 7: Restoration of Members**

Members dismissed by the Elder Leadership Team shall be restored to full membership privileges by the Elder Leadership Team according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7,8 when their conduct is judged by the Elder Leadership Team to be in accordance with Biblical standards and the Membership Covenant. Elder Leadership Team will communicate such restoration to the Church in a timely manner.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **Church Government**

#### **SECTION 1. General Statement**

## 1. Officers

The Officers of the Church shall consist of a Elder Leadership Team. Officers shall be called to office by vote of the membership of the Church as provided for in Article II, Section 2 and Section 3 of these bylaws. All officers of the Church shall be members of the Church in good standing.

If there are not at least four elders, a board of Directors shall function as the counsel of Elders. The Directors shall be comprised of the senior pastor, the Elders, & Directors appointed by the church membership according to ....

## 2. Committees and Appointees

The Elder Leadership Team has the authority to create committees and positions to which it may delegate any specified aspect of its responsibility. The Elder Leadership Team has the authority to dissolve any committee or position which it created. The Elder Leadership Team also has the authority to appoint Elders, other members of the Church to serve as members of such committees and to act as its agents in such positions. Every committee shall have a chairperson, responsible for the overall operation of the committee, who shall be appointed by the Elder Leadership Team.

## **SECTION 2. Elder Leadership Team and Leadership Structure**

The leadership structure at Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship is built around three teams of people:

1. The Board of Elders
2. The Executive Staff
3. The Support Staff

### 1. Elders

The board of elders is comprised of no fewer than six and no more than twelve men. The senior pastor is a permanent member of the board of elders and up to three staff may serve on the elder board, but not to exceed 30% of the make up. Pastoral Staff who serves on the Board of Elders must be Elder qualified.

### 2. The Purpose of Elders

Elders function primarily as discerners and guardians of the organization. They are not expected to oversee specific projects or ministry areas in their capacity as elders. They function as overseers for the entire organization. However, elders may be asked to serve on or lead specific teams when it is in the best interest of the church. The elders evaluate the effectiveness and direction of the organization according to three criteria:

1. The organization's mission: To help people meet Jesus and grow in that relationship.
2. The organization's resources.
3. The organization's doctrine:

Elders do not determine programming. This responsibility falls to the executive staff. However, the elders are responsible for evaluating programming based on its appropriateness and effectiveness in furthering the overall mission of Pin Oaks Ministries.

### 3. The Authority of an Elder

For all practical purposes, the elders have final say in any and all matters concerning the overall direction of the organization. Unless otherwise specified in this document, anything voted on by the elders requires a three-fourths majority of all in attendance in order to pass. A quorum of three-fourths must be present and voting at the time any vote is taken.

There are four decisions that the elders may not make without membership approval at an Organizational Business Meeting.

1. Elders may not appoint a new senior pastor.
2. Elders may not approve debt for the organization in excess of one-twelfth of the previous year's annual operating budget.
3. Elders cannot change or establish the denominational affiliation of POCF.
4. Elders may not change the Articles of Incorporation, or the Constitution.

### 4. The Qualifications of an Elder

A candidate for elder must have been a member of POCF for one year prior to his election to office, and have been actively involved in ministry at POCF for at least six months.

Furthermore, all elders are required to meet the qualifications for elder/overseer as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9.

### 5. The Selection of Elders

Names of potential Elders will be recommended by the current Board of Elder members first. These names will be voted on by the Board of Elders and a three-fourths approval is required to present them as candidates to the church body. Candidates must receive a 70% approval from the membership to be confirmed at the Annual Meeting.

The Board of Elders may solicit recommendations from the congregation for candidates for eldership. Candidate requests must be made no later than 6 weeks before yearly meeting to

allow for a two week interview process. These names will be voted on by the Board of Elders and a three-fourths approval is required to present them as candidates to the church body. Candidates must receive a 70% approval from the membership to be confirmed at the Annual Meeting or a Special Called meeting.

#### 6. The Terms of Elders

Elders will serve for a three year term. They may run for a second term upon a three-fourths approval vote by the current board and 70% approval by the membership. The chairman (“first among them”) will be elected by the current board by a three-fourths vote for a three year term and as Teaching Elder the pastor should have first consideration. If someone other than the Senior Pastor is elected then the chairman may run for consecutive terms. At the end of an elders second term they must step off the board for at least one year. Staff members who serve on the Board of Elders do not have terms.

