

By-Laws of New Beginnings Church

A. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this congregation shall consist of those persons who have publicly made a confession or reaffirmation of faith before the worshipping congregation and received a water baptism. Exceptions to the public confession of faith may be allowed if any limitations are preventing a public presentation. Then membership may be received by any two elders. Although New Beginnings Church (NBC) will receive infant baptisms by sprinkling as valid for membership transfers, only “believers baptism by immersion” will be offered unless there are medical concerns that may cause some health risk to the prospective member.

A confession (or reaffirmation of faith is positively affirming (or reaffirming) that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God and (continuing to) accept Him as your Lord and Savior.

The duties of church membership are to support the Mission and Core Values of the church by being involved in a ministry, with one’s personal and financial resources and by attending worship.

If one seeks membership after having been removed through disciplinary procedures they must first get the approval of a majority of the Elder Team.

1. Membership Status

Membership status shall be either active or inactive. If a member has not been in worship or had any record of giving to NBC for a three-month period, the member will be contacted by the Church Secretary to ascertain the intent of the member. If it is discovered that life circumstances might be positively impacted with pastoral care appropriate referrals shall be made. If withdrawal is desired by the member, then the member will be requested to submit a written request to the Church Secretary to that effect. If that member cannot be located after a reasonable effort, or if the member does not submit a request for withdrawal within one month after being notified, the Church Secretary may designate that person’s membership to be inactive. That membership status shall remain inactive until a letter of transfer is received, a request by the member is made to remove their membership or they begin participating in the life of the church again in a meaningful way.

B. SERVANT LEADERSHIP DISTINCTIONS

Servant leadership shall consist at various levels of distinctions and is made up of all persons who have met the qualifications for spiritual maturity, financial stewardship, righteous obedience and training. All those who wish to achieve Covenant leadership must progress through the following levels of distinction. As each level of distinction increases the previous obligations are included as obligations for the next higher level. The Pastoral Team shall assess leadership distinctions except in the case of the Covenant Leadership distinction in which the Pastoral Team shall invite servanthood at that level.

1. **M1 - Seeker** – This person has a ministry function that does not involve leadership. Their passion for ministry, spiritual gifts and behavioral style are untested and uncertain. A Seeker may not yet be a member of the church or may not have identified themselves as a Christian yet.
2. **M2 - New Young Believer** – This person needs to have an idea of what their passion for ministry might be and know a list of possible spiritual gifts they possess. Their spiritual gifts and ministry

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passion need to generally fit the ministry for which they are seeking to service. (They could be in an apprentice leadership position.) A New Young Believer needs to demonstrate a regular presence in their worship attendance.

3. **M3 - Stable Growing Believer** – This person must know their passion for ministry and spiritual gifts. (Evidence of this would be completion of a Uniquely You seminar.) Their gifts and passion must match the ministry in which they are seeking to serve. Training for ministry participation may also be required. In order for a Stable Growing Believer’s distinction to be growing it is required that they evidence some individual or small group relationship of accountability. (At this leadership distinction most team leadership positions and cell group leadership positions are possible.)
4. **M4 - Leading Guiding Believer** – This is an individual who has proven kingdom fruitfulness through their own ministry as well as in the mentoring of others. They have demonstrated leadership that discovers or reproduces leaders under their influence. (The multiplication of cell groups would be evidence of this leadership distinction.) A Leading Guiding Believer needs to demonstrate a personal spiritual discipline to be praying and reading the Bible several times a week.
5. **M5 – Covenant Leader** – In addition to all of the requirements that have come before the Covenant Leader must be open to new ways of doing church in order to remain culturally relevant. The Covenant Leaders must be in agreement with the Core Values of New Beginnings Church. The Covenant Leader needs to have training in or a working knowledge in the operations of “Permission Giving” church. A Covenant Leader needs to tithe. The level of Covenant Leader is achieved by being invited by a member of the Pastoral Team to sign a covenant agreeing to walk in this level of obligation for service to God and the expression of the Body of Christ that is New Beginnings Church. While the selection is being made two pastors or a selected pastor and an Elder Team member shall conduct the examination of the candidate confidentially. After the examination is done and Elder Team approval is secured the candidate will be invited to serve at this level.

