

# Constitution and Bylaws

**This Constitution and Bylaws, as revised, amended, and approved at a called business meeting on December 3, 2014 supersedes all previous versions of this document.**

## BYLAWS

### Preamble:

We affirm that Jesus Christ is Lord over His Church. He reveals His will through His inspired Word, the Bible. We submit to Christ's Lordship as we place ourselves under the authority of His Word for faith and practice, when interpreted responsibly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of faith.

The guiding spirit in the application of this Constitution and Bylaws should be a COVENANT RELATIONSHIP between the Pastoral Staff, the Leadership Board, and the Congregation.

### WHAT WE BELIEVE:

1. The sole basis for our belief is the Bible, which is uniquely God-inspired and the final authority on all matters on which it bears. (*2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21*).
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Genesis 1:26, Matthew 3:13-17*).
3. We believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ (*Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:18-22*), that He lived a sinless life on earth (*Hebrews 4:15*) and voluntarily paid for our sin by dying on the cross as our substitute (*Isaiah 53:4-5; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 5:8*). This accomplished salvation for all whom by grace trust in Him alone (*John 3:16; John 6:29*). He rose from the dead (*Mark 16:6; Luke 18:31-33; Luke 24:1-7*), ascended into heaven (*Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:1-9*), and is the only mediator (*1 Timothy 2:5*) between God and us. He will return to earth in power and glory to consummate history (*Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 19:11-21*).
4. We believe that God created humans in His own likeness to have fellowship with Him (*Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1; Colossians 3:9-10*), but they defied God by sinfully going their own way (*Genesis 3:1-13*). As a result, we need God's saving grace—not human effort—to end our alienation from God (*Ephesians 2:8-9*). Only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained (*Titus 3:5*).
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life (*Ezekiel 36:27; John 16:13*).
6. We believe marriage is an ordinance established by God (*Genesis 2:18, 21-24; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:21-33*). This church defines marriage as the exclusive covenantal union of one man and one woman in which such union is a lifetime commitment. A civil government's sanction of a union will be recognized

as a legitimate marriage by the church only to the extent that it is consistent with the definition of marriage found in this Constitution and Bylaws.

7. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead (*Philippians 3:20-21; 1 John 3:2*); of the believer to everlasting fellowship and joy in the Lord, of the unbeliever judgment and everlasting punishment (*Matthew 25:31-47; Revelation 20:11-15*).

## **ARTICLE 1: NAME AND PURPOSE**

### Section 1: Name of the Church

The name of the Church is **St. George Community Church**.

### Section 2: Core Values

1. Biblical Authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
2. Local Church Integrity (Ephesians 3:10-11)
3. Leadership Development (Ephesians 4:11-13)
4. Kingdom Multiplication (Matthew 16:18; 28:19-20)

### Section 3: Statement of Purpose

1. Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ
2. Teaching the truth of the Faith
3. Exalting God's Name
4. Pursuing Spiritual Maturity
5. Serving in Ministry

Encompassing the *Steps* is a basic scriptural concept which we, St. George Community Church, embrace and uphold in regard to retaining the true visible marks of Christ's Universal Church. These marks are namely: 1) The sound preaching of God's Word – *Doctrine*, 2) Properly administering Baptism and the Lord's Supper--*Ordinances*, and 3) Rightfully exercising *Discipline* in Christ's local church. This we believe honors the Triune God as revealed in Scripture, while giving precedence to Christ's Lordship over His Church and His sovereign grace and authority in our lives.

## **ARTICLE 2: RELATIONSHIPS**

### Section 1:

St. George Community Church is a congregation whose active membership, when gathered at a called business meeting, has final authority over all the business and ministries of the church. (See Preamble)

## Section 2:

We recognize the Biblical calling to partner in ministry with the Body of Christ beyond our local congregation. We are free, at any time, to partner with other organizations for the advancement of the ministry of Jesus Christ.

We recognize the importance of community within and accountability to the Body of Christ.

## **ARTICLE 3: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

For accountability in leadership, and voting on church business, there must be an official membership roll for St. George Community Church.

