

# Centerpoint Fellowship Church By-laws

Last Amended 9-4-08

## ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

### **SECTION 101 - Qualifications**

We acknowledge that, those conditions which the Scriptures require of an individual at the occasion of his (her) entrance into the Universal Body of Christ, as outlined in Acts 2:38-42, and which are delineated in the Partnership section of the CONSTITUTION, ARTICLE V, shall be the basis for local union with this Church. Those choosing to join in fellowship with us under these requirements shall be considered members (herein referred to as partners throughout the remainder of this document). The age of an applicant should be such that, he (she) is fully capable of understanding our statement of faith in regards to salvation and is able to engage in the expectations of a partner in a way that is appropriate to his (her) age.

### **SECTION 102 - Admission Procedure**

An applicant for partnership shall be required to profess, as a minimum, belief in the fundamentals of the Christian faith contained in our Statement of Faith. This profession may be to the Board of Elders, to an appointed representative of that Board, or to the Church body at a conveniently appointed time. Upon the profession of faith and completed attendance at our partnership meal, the individual should be publicly welcomed into the fellowship at a regular service of the Church on the Lord's Day.

### **SECTION 103 - Responsibility of Partnership**

Partnership includes the responsibility for the various commitments of ARTICLE V, section A of the CONSTITUTION, the Church Covenant. In addition, it carries the responsibility for participating in, and voting on, all business brought before the partnership.

### **SECTION 104 - Children of Partners**

Children of adult partners do not automatically become voting partners of Centerpoint Fellowship Church. Nor do they automatically gain partnership upon reaching a certain age of accountability. Our concern is that each young person and voting partner has a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This relationship cannot be inherited by virtue of a parent's profession and commitment.

However, it is not our intention to exclude young men and women from the life and decisions of the church. Therefore, children may enter into Partnership (including the privilege of voting) provided they meet the following two criteria:

- A. They are age 12 or older and
- B. They have met with the elders and affirmatively answered the four questions, which are the Basis of our church's Covenant of Discipleship.

It is an elder's responsibility to seek out the young men or women who turn 12 years of age and inquire about their desire (or lack of desire) to meet with the elders and become a voting partner.

## **SECTION 105- Termination of Partnership in Centerpoint Fellowship Church**

Partnership may be terminated in the following ways:

### A. By Death

### B. By Transfer

Any partner in good standing who wishes to affiliate with another church will be granted a Letter of Recommendation upon request by the church with which he (she) desires to associate. The Letter will be forwarded upon recommendation of the Board of Elders.

### C. By Request

Any partner who requests termination of partnership for whatever reason will be granted that request. If there are unresolved problems between the requesting partner and the Church, efforts will be made by the Elders to resolve any points at issue prior to the granting of the request.

### D. By Disciplinary Action

Should any partner of this Church be found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life, the Church reserves the right to administer Scriptural forms of church discipline, as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17 through the Board of Elders. Should faithful efforts by the Elders render no promise of reform or manifest no spirit of repentance on the part of the partner in question, partnership may be terminated upon unanimous recommendation of the Board of Elders or 3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting. A partner removed from fellowship by disciplinary action may be reinstated only by means of the normal admission procedure. The elders shall maintain standing operating procedures that specify the process for exercising church discipline at Centerpoint Fellowship Church. This document shall be available for review and use by any church partner.

### E. By Inactivity

If a partner has not participated in any of the church worship services for a period of six months, his (her) partnership may be terminated, unless the inactivity is due to health or other reasons acceptable to the Board of Elders.

## **ARTICLE II - OFFICERS**

### **SECTION 201 - Elders**

#### A. Selection and Removal

Elders shall be nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders and approved by a 3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting of the Church and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Elder may be approved to either fill a vacancy on the Board of Elders or to add an additional partner to that Board. Elders maybe removed from office upon their own request or by 2/3 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting. An Elder may be suspended indefinitely by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders. SECTION 301.B amplifies this provision.

## B. Qualifications

Elders shall be men of intellectual and spiritual maturity, with proven Christian character and sound judgment, exemplary in their conduct, effective leaders and teachers. They should be growing more Christlike in the areas of knowledge, skill, and character on a regular basis. Elders shall be qualified in accordance with the guidelines of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 and be willing, to be servants of the Church. Additionally, Elders shall be Partners of the Church and shall have proven themselves before the Partnership in their other capacities of service. An Elder shall be affirmed in his readiness for this office by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

## C. Responsibilities

An Elder shall be responsible to:

1. Seek the Lord and find delight in Him:
  - a. Give adequate time to personal prayer and study in the Word.
  - b. Labor and strive after godliness (1 Timothy 4:6-10).
2. Be a pastor to one's own family first (1 Timothy 3:4,5):
  - a. Spend time together in prayer, spiritual conversation, and the Word (Ephesians 5 and 6).
  - b. Meet the needs of one's wife in particular, deepening their intimacy and relationship together (Ephesians 5, 1 Peter 3:7).
3. Be an example to the believers (1 Peter 5:1-3).
4. Pray for the whole church program and for individual partners (Acts 6:4).
5. Be involved in the teaching of God's Word (Acts 6:4; Ephesians 4:11; Titus 1:9).
6. Be a contributing member to a missional community group (Gal. 6).
7. Meet with the other elders of the church at stated times for the purpose of prayer, discussion, examination of potential partners, making decisions related to the life of the church, and other such duties as may be part of the responsibilities of the Board of Elders as defined in SECTION 301.