C. ELDER TEAM

New Beginnings Church shall have only one class of members, who shall have no voting rights. The Elder Team shall be made up of all the ordained Pastors, and lay Elders. Those that serve on the Elder Team are to fulfill their calling with their unique gift mix. The qualifications for elder are summarized in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

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| <i>Above reproach</i> | Elders must lead by example and demonstrate a faithful Christian lifestyle. |
| <i>Husband of one wife</i> | Elders, if married, must be devoted spouses. |
| <i>Temperate</i> | Elders must be self-controlled, enslaved to nothing, free from excesses. |
| <i>Prudent</i> | Elders must be sober, sensible, wise, balanced in Judgment, not given to quick, superficial decisions based on immature thinking. |

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| <i>Respectable</i> | Elders must demonstrate a well-ordered life and honorable behavior. |
| <i>Hospitable</i> | Elders must be unselfish with their personal resources. They must be willing to share blessings with others. |
| <i>Able to teach</i> | Elders must be able to communicate truth and sound doctrine in a non-argumentative way. |
| <i>Not pugnacious</i> | Elders must be gentle, patient and able to exercise self-control in difficult situations. |
| <i>Not greedy</i> | Elders must not be stingy, greedy, out for sordid gain, or preoccupied with material things. |
| <i>Manage own household</i> | Elders must have a well-ordered family life. |
| <i>Not a new convert</i> | Elders must have been Christians long enough to demonstrate the reality of their conversion and the depth of their spirituality. |
| <i>Good reputation</i> | Elders must be well respected by unbelievers and free of hypocrisy. |
| <i>Not self-willed</i> | Elders must not be stubborn, prone to force opinions on others or abuse authority. |
| <i>Love what is good</i> | Elders must desire the will of God in every decision and situation. |
| <i>Just</i> | Elders must desire to be fair and impartial. Their Judgments must be based on scriptural principle. |
| <i>Devout</i> | Elders must be devoted Christ followers seeking to be conformed to prayer, worship, the study of Scripture, and the guarding of their own walk. |

1. Term of Elder Team Members

Since Scripture indicates no fixed term for elders, no specific fixed term of office is recommended. Instead, each member of the Elder Team, upon appointment, shall be asked for a one-year commitment, subject to review, re-commitment, and re-affirmation by the participating team members with whom they serve each subsequent year.

During the period of annual review, both the individual and the other team members shall evaluate his continued service as elder, again considering the biblical qualifications as well as any personal factors that might affect his service. An individual's service as Elder Team member may discontinue by his own decision, or by three-fourths decision of the other team members. Those Elders renewing their commitment shall be presented to the participating members of the congregation for affirmation and dedication in January of each year.

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The Elder Team shall have the prerogative to drop from the membership of the Elder Team any member who, without notifying the church office, misses two consecutive meetings.

2. Selection of Elder Team

Members of the Elder Team are selected from the Covenant Leaders by consensus of the Elder Team. Leadership shall be recommended by the Pastoral Team for service on the Elder Team. There shall never be more than seven members on the Elder Team at any one time.

3. Responsibilities and Authority of Elder Team

Only those who are on the Elder Team shall be able to vote on matters concerning the whole congregation. Absentee ballots and proxy ballots may not be counted in any vote pertaining to church life. Those matters include budget goals, membership expulsion, purchase and sale of land, employment of the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor, Vision Statement, Core Values, Philosophy of Ministry, pastoral compensation, demotions in leadership distinctions, any indebtedness in excess of 5% of the annual budget, and any membership or leadership discipline issues that need to be brought to the Elder Team. A meeting of the Elder Team shall constitute an annual meeting of the corporation as far as the Articles of Incorporation are concerned.

Rounded to the nearest whole number eighty five percent (85%) of the voting membership of the Elder Team shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. An eighty (80%) majority (rounded to the nearest whole number) of the voting members present when there is a quorum shall be considered an action of the Elder Team.

The Elder Team meetings are open to church members unless deemed closed for confidential issues such membership discipline or conflict. Any two members of the Elder Team may make this decision.

4. Removal From Servant Leadership or Termination of Membership:

The guidelines for church discipline are set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 5:1-5, and 1 Corinthians 5:13.

Servant leaders may be removed from service or members may be removed from New Beginnings Church membership if there is behavior that is habitual and biblically sinful, or in violation with NBC's Core Values and basic beliefs. Dismissals from membership or demotion in leadership distinction shall proceed in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17. This is to be interpreted by the following steps.

- a. The offense must not be shared with anyone but the person(s) involved, except a member of the Elder Team and then only to receive counsel on how to proceed. Restoring the relationship, rather than exposing possible sin must be the focus. This process involves an effort to understand another's actions based upon their perspective.
- b. The preferred first step is for the offended party to go to the person(s) alone in a spirit of gentleness. If one is unable to maintain a spirit of gentleness or the first step is unsuccessful at achieving restoration, a member of the Elder Team may then be involved. For the biblical mention of a witness in Matthew we designate any member of the Elder Team. If more than one member of the Elder Team is enlisted the members of the Elder Team must consult with one another before any meeting takes place.