### Section 1: Steps to active membership at St. George Community Church.

1. While salvation is a work of God in the individual, discipleship and service are experiences we share in community with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Confession of one's faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord followed by water baptism through immersion, or by a letter of transfer from a church of like faith and practice, or by the prior experience of having accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord followed by water baptism.  
[Exceptions to the above will be handled by the Leadership Board on a case by case basis]
2. Acceptance of the Old and New Testaments as our final rule for faith and practice.
3. Completion of the New Members Class as provided for by the Leadership Board.
4. A spirit of agreement with the vision and mission of St. George Community Church and a desire to participate, serve, and give with all of the strength, grace and knowledge provided by God.
5. Affirmation by the Leadership Board and Senior Pastor.

### Section 2: Release from the Active Membership Roll shall be by the following:

1. Request for a Letter of Transfer to another Church of like faith and practice.
2. Erasure; any member may request that his or her name be removed from the roll.
3. On a yearly basis, the rolls shall be updated by the Membership Team and presented to the Leadership Board. Members who have absented themselves from the overall life of the church shall be moved to an inactive member roll.
4. Members who by special circumstances are unable to participate in church life shall remain in active membership. [Special circumstances include: illness, military service, shut-in, away at college, and any circumstance that the Leadership Board deems acceptable]

5. While on the inactive roll, members may not vote on the business of the church or hold elected office. Return to active membership shall only be allowed by a vote of the Leadership Board.

### Section 3: Church Discipline

1. The Purpose of Church Discipline
  - a. Restoration and reconciliation of the believer.
  - b. To keep the sin from spreading to others.
  - c. To protect the purity of the Church and the honor of Christ.
2. Any dispute involving a church member or regular attendee shall be dealt with in accordance with the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-20; and shall be handled under the direction of the Leadership Board.

[Other Scriptures that will inform the discipline process are: Deuteronomy 19:15; Galatians 6:1; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 5:19; and Hebrews 13:17]

## **ARTICLE 4: PASTORS**

### Section 1:

1. The Senior Pastor shall be a graduate of a seminary recognized by the Leadership Board, shall be an ordained minister or shall be preparing for ordination, shall have demonstrated a deep love for and commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and the local church. He shall accept the *Pastors and Leadership Board Covenant* and seek to faithfully live out its challenge. [See Article 12]
2. The Senior Pastor shall be accountable to the Leadership Board for the faithful discharge of his duties.
3. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the regular worship services of the church.
4. The Senior Pastor is a gift from Christ to the local church and shall, in a COVENANT RELATIONSHIP with the Leadership Board, be the primary catalyst for the vision, mission, and ministry of the church. He shall give special time and attention to prayer, preaching, teaching, leadership, and “equipping of the saints for the work of their ministry...to the building up of the Body of Christ” according to Ephesians 4.
5. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for leading, and/or supervising the Pastoral and Support Staff.
6. The salary and benefits of the Senior Pastor shall be fixed at the time of call by vote of the church and reviewed by the Leadership Board on a yearly basis. Suggested changes shall be submitted to the congregation in the annual budget.
7. In the event that the Senior Pastor and/or the Church feel the tenure of service should come to an end, a two month written notice shall be given, unless by mutual agreement of the Pastor and the Leadership Board. The term of the Pastor

- may be ended by his resignation or by three-fourths (3/4) of the active members present and voting at a called business meeting.
8. When the Church is in need of a Senior Pastor, a Pastoral Search committee of no less than five (5) and no more than nine (9) active church members shall be nominated by the Leadership Board and voted upon by the congregation at a called business meeting. The members of this committee shall be a demographic representation of the congregation.
  9. The call of the Senior Pastor shall be by written ballot and shall take place at a called business meeting of the Church. He shall be elected by three-fourths (3/4) of the active members present and voting.

Section 2:

1. Additional members of the Pastoral or Support Staff shall be nominated by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Leadership Board.
2. Additional members of the pastoral staff shall accept the *Pastors and Leadership Board Covenant* and seek to faithfully live out its challenge.
3. Pastoral Staff are ex officio members to the Leadership Board, all Ministry Teams, Committees, Auxiliary Organizations and any other group the Leadership Board authorizes.
4. The Pastoral Staff, in conjunction with the appropriate Ministry Team leaders, shall oversee the day to day business of the church.
5. Termination of Pastoral or Support Staff shall be by vote of the Leadership Board. [For termination of the Senior Pastor, see Article 4, Section 1.7]

## **ARTICLE 5: THE LEADERSHIP BOARD**

Section 1:

1. The Leadership Board shall be the governing board of the Church and shall consist of: 1) Five (5) to Seven (7) qualified active members; 2) The pastoral staff as ex officio members.
2. The members of the Leadership Board will be elected to that position by a majority vote of active church members at a called business meeting.
3. Leadership Board members may serve one three-year term and then shall take one year off the board.
4. Filling an unexpired term on the Leadership Board shall not be counted against the three-year maximum.
5. The Leadership Board shall be accountable to the Congregation for the faithful discharge of their responsibilities.
6. The Leadership Board, in COVENANT RELATIONSHIP with the Pastoral Staff, shall oversee the vision, mission, Ministry Teams, and the month to month business of St. George Community Church.
7. The Leadership Board and Senior Pastor shall confirm the Ministry Team Leaders.

8. The Leadership Board shall meet monthly for prayer, devotions, and the work of the Church. They shall retreat at least yearly for Long Range Planning.
9. Members of the Leadership Board must be willing to sign and sincerely accept the challenge of the *Pastors and Leadership Board Covenant*. [See Article 12]
10. The Leadership Board shall have authority to exceed the yearly budget by up to 10% in a given year if emergency maintenance issues require such action. The Board shall also have authority to approve up to a 10% increase in any given Ministry Team budget if ministry goals warrant such action. Any other revisions to the church budget shall be voted on by the congregation at a called business meeting.
11. The Leadership Board shall hold in trust all property belonging to the church and the corporation. The Board shall be the legal representative of the church with signers for all legal matters being the Church Clerk, the Moderator, and the Treasurer of the church with two of these three required on any document.

## **ARTICLE 6: MINISTRY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### Section 1: Administrative Positions

1. The Moderator shall preside at all business meetings of the Church. In the absence of the Moderator a member of the Leadership Board shall preside over the business meeting. The Moderator shall be chosen by the Leadership Board from among its members.
2. The Church Clerk shall be responsible for the recording of all proceedings of the Church, preparing official correspondence and preserving all official documents coming into the Clerk's hands during his/her term of office. He/she shall issue letters of dismissal and membership standing as directed by the Leadership Board. The Church Clerk shall be a member of the Membership Team. This position will be elected by the congregation for a three (3) year term for a maximum of six (6) consecutive years.
3. The Church Treasurer shall be responsible for the keeping of records of all receipts and disbursements. He/she shall make a monthly report to the Leadership Board. The Church Treasurer shall be the Financial Team Leader. This Position will be elected by the congregation for a three (3) year term for a maximum of six (6) consecutive years. The treasurer shall pay, as budgeted, the pastor's salary and salary-related items, mission and Transformation Ministries donations, and utilities. All other expenditures shall be approved by the Leadership Board or the Team Leader responsible for the appropriate section of the church budget. At the close of the fiscal year the treasurer shall financial records ready and available for audit within 30 days. The Leadership Board shall have audit completed by March 31<sup>st</sup> and a report submitted to the April Congregational Business Meeting. At the end of the term of office the treasurer shall immediately deliver to a successor all books and records pertaining to this office.

### Section 2: Ministry Teams

The Ministry Teams shall lead the hands-on ministries and day to day business of St. George Community Church in conjunction with the Pastoral Staff.

[The following descriptions are suggested to assist and guide, but not to restrict the activities of the Teams.]

1. Outreach Team  
Shall be responsible for evangelism training. They will plan and implement strategies for reaching our community and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ. They will also oversee the mission budget and direct its use locally, nationally, and internationally.
2. Discipleship/Education Team  
Shall oversee the formal Christian education ministries of our church including Sunday School and teacher training. The team will be in charge of the lending library and media resources. It shall assist new believers in their spiritual growth and in discovering their spiritual gifts and places of ministry in the Church. They will also oversee the small group ministry of the Church.
3. Care Team  
Shall be responsible for seeing that the sick and shut-ins are visited, that meals are provided when necessary and provide transportation to and from church and doctor appointments when needed.
4. Worship Team  
Shall work with the Pastoral Staff in scheduling, planning and developing the order of each service, both special and regular, including all music selection and any special music and singers. The ushers will also be responsible for the preparation of the Lord's Supper, the selection of those who will distribute the elements, and the clean-up.
5. Property Team  
Shall be responsible for keeping our building and grounds in good functional order to the glory of God. This includes the upkeep, usage, preventive maintenance, opening, closing, setup, teardown, improvements, and ongoing development of the physical plant of St. George Community Church. The team will also oversee the expenditures for insurance, utilities, office supplies and equipment, janitorial supplies and equipment, and restroom supplies.
6. Finance Team  
Shall oversee the process of collection, counting, depositing, tracking, investing, and expending the financial resources of the church, including any special or designated funds, and reconciliation of bank accounts.