#### 7. Elder Meetings

Senior Pastor will meet with the elders on a monthly basis, not less than nine times per year.

#### 8. Role of Chairman (First Among Them)

The Chairman has a vote on the Board of Elders and is an active participant in all discussions. The Chairman is responsible for the timely communication and organization of scheduled meetings. The Chairman is the primary communicator of the Board of Elders. He establishes the agenda and leads all church-wide meetings. He communicates with the staff on issues of salary, benefits, and discipline.

#### 9. The Dismissal of an Elder

If it becomes apparent that an elder should not serve in the office of elder, he may resign, or by three-fourths vote of the elders, excluding the elder under consideration, be immediately retired from the office. His position will remain vacant until the next regularly scheduled election or until the current elders choose a suitable replacement.

Elders have the authority to dismiss the senior pastor without organizational approval by a unanimous vote of all elders, excluding the senior pastor. In addition, any complaints or concerns regarding the senior pastor should be directed to and handled by the elders.

#### 10. Executive Staff

The senior pastor selects and leads the executive staff each year. The purpose of this group is to determine programming, give vision to the various ministries of the organization, and oversee the day-to-day operations. The Personnel Team and Senior Pastor are responsible for hiring and dealing with all staff (except Senior Pastor).

The Board of Elders oversees the salary and benefits package of all staff in partnership with the Finance and Personnel Teams. The Chairman of the Board is responsible for the communication of compensation to the staff.

#### 11. Support Staff

The Senior Pastor and Elder Leadership Team will work together in maintaining a support staff structure that best fits the needs and future of Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship. All support staff personnel are hired by the Senior Pastor and Executive Staff when deemed necessary.

### **SECTION 3. Vocational Pastors and Vocational Ministers**

#### 1. Definition

Vocational Pastors are the Elders of the church, who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. Vocational

Ministers are the non-ordained ministers of the church who, in response to God's call, serve the church of Christ as their primary vocation. Both Vocational Pastors and Vocational Ministers are supported financially by the church in return for their vocational labors.

#### 2. Duties

Vocational Pastors and Ministers shall perform the duties determined by the Elder Leadership Team and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes shall be approved by the church. The church's call of a Vocational Pastor is a call to the Eldership of the church. Therefore Vocational Pastors shall be members of the Elder Leadership Team and have all the Biblical qualifications of an Elder.

#### 3. Vocational Call by the Church

The members shall call Vocational Pastors and Ministers (1) by ballot upon recommendation of the Elder Leadership Team and (2) by at least a two-thirds majority of those members voting at the meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on the two successive Sundays preceding the meeting.

#### 4. Termination of Vocational Call by the Church

##### 1. By resignation

The question of terminating the vocational call of a Vocational Pastor or Minister shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the Pastor's or Minister's resignation.

## 2. Grievance

Where a grievance exists against a Pastor or Minister, either due to his preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article III or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting a Pastor or Minister, such grievance may be brought before the Elder Leadership Team by any two members in good standing. If the Council, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, then the vocational call of the Pastor or Minister may be terminated at any business meeting upon the recommendation of the Elder Leadership Team when supported by closed ballot of a three-fourths majority of those voting members of the Church present and voting with at least eighty percent (80%) of the total voting membership of the church present and voting at such meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays preceding the meeting.

## 5. Licensing and Ordination

In the matter of licensing and ordaining any person to the Gospel Ministry, the church shall follow the procedure developed by the Elder Leadership Team.

## SECTION 4. Lay Pastors

1. In addition to vocational pastor and Minister's, the church may employ additional pastors on a laymen's basis. The employment of lay pastors must be approved by the Elder Leadership Team. The Elder Leadership Team and Personnel Team shall be responsible for determining the duties of such personnel.

## SECTION 5. Other Employees

1. In addition to Vocational Pastors and Ministers, the church may employ additional personnel. The moneys for such personnel must be approved by the congregation at a properly called business meeting. The Elder Leadership Team and Personnel Team shall be responsible for determining the duties of and hiring such personnel.

# ARTICLE III

## Churches Basic Beliefs

### The Bible:

The Bible is God's Word to all people. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. Because it was inspired by God, the Bible is truth without any mixture of error and is completely relevant to our daily lives.

