CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
of
FALLING WATERS BIBLE CHURCH
Spring Arbor, MI

(Revised: 10/26/26)

Section I: Constitution..... 2
1. Our Name..... 2
2. Our Purpose & Mission..... 2
3. Statement of Faith..... 2
4. Doctrinal Statement..... 3
5. Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics..... 6
6. Theological Distinctives & Philosophy of Ministry..... 8

Section II: Bylaws..... 10
1. Affiliations and Denominations..... 10
2. Government..... 10
3. Finances..... 19
4. Missions..... 21
5. Properties..... 22
6. Constitutional Amendment..... 23

Section I: Constitution

1. Our Name

The legal name of our church is Falling Waters Bible Church.

2. Our Purpose & Mission

To glorify God and to make Him known.

We will accomplish this by making new disciples through sharing the Gospel, maturing disciples through the preaching and teaching of God's Word, and serving one another in a committed Christian community [Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 1:28].

We will pursue this purpose and mission under the sole authority of Jesus Christ, who is the head of the Church, in free association with other churches of like faith and practice. The Word of Christ, the Holy inspired Scriptures, will guide its conduct in all affairs [Matthew 16:18–20, 22:35–46, 28:18–20; Ephesians 2:19–22; 1 Timothy 3:14–16; 2 Timothy 3:16–17].

3. Statement of Faith

The following is a statement of core beliefs that define our worship and unity in the faith at Falling Waters Bible Church. We require all members to affirm this statement of faith in its entirety as a condition of membership (see Section II.2.8).

3.1 The Scriptures

We believe that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the verbally inspired word of God—inerrant in its original autographs, infallible in its prophecies, and providentially preserved in trustworthy translations [1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:17; John 10:35, 17:17]. Therefore, the Bible is the supreme, final, and sufficient authority in all matters of faith and practice [Isaiah 8:20; Jude 3; 2 Timothy 3:17].

3.2 The Godhead

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit [Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14].

3.3 Creation

We believe that God created everything from nothing by His word [Psalm 33:6; Hebrews 11:3], and that He made man in His own image, giving him upright character and dignity [Genesis 1:26-28; Ecclesiastes 7:29]. We also believe that God made mankind male and female [Genesis 1:27], that gender identity and biological sex are identical, and that marriage is a covenanted, sexual union between a man and a woman, and is intended for a lifetime [Genesis 2:18, 24; Matthew 19:3-9]

3.4 Sin

We believe in the fall of man—that through Adam's sinful choice, man forfeited his upright character and became depraved, a slave to sin, and thus deserved God's wrath and eternal punishment [Romans 3:9-20, 3:23, 5:12-19; John 8:34; Romans 3:9-12; Ephesians 2:3; Matthew 25:46]. Nevertheless, in light of his original creation, man on earth retains dignity and should be treated accordingly [Genesis 9:6; James 3:9-10].

3.5 Jesus Christ

We believe that God loved the world and sent His Son to be the Savior of the world [John 3:16-17, 4:42; 1 Timothy 4:10]. This Son, Jesus Christ, was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, worked true miracles, was crucified and died for our sins, was buried but then raised bodily from the dead on the third day, after which He ascended into heaven, where He is now seated at the Father's right hand until the day He returns bodily to judge the world [Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 11:4-5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:20; Acts 17:31]. Jesus Christ is Lord, truly God and truly human, the only mediator between God and men, and the only way to heaven [Romans 10:9; John 1:1, 1:14, 14:6; 1 Timothy 2:5].

3.6 Salvation

We believe in salvation by grace alone—that through faith alone, a repentant sinner is securely united to Jesus, whose blood justifies him from sin and whose life guarantees to him eternal life [Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Acts 20:21; Romans 5:1, 5:9-10, 6:1-14, 8:1; Hebrews 7:23-25]. Unless a sinner is justified and made alive by the Holy Spirit while yet on earth, he cannot enter heaven [Romans 3:19-20; John 3:3, 5].

3.7 Holiness

We believe that every believer should unite with other believers in a local church [Hebrews 10:25], participate in the ordinances of the Church—baptism and communion—[Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:38, 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26] and should strive by God's power to live a holy and exemplary life in preparation for the Lord's imminent return [Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 1:3-11, 3:8-14]. Through a life of faith, love, and obedience, a believer shows that he is truly born of God [1 John 2:29, 4:7, 5:1].

3.8 The Eternal State

We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the resurrection when they are to be glorified forever with the Lord [Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17].

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

4. Doctrinal Statement

The following statement is a more comprehensive doctrinal statement than the previous summary Statement of Faith and represents the official doctrinal positions of the church. Affirmation is ***not*** required for membership. In accordance with Section II.2.8.5a, in any matters where differences of opinion or interpretation arise, members will commit to

addressing them with Christian charity and humility, seeking to maintain the spirit of unity and the bond of peace [Ephesians 4:3], and will strive to honor one another in love as they pursue a knowledge of the truth together.

All Elders ***must*** affirm the Doctrinal Statement as a requirement for serving in the office (see Section II.2.2.3).

4.1 The Scriptures
We believe that the sixty-six Old and New Testament books are the verbally inspired word of God, inerrant in the original autographs and providentially preserved in trustworthy translations [1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:17; John 10:35, 17:17]. Therefore, the Bible alone is the supreme, final, and all-sufficient authority in all matters of faith and practice [Psalm 138:2; 2 Peter 1:17-19; 2 Timothy 3:17, Isaiah 8:20; Jude 3].

4.2 The Godhead
We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons–Father, Son, and Holy Spirit–co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections [Exodus 20:1-3; Matthew 28:19; John 14:16-17; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Deuteronomy 6:4].

4.3 The Person and Work of Christ
We believe that God loved the world and sent His Son to be the Savior of the world [John 3:16, 4:42; 1 Timothy 4:10]. This Son, Jesus Christ, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, worked true miracles, was crucified and died for our sins, was buried and raised bodily from the dead on the third day, after which He ascended into heaven where He is seated at the Father's right hand until the appointed time of His bodily return [Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:35; Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 11:4-5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4]. Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man, the only mediator between God and men and the only way to salvation [Romans 10:9; John 1:1, 14; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:6].

