

New Life Fellowship Constitution

Adopted August 30, 2006

Preamble

We declare and establish this constitution to preserve and secure the principles of our faith and to govern the body in an orderly manner. This constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual church member and the freedom of action of this body in relation to other churches.

Article 1 – Name

This body shall be known as the New Life Fellowship of Holden, Missouri.

Article 2 – Purpose

The purpose of New Life Fellowship is to (1) Exalt God in all His glory (2) Equip members for life leadership (3) Evangelize unbelievers locally and globally.

Article 3 – Statement of Faith

This church subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article 4 – Covenant

We, the members of New Life Fellowship, do hereby covenant with each other before God to:

Be family; to be committed to each other; to love, accept, and forgive each other until death or God's call causes us to part.

Live in Jesus Christ and take His commands seriously.

Help one another grow toward Christian maturity by bearing one another's burdens, encouraging one another, exhorting one another, praying for one another, confessing our sins to one another, speaking the truth in love to one another, admonishing one another, building up one another, teaching one another, comforting one another, submitting to one another, serving one another, patiently bearing with one another, being hospitable to one another, greeting one another, living in peace with one another, regarding one another as more important than ourselves, caring for one another, exercising our spiritual gifts to serve one another, being kind and tenderhearted to one another, being devoted to one another, accepting one another, forgiving one another, and loving one another.

We invite fellow members to pray for us, teach us, correct us, or rebuke us, if necessary, in a spirit of gentleness and humility should we stray from our Lord's commands, because the thing we desire most in life is to serve Christ.

We voluntarily submit ourselves to one another and to the discipline of the church. Such discipline will always be for the loving purpose of restoration—restoration to fellowship with God and with the covenant community—and it will always be done in accordance with Matthew 18:15-22.

Bring honor to the body of Christ by maintaining a good testimony.

We enter into this covenant because we have the common purpose of obeying Jesus Christ, and because we believe that we need one another's help to do this. As believers, and disciples of Jesus Christ, we have entered into a covenant relationship with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—with the God who revealed Himself in Jesus. Since the blessings and promises of the covenant have been freely extended and given to us, out of wonder, love, thanksgiving, and reverence, we hereby accept and take up the covenant responsibilities that go with such a privilege. This is our reasonable service, and we should do nothing less.

God helps us all! We rely on His grace and hold fast to His promise that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Article 5 – Membership

Section 1 – Purpose of Membership

To publicly declare one's commitment to serve Christ and support His church and its ministries to the community. It is the launching point at which believers can begin using your God-given potential to accomplish His vision for your life and His church.

Section 2 – Requirements of Membership

- (a) Be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ
- (b) Follow Christ in believer's baptism by immersion (Rom. 6:3-4)
- (c) Transfer membership from another church of like faith and order
- (d) Take the newcomers' orientation seminar

Section 3 – Rights of Membership

Members of the church are entitled to vote at all elections and on all questions submitted to the church in conference, provided the member is present or provision has been made for absentee balloting. Members shall be eligible for positions in any office or ministry of the church provided they meet the requirements of that position.

Section 3 – Duties of Membership

- (a) Pray regularly for His church, its leaders and ministries. (I Timothy 2:1)
- (b) Worship together regularly with other believers. (Hebrews 10:25)
- (c) Give financially to support the vision and ministries. (Malachi 3:10)
- (d) Encourage other members as they grow in their faith. (Hebrews 3:13)
- (e) Serve Christ and others in ministry. (Galatians 6:10)
- (f) Lead others to faith in Christ and church membership. (Acts 1:8)

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

(a) Membership shall be terminated for the following reasons: 1) Death of the member 2) Request or proof of membership in another church

(b) Membership may be terminated for those who habitually absent themselves from regular services—unless physically unable—or fail to support the general welfare of the church. The clerk may refer such members to the Deacons for investigation and final ruling.