*(Deuteronomy 4:1-2; Psalms 119:11, 89, 105; Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 22:29; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 3:16)*

**Trinity – God:**

God has existed in relationship with Himself for all eternity. He exists as one substance in three persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Although each member of the Trinity serves different functions, they each possess equal power and authority.

*(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 1:35; John 5:21-23; 14:10, 16; Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Hebrews 1:8-10; James 2:19)*

**The Father:**

God is great: He is all powerful, all knowing, ever present, unchanging, completely worthy of our trust, and above all, holy. It is in Him that we live, move and exist. God is good: He is our Father. He is loving, compassionate, and faithful to His people and His promises.

*(Exodus 3:14; Numbers 23:19; Leviticus 11:44-45; 19:2; Psalm 11:4-6; Malachi 3:6 John 3:16; 4:24; 5:26; 14:1; Acts 17:28; Romans 3:3-4)*

**The Son:**

Jesus Christ is completely human, but at the same time completely God. He is the only plan for bringing people who are enemies of God back into a right relationship with God. He lived a perfect life, so that He could be a substitution for us in satisfying God's demands for perfection. He defeated death in His resurrection so that we could have life.

*(Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 14:33; 16:16; 28:5-6; Luke 22:70; 24:46-47; John 1:1, 14; 10:30; 11:25-27; 17:1-5; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 8:1-3; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; Gal 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:15; 2:9; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16)*

**The Holy Spirit:**

His presence assures us of our relationship with Christ. He guides believers into all truth, and exalts Christ. He convicts people of their sin, God's righteousness, and the coming judgment. He comforts us, gives us spiritual gifts, and makes us more like Christ.

*(Genesis 1:2; Psalms 51:11; 139:7 ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Mark 1:10; Lk 1:35; 4:1; 11:13; 12:12; John 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 13:2; Romans 8:9-11, 14-16, 26-27; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Peter 1:21; Revelation 22:17)*

**Eternity:**

Man was created to exist forever. He will either exist eternally separated from God by sin, or in union with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are places of eternal existence.

*(John 3:16, 36; Romans 6:23; 1 John 2:25; 5:11-13; Revelation 20:15)*

**Man:**

Man is made in the image of God and is the supreme object of His creation. Man was created to

have fellowship with God, but became separated in that relationship through sinful disobedience. As a result, man cannot attain a right relationship with God through his own effort. Every human personality is uniquely created, possesses dignity, and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*(Genesis 1:26-30; 2:7, 18-22; 3; Psalms 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18, 23; 5:6; 6:6; 7:14-25; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19, 21-22; Ephesians 2; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11)*

### **Salvation:**

The blood of Jesus Christ, shed on the cross, provides the only way of salvation through the forgiveness of sin. Salvation occurs when people place their faith in the death and resurrection of Christ as sufficient payment for their sin. Salvation is a gift from God and it cannot be earned through our own efforts.

*(Isaiah 1:18; 53:5-6; 55:7; Matthew 1:21; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 16:30-31; Romans 1:16-18; 3:23-25; 5:8-10; 6; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians 2:12-13; Hebrews 9:24-28; Revelation 3:20)*

### **The Church:**

The church is a local community of baptized believers unified through faith in Christ. It is committed to the teachings of Christ, to obeying all of His commands, and it seeks to bring the gospel to the world. The Church works together in love and unity, intent on the ultimate purpose of glorifying Christ.

*(Matthew 16:18-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-47; 5:11-14; 13:1-3; 14:23; 16:5; 20:28; 1 Corinthians 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:10-12; 5:22-32; Colossians 1:18; 3:15; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 21:2-3)*

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **Church Finances**

#### **SECTION 1 In General**

No method of raising funds shall be entertained which is in conflict with the Scriptural ideals of the Church.

#### **SECTION 2 Contributions**

It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligations to support the Church and its causes with regular and proportionate giving. Each member shall be encouraged in Scriptural giving, with tithing as the ideal minimum.

Special offerings may be sought by the Church, or by any of its organizations, with the approval of the Elder Leadership Team. This shall not preclude individuals from making special offerings or designated gifts at any time as the Spirit of God may move them.