## **SECTION 202 - Deacons**

### A. Selection and Removal

Deacons shall be nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders, and approved by 3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting of the Church and shall serve in that capacity for an indefinite period of time. A new Deacon may be recommended and approved to either fill a vacancy on the Board of Deacons or to add an additional partner to that Board. Deacons may be removed from office upon their own request, by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders, or by a 2/3 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting.

## B. Qualifications

Deacons shall be men or women of spiritual discernment and partners of the Church, exemplary in their Christian character and conduct, and of good reputation in the community outside of the Church. They shall be willing to be servants of the Church in accordance with the meaning of the work as outlined in Acts 6:1-6 and shall be qualified in accordance with the guidelines in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. A Deacon shall be approved by this Church with the laying on of hands by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 704).

## C. Responsibilities

Responsibilities of individual Deacons shall be those of the Board of Deacons as defined in SECTION 302.

## D. Trustees

The Trustee Chairman shall be appointed by the Board of Elders to care for, maintain, and oversee all Church property. The Trustee Chairman shall be a Deacon, since the administration of the Church's resources was a task given to Deacons in the early Christian Church. If a Deacon cannot be found to serve as the Trustee Chairman, then the Board of Elders may temporarily appoint another partner of the church until a qualified Deacon is found. The elders should seek to fill the position with a Deacon at the earliest possible moment. The Trustee Chairman shall also serve as a partner of the Board of Deacons. The Trustee Chairman may be removed by a majority vote of the Board of Elders. Other persons may serve as helpers (called Trustees) by appointment of the Trustee Chairman.

## **SECTION 203 - Treasurer**

### A. Election and Removal

The Treasurer shall be confirmed by the Board of Elders, and elected by 3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting of the Church. The Treasurer may be removed from office upon his (her) own request, by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Elders, or by a majority vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting.

### B. Qualifications

The Treasurer shall be a partner of the Church and an individual of sufficient numerical and accounting skill so as to carry out the responsibilities of the position. Whenever possible, the Treasurer should also hold the Biblical office of Deacon, since the accounting and administration of the Church's funds was a task given to Deacons from the early Christian Church.

### C. Responsibilities

The Treasurer shall be responsible for:

1. The holding in trust of all monies belonging to the Church in the appropriate checking, savings, or other type account.
2. The maintenance of appropriate records of all expenditures of the Church.

3. The Business Meeting preparation of the Year End Financial Statement and its presentation to the Partnership and presentation of financial reports at each congregational budget Business Meeting.
4. Cash disbursements:
  - a. The payment from the receipts on hand of all authorized salaries and fixed expenses, and other amounts within the designated Budget of the Church, when authorized by the appropriate Board, Committee, Officer, ministry group or individual.
  - b. The payment of amounts in excess of the Church Budget when authorized by the Board of Elders (See SECTION 605C).

All or any of the above responsibilities may be delegated to a paid bookkeeper, an accountant, or an accounting firm. The funding and choice must be approved prior to any hiring action by a majority vote of both the elders and the Partners present at a Business Meeting. It will then be the responsibility of the Treasurer to work with and supervise the actions of the person or group.

#### D. Accountability

The Treasurer shall, in general, be accountable to the Partnership and specifically to the Board of Elders.

### **ARTICLE III - GOVERNMENT**

#### **SECTION 301 - Board of Elders**

##### A. Partnership

The Board of Elders shall be comprised of those Elders nominated by the body, confirmed by the Board of Elders, and approved by the Partnership (see SECTION 201).

##### B. Responsibilities

The Board of Elders is responsible for the administration of the Church under God's authority and in particular is responsible for the development of the spiritual life of the Church and its partners. Collectively, the Board of Elders shall:

1. Define and interpret the overall objectives and aspirations of the Church which, if attained, will produce progress toward fulfilling the Scriptural purposes for its existence.
2. Become aware of the spiritual needs and concerns of those in the Congregation, and assist in the establishment of goals for the Church based on these concerns.
3. Oversee the development of strategies by the various ministries, small groups and individuals using available resources to meet the goals of the Church, including all programs, ministries, meetings, and other efforts of the Church. Individual partners may be assigned as liaison to various boards for specific periods of time.
4. Administer Scriptural forms of Church discipline to partners as outlined in Matthew 18:15-17, when a partner is found to be flagrantly negligent in living the Christian life and in upholding the Church Covenant.

5. Act on termination of partnership as provided for in SECTION 105 of these By-laws.
6. Obtain nominations from the body of those willing and qualified to serve as Elders, Deacons, Treasurer or other required administrative positions.
7. Ensure all candidates for positions of Elder, Deacon and Treasurer are fully qualified per the bylaws. Confirmed nominees are then presented to the partners for voting.
8. Suspend or remove church Officers per SECTION 201.A. (When considering the suspension of an Elder, the Elder being considered is entitled to vote against his own suspension.) If the vote is in favor of suspension or removal and the church Officer holds a staff position, the Board of Elders may also choose by majority vote to immediately dismiss that church Officer from their staff position.
9. Appoint persons to and dismiss persons from paid or unpaid administrative positions. For paid positions, appointment should occur only after budget approval by the Partnership. Dismissal of persons from administrative positions requires a majority vote of the elders. However, hiring and dismissal of the Custodian shall be per SECTION 302.G.
10. Approve expenditures by Boards, Committees, officers, and ministry groups when such expenditures are within the Budget categories previously approved by the Partnership, but temporarily exceed the limitations of the Church Budget (See SECTION 605C).
11. Review and approve the Annual Budget prior to its submittal to the Partnership.
12. Keep accurate written minutes of all meetings.

#### C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Elder business shall be as determined by that Board. The Chairman shall be the Lead Pastor unless otherwise designated by that Board.

#### D. Meetings

The Board of Elders shall meet as and when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact partners of the Board and, when possible, announce such meetings on the Sunday morning prior to the meeting. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board membership.

#### E. Authority

On the basis of the Scriptures and ARTICLE VIII of the CONSTITUTION, the administration of authority in the Church is given by the Holy Spirit to the Elders who are to administer God's authority and be responsible for His will being put into practice. The Board of Elders, therefore, shall have the authority to interpret this Constitution and Bylaws and implement actions consistent with it.

### **SECTION 302 - Board of Deacons**

#### A. Partnership

The Board of Deacons shall be comprised of those Deacons nominated by the Body, confirmed by the Elders, and approved by the Partnership (See SECTION 202).

## B. Responsibilities

Deacons do not exercise Biblical authority over the congregation. The Deacons shall assist the Board of Elders and be responsible for various temporal ministries of the Church. Specifically, the Board of Deacons shall:

1. Be an example to the Congregation in the areas of faith, prayer, spiritual growth in the Small, and boldness in proclaiming the Gospel.
2. Visit the sick, the elderly, the prisoners, and others in the Church requiring contact with the Church.
3. Become aware of the physical needs of those in the Church and the community at large, and develop and implement methods of meeting those needs.
4. Distribute money from the Benevolence Fund consistent with Biblical guidelines and procedures established by the Board of Deacons.
5. Devise and implement effective Biblical methods of collecting the gifts of the Lord's people. This includes the counting and depositing of money collected in Church offerings or received by other means.
6. Assist the Congregation in an understanding of Biblical financial management, stewardship, and giving. They shall also seek ways to develop in the Partners the grace of liberality and Christian financial freedom.
7. Assist the Elders in ordinances and ceremonies as necessary.
8. Assign check writer(s) in accordance with SECTION 601.J. - that is, if this task is not being handled by a paid accountant or accounting firm.
9. Keep accurate written minutes of all meetings.

## C. Organization and Procedures

Procedures for the conduct of Deacon Business shall be as determined by that Board. A Chairman shall be selected by the Board of Deacons. The Chairman's responsibilities are to oversee meetings and to act as Spokesman for the Board to the Congregation, the Board of Elders and others as appropriate. The Board of Deacons shall be accountable to the Board of Elders and to the Partnership. If it is impossible for any reason to secure Deacons, the responsibilities of their office shall fall upon the Board of Elders.

## D. Meetings

The Board of Deacons shall meet when necessary to conduct its business. Meetings shall be called by the Chairman who will individually contact partners of the Board and when possible, announce such meetings on the Sunday morning prior to the meeting. A quorum for the transaction of business shall be a majority of the Board partnership.

## E. Authority

The Board of Deacons shall have the authority to expend funds consistent with their responsibilities and within the limitations of the Church budget.

## ARTICLE IV - STAFF

### SECTION 401 – PASTORS

#### A. Selection

##### 1. Pastor Search Committee

###### a. Formation

In the event of a pastor vacancy in this Church, a Pastor Search Committee shall be established as an Ad Hoc Committee. The Pastor Search Committee shall be comprised of those Elders desiring to serve on the Committee and any two Partners of the Church elected by the Partnership. If fewer than three Elders serve on the Committee, additional partners shall be elected so that the Committee has at least five members.

###### b. Responsibilities

In general, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor Search Committee to review and select candidates to be presented before the Church. This shall involve:

- (1) The establishment of criteria to be considered in making initial contacts with prospective candidates.
- (2) The making of inquiries as to the availability of prospective candidates.
- (3) The review of information as to the prospective candidates educational training, experience in Christian service, personal and spiritual reputation, doctrinal views, and conditions under which they would consider a call from the Church.
- (4) The scheduling of candidates for exposure to the Church including speaking at services.
- (5) The consideration of candidates for formal presentation to the Church for the purpose of voting on calling the candidate.

When possible or desirable the Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to select a candidate who has received some sign or signs of approval from another evangelical church body or organization (such as examination, ordination or letters of recommendation). The Pastor Search Committee is encouraged to seek the aid of the pastors and staff members at the Central Baptist Association or Baptist Convention of New Mexico at in examining doctrinal and spiritual matters of a pastoral candidate.

###### c. Authority

The Pastor Search Committee shall have the authority to expend funds in the pursuit of their responsibilities consistent with the Church budget.

##### 2. Calling of Candidates

After a candidate has spoken at services of the Church and met with the Pastor Search Committee, the Committee shall meet to consider whether or not to formally present the candidate to the Church for the purpose of a Partnership vote. The unanimous vote of the Pastor Search Committee is required for formal presentation to the Church whereupon a vote shall be

taken by the Partners at a Business Meeting. A Pastor may be called by 3/4 of the Partners present (See SECTION 501C,3).

#### B. Term of Service

A Pastor will be called for an indefinite period of time. The Pastor's tenure of service shall terminate by his resignation or death or by 3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting. In the event of the Pastor's resignation, he may give up to thirty days notice; in the event that the Church votes to terminate the Pastor's services, he shall receive thirty days notice or thirty days salary in lieu of such notice.

#### C. Conditions of Employment

The salary of the Pastor and other compensation such as Social Security, insurance, housing allowance, and pension shall be specified in writing and made a part of the call upon which the Partnership votes. Likewise, such items as authorized vacation, attendance at meetings and conferences, moving expenses, and other agreed upon conditions shall be addressed in the call. The call shall be in the form of a legal agreement. Changes in the initial conditions of employment are to be enacted by vote of the Partnership.

#### D. Qualifications

The qualifications for Pastor shall be the Biblical standards for the office of Elder (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). In addition, the Pastor shall be affirmed by the Board of Elders through the laying on of hands and shall hold partnership in this Church during his term of service. Additional qualifications shall be as determined by the Pastor Search Committee.

#### E. Responsibilities

A Pastor has both the collective responsibilities as a member of the Board of Elders (see SECTION 301) and the individual responsibilities of an Elder (see SECTION 201). Additionally, a Pastor shall fulfill his role according to the affirmation of his calling and giftedness in these areas:

##### Lead or Teaching Pastor

1. Minister to the Congregation through the regular preaching and teaching from the Scriptures.
2. Lead the Elder board as chairman.
3. Lead the church through regular communication.

##### Administrative Pastor

1. Supervise paid staff functions. Part of this function will be to determine vacations, sick days, and other work-related leave.
2. Coordinate the day-to-day operations of the Church and be available for the purpose of counseling.
3. Serve as an elder as requested by the Lead pastor and elder board.

##### Worship Pastor

1. Oversee the Church's observance of its ordinances and ceremonies.

2. Serve as an elder as requested by the Lead pastor and elder board.

#### Evangelism Pastor

1. Lead the church to bring people to know Christ.
2. Lead small groups to engage in missions.
3. Serve as an elder as requested by the Lead pastor and elder board.

#### Discipleship Pastor

1. Lead the church to teach disciples to obey the commands of Christ.
2. Serve as an elder as requested by the Lead pastor and elder board.

#### Pastoral Care Pastor

1. Visit in the Smalls of those in the Congregation.
2. Perform Weddings and Funerals.
3. Serve as an elder as requested by the Lead pastor and elder board.

If any of these pastoral positions are not filled, the Lead pastor is responsible for each of these roles.

#### F. Outside Ministries

Involvement by the Pastor in ministries, work, or other endeavors outside of the Church and its Ministries shall be reported to the Board of Elders.

#### G. Authority and Limitations

The authority of the Pastor to expend funds is limited to his participation as a partner of the Board of Elders and the authority and limitations prescribed to the Board in SECTION 301. The Pastor shall have the authority to interpret the Scriptures to the Congregation consistent with the Statement of Faith of the Church.

#### **SECTION 402 - Custodian**

- A. Will be hired by the Board of Trustees and with the input (for spiritual concerns only) of the Board of Elders, provided funding (budget) has been approved.
- B. Can be removed by resignation, death, majority agreement by the Board of Trustees, or by 3/4 vote of the Partnership present at a business meeting.
- C. Supervision of the custodian will be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Day to day scheduling and prioritization will be done by the Pastor.

#### **SECTION 403 - Other Paid Staff Positions**

- A. Will be hired by the Administrative Pastor after unanimous approval by the Board of Elders, provided funding (budget) has been approved.
- B. Can be removed by resignation, death, unanimous agreement by the Elders (except when the person being considered for removal is an Elder), or by 3/4 vote of the Partnership present (see SECTION 501.C.3).
- C. Will be supervised by the Pastor most responsible for administration.

## **ARTICLE V - MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 501 - Regular Meetings**

#### A. Missional Community Groups

Small groups are the basic framework of our organization. These groups take many forms and have various functions. They will meet throughout the week, either in homes or in businesses. These groups will lead out in discipleship, evangelism, and missions. They will feed our weekly worship time.

##### 1. Structure of Missional Community Groups

The number of MCGs, their structure and leadership shall be determined by the Board of Elders.

##### 2. Purpose of Missional Community Groups

The Care Group structure is an attempt to follow the pattern of house churches or house fellowships which existed in the early Christian Church and to put into practice certain principles found in the New Testament that provide opportunities for:

- a. Knowing God and seeing His work in each of us in a more personal and meaningful way.
- b. Studying the word of God for the purpose of practically relating it to daily living (Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16).
- c. Interacting with one another by sharing, confession, and speaking the truth in love with one another (James 5:16; Ephesians 4:15,25).
- d. Bearing one another's burdens through prayer, comfort, encouragement, and the sharing of material goods (Galatians 6:2; James 5:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; Hebrews 3:13; Acts 4:32).
- e. Equipping each other for ministry and encouraging the discovery and use of spiritual gifts in ministry (Ephesians 4:12; 1 Peter 4:10,11).
- f. Witnessing to those outside the Church (Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:21).

In addition to the above general purposes, Small Groups may choose to become individually involved in special areas such as Scripture memorization, specific community outreach endeavors, worship, etc. Different Small Groups may focus on different aspects of Christian living or support ministry dependent upon the needs and interests of the Group.

##### 3. Meetings of Small Groups

Small Groups shall normally meet once a week at a time and place determined by the individual Group. When possible, the times and places of Small Group meetings shall be made known to the Elders and the members of the group.

#### B. Worship Services

The Church shall meet regularly each week for worship of the Triune God, for edification and exhortation through the Word of God, for fellowship among those in the Body of Christ that they

may minister to spiritual needs, and as a witness to the community. The conduct of these meetings shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders, with specific responsibilities delegated to the Lead, Teaching, and Worship Pastors and other individuals or ministries.

### C. Business Meetings

#### 1. Notification of Meetings

All Business meetings of the Church shall require that notice be given in written form sent to each partner at least two weeks prior to the meeting, in the Church newsletter two weeks prior to the meeting, or by announcement at at least two previous worship services. Such announcement shall state the time, the place of the meeting, and the nature of the proposed business. The requirement for a two-week notice may be waived by the unanimous vote of the Board of Elders in cases of emergency.

#### 2. Moderator

The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall either act as Moderator or appoint another Elder to act as Moderator at all Business Meetings of the Church. In his absence, another Elder shall function in that capacity.

#### 3. Quorum

Those Partners who attend a Business Meeting shall constitute a quorum for that meeting with the exception of business addressing the following items: changes in the status of the organization, its Constitution, or its By-laws; the buying, selling, mortgaging, leasing or long-term rental of Church real property; and the call, selection, or termination of the Pastor, the approval of the annual budget, and the termination of church staff. In the case of the exceptions noted above, a quorum shall consist of 40% of the Church Partnership.

#### 4. Transaction of Business

The transaction of business at any Business Meeting of the Church shall require a majority vote of Partners present, except as otherwise provided in these By-laws. Votes may be cast only by Partners who are present at a Business Meeting since congregational discussion and/or amendments made to a motion may change a vote cast in absentia. The Board of Elders shall always have the authority to request the reconsideration of any vote.

#### 5. Minutes

Official minutes of all Business Meetings shall be recorded. Minutes from the previous Business Meeting shall be read and approved at each meeting.

#### 6. Procedures

*Robert's Rules of Order* is to serve as guidance relative to parliamentary rules of procedure for all Business Meetings of the Church.

## **ARTICLE VI - FINANCES**

### **SECTION 601 - Financial Policies and Goals**

We believe that the way an organization handles itself in the financial area is a reflection of its integrity in every area. Luke 16:11 teaches that the person who is untrustworthy in handling money cannot be trusted to handle spiritual riches either. Likewise, if we are trustworthy in the use of monetary riches, then God will be able to entrust spiritual riches and blessings to us as a church (Luke 16:10). Therefore, we have established the following financial policies and goals to guide us in proper stewardship of God's monetary riches:

- A. This church and ministry belongs to God. It is neither a monument to anyone's ego nor a legacy to anyone's memory. The ministry does not bear anyone's name. The buildings are not dedicated to anyone, but Jesus Christ. The pastor, elders and other partners are merely stewards and fellow-servants in the work of the Kingdom.
- B. The Lord has apparently chosen to place His mantle of approval on this ministry called Centerpoint Fellowship Church. Nevertheless, He gives and sometimes takes away. The "church" of Jesus Christ is the people of God. God's people will never cease to exist. But this particular ministry may. If He ever closes the doors to this work, we will accept His leading and yield the outcome to Him. Until then, we will devote every ounce of energy to the task at hand.
- C. One of the ways we can discern the Lord's will regarding the continuation of our work is through the financial support He sends (or doesn't send) from His people. Therefore, during lean times we will make our obligations known--but we will not squirm, scratch or claw for contributions. We will never resort to what we consider to be disrespectful and dishonorable methods of raising funds, even when the need is serious. Nor will we attempt to motivate giving from a false sense of guilt or compulsion, since this robs God's people of the opportunity to give cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7).
- D. We consider the contributions we receive to be sacrificial--like the widow's mite (Luke 21:1-4) we will view each contribution as a sacrificial gift from Christian people who love God. Our obligation, therefore, is to spend that money conservatively and wisely. Every penny will be stretched as far as possible to serve the needs of the ministry and the extension of Christ's kingdom.
- E. We believe God wishes to use Centerpoint Fellowship Church as a financial channel to help needy individuals and to support other evangelical ministries. Therefore, we will not spend money upon nonessential church personnel, programs or facilities. Instead we will strive toward the goal of giving 50% of our income to ministries and individuals outside of the regular church program (i.e. Worship Service, pastor's salary, building projects, utilities, etc.).
- F. When we make a purchase, we will pay the invoice within 30 days if possible. Overdue bills are a sorry testimony to the world. We do not intend to use the vendor's money.
- G. We will not spend more money than we receive. Careful budgeting and monitoring of our resources will permit us to reduce our expenses for programs and services before disbursements exceed income. Deficit spending is not God's will for this church.

- H. The Scriptures teach that "the borrower is a slave to the lender" (Proverbs 23:7). In order that we might be free to act, minister and to give as we are led by the Lord, it is our goal to remain financially free from debt, as much as possible. If debt is incurred we will work to repay the obligation as soon as possible.
- I. The pastor will not be the primary fund raiser.
- J. Satan delights in bringing disrepute to God's work through sins of greed, embezzlement and ill-gotten gain. Therefore, we will seek to elect and confirm leadership that is free from the love of money (1 Peter 5:2; 1 Timothy 3:3), and we will conform to acceptable accounting procedures to assure ethical monetary practices.
- K. To summarize, we will try to remember always that Jesus Christ is our possessor and our dispossessor. He ordained and blessed the establishment of Centerpoint Fellowship Church. It belongs entirely to Him. Therefore, we will cradle it lovingly in our hands, attempting not to crush it through self-centeredness, ignorance or church politics.

### **SECTION 602 - Accounts**

The Financial Accounts shall be established through the Budget annually by the Board of Elders, approved by the partnership, and maintained by the Treasurer. Accounts may be established for non-budgeted funds collected for church approved activities or events.

### **SECTION 603 - Offerings**

#### **A. Regular Offerings**

Regular offerings shall be taken at worship services, online, and other special meetings as determined by the Board of Elders. Undesignated offerings shall be applied to the Annual Budget.

#### **B. Special Offerings**

Special offerings shall be specifically identified as to their purpose and shall either be taken separate from regular offerings or provision made for the separating of special offerings from regular offerings by means of an identification procedure.

#### **C. Designated Offerings**

At the discretion of the individual, offerings or portions thereof may be designated, but only to specific budget categories in the church budget or Christian causes approved by the elders. If monthly collections toward the Church Budget are not sufficient to meet all Budget Commitments, then the Treasurer can apply designated funds towards the Church's Budget commitment with approval by the Board of Elders. This procedure does not apply to funds designated to non-budgeted accounts as specified in SECTION 602.

#### **D. Accounting of Offerings**

The amount of funds received in regular offerings shall be communicated to the Congregation by means of regular financial statements. Funds received in special offerings shall be communicated to the Congregation at the Worship service following the offering. Offerings shall be counted in the presence of two or more people appointed by the Treasurer.

## **SECTION 604 - Financial Statements**

Financial statements shall be prepared by the Treasurer. Financial statements shall conform to business standards and be comprehensive in nature including the identification of receipts and disbursements by account for the period covered and comparisons made to the budget figure for those same accounts and period. Financial statements shall be made available to the Partnership.

## **SECTION 605 - Church Budget**

### **A. Preparation**

The Church budget shall be prepared by the Board of Elders (SECTION 301B) or a committee appointed by it as necessary. The Board of Elders or the committee will be assisted by the Treasurer. The Church Budget shall be based on God-given challenges, the previous receipt and disbursement record, growth experienced during the previous year/period and anticipated in the coming year/period, and other factors which affect the expenditures of the Church. Input should be obtained from the various officers, ministry groups or individuals relative to their particular areas of ministry.

### **B. Submittal and Approval**

A copy of this budget as prepared shall be made available to the Partnership at least two weeks prior to the Budget approval meeting. Upon approval of the final Budget at this Business Meeting, copies shall be made available to the Partnership.

### **C. Use and Implementation**

The Annual Church Budget shall serve as a guide for the expenditure funds in all areas of the Church's ministry. Expenditures in excess of the budget by Boards Committees, Officers, ministry groups or individuals require the prior approval of the Board of Elders or the Partnership. The expenditure of funds for budgeted items which exceed the Budget amount may be approved by the Board of Elders as long as these expenditures are consistent with the needs of the Church, the recent financial position of the Church, and the extent of funds on hand. Items not addressed or identified in the Budget require the approval of the Partnership, regardless of amount.

### **D. Budget Oversight Committee**

Once the church receipts are in excess of \$100,000, the Church finances shall be reviewed quarterly by a committee of at least three people, one of whom shall be an elder. This committee will be selected by the Board of Elders on an annual basis. This committee will review all financial records and ensure that the books are balanced, make any recommendations to the board of Elders and make a report available to the congregation thru the church bulletin. The Treasurer will provide all pertinent documents required by the committee.

## **ARTICLE VII - ORDINANCES AND CEREMONIES**

## **SECTION 701 - Baptism**

### **A. Reason For**

Water baptism is the symbol of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection and the new believer's identification with Christ (Romans 6). Baptism is only for believers in Jesus Christ who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit. On the basis of these principles baptism will be practiced in this way:

B. Mode of

A person who has made a profession of faith in Christ and who earnestly desires to lead an obedient life and who has never been baptized, will be encouraged to be baptized. Such a person should present himself before the Board of Elders and/or the Congregation to profess his faith and to request baptism. The mode of baptism will be immersion in water. If a person becomes a Christian who has previously been baptized, a second baptism will be required.

C. Scheduling of

Baptism services shall occur as and when scheduled by the Board of Elders. Any Elder or someone approved by an elder may baptize and shall be assisted by Deacons or others as needed.

**SECTION 702 - Child Dedication Ceremony**

A. Parent's and Congregation's Commitment

Those parents who believe wish to make a commitment to raising their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord may make a public statement of this fact by vowing to:

1. Express their faith that although their children are born sinful and rebellious toward God, He has promised to save them through faith in Jesus Christ even as He has saved us, and acknowledge that God's means of saving their children is primarily through the Christian home; and
2. Believing these promises, promise to lead a Godly life before their children and encourage them to follow their example, pray with and for their children that God will save them, train them in the nurture and discipline of the Lord and His Word, and impress on their children the need they have of a Savior and the promises of God in Christ Jesus.

In the dedication service the Pastor or Elder shall ask the following questions to the parents:

1. Do you acknowledge your child's need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?
2. Do you claim God's covenant promises in his (her) behalf, and do you look in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ for his (her) salvation, as you do for your own?
3. Do you now unreservedly dedicate your child to God, and promise, in humble reliance upon God's grace, that you will endeavor to set before him (her) a godly example, that you will pray with and for him (her), that you will instruct him (her) in the teachings of the Christian faith, and that you will strive, by all means of God's appointment, to bring him (her) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

Then he shall ask the Congregation:

Do you as a congregation undertake the responsibility of assisting these parents in the Christian nurture of their child?

## B. Administration of the Dedication Ceremony

Dedication Ceremonies shall occur as and when scheduled by the Board of Elders. The Pastor is responsible for the Dedication Service and can edit the content of the ceremony as he sees fit.

### **SECTION 703 - The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper is symbolic of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:23-26) and the resulting fellowship of believers (1 Corinthians 10:16,17). Participation in the Lord's Supper shall be open to all Christians who genuinely confess their sinful state and indicate their repentant spirit and dependence upon Christ as Savior and Lord (1 Corinthians 11:27-32). The Lord's Supper shall be administered as and when determined by the Board of Elders, but not less frequent than quarterly. Any Elder may administer the Lord's Supper and shall be assisted by Deacons or others as required.

### **SECTION 704 - The Ordination Ceremony**

Upon confirmation by the Board of Elders and approval by the Partners, the Candidate shall be ordained to Christian ministry at a public service of the Church containing exhortation from the Word of God, questions posed to the Candidate, the laying on of hands, and prayer (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 4:14; 5:22). The Church shall take the responsibility for encouraging and assisting those whom it has ordained (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; Hebrews 13:17).

The following questions shall be asked of the Candidate by a Pastor or Elder:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God without error in the original writings, the only rule of our faith and practice?
2. Do you acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Redeemer and Head of His Church and are you willing to submit to His Lordship?
3. Have you been motivated as far as you know your own heart to seek the office of Elder from love of God, obedience to God's call and to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ?
4. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?
5. Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in your personal and family life, as well as in the public duties of your office, endeavoring to walk as an example before the people of God?
6. Are you ready now to take the responsibilities of Elder (Deacon)?

For Elders and Pastors the following question shall be asked of the Partnership, which should signify an affirmative answer by holding up their right hands:

Are you ready to submit to the spiritual leadership of this man?

Following affirmative answers to these questions the Board of Elders, or in the case of a Deacon Candidate the Board of Elders and Deacons, shall lay their hands upon the Candidate and prayer shall be offered. An Elder shall then say:

I now pronounce and declare that \_\_\_\_\_ has been regularly confirmed, approved, and ordained to the office of Elder (Deacon), agreeable to the Word of God, and according to this Church's Constitution and By-laws, and that as such he (she) is entitled to all encouragement and honor in the Lord. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

As with any other ceremony we observe, the pastor leading it may edit the content or form of the ceremony as needed.

### **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

#### **SECTION 801 - Procedures**

These By-laws may be amended at any Business Meeting of the Church provided:

1. That such amendments are proposed by either boards, committees, officers, ministry groups, or partners of Centerpoint Fellowship Church;
2. That such proposed amendments have been made available to the Partnership in written form at the two consecutive worship services preceding the meeting in which action on the amendments is to be taken or have been provided by mail 10 days prior to that Meeting;
3. That notice of the time and place of the Meeting has been indicated in the above written notification, has been announced, or has been acknowledged in the Church announcements at least two weeks preceding the Meetings;
4. That the affirmative vote for amendment shall not be less than 3/4 of the votes cast by the Partners present (See SECTION 501C,3).

Voting shall be by secret ballot if so requested by any partner.

#### **SECTION 802 - Exclusion**

No amendment to these By-laws shall be permitted which infringes upon the Constitution of the Church.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**APPROVE** - A distinction is made in these By-laws between approving and electing Officers. Those Officers that are approved by the Partners are Elders (including Pastors) and Deacons. The Officer elected by the Partners is the Treasurer. The procedure of approval and election are the same (3/4 vote of the Partners present at a Business Meeting), but there is a conceptual distinction, which seems to be important to preserve.

The offices of Elder and Deacon are made a part of the Church by the Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1-13). On the other hand, the office of Treasurer is a man-made position set up by the Church in order that things might be done decently and in order. Secondly, according to the Scriptures, a person who undertakes the office of Elder or Deacon is first called or elected by God to that office (Acts 20:28). In this sense then, the Church Partnership does not make the person an Elder or Deacon by election, but rather approves or

agrees with God that the person is indeed called to an office which God Himself has already given to that individual.

**BENEVOLENCE FUND** - A specific fund established by the Church budget and administered by the Board of Deacons for the purpose of sharing our monetary resources with those in financial or material need.

**BODY OF CHRIST** - The visible Church of Jesus Christ; all Christians still living, no matter what local church or denomination they may be a part of.

**CHURCH** - In almost every case in these By-laws, Church refers to this particular local church called Centerpoint Fellowship Church of Albuquerque. Where Church is used to refer to the Christian Church, the entire Body of Christ, this is made clear either by the context or use of the term "Christian Church".

**CONFIRMED BY THE BOARD OF ELDERS** - The Board of Elders have the responsibility to verify the qualifications of church Officer nominees per SECTION 301.B. Once verified, the elders will approve the nomination by a vote of at least 2/3 of the Board of Elders. If this is done, the nominee is "confirmed" and will be presented to the partnership for voting into office.

**CONGREGATION** - All those who fellowship with Centerpoint Fellowship Church on a regular basis including both partners and non-partners.

**PARTNERS** - A partner of Centerpoint Fellowship Church as per ARTICLE I of these By-laws.

**PASTOR** - All references to "Pastor" in this document refers to the Lead Pastor of Centerpoint Fellowship Church.

**REMOVAL** - Removal from office is the permanent expulsion of an officer from his church position. In order for the person to return to office, they would need to go through the same procedure as someone who had never held that office. See *Disciplinary Guidelines* for further information.

**SUSPENSION** - The temporary removal of a church officer to include all responsibilities and privileges, until such time as they are permanently removed or reinstated. The suspension may be definite (a set period of time) or indefinite (waiting for the unrepentant offender to exhibit signs of repentance). See *Disciplinary Guidelines* for further information.