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c. If it is reported by the parties involved that restoration is not achieved and the sinful behavior continues, a majority of the Elder Team is obligated to confirm these accusations and serve as an arbitrator in resolving personal differences. If it is a matter of sin or behavior disruptive to the body of NBC the Elder Team may determine an appropriate change in leadership distinction by a majority vote of the Elder Team.

d. If the individual or individuals are noncompliant with the Elder Team's recommendations and/or their behavior continues to be disruptive to the body of NBC the Elder Team will recommend their expulsion from membership by a majority vote of the Elder Team.

e. Once the Elder Team is involved they will determine who needs to be informed or involved in the process. Individuals that bring conflict or sin to the attention of the Elder Team may be requested to bear their own burden and trust the Elder Team to deal with the item.

5. Restoration of Servant Leadership

Leaders and members dismissed by the Elder Team shall be restored by the Elder Team in the spirit of 2nd Corinthians 2:5-11, under the conditions that they have demonstrated confession and repentance to the offended parties. They need to apply to the Elder Team for reinstatement. The Elder Team reserves the right to decline applications.

D. PASTORAL TEAM

The ordained members of the Pastoral Team are considered members of the Elder Team. The Pastoral Team shall be made up of individuals that meet all of the requirements for Covenant Leadership and have been appointed if not employed by the Elder Team as a pastor of NBC.

Mission: The mission of the pastoral team is to equip persons for ministry by modeling and mentoring them in living out the mission, vision and values of the church.

Limitations: The pastoral team may do whatever they believe necessary to focus and equip people in ministry, provided they do not contradict the mission, vision, values and beliefs of the church, and provided that they do the following:

The Pastoral Team shall:

1. Not undertake any ministry or project without seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit through prayer and biblical discernment.
2. Deploy more teams and cell groups, or more team and cell group leaders from one year to the next.
3. Cast a compelling and ever-growing, Christ-centered vision for the church.
4. Cultivate new disciples who make new disciples.

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5. Work with the Elder Team to effectively accomplish the mission, vision, and values of the church.
6. Train and support lay leaders to carry out the ministry of the church.
7. Not be responsible for performing any ministry task which lay persons may adequately perform.

F. PASTORS

1. Senior Pastor

Consistent with the New Testament concept of spiritual gifts, the Senior Pastor, like any member of the body of Christ, is uniquely gifted and should seek to minister primarily within their area of giftedness. In addition, the Senior Pastor should be a teacher of the Word of God and provide strategic leadership and vision to the body. The goal of this leadership is to help mature believers through anointed and insightful presentation of biblical truth, equipping them to be faithful ministers in the body. This teaching must be by word and example, and must stress both understanding and application of God's truth.

Mission: The mission of the Senior Pastor is to be a servant after God's own heart and to proclaim a godly vision through teaching and preaching, so as to build up the body of Christ in ways that serve to fulfill our mission, vision and values.

Limitations: The Senior Pastor may do whatever fits within his area of giftedness, provided it does not contradict the mission, vision, values and beliefs of the congregation.

2. Selection of the Senior Pastor

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Senior Pastor, the Elder Team shall be responsible to conduct a search for candidates to fill the position. Once the Elder Team has selected a candidate, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation for affirmation. Affirmation is not voting. Affirmation is a positive group response i.e. a collective verbal "I do", standing or applause.

3. Removal of the Senior Pastor

In order to dismiss the Senior Pastor the Elder Team must vote by a three-fourths majority for the dismissal of the Senior Pastor. The terms for the Senior Pastor's departure shall follow the Pastor's Contract.

4. Associate Pastors

Consistent with the New Testament concept of spiritual gifts, any Associate Pastor, like any member of the body of Christ, is uniquely gifted and should seek to minister primarily within their area of giftedness. In addition, any Associate Pastor should seek to reinforce leadership and vision of the Senior Pastor for the unity to the body. The goal of this leadership is to help maximize the vision as articulated by the Senior Pastor. This leadership must be by word and example, and must stress both understanding and application of God's truth.

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Mission: The mission of any Associate Pastor is to be a servant after God's own heart and to contribute to the vision as articulated by the Senior Pastor, so as to build up the body of Christ in ways that serve to fulfill our mission, vision and values.

Limitations: The Associate Pastor may do whatever fits within his or her giftedness as directed by the Senior Pastor, provided it does not contradict the mission, vision, values and beliefs of the congregation.

5. Selection of Any Associate Pastor

In the event of a vacancy in the position of Associate Pastor, the Elder Team along with the Senior Pastor shall be responsible to conduct a search for candidates to fill the position. If the Senior Pastor is on staff, the Senior Pastor must recommend the Associate Pastor candidate to the Elder Team for employment. The candidate shall be affirmed by the Elder Team with a three-fourths majority.

6. Removal of Any Associate Pastor

In order to dismiss an Associate Pastor if present on staff, the Senior Pastor must recommend dismissal of the Associate Pastor to the Elder Team. The Elder Team must then vote by a two-thirds majority to dismiss the Associate Pastor. The terms for the Associate Pastor's departure shall follow the "Pastor's Contract."

G. MINISTRY TEAMS & SMALL GROUPS

The multiplication of ministry teams and cell groups comprises the primary means whereby the mission, nurture, growth and pastoral care of the church is accomplished.

1. Ministry Teams

Ministry teams are created when a passion for a ministry and/or a spiritual gift mix within an individual, results in a call to ministry. Upon sharing their vision for the ministry others follow. It is not uncommon that an obvious need results in a call for people to be involved in a ministry team. We are trusting in God for the formation of ministry teams to fulfill His calling for NBC.

Mission: The mission of ministry teams is to engage at least three or more people to perform in ministry any shared enthusiasm that the Holy Spirit calls forth.

Limitations: Ministry teams may do whatever they believe necessary to accomplish their ministry task, provided they do not contradict the mission, vision, values, beliefs and policies of the congregation, and provided that they abide by the following:

- a. No ministry team may be deployed without a designated leader, affirmed by the oversight staff person or Lay Program Director (as assigned by the Senior Pastor) and at least two other persons committed to the ministry.

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- b. No ministry team may undertake a ministry task without including a core process of prayer, action, learning of scripture and personal sharing (P.A.L.S.) as integral parts of the team's shared life together.
- c. No ministry team leader may lead more than one team at a time unless unemployed in the secular world.
- d. Any layperson may volunteer for these ministries teams and serve with the affirmation of the Ministry Team Leader.

2. Cell groups

Cell groups are defined as groups that have an established fellowship life, provide for spiritual development through Bible study, active service, prayer, and personal sharing. Therefore cell groups have the P.A.L.S. system at the core of their existence (similar to Ministry Teams). They also have trained lay leadership that are in a relationship of accountability with the pastoral leadership of the church and provide shepherding for their group members. There are many other groups that can provide some of these services. They may add to the group life of the church but are not considered cell groups.

Mission: The mission of a cell group is to provide a setting for new leaders to emerge, mutual support and encourage spiritual growth.

Limitations: Cell groups can do whatever they believe necessary to accomplish their mission, provided they do not contradict the mission, vision, values, beliefs and policies of the congregation, and provided that they do not do the following:

- a. No cell group should be deployed without a called, trained leader and an apprentice.
- b. No cell group can be deployed that does not also pray for people outside the group, and do something of practical benefit for others.

H. AMENDMENTS

Proposed changes to these By-laws must be submitted, in writing, to the Senior Pastor and the Elders by a church member at least two (2) weeks prior to an Elder Team meeting. This church member must then present the case to change the By-laws at a meeting of the Elder Team. A three-fourths vote of the entire Elder Team is required for passage. If passage fails, the matter is ended. Absentee ballots may not be counted in any vote pertaining to church life.

The same procedure stated above shall be used for amending the Articles of Incorporation.

I. MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting during each calendar year. At this meeting, the congregation shall celebrate the leadership of the Elder Team and the vision of the church.

Special meetings of the congregation may be called at other times by the Senior Pastor of the congregation, by a majority vote of the Elder Team, or by the written petition of not less than ten percent (10%) of the members of the congregation.

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Notification of Meetings: All members of the congregation shall be notified of the time and purpose of any regular or special meetings of the congregation not less than five (5) days prior to such meetings.

J. Launching Team

This paragraph acknowledges that a core group of interested individuals is required to establish this organization's method of beginning and to lay the groundwork for a more enduring structure and method of functioning. This groundwork includes:

1. An initial set of By-laws
2. Decisions of property and finance
3. A system of choosing the more formally seated initial Elder Team

The members of the Launching Team are as follows; Ron Connerly – Senior Pastor, Steve Packer – Associate Pastor, Rob Denler – Youth Director, Counselors – Tom Petersen, Don Ferris, Mark Witham, and Marty Richards.

Members of the Launching Team may be nominated and affirmed as members of the Elder Team, but this is not to be considered automatic.

After the initial Elder Team is set in place, the Launching Team will be dismissed, having completed their function. Governance thereafter will be by the Elder Team as set forth elsewhere in these By-laws. This section of the By-laws concerning the Launching Team will thereafter have no effect on church governance.

K. POLICY MANUAL

The church office maintains a Policy Manual for the collection of standard operating procedures and policies. This instructional source is to centralize information and make practices easily adaptable and available. Any questions not contained in these By-laws are kindly referred to in the Policy Manual.