Monthly reports of the complete financial position, including monthly/yearly income and expense, shall be reported to the Leadership Board by the Treasurer.

7. Hospitality Team  
Shall make people feel welcome when they enter the church building for services. They will provide greeters and ushers at each service and any other activity (such as parking attendant) deemed appropriate. The Team will also prepare the Newcomer Packets and make follow-up visits to newcomers.
8. Prayer Team  
Shall consistently and persistently pray for the needs and concerns of our church and its mission. They will develop and maintain an active prayer chain.
9. Fellowship Team  
Shall be responsible for planning, preparing, overseeing, and cleaning up for potlucks, coffee fellowships and food service for other church related events (funeral, etc.).
10. Decorating Team  
Shall oversee the decoration of the worship center and fellowship hall for all regular and special services and events.

### Section 3: Who may serve on a Ministry Team

1. Any active member of St. George Community Church
2. Regularly attending non-members with the approval of the appropriate Ministry Team Leader.
3. Youth Group members are encouraged to serve on the various teams and Team Leaders should actively recruit youth to serve in their areas of ministry.
4. Ministry Team members are encouraged to serve in their area of gifts and interests, therefore, there are no term limits for serving on a Ministry Team.
5. Team Leaders must be active members of St. George Community Church.

## **ARTICLE 7: BUDGETS AND DESIGNATED FUNDS**

### Section 1: Ministry Teams, Leadership Board and The Annual Budget

1. Each Team shall prepare and present a budget for the upcoming year to the Leadership Board during the month of October.
2. The Leadership Board shall present the budget to the congregation for approval in November of each year.



3. The budget may be revised at any congregational business meeting, provided that the Leadership Board has approved it and brings it to the congregational meeting as a motion to adopt it, and with two weeks notice having been given to the congregation.

#### Section 2: Designated Funds

1. The congregation will have authority to spend the Building Fund.
2. The Leadership Board will have authority to spend the Benevolent Fund.
3. The Discipleship Team will have authority to spend the Library Fund.
4. The Worship Team will have authority to spend the Music Fund.
5. The Outreach Team will have authority to spend the Mission Fund and Youth Fund.

### **ARTICLE 8: COMMITTEES AND AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS**

#### Section 1: Standing and Non-standing

1. May be created by the Leadership Board upon the recommendation of the appropriate Team Leader or Pastoral Staff member for a maximum of one year only.
2. Shall be allowed to form or disband according to need during that year.
3. Shall be accountable to and work in conjunction with a specific Ministry Team.
4. A Nominating Committee shall be a standing committee whose active members shall serve for one year only and then must take a year off. It shall be made up of the Senior Pastor and two active members not currently serving on the Leadership Board.

### **ARTICLE 9: VOTING AND MEETINGS**

#### Section 1: Voting

1. Active members must be eighteen (18) years of age to vote on any matter.
2. For voting, a quorum shall be those active members present and voting at a called business meeting.
3. Members qualified to vote, but who with good reason are unable to attend a called business meeting(s), may assign another active member to present them as a proxy to vote on matters before the congregation. The member determines the meeting or the length of time the proxy shall represent them, which shall not extend beyond December 31 of the year the proxy is assigned. A written statement naming the proxy and providing the term of assignment is required. It must be signed and dated by the member(s) making the assignment. The proxy must present this statement to the church clerk prior to the meeting.
4. Members qualified to vote, but who with good reason are unable to attend a called meeting(s), may request absentee ballots. Information concerning the matter(s) to be voted on shall be made available to absentee voters verbally or in print

fourteen (14) days prior to the meeting. To be valid, the church clerk must receive these ballots before voting closes.

## Section 2: Meetings

1. The fiscal year and the church year shall be from January 1 through December 31.
2. There shall be a meeting held the third Wednesday each year in November at which time the congregation shall vote upon a proposed budget and any open Administrative Positions and Leadership Board Positions for the upcoming year.
3. Special meetings may be called at any time by the Senior Pastor, five (5) members of the Leadership Board, or twelve (12) active members of the church. Notice of the meeting and its purpose shall be given during the Sunday morning worship service on two (2) successive Sundays prior to the meeting. The business conducted at a special meeting is restricted to that announced prior to the meeting.
4. Special congregational business meetings require two (2) weeks prior notice to the congregation.
5. Regular business meetings will be held the third Wednesday of April, July, and November.
6. The Annual Business Meeting will be held on the third Wednesday of January.