### **SECTION 3 Financial Planning**

The financial planning of the Church shall be carried out through the medium of annual budgets for carrying out of the various programs of its work. Annual budgets shall be adopted by the Church upon recommendation of the Elder Leadership Team, or, if authorized by the Council, the Deacons or other committee.

### **SECTION 4 Accounts**

Financial receipts from all sources shall be accounted for according to the purposes for which contributions are designated. The Church shall disburse these funds promptly according to the financial program of the Church as detailed in the Budgets or other authorized designations.

### **SECTION 5 Indebtedness**

No note or contract whereby the credit of the Church is pledged shall be made except by recommendation of the Elder Leadership Team and approved by the Church.

### **SECTION 6 Authority to Bind the Church**

The Elder Leadership Team shall appoint no fewer than three officers of the church to serve as Trustees of the church and must be appointed from within the Elder Leadership Team. The Trustees are the only officers who have authority, in accordance with these Bylaws, the Church Constitution, and any applicable laws, to execute legal documents relating to real estate, church property, and church finances.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Meetings**

#### **SECTION 1 FOR WORSHIP**

Public services shall be held on any day the Executive Staff and Elder Leadership Team deem necessary for the operations of church functions. The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such times as the Executive Staff determine but no less than once a quarter. Other religious services may be appointed as the advancement of the work of the Church may require.

## **SECTION 2 FOR BUSINESS**

1. The Annual Meeting A general meeting of the Members shall be held each year at such time as determined by the Elder Leadership Team. This general meeting shall be the annual membership meeting. The purpose of this meeting shall be to adopt an annual budget. Any other proper business may be conducted at this meeting, when approved by the Elder Leadership Team or the Senior Pastor, but only if the notice requirements of ARTICLE V, SECTION 2.5 have been complied with in regard to said item(s) of business.
  
2. Special Meetings.
  1. Special meetings may be called at any time and for any purpose by a majority of the Elder Leadership Team or by the Senior Pastor, by giving notice to the Members in accordance with ARTICLE V, SECTION 2.e.
  
3. Quorum. A quorum for a meeting called pursuant to ARTICLE V, SECTION 2 shall consist of 40% of the total voting members of the church. All items of business will be conducted using simple majority rule except where otherwise specified in these Bylaws.
  
4. Rules Governing Business Meetings. Robert's Rules of Order shall be recognized as the general pattern for the conduct of the business meetings of the Church. Seeking the Lord's wisdom and blessing through thankful prayer shall be a part of every meeting.
  
5. Notice Provisions. Whenever Members are required or permitted to take any action at a meeting, notice shall be given to Members no less than ten (10) days or more than sixty (60) days prior to a meeting. Notification of membership meetings shall be given in any of the following manners, any of which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a membership meeting:
  1. distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a regular weekend service or
  2. oral announcement to the congregation at a regularly scheduled service or
  3. by United States mail to each Member identified on the membership record using their last known address per the membership record.

## ARTICLE VI

### Organization of Members for Ministry

Members of this church shall have the liberty to participate in and organize themselves for ministry, provided that such participation and organization does not conflict with Article II of the Constitution. Any such organization may seek church sanction from the Elder Leadership Team as an official ministry of Pin Oaks Christian Fellowship. Such sanction shall be granted provided that 1) the object, purpose, belief and conduct of the organization and its members is consistent with Article II of the Constitution, and 2) the primary officers of the organization are members of the church. Sanction by the Elder Leadership Team does not necessarily imply support of the organization by the church with personnel, finances, or facilities. Such support may be requested as provided by the leadership of the church.

## ARTICLE VII

### Discipline

The discipline of members shall be a responsibility of the Elder Leadership Team under such rules and procedures as the Elders may from time to time establish on the basis of Scripture. All such proceedings shall be guided by a spirit of prayer, Christian kindness, forbearance, and holy firmness under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## ARTICLE VIII

### Amendments

Revisions, additions or amendments of these bylaws may be made only in the following manner:

1. by recommendation of the Elders; and
2. at the annual meeting or special meeting; and
3. by a two-thirds majority vote of the total voting membership as defined in the bylaws; and
4. if notice of the proposed change or addition has been given, in writing and from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the annual meeting.

# Bylaws

Proposed for approval 16 January 2011  
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Chart 1: *POCF Organization Chart*

