

# **Evident Life Church**

## **By-Laws**

*{Adopted August 2015}*

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **Location of Offices**

Evident Life Ministries, Inc., DBA Evident Life Church (the Church), is an Arizona Nonprofit Religious Corporation with its principal offices in Gilbert, Arizona.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **Purpose and Mission**

Evident Life Church is organized for exclusively religious purposes (including charitable and eleemosynary purposes common to a pastoral church ministry as defined by Scripture). Our commission is summarized as follows: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Evident Life Church is embracing Jesus' Great Commission by helping people encounter God's presence, belong to His family, and grow in His love so that our town is transformed and our world impacted for God's glory.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Statement of Faith**

We believe in one God who is seen in three persons: the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 3:16,17; John 1:1,14; John 14:9; Genesis 1:2,26; John 4:24, John 10:30; John 14:16- 20)

We believe in God the Father, Creator of all things visible and invisible. (Genesis 1:1; Acts 17:24-28; Hebrews 11:3)

We believe Jesus was born fully human and fully divine, conceived of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary. (Philippians 2:7,8; John 1:14; Romans 5:15-17; Colossians 2:9; I John 1:1; Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:26-38).

We believe that mankind was meant to have fellowship with God, but through Adam's disobedience, sin separated us from God, our source of life. (Isaiah 59:2; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:23; Romans 5:12)

We believe that hell is a place that was made for Satan and his demons. Those who do not accept salvation will be thrown into the Lake of Fire without another chance for repentance. (Matthew 25:41, Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 19:20; Hebrews 6:1,2).

We believe that Jesus suffered and was crucified to pay the price for our sins and to undo the works of the devil. (I John 3:8; Galatians 3:13 Colossians 2:14,15).

We believe Jesus was buried and resurrected in bodily form on the third day. (Luke 23:44-24:8; John 20:24-29; I Corinthians 15:3-8)

We believe that salvation and forgiveness of sins is only received through saving faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is accomplished through personal repentance, belief in the Lord Jesus, and acceptance of Him into one's life as Savior and Lord. This should result in an active lifestyle of loving obedience to Jesus Christ. (Matthew 26:28; Romans 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Peter 1:18-19; I John 1:7-9).

We believe that God's grace empowers us to say no to sin and experience freedom today as well as for eternity. (Titus 2:11; Romans 6:18).

We believe that when someone chooses to give their life to Christ, their spirit nature is made new. (II Corinthians 5:17; John 3:3-5; I John 5:12,13; John 3:16; Romans 10:9,10)

We believe that water baptism is a foundational act of faith for those who follow Christ. (Romans 6:4; Matthew 28:19; Colossians 2:12, Matthew 3:16)

We believe that Jesus ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of the Father. (Luke 22:69; Acts 1:1-9; Colossians 3:1).

We believe that Jesus will return to the earth to judge both the living and the dead. (Matthew 24:36-42; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:10-11, 10:39-42; I Peter 4:5; I Thessalonians 4:16,17).

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who indwells every Christian. (John 15:26; John 16:5-15; I Corinthians 3:16, 6:19; II Timothy 1:14)

We believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, an experience that empowers the Christian. (Acts 1:7-8; Romans 8:26-27)

We believe that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the church today and therefore should be earnestly desired and practiced in a manner of love and

order. (1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14)

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We are therefore called to defend, protect, and value all human life. (Psalm 139).

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, written by men who were moved by the Holy Spirit. (Mark 12:36; John 14:26, 16:12-15; Acts 1:16; I Corinthians 2:12-13; II Timothy 3:14-16; II Peter 1:20-21).

We believe that the Bible is the final authority for all matters of faith and conduct. (Isaiah 40:8; Matthew 5:18, 24:35; Romans 15:4; Hebrews 4:12).

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **Church Government**

Evident Life Church is committed to building a biblical foundation for church government. Spiritual life is produced when church government and theological correctness are combined with biblical preaching that proclaims the authority of God's Word and the presence of the Holy Spirit. We believe the principles of church government are universal, and the scriptural formula for oversight and governance of the local church is relevant in every culture.

#### **Section 1: Board of Elders**

Evident Life will practice an Elder form of government. Although there are other important positions of leadership for instruction and ministry, it will be the Elders that have the responsibility to administer the visionary direction set by the Lead Pastor / Elder and to be the spiritual covering for the ministries of the church.

The basic functions of Elders include:

1. To lead the church by governing the vision of the church and establishing policies which provide philosophical boundaries for church life.
2. To uphold the biblical standards of behavior among church members. This includes enforcing church discipline for factious behavior, unrepentant sin and doctrinal error.
3. To individually demonstrate a lifestyle of active ministry and godly living to the people as they lead the church.
4. To oversee, lead, pastor and care for the Evident Life Church congregation.

Evident Life Church believes that church policies and philosophies for ministry are best decided when the entire Elder team meets together and discusses, debates and prays. Elder meetings will be held regularly and include discussion about policy decisions that affect the congregation as a whole.

While the Lead Pastor is the leader of the Elders and is given special respectful consideration as “first among equals”, all the Elders have a platform relating to input and decision-making. As the church grows and new ministries are established, the Elders ensure that the ministry remains consistent with the vision of the church and the methods of ministry remain consistent with our principles for ministry.

### **Major Points**

The office of Elder (overseer) is a governmental office with spiritual responsibilities and rewards. We believe that one day Jesus will review each Elder’s stewardship. Faithful, willing and sacrificial service to the flock of God will result in a heavenly reward. Elders should set the standard in every area of life. While perfection is not expected, an Elder should take his position seriously and strive to uphold the character qualifications necessary for this office in the church.

The Elders of Evident Life Church will be initially appointed by Lead Pastor Eric Jones with input from the Apostolic Advisors after which the active Elders will be given authority to expand the number of Elders as they determine.

Careful consideration is given when choosing an Elder. The qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are used to determine a man’s ability to minister in the capacity of Elder. Evident Life Church will only appoint spiritually mature men who are known within the congregation, have served faithfully in the ministries of the church for a season of time, are bearing evident spiritual fruit, and have completed the eldership requirement process which involves interviews, accountability, biblical and theological learning, and character examination. A man must also be gifted governmentally, which is reflected through the following qualities.

The Elder candidate should:

1. Enjoy overseeing the church and desire the office of Elder.
2. Have the disposition of a servant and have a distinct love for people.
3. Have an enthusiasm for every ministry of the church and not have a strong bias towards particular areas.
4. Be able to effectively teach and minister the Word of God with sound doctrine and spiritual sensitivity.
5. Understand and respect the authority structure of the church.
6. Be able to make decisions and maintain his resolve even in the face of intense and sometimes critical opposition.
7. Be filled with faith for the future and not be overwhelmed by the size of the vision that God has for the church.
8. Support and be able and willing to defend the Eldership publicly and privately.

The Elder role and scope of service:

- Evident Life Church believes the Lead Pastor should be the leader of the Eldership and should set the agenda for each meeting.

- Evident Life Church will have Elders who are serving as staff of the church and Elders who are not a part of the church staff. While the ratio of staff Elders and non-staff Elders may vary, it is the desire of Evident Life Church to maintain a balance of both.
- Evident Life Church maintains that Elders are men who should serve as the head of the church just as men should serve as the head of the home.
- The Elders make decisions after extensive discussion and prayer and with complete unanimity. Debate is common and differing opinions are welcomed. Every effort is made by each Elder to operate in unity with one another.
- The active Elders have the authority to appoint new Elders as deemed necessary. When new Elders are appointed, the congregation will be notified.
- Elders will fulfill their full term unless:
  1. They resign for personal reasons.
  2. They are disqualified by sin or a failure to meet the biblical standards of the office.
  3. They leave Evident Life Church.

#### Scriptural References

- 1 Timothy 3:1–7
- Titus 1:5–9
- 1 Peter 5:1–4
- James 5:14–15

#### **Section 2: Board of Directors and Officers:**

While the Elders are responsible for leading the ministerial functions of the Church and governing the vision of the Church, the Board of Directors, as outlined in the Articles of Incorporation, is responsible for overseeing the legal and business functions of the organization including, but not limited to:

- a) Purchase or otherwise acquire, own, hold, use, sell, exchange, assign, convey, lease or otherwise use hypothecate or encumber real and personal property;
- b) Borrow money, incur indebtedness and to secure repayment of the same by mortgage, pledge, deed of trust, or other hypothecation of property, both real and personal;
- c) Manage the employment status and compensation of the Lead/Senior Pastor.

Members of the Board of Directors may also serve as Elders. The officers of the corporation shall each have such powers and perform such duties as may be conferred and assigned from time to time by the Board of Directors.

The President. The Lead/Senior Pastor shall be the President of the Church and shall have the spiritual authority to shepherd the Church and in general control all of the affairs of the Church, including without limitation the negotiating and signing of any contracts, deeds, mortgages, bonds, documents, debt instruments or other agreements or commitments properly

authorized by the Board of Directors. He shall report to the Board of Directors and the Board of Elders and be generally responsible for all of the affairs of the Church.

The Treasurer. The Treasurer shall perform such other duties and responsibilities incident to the Office of Treasurer as may be assigned as directed by the President or the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall have charge and custody of and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Church.

The Secretary. The Secretary shall record the minutes of the meetings of the Members and Board of Directors and email a copy of such notes to each Board Member; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these By-Laws or as required by law; keep a register of the post office address of each Member which shall be furnished to the Secretary by such Member; and in general perform all duties incident to the Office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the President or by the Board of Directors.

**Board of Director Vacancies.**

A vacancy in any office, from whatever cause, may be filled for the unexpired portion of the term by appointment by the President, or in the case of the office of President, by a majority vote of the Board of Directors.

**Board of Director Resignation.**

Subject to the provisions of any contract of employment, any officer may resign as such at any time by giving written notice to the President or in the case of the President, the Chairman of the Board of Directors.

**Board of Director Removal.**

Any officer may be removed summarily either with or without cause at any time by a 75% vote of the Board of Directors.

**Conclusion**

Biblical government is designed to represent heaven accurately. The governmental DNA of the church is produced by pure biblical standards that have not been distorted or damaged by negative influences. The local church is the hope of the world and the local church is most effective when church government is established under the precepts, blessing, and favor of God.

**ARTICLE V**

**Membership**

The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of the Church Bylaws, and who offer evidence, by their confession and their conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and these Bylaws, and are actively

pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship with the Lord, Jesus Christ, and who desires to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of love. The elder board of this Church shall have final authority in all matters of church governance and membership, as set forth and described in these Bylaws.

Members are defined as persons who have completed a membership application, have agreed to the tenets of the church bylaws, and have been accepted by the elder team as members of Evident Life Church.

Each member of Evident Life Church covenants to cherish a brotherly love for all members of the church; to love, honor, and esteem the pastor; to pray for him; to recognize the Elders authority in spiritual affairs of the church; to support the church in prayer, tithes, offerings and with other financial support as the Lord enables; and in accordance with Biblical commands, to support through a lifestyle walk affirming the beliefs and practices of the church. Membership may be dissolved by the member by way of written, signed, and dated notice to the Elder Board or it may be dissolved by the Elder Board by way of written, signed, and dated notice to the member.

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **Church Discipline**

#### **Section 1. Overview:**

Evident Life Church believes that a primary responsibility of leadership is to model and maintain a standard of biblical behavior in the local church. We believe the Lord has given the Elders the responsibility to provide spiritual oversight for those who join the church. His command in 1 Peter 5:1 to "shepherd the flock of God" is something we take seriously. Although we do not believe God has given the Elders absolute responsibility or authority in an individual's life, we believe there are three specific areas in which we are responsible to give spiritual oversight in situations where the sin and/or conflict becomes elevated and dangerous. The different areas of restoration and reconciliation that require different approaches and procedures are as follows:

#### **Section 2. Disputes & Sin Between Members in the Church: ([Matthew 18:15-21](#))**

The Lord desires unity in His church. Brothers and sisters in Christ are called to love one another and encourage one another; not sin against one another, cheat one another, gossip about one another, and create dissension in the body. Matthew 18:15-21 provides the biblical instruction and insight on how the church is to handle these types of situations.

- First, the two believers are to attempt to work it out amongst themselves and find repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
- If that is unsuccessful, then they are supposed to involve 2-3 other church members as witnesses as they attempt to resolve the dispute.

- If that fails to bring about unity, repentance, and forgiveness, then they are to involve the leaders of the church who are called to mediate and adjudicate the situation. If the brother in sin refuses to listen to the church leaders, then the church is to let that brother go and treat him as an unbeliever.

In accordance with biblical teaching and context, this method of reconciliation and church discipline is very specifically applied to disputes between church members and not used for all forms of restoration.

### **Section 3. Open and Blatant Sin in a Church Member: (Galatians 6:1)**

How is the church supposed to handle open and blatant unrepentant sin practiced by its members such as the sin discussed in 1 Corinthians 5:1-2? When the person is completely unrepentant, the church is supposed to “hand them over to Satan.” However, how do we make every attempt to help that person find repentance and turn from their evil ways? In Galatians 6:1, the Apostle Paul gives us the answer. We who are spiritual should restore them gently. We are supposed to come alongside of our fellow believers and speak the truth of God’s Word into their lives and help them realize that by God’s grace, they can say no to this sin and honor the Lord. This process involves discipleship, truth, prayer, accountability, and love. Ongoing, unrepentant sin will result in the revocation of church membership, which can be subsequently restored upon demonstrating biblical repentance and the fruit of righteousness.

### **Section 4. Open and Blatant Sin in a Church Leader: (1 Timothy 5:19-21)**

Scripture shows us that when a church leader is found in blatant sin, in addition to applying the Galatians 6:1 principle of gently walking them through the process of repentance and restoration, it is also appropriate to bring them before the church members and reveal the sin so that others may be warned of the dangers of sin. However, the church must be sure not to administer this process without ensuring that the sin is real and verifying with many witnesses. This precedence of public exposure is found in 1 Timothy 5:19-21 and is shown contextually to apply only to church leaders.

Furthermore, discipline of members or leaders may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may be disciplined by the Elder Board short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstance (for example, an individual may remain in certain circumstances a member of this church but be denied the privilege of serving in a particular ministry). The Elder Board, as is required by Scripture, may report to the congregation the names of those who have lost membership by reason of church discipline, and the reason for that discipline, as described in Matthew 18:15-20.



Finally, the members of this church further knowingly and voluntarily agree that a member cannot voluntarily dissolve his or her membership in the midst of the discipline process, and may only voluntarily dissolve his or her membership if they are not the subject of a discipline proceeding at the time or only after a disciplinary process, of which they are the subject, has been concluded as determined by the Elder Board.

### **Section 5. Mediation:**

Members of the church agree to submit any legal dispute with the church for mediation before a mutually agreed-upon mediator, or if none can be agreed upon, one selected by Peacemaker Ministries or the like. Lawsuits between believers, or threats of lawsuits between believers, are a matter of grave concern for the church, are contrary to biblical and church teaching, and mediation is an effort to resolve disputes in a biblical fashion. (1 Corinthians 6: 1-7.)

Mediation will be governed by the *Rules of Procedure for Christian Conciliation* of the Institute for Christian Conciliation (ICC Rules), unless modified as stipulated by the parties. In particular, subject to the more detailed provisions of the ICC Rules, mediator(s) will attempt to assist us in reaching a voluntary settlement of any disputes through mediation. The confidentiality of the mediation process will be protected and these matters will not be discussed with people who do not have a necessary interest in them. If settlement can be agreed upon, the conciliators may, at their discretion, issue an advisory opinion. Neither the opinion, nor any communications exchanged in the mediation process, will be admissible for any purpose in any subsequent legal proceeding.

### **Section 6. Conclusion:**

In summary, our desire is to help our members grow to maturity through compassionate mentoring. The biblical model of confrontation and correction is not meant to punish people but rather to protect the Body of Christ from the wages of unrepentant sin. Biblical authority is not a license to exert control; it is a responsibility to exert influence for God's will to be accomplished.

Our approach to confronting a member of the church typically involves the following steps:

1. Begin with personal confrontation
2. Expand to group confrontation
3. Broaden to church leadership confrontation
4. End in removal of membership privileges

In confronting sin, we must remember that:

- The *purpose* is redemption.
- The *attitude* is humility.
- The *approach* is gentleness.
- The *result* is restoration.

- In all things we desire to glorify the Lord.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **Ordination, Licensing, and Commissioning**

#### **Section 1. Ordination**

Ordination refers to the unanimous recognition by the Board of Directors and the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office.

#### **Section 2. Licensing**

The license is issued by the Board of Directors and the Board of Elders and is given in recognition of a man's call to that ministry. Its aim is to allow a man to perform the ecclesiastical duties and functions of the church. Licenses will be evaluated and issued on a yearly basis.

#### **Section 3. Commissioning**

When local-church certification is required for ministry where ordination would be unnecessary or inappropriate, a person is commissioned by the Board of Elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity to minister remains in effect and as long as the person maintains the qualifications for ministry.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Statement of Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality**

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Genesis 1:26-27.) Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 2:18-25.) We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4.) We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (e.g. adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God. (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.)

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of Evident Life Church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the Evident Life Church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Evident Life Church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality. (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:19-21; Rom 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31.) Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Evident Life Church.

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man, a woman, and Himself, Evident Life Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. Further, the pastors and staff of Evident Life Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman. Finally, the facilities and property of Evident Life Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman. Additionally, the Senior/Lead Pastor of this church will only perform weddings where either the bride or groom is a member of Evident Life Church. Furthermore, the facilities and property of Evident Life Church shall only host weddings where either the bride or groom is a member of Evident Life Church.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Church Facility Use Policy**

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

Facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's constitution and bylaws. Nor may church facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the church's faith or moral teachings. The pastor, or his official designee, is the final decision-maker concerning use of church facilities.

This restricted facility use policy is necessary for two important reasons. First, the church may not in good conscience materially cooperate in activities or beliefs that are contrary to its faith. Allowing its facilities to be used for purposes that contradict the church's beliefs would be material cooperation with that activity, and would be a grave violation of the church's faith and religious practice. (2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:22.)

Second, it is very important that the church present a consistent message to the community, and that the church staff and members conscientiously maintain that message as part of their witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Allowing facilities to be used by groups or persons who express beliefs or engage in practices contrary to the church's faith would have a severe, negative impact on the message that the church strives to promote. It could also cause confusion and scandal to church members and the community because they may reasonably perceive that by allowing use of our facilities, the church agrees with the beliefs or practices of the persons or groups using its facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the church's faith use any church facility. Nor may church facilities be used in any way that contradicts the church's faith. This policy applies to all church facilities, regardless of whether the facilities are connected to the church's sanctuary, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Colossians 3:17.)

## **ARTICLE X**

### **Auxiliaries**

Any organization, group or club whose membership is primarily for a church activity, shall be considered an auxiliary of the church and shall be subject to the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of Evident Life Church. As an auxiliary, the organization shall exist only in cooperation with the Senior Pastor, and the Board of Elders. This is the case with the East Valley House of Prayer.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **Amendment of Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws**

The Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws may be amended, repealed, or new Articles of Incorporation or By-Laws may be adopted by the affirmative vote of seventy-five percent (75%) of the Board of Elders and the Board of Directors at a meeting held for such purpose if a quorum is present.

**ARTICLE XII**

**Annual Accounting Period**

The annual accounting period for this corporation shall begin on the first day of January and shall end on the last day of December.

**ARTICLE XIII**

**Miscellaneous**

**Section 1. Execution of Documents.**

The Board of Elders may authorize by majority vote any officer or officers, agent or agents to enter into any contract or execute any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Church and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. Unless so authorized, no officer, agent or other person shall have any power or authority to bind the Church by any contract or engagement or to pledge its credit or to render it liable for any purpose or to any amount.

**Section 2. Limitation of Liability and Indemnification.**

The Church shall indemnify any person who is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative or investigative, other than an action by or in the right of the Church, by reason of the fact that he or she is or was an Elder, officer, employee, member or agent of the Church, or is or was serving at the request of the Church, against expenses, including reasonable attorneys' fees, judgments, fines and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with such action, suit or proceeding if he or she acted in good faith and in a manner he or she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Church, and with respect to any criminal proceedings, if he or she had no reasonable cause to believe that any conduct was unlawful.

**Section 3. Construction of Definitions.**

Unless the context otherwise requires the general provisions, rules of construction and definitions contained in the Act shall govern the construction of these By-Laws.

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I certify that I have read these church bylaws, I am in agreement with the statement of faith, the policies, the procedures, and as a member I will submit to them and abide by them to the best of my ability.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_