(c) Membership may be terminated for those who assent to such doctrine or such conduct as shall in the judgment of the pastor and majority of deacons be so opposed to the Word of God as to threaten the life and faith of the church. The Pastor and Deacons shall strive to restore the member before removing them from the body (James 5:19-20). The church may over-turn the ruling of the Pastor and Deacons in regular business session by a three-fifths majority vote of active members present.

Article 6 – Officers

Section 1 – Pastor

(a) The role of the Pastor is to 1) Protect the congregation (Acts 20:28), 2) Equip the congregation (Ephesians 4:11-12), 3) Lead the congregation (1 Timothy 5:17). The pastor is responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The pastor will lead the congregation, the ministries, and the church staff to perform their tasks. He shall preside at meetings of this church, and as moderator in all business sessions in keeping with the rules of order authorized in this constitution.

(b) Qualifications of Pastor shall be 1) A mature believer (1 Tim. 3:6), 2) Posses Godly character (1 Tim. 3:1-7), 3) Called by God (Eph. 4:11), 4) Ordained (Titus 1:5).

(c) A pastor shall be chosen and called by the church whenever a vacancy occurs. The election shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. A Pastor Selection Committee of seven members with one being a representative of the Deacon

body shall be elected by the church to seek out a suitable pastor, and its recommendations will constitute a nomination. The committee shall bring to the consideration of the church only one name at a time. Election shall be by ballot, an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those present being necessary for a choice.

(d) The pastor, thus elected, shall serve until the relationship is terminated by his request or the church's request. The pastor may relinquish the office as pastor by giving at least two weeks notice to the church at the time of resignation. The church may declare the office of pastor to be vacant. Such action shall take place at a meeting called for that purpose, of which at least one week's public notice has been given. The meeting may be called upon the recommendation of a majority of the Deacons or by written petition signed by not less than one-half of the church membership. The moderator for this meeting shall be designated by the members present by majority vote, and he shall be someone other than the pastor. The vote to declare the office vacant shall be by secret ballot; an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present being necessary to declare the office vacant. The termination shall be immediate. The church will compensate the pastor with not less than one-twelfth of his total annual compensation.

Section 2 – Ministry Staff

(a) The ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the church determines the need for such offices. A job description shall be written when the need for a staff member is determined. Those staff members of whom the church requires evidence of a personal call of God to minister shall be recommended to the church by the Pastor or majority of Deacons and called by church action. At the time of resignation, not less than a two-week notice shall be given to the church. The church may vote to vacate such positions upon recommendation of the Pastor or majority of Deacons, such termination being immediate, and the compensation conditions being the same as for the pastor, except that the amount shall relate to the individual's compensation.

(b) Non-ministerial staff members shall be employed as the church determines the need for their services. The Pastor and Trustees shall have the authority to employ and to terminate services of non-ministerial staff members.

Section 3 – Deacons

(a) The role of Deacons is to minister to needs of congregation (Acts 6:1-6).

(b) Qualifications of Deacons shall be 1) A mature believer (Acts 6:3), 2) Posses Godly character (1 Tim. 3:8-13), 3) Ordained by the church (Acts 6:6). The Pastor and Deacons shall determine the eligibility of candidates to present to the church for confirmation.

(c) The church shall elect deacons by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. Deacons shall serve for a period of three years. After serving a three-year term assignment, a deacon may be reaffirmed for each additional three-year term by ballot at regular business meetings of the church. There shall be no obligation to constitute as an assigned deacon one who has been a deacon in another church; but in such instances as one might be chosen by this church for assignment as a deacon, his previous ordination by another church of like faith and order shall suffice for this church.

Section 4 – Trustees

The church shall elect six trustees to serve as legal officers for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters. Trustees shall serve on a rotation basis, with two new trustees being elected every three years.

Section 5 – Clerk, Treasure, Financial Secretary

(a) The church shall elect annually a clerk as its clerical officer. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a suitable record of all official actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. The clerk shall be responsible for keeping a register of names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, death, or erasure, together with a record of baptisms. The clerk shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communications and written official reports, and give required notice of all meetings where notice is necessary, as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing the annual letter of the church to the association. The church may delegate some of the clerical responsibilities to a church secretary who will assist the elected clerk. All church records are church property and shall be kept in the church office when an office is maintained.

(b) The church shall elect annually a church treasurer as its financial officer. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to render to the church a report of the receipts and disbursements.

(c) The church shall elect annually a financial secretary. All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the financial secretary, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. The financial secretary shall maintain annual giving records to be given to each contributor at the end of each calendar year.

Section 6 – Dismissal of Officers

Any officer failing in their duties or whose conduct threatens the life and health of the church may be dismissed by the Pastor and majority of Deacons (See Article 6, Section 1 & 2 for exceptions). The church may over-turn the ruling of the Pastor and Deacons in regular business session by a three-fifths majority vote of members present. An individual may serve in only one officer position at a time.

Article 7 – Committees

Section 1 – The committees of this church shall be a Nominating Committee, a Stewardship Committee, and such other regular and special committees as the church shall authorize. Committee members shall serve for a period of one year and may be nominated each year thereafter.

Section 2 – The Nominating Committee shall nominate to the church in its annual business meeting persons to serve for the succeeding year as officers, ministry directors, and committee members except the Nominating Committee. The members of the Nominating Committee shall be appointed by the pastor, with the assistance of the deacons, at least three months before the beginning of the church year. Throughout the year, this committee shall have the responsibility of nominating to the church persons to serve in positions of the church vacated by death, termination of membership, expiration of term of office or removal.

Section 3 – The Stewardship Committee develops and recommends an overall stewardship development plan, a unified church budget, and budget subscription plans. It advises and recommends in the administration of the gifts of church members and others, using sound principles of financial management. It works with the treasurer and financial secretary in the preparation and presentation to the church of required reports regarding the financial affairs of the church.

Section 4 – Any committee member failing in their duties or whose conduct threatens the life and health of the church may be dismissed by the Pastor and majority of Deacons. The church may over-turn the ruling of the Pastor and Deacons in regular business session by a three-fifths majority vote of members present.

Article 8 – Ministries

Section 1 – The church shall maintain ministries that exalt God in all His glory, equip members for life leadership, and evangelize unbelievers locally and globally.

Section 2 – Each ministry shall have a Director who shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and presented to the church for approval each fiscal year. Ministry Directors shall have authority to enlist members and administer funds necessary to help sustain and advance the ministry as needed. Directors shall not administer funds that exceed the annual budget limits without church approval. The Pastor shall maintain oversight of ministries and ministry Directors.

Section 3 – Any ministry Director failing in their duties or whose conduct threatens the life and health of the church may be dismissed by the Pastor and majority of Deacons. The church may over-turn the ruling of the Pastor and Deacons in regular business session by a three-fifths majority vote of members present.

Article 9 – Meetings

Section 1 – Worship Service

(a) The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning for the worship of Almighty God. Other services essential to the advancement of the church's objectives may be scheduled. The pastor shall direct the services for all the church members and for all others who may choose to attend.

(b) Baptism – This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes Him publicly and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. The pastor, or whomever the church shall authorize, shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for, and the observance of, baptism. Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.

(c) Lord's Supper – The church shall observe the Lord's Supper quarterly, the first Sunday of the quarter, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, the deacons being responsible for the physical preparations.

Section 2 – Business Sessions

(a) The church shall hold regular business sessions at the beginning of each quarter. One week notice shall be given for any regular business session. The church's fiscal year shall begin on September 1.

(b) The church may conduct called business sessions to consider matters of special nature and significance. Special business sessions may be called by the Pastor or majority of Deacons. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business sessions. The notice shall include the subject, the date, and time and place; and it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have an opportunity to know of the meeting.

(c) The quorum consists of those members who attend the business session, provided it is a regular session or one that has been properly called.

(d) Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business sessions of the church.

Article 10 – Amendments

Changes in the constitution may be made at any regular business session of the church provided each amendment shall have been presented in writing at a previous business session and copies of the proposed amendment shall have been furnished to each member present at the earlier session. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds majority vote of church members present.