4.4 The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit
We believe the Holy Spirit to be a divine person, eternally one with God the Father and God the Son, and of the exact same nature. We believe He was active in creation. In His relation to the world, He restrains evil to fulfill God's present purposes. He convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment. We believe He bears witness to the truth of the Gospel in preaching and other testimony and that He is the Supernatural Agent in the New Birth. We believe that He baptizes every believer into the Church, which is the Body of Christ, indwelling and sealing them unto the day of redemption. Additionally, by His agency, all who believe may acceptably pray, live, witness, worship, and be assured of the hope set before them [Genesis 1:1-3; Job 26:13; John 14:16, 16:7-11; John 3:5-6; Ephesians 1:13; 2 Corinthians 12:13; Romans 8:14, 8:26-27; etc.]. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit [John 16:13; 1 John 2:20, 27; Ephesians 5:18].

4.5 Man
Man was created directly and instantly by God and was made in His image [Genesis 1:26; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9] in two permanent and distinct genders: male and female [Genesis 1:27]. We believe that man was innocent and that by voluntary transgression of the law of God, he fell from his sinless and happy estate, and as a consequence all mankind are now sinners both by nature and by choice, alienated from God and justly condemned to judgment and an

eternity apart from God and unable to remedy his lost condition [Genesis 1:26-27; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 18:6-9, 25:41; Romans 3:22-23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3, 12; Jude 6-7; Revelation 14:10-11, 20:11-15].

4.6 Salvation

We believe that all who repent of their sins and believe upon Jesus Christ by faith for the forgiveness of their sins are saved and granted eternal life and fellowship with God. We believe that the salvation of the sinner is wholly by grace through faith apart from works, and that Christ's death made a full and substitutionary atonement for the sins of all who believe [Romans 3:23-24; John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14; Isaiah 53:4-7; 1 John 4:10; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; etc.].

We believe that the Christian, through faith in Christ, is thereby saved from their sin and saved to a life of bearing fruit in keeping with repentance through the process of progressive sanctification and that this marks the life of every true believer [Mark 4:20; Luke 8:15, 13:9; John 15:16; Romans 6:22, 7:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Galatians 5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2].

We believe Christ secures, for those who believe in Him, the blessing of justification, which is perfect righteousness in the sight of God [Isaiah 53:11; Acts 13:39; Romans 8:1, 5:1, 5:9].

We believe that all the redeemed will persevere by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever [John 6:37-40, 10:27-30; Romans 8:1, 8:29-30; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; 1 Peter 1:5].

4.7 Mission

We believe Christ has commissioned the Church corporately to make disciples of all nations [John 20:21; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 14:21; 1 Corinthians 5:18-21]. Therefore, the Church's mission is to proclaim the Gospel and to disciple toward maturity those who believe [Colossians 1:28-29]. Each Christian is responsible to participate in this mission according to the gifts that God has given them.

4.8 The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts, those gifts acting with the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today, and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased and are no longer normative for the Church today [1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12].

We believe that God hears and answers the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted [John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15].

4.9 The Church

We believe that Christ is the true and only Head of His Church [Ephesians 1:22–23, 4:15, 5:23].

We believe that God, in His providence, forms local congregations called churches on the earth in this present age and that the New Testament defines their organization, purpose, and mission. We believe that each such church is meant to be a congregation of regenerate believers, under the leadership of local male Elders and served by Deacons, associated in mutual agreement for evangelism, the discipleship of the saints, and the observance of the ordinances.

We believe that all who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior by faith are baptized in the Holy Spirit and become members of the universal Body of Christ [Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27]. As such, the Spirit endows them with gifts that enable them to work together with their brothers and sisters to edify the body [Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11].

4.10 Satan

We believe that there exists a real person known in Scripture as Satan and the Devil, who endeavors to usurp the place, and assume the prerogatives of God. By the work of Christ at Calvary, he became a defeated foe and will be brought to judgment on the last day [Job 1:6, 2:1; Ezekiel 28:12-15; Isaiah 14:12-17; Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Ephesians 2:2; 1 Peter 5:8; John 14:30, 16:11; Revelation 20:2-3, 2:7-8, 2:10].

4.11 The Last Days and The End of the Age

We believe the Church is living in the last days [Acts 2:17; 1 John 2:18]; that tribulations mark these last days [Matthew 24:3-14] and will culminate in the Great Tribulation [Daniel 9:26-27; Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14]. We believe that during these last days, the Church is to live a life of earnest readiness and to look forward in anticipation to the bodily, glorious, and imminent return of Jesus Christ "our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ," (Titus 2:13) [see also Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:7; Philippians 3:20-21].

4.12 The Eternal State

We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await resurrection when they are to be glorified and will always be with the Lord [Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23, 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17]. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death, in conscious misery where they await resurrection when they shall appear at the Great White Throne of Judgement and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire to suffer everlasting conscious punishment [Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6, 7; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15].

4.13 Ordinances

We believe the Church is commanded to carry out two ordinances until the Lord's return: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

a. We believe that baptism is an outward public profession of faith in Jesus Christ that is a matter of obedience for all Christians. We believe that the mode is to be done by immersion and is to be undertaken upon a credible profession of faith; it is in no way salvific [Mark 16:15-16; Acts 8:36-39, 10:47-48; 1 Corinthians 1:14-17].
a. We believe that the Lord's Supper is for all who, by faith, confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who are abiding in fruitful fellowship with and loving obedience to Him [Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; John 14:15].

5. Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics

In light of cultural pressures and beliefs, we declare our Scriptural convictions concerning gender, marriage, and related matters of ethics in the following statement. It is *<u>required</u>* that all Members, Elders, and church staff affirm agreement

with this statement as a condition of membership, holding office, or employment (see Sections II.2.3, II.2.4.1d, II.2.6c, and II.2.7.1c).

5.1 Gender and Biological Sex

In the beginning, God created mankind as male and female, in the same sense that the animals are male and female [Genesis 1:27, 6:19, 7:2-3]. Scripture does not allow a distinction between gender and biological sex; therefore, our identity as male or female is rooted in our physical bodies and should not be altered [cf. Deuteronomy 22:5].

5.2 Gender Roles

As human beings, created in the image of God as male and female [Genesis 1:27], men and women are designed by God with distinct roles [Genesis 2:18]. Therefore, we affirm both the spiritual equality of all Christians [Galatians 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7] and the responsible leadership of men in the church and home [1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-33].

5.3 Marriage

Marriage is a gift of God for His glory and for our good [Proverbs 18:22, 19:14; Romans 11:36; James 1:17]. By design, marriage is the covenanted union of one man and one woman to be friend and lover in a lifelong, exclusive relationship [Malachi 2:14; Song of Solomon 5:16]. By instituting marriage in the beginning, God established its legitimate form for all cultures in all times [Genesis 2:18-24; Matthew 19:3-8; 1 Corinthians 11:7-10; cf. 1 Timothy 2:11-13]. As a covenant, marriage is publicly constituted and intended to be permanent, with allowance only for biblical exception (e.g. 1 Corinthians 7:15-16). Rightly, Jesus concluded, "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" [Matthew 19:6].

5.4 Singleness

Singleness is also a gift of God for His glory and for our good, because it is well suited for a life dedicated exclusively to Christ [1 Corinthians 7:7, 32-35]. Even so, it is still not good for a believer to be alone [cf. Genesis 2:18]; therefore, God has given singles fellowship through the Church as a spiritual family [cf. Mark 3:31-35; Hebrews 10:25].

5.5 Sexual Purity

The sexual union of a man and a woman, the "one flesh" relationship, is lawful only within marriage [Hebrews 13:4]. As a holy people, Christians are called to abstain from all sexual impurity and immorality, both in mind and in body, regardless of the strength of internal tendency or external temptation [1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Peter 2:11; Matthew 5:28; 1 Corinthians 10:13]. This prohibition includes fornication (such as "premarital sex"), adultery (such as "extramarital affairs"), pornography, all forms of homosexuality, and anything else that deviates from God's holy standards [1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Ephesians 5:3-5; Romans 1:24-27; 1 Timothy 1:8-11].

5.6 Sanctity of Life

We believe that all human beings are made in the image of God [Genesis 1:26-28; James 3:9]; therefore, human beings have a derived sanctity and an intrinsic worth that sets them apart from the animals [Matthew 10:31, 12:12]. The taking of innocent human life is wrong [Genesis 9:6]. We believe that human life and personhood begin at conception; therefore, abortion and all purposed destruction of innocent human life break God's law and should be mourned and opposed [Exodus 20:13, 21:22-25; Psalm 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24, 49:1; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:15, 41, 44; Matthew 2:16-18; 1 Corinthians 5:2].

5.7 Grace & Forgiveness

As a congregation of repentant sinners saved by grace through faith in Christ, we recognize that we have been guilty of such sins as detailed here, but through repentance and faith these sins no longer define our identity [1 Corinthians 6:9-11]. As redeemed children of God, we are called by His holy name—we are saints—and we are privileged to proclaim this same forgiveness and freedom to others [1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 2:15-16; 1 Peter 2:9-10]. To God alone be all the glory!

6. Theological Distinctives & Philosophy of Ministry

The following items represent theological distinctives and philosophies of ministry that one will encounter in the ministry at Falling Waters Bible Church. All Falling Waters Elders and lay teachers are required to uphold these perspectives and philosophies in the teaching of God's Word and the practice of ministry (see Section II.2.7).

6.1 Interpretation of the Scriptures

In approaching the Scriptures, we seek to interpret a passage in a literal, historical, and grammatical sense. This means we come to the Scriptures with the Spirit's help to seek the plain meaning of what the Bible records and teaches. We seek to avoid spiritualizing, allegorizing, or reading metaphorical interpretations into the text unless plainly warranted by the author's words or context. We seek to interpret the more difficult passages of Scripture in the light of clearer ones, thus allowing Scripture to help us interpret Scripture.

6.2 Church Membership

We teach and emphasize that church membership is not merely a modern formality but a vital expression of biblical Christianity. It is culturally popular for Christians to casually associate by attending a church without formally committing to a local congregation and submitting to the care of the Elders. We believe and teach that this stands in contradiction to the teaching of the New Testament. The biblical foundation for church membership is clearly present in the New Testament. We see this in (a) the example of the early church, (b) the numbering of believers in the Book of Acts, (c) the existence of church government, and (d) the exercise of church discipline.

a. Many passages only make sense with some concept of formal church membership. Luke refers to "the whole congregation" (Luke 6:5), "the church in Jerusalem" (Luke 8:1), "the disciples" in Jerusalem (Luke 9:26), "in every church" (Luke 14:23), "the whole church" (Luke 15:17), and "the Elders of the church" in Ephesus (Luke 20:17). All of these more than suggest a recognizable church Membership; they knew who were in and who were outside the church.
b. In the Book of Acts, the numbering of those who were added to the Church is suggestive of a formalized list or understanding of who was a part of the newly formed Church [Acts 2:41, 2:47, 4:4].
c. The leadership structure and charge given to Elders in the New Testament only makes sense if the Elders knew who they were accountable for in their shepherding [Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 5:17; Hebrews 13:17].
d. Church discipline requires a formal understanding of how a person should be put out of the Church [Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 3:10-11].

6.3 Ordinances

The ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper have been instituted by Christ to express our union and identification with Him and our unity and fellowship with one another. We teach that baptism by immersion is for believers and is meant to be an early step of obedience closely associated with conversion [Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38, 2:41, 8:12, 8:36, 9:18, 10:47-48, 16:33]. There are no optional commands given in Scripture and we therefore instruct and encourage our people to undergo baptism prior to taking communion out of reverence for Christ and in obedience to His commands [1 Corinthians 11:27-32].

6.4 Complementarian Roles

We uphold the clear teaching of Scripture that men and women, equal in value and worth before God, have been assigned distinct and complementary roles in both the home and the Church. According to God's sovereign design, the role of the office of Elder or pastor is to be held by qualified men [1 Timothy 2:12-14, 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9]. This is not a cultural concession but a divine mandate rooted in the order of creation, affirmed by the apostles, and consistent throughout millennia of Church history.

We reject the notion that these roles imply inequality or inferiority; rather, they reflect God's perfect wisdom and order. Women are highly esteemed and are encouraged to serve in numerous vital ministries within the Church, exercising their spiritual gifts in ways that align with the biblical pattern. In honoring God's design, we seek to glorify Him through our obedience to His Word, ensuring that our church functions in a way that reflects His truth and order.

6.5 Premillennialism

Based on our literal, historical, and grammatical approach to Scripture, we teach that Christ's Kingdom is now *spiritually* present on earth within the Church and that Christ will return visibly and bodily to establish His *physical* kingdom upon the present earth, creating a golden era of peace for all believers alive at His return along with the resurrected saints of past eras [Revelation 20:1-7; Matthew 25:31; Luke 1:31-33; Acts 1:10-11, 2:29-30].

Furthermore, in accordance with the Scriptures and the teachings of Jesus, we emphasize the purpose of God's revelation concerning the return of Christ is not in determining the times and seasons these things will take place, but in cultivating an eager readiness for His imminent return [Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32-33; Luke 12:35-40; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-2; 2 Peter 3:10-12].

Section II: Bylaws

1. Affiliations and Denominations

This church shall be an independent, non-denominational organization adhering to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith as set forth in the Holy Scriptures and as defined in our Doctrinal Statement (Section I.4), Statement of Faith (Section I.3), and the Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics (Section I.5).

2. Government

2.1 Authority

As set forth herein, final authority in this church shall be vested in the Membership (see Section II.2.8), with the responsibility of leadership and shepherding willingly entrusted by the assembly to the Council of Elders through their voting and affirming of candidates for the office of Elder (see Section II.2.2).

2.2 Elders

2.2.1 The Council of Elders

Oversight of the church, its resources, and its facilities shall be vested by the Membership in a Council of Elders who satisfy the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9 and these Bylaws. It is the duty of this Council to meet regularly for prayer, planning, and oversight of the flock of Falling Waters Bible Church.

Annually, the Council of Elders shall vote to elect a Chairman and a Secretary to serve a minimum one-year term. A simple majority shall be required to elect each position. The Chairman shall set the agenda for each meeting, with Elders sending proposed agenda items to the Chairman before meetings. The Secretary shall provide minutes reasonably promptly after each meeting, to be made available for review to the Elders and Membership.

In compliance with Michigan's nonprofit corporation laws, the Council of Elders shall serve as the Corporation's Board of Directors, and the Elders' Chairman shall serve as the corporation's president.

If the church has no Elders, the Deacons shall elect an interim Moderator at a Members Meeting as soon as possible. The Moderator shall nominate two or more men to serve as interim Elders until biblically qualified Elders are elected. The office of Interim Moderator shall dissolve immediately upon the election of two biblically qualified Elders.

In the event that the church has only one Elder, the Elder should prayerfully seek to evaluate, train, seek out, and recommend additional Elders or Associate Elders to the Membership for a vote as soon as possible.

2.2.2 The Role and Responsibilities of Elders

Based upon our understanding of the Scriptures, we affirm that the terms 'Elder' and 'Pastor' are synonymous and interchangeable and refer to a single office.

The Elders shall, in keeping with the principles outlined in the Scriptures, undertake the responsibility of leading and shepherding God's flock, paying careful attention to devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word [Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-4].

While affirming equal authority and responsibility among Elders in shepherding the flock, we acknowledge that some Elders may be set over certain areas of responsibility according to God's gifting and their availability. This recognition does not diminish the shared pastoral responsibility but allows for practical differentiation in roles. For instance, the primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public church meetings may be vested in a particular Elder who is set aside and provided remuneration following 1 Timothy 5:17. Additional men may be similarly set aside and provided remuneration to support the ministry in specific areas of responsibility as deemed necessary by the Elders and in accordance with these Bylaws. This approach seeks to balance the biblical principle of shared leadership and parity while recognizing the diverse gifts and weekly availability of the Elders, contributing to effective and harmonious pastoral care for the Membership.

Elders shall have the right to serve as *ex officio* members of any committees or organizations formed within or by the church at their discretion.

2.2.3 Qualifications for Elders

Elders shall be men who give evidence of God's call to the office, meet the biblical requirements [1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1], and have been ordained (see Section II.2.3) by this church or a church of like faith. For any man to be considered a candidate, he must read the Falling Waters Constitution and Bylaws and signify his agreement with its entirety.

2.2.4 Calling Elders

a. The Council of Elders shall interview and investigate candidates for Eldership. Candidates shall be asked to affirm the Constitution and Bylaws in its entirety and to complete a written questionnaire regarding beliefs and practice, training, experience, personal holiness, and other biblical qualifications.
b. If the candidate has not been ordained, ordination shall be a part of the call in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws (see Section II.2.3).
c. The Council of Elders shall submit a qualified candidate for the office of Elder for a Membership vote at a specially-called Membership meeting. A three-fourths majority vote by the Membership will be required to extend a call.
d. If not already Members, the Elder and his wife shall become Members through the process outlined in Section II.2.8.
e. For those confirmed Elders, an installation ceremony shall be called and conducted by the Council of Elders to lay hands on and install the man in the office at a public gathering of the church. When possible, this ceremony should correspond with the ordination of the Elder.
f. The term of office for Elders shall be indefinite.

2.2.5 Associate Elders

a. In an effort to avoid haste in the laying on of hands, a man may be designated by the Council of Elders and approved by a three-fourths majority vote of the Membership to serve as an Associate Elder for up to two years. Once approved, the term may be renewed by a three-fourths majority Membership vote.
b. The Associate Elder functions as an Elder for governance purposes but with a limited term as described herein. He may also conduct weddings and funerals, and administer the Ordinances.
c. Following approval by the Membership, Associate Elders will not be installed but rather recognized publicly during a corporate worship gathering of the church.
d. The Council of Elders may present an Associate Elder for a vote to become a permanent member of the Council of Elders at a specially-called Membership meeting. He must meet all the qualifications given under Section II.2.2.3. A three-fourths majority vote by the Membership will be required to extend a call as a permanent member of the Council of Elders.

2.2.6 Removal of Elders or Associate Elders

In accordance with Matthew 18 and 1 Timothy 5:19, Members in good standing have the authority to remove an Elder from office, subject to the following conditions:

a. A special Membership meeting may be convened for the purpose of removing an Elder if:
    i. The Council of Elders deems necessary for reasons of incapacity, moral failure, or a failure to meet the biblical requirements outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
    ii. A signed petition is submitted to the Council of Elders by at least 20% of the Membership in good standing; this petition must include: (1) the names of all those in support of removal; (2) the biblical grounds for disqualification/removal [1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:19; Titus 1:5-9]; (3) description of efforts to address the sin with the accused and the outcomes of those efforts [Matthew 18:15]. Those Elders not under allegation will then set a special Membership meeting and announce it to the Membership two weeks prior to the meeting date.
b. During this special Membership meeting, the petition along with biblical charges shall be read aloud to the Membership with the accused being given the opportunity to respond to the charges at the meeting in person or by writing. Those Elders not being charged shall also be given the opportunity to address the allegations during the meeting.
c. A three-fourths majority vote by the Members present at the special meeting shall be required to remove an Elder from office.
d. All responsibilities and duties terminate immediately upon removal of an Elder. Unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, remuneration and benefits for paid Elders shall continue in full for a period of 90 days from the official date of removal from office.

2.3 Ordination

2.3.1 Composition and Functions of Ordination Council

In accordance with 1 Timothy 4:14, when the Council of Elders judges that a man is called to the Christian ministry or the office of Elder, they may convene an Ordination Council to examine him.

a. The Ordination Council shall consist of ordained Elders or Christian ministers.

b. The applicant for ordination shall compose a comprehensive doctrinal statement which will form the basis on which the Ordination Council shall examine the candidate. This statement should be provided to the Ordination Council for review approximately two weeks prior to the examination date.
c. The Ordination Council shall set a date for a public examination and notify and invite the Membership in advance.
d. The Ordination Council shall examine the applicant's Christian experience, call to the ministry, doctrinal stances, reputation, and demonstrated Christian service during this meeting.
e. Upon the conclusion of the examination, the Ordination Council shall confer and vote on whether the man is to be ordained. The outcome is to be announced privately to the candidate and then publicly to the church.
f. Those candidates who are affirmed for ordination by the Ordination Council shall be ordained at a public ceremony conducted by the Council of Elders to lay hands on the man.

2.3.2 Discipline of Ordained Ministers

The Council of Elders shall also have the power to discipline, even to revoke the ordination credentials, of any minister ordained under the Falling Waters Constitution if he is found guilty of doctrinal or moral defection. The Council of Elders will notify those members of the Ordination Council from outside Falling Waters Bible Church that participated in ordaining the minister of their concerns and invite them to a meeting. A simple majority of those present at the vote shall be required to discipline an ordained minister. The minister under discipline shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the Council of Elders within 60 days after the decision is made publicly known.

2.4 Deacons

2.4.1 Qualifications for Deacons

a. All Deacons must be Members in good standing for at least one year before the beginning of their appointment.
b. Deacons shall meet the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.
c. Every Deacon shall be faithfully engaged in the ministries of Falling Waters, actively attending, serving, and leading.
d. Every Deacon shall have unreserved agreement on the Statement of Faith (Section I.4) and the Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics (Section I.5), and must in good conscience be able to abide by the remainder of the Falling Waters Constitution.

2.4.2 Duties

a. Deacons, under the direction and empowerment of the Elders, shall lead and manage the practical aspects of ministry, thereby promoting unity within the congregation and helping to achieve the church's ministry goals [Acts 6:1-7].
b. The Deacons shall meet regularly with the Council of Elders to collaborate, offer feedback, and work together to further the ministry goals set by the Elders, and inform and assist in the decision-making and ministry direction.
c. The Deacons shall meet as a body together regularly to organize and oversee the ministries entrusted to them.

2.4.3 Nomination & Appointment of Deacons

a. Deacons shall be nominated and recommended by the Membership and appointed by the Council of Elders [Acts 6:3, 6].
b. Nominations shall be held regularly by the Council of Elders who encourage the Membership to select candidates for nomination according to the biblical qualifications.
c. The Elders shall then appoint, by a majority vote, Deacons to the office and they shall be recognized before the Membership during a public worship service.

2.4.4 Terms of Service

a. Service of Deacons shall continue until removed by the Council of Elders or upon mutual agreement with the individual. A majority vote of the Council of Elders shall be required to remove a Deacon.
b. The Council of Elders shall annually review the list of Deacons currently serving to ensure the practical needs of the ministry are being met.
c. No Deacon shall serve while subject to any disciplinary process described herein.

2.5 Directors and Other Appointments

The Elders may appoint Directors, Officers, and other lay positions within the church to conduct church business and ministry as needed.

2.5.1 Qualifications

a. All appointees shall be active Members in good standing.

2.6 Church Staff

a. The Council of Elders shall have the authority to hire paid staff as necessary to fulfill the ministry needs and operational requirements of the church. This authority includes the ability to create, modify, and eliminate staff positions.
b. The Council may assign specific Elders or other paid staff to directly supervise these staff members, ensuring alignment with the church's vision and strategic goals. The Council of Elders shall retain ultimate authority over all staffing decisions and may intervene or reassign oversight as necessary.
c. All church staff shall be required to affirm the church's Statement of Faith and Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics as a condition for employment (Sections I.3 and I.5).
d. The Council of Elders, or its designees, shall conduct regular performance reviews of all paid staff to ensure they are fulfilling their duties in accordance with their job descriptions and the mission of the church. These reviews shall include an assessment of job performance, spiritual maturity, and adherence to church doctrine and ethics as outlined in Section I.3 and I.5. The Council of Elders has the authority to discipline or terminate any paid staff member whose conduct, performance, or doctrinal stance is deemed inconsistent with these sections. Such actions should be taken with prayerful consideration and, where possible, in accordance with the principles of biblical conflict resolution [Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; Titus 3:10].

2.7 Teachers

a. All lay Members in the role of teaching Scripture within the congregation must be active or associate Members and agree to uphold the perspectives represented in this Constitution, including the Statement of Faith,

Doctrinal Statement, Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics, and Theological Distinctives (Sections I.3. I.4, I.5, and I.6 respectively).

b. The Elders must approve all teachers and curriculum materials.

2.8 Members

2.8.1 Qualifications of Members

a. A candidate for membership must be a committed believer in Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice for their sin. This belief should be evidenced in the form of genuine love and devotion to Christ and His teachings accompanied by the fruit of the Spirit.
b. Those who are physically able must also have undergone a believer's baptism by immersion.
c. Finally, a candidate for Membership must also agree fully with the church's Statement of Faith and the Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics (Sections I.3 and I.5).

2.8.2 Admission of Members

a. The Council of Elders shall oversee the Membership process and evaluate applicants to determine whether they meet the qualifications for Membership in Section II.2.8.1 [Romans 12:4–8; 2 Corinthians 8:1–5; Ephesians 4:11–16; Philippians 1:1; Hebrews 10:23–25, 13:17].
b. Applicants approved for Membership shall be announced to the congregation for two weeks. If the Elders receive no valid objections contradicting their testimony, their Membership shall be in force and announced to the congregation.
c. Temporary Membership Transfer Provision: Members in good standing under the Countryside Bible Church Constitution who joined prior to January 1, 2025 may transfer their Membership to Falling Waters Bible Church by affirming the Statement of Faith and Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Ethics. For these transfers, the baptism by immersion requirement will be waived, though Members are encouraged to pursue baptism as an act of obedience to Christ. This provision will be in effect until June 30, 2025, after which it will be automatically removed from the Bylaws without requiring an amendment or Membership vote as outlined in Section II.6.

2.8.3 Status of Membership

The Membership of this church shall consist of two groups: Active Membership and Associate Membership.

a. Active Membership: Active Membership shall consist of such Christians who have been received in accordance with these Bylaws and are not Members of any other church. Active Members who have reached the age of 18 years shall be entitled to vote.
b. Associate Membership: The Elders may extend Associate Membership to those who meet the qualifications for Active Members and are not permanent residents of this area (such as university students and missionaries who may hold regular Membership elsewhere). Likewise, those Members of this church who temporarily move away but wish to maintain Membership with this church may do so as Associate Members by notifying the Elders of this desire. Associate Members shall not have the right to vote.

2.8.4 Removal of Members

a. Those who, without reasonable cause, are consistently absent from the regular assembly of this church shall be removed from Membership by the Council of Elders. In such cases, the Elders shall make a reasonable effort to contact the Member before removing them from Membership.
b. Those who have come under church disciplinary action may be removed from Membership in accordance with these Bylaws (see Section II.2.8.6).

2.8.5 Responsibility of the Membership

Upon applying for and being received into Membership, all Members agree to strive, by the grace of God and his enablement, to live out the responsibilities of Membership as described:

a. We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace [Ephesians 4:1-3].
b. We will walk together in brotherly love as Members, exercise affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require and opportunity provides [Romans 12:10, 16:17-18; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:15-17; James 5:19-20; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 3:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; 1 Corinthians 5].
c. We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves or neglect to pray for ourselves and others [Hebrews 10:23-25; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 25].
d. We will endeavor to nurture and admonish the children under our care and seek the salvation of our family and friends through our example and prayerful sharing of the Gospel [Deuteronomy 6:1-12, 11:18-20; Matthew 6:6, 5:16; Ephesians 6:4, 5:15; Mark 5:19; Luke 5:19].
e. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows [Romans 12:15; Galatians 6:2].
f. We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so we have a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life [Ephesians 5:15; Titus 2:12; Romans 6:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:13-25].
g. We will work together to continue a faithful evangelical ministry in this church as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations [Ephesians 2:21-22; Hebrews 10:25; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:24-34; Romans 16:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 5; Acts 2:42; 2 John 1:9-11; Matthew 10:10; Galatians 6:6; Malachi 3:8-10; Acts 11:29; 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Luke 24:46-48; Acts 1:8].
h. When we move from this place, as soon as possible, we will unite with some other church to carry out the spirit of these commitments and the principles of God's Word [Acts 18:27-28; Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Colossians 3:23; Hebrews 10:24-25].

2.8.6 Discipline

Although it is the conviction of this church that converts should be welcomed into this church so that they might be taught, edified, and built up in the faith [Romans 14:1], it is likewise our conviction that the church should administer church discipline of Members according to the Word of God [Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:6; Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 3:9-11]. Any disciplinary action that is deemed necessary shall be in the spirit of love and humility [2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Galatians 6:1] and for purposes of repentance and restoration. Disciplinary actions may be taken against sins

that are observable by witnesses, serious in their consequences for the individual or the church, and for which the person is unrepentant.

2.8.6.1 Reasons for Discipline

Reasons for discipline shall include:

a. Non-attendance, as described in Section II.2.8.4a. The Elders shall therefore conduct a regular review of the Active Membership.
b. Doctrinal deviation and heresy [1 Timothy 6:3-5; Titus 3:10-11; Romans 16:17-18], including departures from the church's Statement of Faith as described in Section I.4.
c. Immoral conduct [1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6].
d. Any action or conversation that would harm the testimony of the church and the Gospel [Philippians 1:27; 1 Peter 2:12].
e. Any action or conversation that has caused division in the church [Titus 3:10-11].

2.8.6.2 Process of Discipline

The oversight of the discipline process of this church shall be entrusted to the Council of Elders.

a. No accusation shall be brought against any Member except upon the testimony of two or three witnesses [Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:9].
b. The Elders will investigate and convey the accusations with the desire and effort to correct and restore. If this does not lead to repentance and restoration of fellowship, charges shall be put in writing and delivered to the person, and he or she summoned to meet with the Elders. Failure to appear before the Elders after being given reasonable notice will not prevent the Council from rendering a verdict following the testimony of witnesses received.
c. A woman subject to discipline shall have another woman involved in the investigation and recommendation related to the matter. In this event, the Elders will appoint a godly female Member in good standing to participate in any meetings with or involving the accused woman.
d. The Elders may require public confession, restitution, intensive counseling or discipleship, or other biblical forms of correction as part of a process leading to restoration.
e. As a result of this disciplinary process, the Elders may propose to the Membership that the individual be removed from Membership. The charges shall be sent to the Membership along with notice of the date of a special Membership meeting. The accused will have the privilege of having the matter presented before the Membership. The accused shall be permitted to state their case or have a representative state their case before the Membership, and the Council of Elders will report on the findings of their investigation into the matter. A majority vote of the Members present at the hearing will decide whether or not to remove the accused from the Membership.
f. The names of any whose membership status has been changed due to nonattendance, discipline, or reconciliation shall be reported to the Membership. Regarding Members who are disciplined, the Membership shall be called upon to pray for their repentance [Matthew 18:17], refrain from gossip [Ephesians 4:29], and limit fellowship to interactions encouraging their repentance [1 Corinthians 5:11].

2.8.6.3 Restoration of Membership

a. The goal and hope of all discipline shall be, Lord-willing, to restore the repentant individual to fellowship and Active Membership in the church [Galatians 6:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Hebrews 10:24-25; James 5:19-20].
b. Upon request by the disciplined individual who gives evidence of fruit in keeping with repentance, they may be restored to active Membership upon recommendation of the Elders and by a Membership vote [2 Corinthians 2:6-11]. The Membership vote shall take place at a special meeting with a quorum present, requiring a two-thirds majority vote to restore the disciplined individual. If approved, an announcement should be made to the Membership noting the return and restoration of the disciplined individual and instructing the body to welcome them.

2.9 Arbitration Board

a. If the internal affairs of the church should reach such a state of controversy that it seems impossible to achieve peaceful negotiations between an Elder and the Membership or between factions in the Membership, a Board of Arbitration shall aid in reaching a point of agreement.
b. This Board shall comprise three or more pastors outside the church, mutually agreed on by the Council of Elders and approved by the Membership. The Arbitration Board may engage two additional qualified consultants.
c. The Arbitration Board shall be called in by the Council of Elders or by a petition bearing the names of 40% of the voting Membership.
d. The decisions of this Board shall be binding upon the Membership, and its conclusions must be accepted by all with the following exceptions:
    i. It has no power to change the Constitution or Doctrinal Statement, or to pass judgment on it.
    ii. It has no power to dissolve the church or dispose of real estate.

2.10 Membership Meetings

a. Members shall meet regularly for purposes of fellowship, worship, and discipleship. Such meetings shall be held in times and places as determined by the Council of Elders.
b. The Elders shall set an annual meeting each year. The Elders shall set the agenda.
c. The Elders may call special business meetings throughout the year when needed to address direction, vision, or specific ministry needs with the Membership.
d. Special business meetings may also be held upon the written request of 20% of the Membership.
e. The time, date, purpose, and location of special meetings must be announced at least two weeks before the meeting.
f. The Chairman of the Council of Elders or a delegate of his choosing shall preside at the annual and special business meetings unless the meeting regards his termination. In the event of his absence, the Chairman of these meetings shall be the Secretary of the Council of Elders or, in his absence, a moderator appointed by the Elders or approved by a majority of Members present, even without quorum.
g. An Elder, Deacon, or Officer of the church shall record Members present and provide minutes at every annual or special meeting.

h. A quorum at the Membership or special meetings shall be 25% of all voting Members. A quorum shall be required to hold a vote on any matter, unless otherwise indicated explicitly herein. When less than 50% of all voting Members are present, a two-thirds majority of those present shall be required to pass any measure. If 50% or more are present, then a majority vote is sufficient to approve a measure, unless a different percentage is indicated herein.
i. In business meetings, the latest edition of Robert's *Rules of Order* shall decide any parliamentary questions not covered in the Constitution or Bylaws.

2.11 Church Organizations

All organizations of this church are subject to Elder approval and oversight. Unless otherwise stipulated by this Constitution, the Elders shall be empowered to establish whatever parameters and regulations are necessary related to any organizations formed by or within the church.

3. Finances

3.1 Offerings

The finances of this church shall be supported primarily through the free will offerings.

3.2 Fiscal Year

The church's fiscal year begins on the first day of January each year.

3.3 Annual Budget

The Council of Elders, in collaboration with the Finance Team (see Section II.3.6), shall be responsible for developing and ensuring the wise stewardship of the annual budget [Titus 1:7]. The adopted annual budget shall be presented to the Membership at a membership meeting held between December 1 and January 31. The proposed budget and a summary of the current fiscal year's spending through the most recently completed month shall be made available to Members at least three weeks before the meeting for review and provide feedback to the Elders or Finance Team. Until its adoption, ordinary expenditures may continue under the prior year's budget.

3.4 Spending Limitations

The Elders shall not authorize or make non-maintenance-related, unbudgeted expenditures of more than $10,000.00 without approval by the Membership. This number may be adjusted annually by Membership vote at the annual business meeting or a specially called business meeting.

3.5 Audits & Financial Record Requests

a. The Elders may engage auditors to review the church's finances, financial records, and reports to ensure efficiency, best practices, and accountability. Formal or informal audits shall be conducted annually. A copy of any auditor reports shall be made available to the Membership at the annual business meeting.
b. Any Member in good standing may review the current budget balances and financial expenses of the church at any time upon written request to the Council of Elders.

3.6 Finance Team

3.6.1 Responsibilities

The Finance Team serves the Membership and collaborates with the Elders in the development and stewardship of the church's financial plan. They are to represent the broader Membership and support the Council of Elders in:

a. The fiscal management of the ministry through record keeping, tracking budgetary expenses, etc.
b. The development of and feedback on the annual budget.
c. The development of initial pay packages for new Elders.
d. Conducting an annual market analysis of the cost of living and pastoral compensation. Based on this analysis, the team will recommend pay and benefit adjustments for the Elders. These recommendations will be submitted to the Elders for consideration and inclusion in the annual budget.

3.6.2 Composition

a. The team shall shall be composed of:
    i. At least one Elder (with a preference for those who are not financially compensated),
    ii. At least one Deacon,
    iii. At least one at-large Member in good standing, and
    iv. Any appointed Financial Officers/Directors.
b. In accordance with the principles in 2 Corinthians 8:16-24, the Members at large shall be selected by the Council of Elders and presented to the Membership for a vote at the annual meeting. All other positions shall be appointed by the Council of Elders.
c. At no time shall the wife of a paid Elder serve on the Finance Team.

3.7 Banking and Transactional Authority

3.7.1 Authority to Sign Checks and Withdraw Funds

a. Designated Signatories: The following individuals shall be authorized to sign checks on behalf of Falling Waters Bible Church:
    i. Elders (collectively, or as appointed by the Council of Elders)
    ii. Appointed Financial Officers (see Section II.3.6.2)
b. Check Signing Limits:
    i. Checks up to $2,000: Any one of the designated signatories listed above may sign checks for amounts up to and including $2,000.
    ii. Checks exceeding $2,000 but less than $10,000: Any two designated signatories may jointly sign checks for amounts exceeding $2,000 but less than $10,000.
    iii. Checks over $10,000: A majority vote of the Council of Elders shall be required for checks exceeding $10,000. Additionally, two signatories, one of whom must be an Elder, are required to sign.
c. Electronic Transfers: The individuals designated to sign checks are also authorized to approve electronic transfers or payments. Any such transaction exceeding $2,000 must be approved by two authorized individuals, with at least one being an Elder.

3.7.2 Authority to Make Bank Deposits

a. Authorized Depositors: The following individuals are authorized to make bank deposits on behalf of Falling Waters Bible Church:
    i. Appointed Financial Officers
    ii. Finance Team Members, with Elder approval
b. Deposit Procedures: All deposits must be made into the designated accounts of Falling Waters Bible Church in accordance with the church's accounting and financial policies. Deposits must be documented with receipts and detailed reports provided to the appointed Financial Officers for record-keeping.

3.7.3 Authority to Enter into Contracts

a. Real Property Contracts:
    i. Any contract involving the purchase, sale, lease, or other transfer of real property must be approved by a majority vote of the Council of Elders.
    ii. Upon Council of Elders approval, any Elder or an appointed Financial Officer shall be authorized to sign such contracts on behalf of the church.
b. Non-Real Property Contracts:
    i. Standard Contracts: The Elders or appointed Financial Officers are authorized to enter into contracts for goods or services related to the church's operations, ministries, and day-to-day functions without prior Council approval, provided the value of the contract does not exceed $10,000.
    ii. Contracts Over $10,000: For contracts exceeding $10,000, prior approval from the Council of Elders is required. The Elders or appointed Financial Officers shall be authorized to sign such contracts after approval by the Council of Elders.
c. Emergency Contracts: In the event of an emergency requiring immediate action (e.g., disaster relief, urgent repairs), the Council of Elders may enter into contracts necessary to address the situation.

3.7.4 Financial Oversight and Reporting

All financial transactions, including checks written, contracts signed, and bank deposits made, must be documented and reported to the Council of Elders on a regular basis, at least quarterly. The Finance Team shall provide a detailed financial report that includes a summary of checks issued, deposits made, and contracts entered into during the period.

4. Missions

4.1 Missions & Outreach

The Elders shall oversee the church's missions and outreach ministries, including the support of any missionaries and outreach programs.

4.2 Missions & Outreach Finance

a. All money received for outreach or missions purposes shall be so used.
b. As part of the budgeting process, the Council of Elders shall designate a percentage of general fund receipts for the purpose of missions.

c. Any financial support given to the church for missions/missionaries not currently supported by the church must be approved by the Council of Elders. In the event it is not approved, all monies shall be returned in full to the donor.

5. Properties

5.1 Title

Title to all property of this church, real and personal, shall be and remain vested in the portion of the Membership that remains faithful to the original purpose stated in Sections I.2 and I.3 of this Constitution.

5.2 Acquisition and Sale of Property

a. The church shall have the power to acquire and hold real estate and personal property for its general purpose. All property so acquired shall be in the church's name.
b. Any purchase, sale, mortgage, or transfer of real estate or personal property valued over $10,000.00 shall be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of the Membership. This limit may be adjusted to keep pace with inflation or market fluctuations at the annual business meeting or a specially called Membership meeting by a simple majority vote of Members present.

5.3 Use of Property

a. All church properties shall be available to the Membership for purposes consistent with the ministry vision of the church, subject to regulation by the Elders, and in accordance with the Constitution.
b. The Elders shall have access at all times and under all circumstances to all properties owned by the church.

5.4 Dissolution

No part of this church's net earnings shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, Member, Director, or Officer of the corporation or any private individual. No donor, Member, Director, Officer of the corporation, or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any corporation's assets.

Upon dissolution, any corporation assets must be distributed to an organization recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one organized exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes consistent with the church's mission as determined by its Membership at that time.

5.5 Indemnification

The church shall indemnify and hold harmless its Pastors, Officers, Directors, employees, and volunteers from and against any and all liabilities, costs, and expenses (including attorneys' fees) incurred in connection with any action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, to which they may be made a party by reason of their service to the church, provided that such person acted in good faith and in a manner they reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the church, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful. This indemnification shall not apply to matters arising from gross negligence, fraud, or willful misconduct. The Elders will ensure that adequate insurance for this purpose is in effect at all times.

The church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Pastor, Officer, Director, employee, or volunteer of the church, against any liability asserted against them and incurred by them in any such capacity, or arising out of their status as such, whether or not the church would have the power to indemnify them against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

6. Constitutional Amendment

This Constitution, except sections I.2-I.6, and these Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Members in good standing at the annual meeting, provided such amendment is presented in written form at least one month before the meeting and by public announcement for four consecutive Sundays.

6.1 Amendments of Sections I.2-I.6

Amendments of Sections I.2-I.6 shall require consent of 90% of the Members in good standing. All other stipulations in Section II.6 above for presenting and accepting a proposed amendment shall apply.