## **ARTICLE 10: PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES**

The Moderator or his/her substitute shall guide, using Roberts Rules of Order, the orderly conduct of meetings in ensuring that information is clearly presented, that ample time is given for discussion and prayer, and that the order and Christian spirit of the meeting is maintained.

## **ARTICLE 11: AMENDMENTS**

These By-Laws may be amended at a called business meeting by two thirds (2/3) of the active members present and voting. Notice of such a meeting, with proposed changes, must be announced from the pulpit and in the church publication two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

## ARTICLE 12: PASTORS AND LEADERSHIP BOARD COVENANT

1. I will actively participate as a teacher or student in a Bible study, small group, discipleship group, or home fellowship.

One of the risks of leadership is that we are constantly giving out spiritual food and energy to others, and in the process we may neglect our own growth in the Word of God.

2 Timothy 2:15-16 ESV *“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”*

2. I will be faithful in private and corporate prayer.

As the leaders of the church we need to both pray and model prayer for the congregation. Our Sunday/Home Group prayer times are an excellent time of intercession for the pastors, the members, our community, and our extended missions.

Ephesians 6:18-20 ESV *“Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end to keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the Gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.”*

Acts 1:14 ESV *All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”*

3. I commit, as a leader, to living within my financial means, avoiding consumer indebtedness, and to support St. George Community Church with my faithful financial stewardship.

As leaders we are called to live in freedom, faithfulness, and as an example to our brothers and sisters, to those whom we are called to lead. If we are in debt, we are not free to serve Christ. If we do not manage our own finances wisely and give generously to the work of the church, then how can we ask others to give faithfully, joyously, and even sacrificially? While New Testament giving is a matter of conscience and personal stewardship, it is good to remember that the minimum standard from Genesis to Malachi was always 10%.

Luke 16:10-14 ESV *“One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and the one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that*

*which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money. The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him.”*

Romans 13:8 ESV *“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.”*

Malachi 3:8-10 ESV *“Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithes to the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”*

#### 4. Faithfulness in Worship!

When we pick up our Bible and we walk out the front door of our homes, we are sending a message to our self, our family, our world and our God. We are declaring and choosing to worship as a priority activity in our lives. As leaders we grow, share and model our worship to the rest of the congregation.

Hebrews 10:23-25 ESV *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”*

#### 5. Faithfulness in leading your Church, Board, and Team!

All of our Teams have an abundance of ministry opportunities before them. The Leadership Board and Ministry Teams should meet monthly. There is prayer and planning. There is reflection and evaluation. There is leadership training and preparation. There’s actual doing of the work at hand. There is the ongoing central task of recruiting and training new team members. There is discipling all toward a better relationship with Christ.

Romans 12:6-8 ESV *“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”*

Hebrews 13:17 ESV *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be no advantage to you.”*

1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV *“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*

My Commitment to Christ and St. George Community Church:

I have prayerfully reflected upon the call to leadership outlined in this covenant. I realize that serving the Church of Jesus Christ is a very high calling. For me to be a Model to the People, Mainstay to the Pastor, and a Mentor to future leaders, it is essential that I myself be called and fully committed to the Christian journey of faith.

This covenant does not represent the maximum of service. In truth, it is the minimum of expectations for spiritual leaders as outlined in the Old and New Testaments. I acknowledge the calling of Christ to serve in this position and I fully accept the biblical call to be a man or woman of Prayer, the Word, Financial Stewardship, Worship, and Faithful Ministry! As Paul the apostle said, “Follow me, as I follow Christ!”

As a called and elected leader of St. George Community Church, I recognize the privilege and responsibility of Christian leadership. I understand the strong and challenging message of the Scriptures for leaders. With the knowledge that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” I nonetheless aspire to the high calling for which I have been chosen. It is the desire of my heart to accept the challenge of the spirit of this Covenant, and before God to be the leader He has called me to be and to do the ministry which He has called me to do. With the Lord as my Savior, the Word as my guide, and the Holy Spirit as my strength, I accept the challenge of this Covenant!

In Faith, \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature