

# NEW HARVEST CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP (CONSTITUTION) BYLAWS

Bylaws of New Harvest Christian Fellowship, adopted this 28<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2005, by the Pastor(s) of the fellowship.

## ARTICLE 1 NAME

The name of this church organization shall be “New Harvest Christian Fellowship” meeting in or near Amissville, Virginia, and is a Full Gospel Church.

## ARTICLE 2 PURPOSE OF ORGANIZATION

**Section 2.1 New Testament Purpose of the Church.** The purpose of this Church shall be to establish and maintain a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father;

**Section 2.2** to provide Christian Fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive giftings;

**Section 2.3** to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all means, both at home and abroad;

**Section 2.4** to minister the Christian ordinances;

**Section 2.5** and to engage in such other ministry as is consistent with New Testament teaching.

## ARTICLE 3 PREROGATIVES

**Section 3.1 Governance.** The Church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, endeavoring to keep the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

**Section 3.2 Amendments.** This Constitution and Bylaws shall be amendable by no other ecclesiastical body, other than by the Pastor/Elders as representatives of this body of believers. The “clear” teachings of the Scriptures shall be the standard for any and all amendments.

**Section 3.3 Property.** The church shall have the right to purchase and maintain land and buildings for the ministry, including outreach ministries, be it from gift, bequest, or otherwise, either directly or as a trustee, and to own, hold in trust, real estate and chattels (movable items) as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes.

## **ARTICLE 4 AFFILIATION**

**Section 4.1 Government of the Congregation.** The government of this congregation is subject to, or liable to, no other ecclesiastical authority or government, and is answerable only to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head.

**Section 4.2 Inter-Church Involvement.** While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs, this church congregation shall voluntarily enter into fellowship and cooperation with other assemblies of believers of like precious faith as it so desires.

**Section 4.3 Outside Ministries.** It shall receive apostolic and prophetic ministries, and teachers and preachers at its own discretion, always testing the Spirit. The Pastor(s) shall exercise discretion and wisdom of the Lord.

## **ARTICLE 6 DOCTRINAL STATEMENT**

**We Believe:**

- 5.1 In the Lordship of Jesus Christ;**
- 5.2 That the Bible is the expressed and authoritative Word of God;**
- 5.3 That people are sinners, and without Jesus Christ and will spend eternity in judgment (Hell) unless they repent and place their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;**
- 5.4 That the good news is that God sent His Son, Jesus, to provide for our salvation through His death on the cross and that we may receive that salvation by faith in Jesus;**
- 5.5 That Jesus arose from the dead and the same resurrection power is given to each person who places trust in Him;**
- 5.6 That God is One, and also Triune ... That is, He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;**

- 5.7 In the baptism of the Holy Spirit for power for God's ministry;
- 5.8 In the Fruit of the Spirit manifesting in the people of God;
- 5.9 In the working of the spiritual gifts through God's people;
- 5.10 That God provided for healing and deliverance through Jesus, "by His stripes we were healed." [Mark 16:17, 1 Peter 2:24]
- 5.11 That we have been recreated (Born Again) in Christ Jesus first and foremost to have fellowship and relationship with the living God;
- 5.12 That we have been recreated (Born Again) in Christ Jesus for good works. Good works are not the means of salvation, but the result of our walk with God and are for the purpose of doing the work of God's kingdom on the earth'
- 5.13 The return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the fulfillment of His Kingdom for all eternity.

## **ARTICLE 6**

### **BOARD OF PASTOR/ELDERS**

**Section 6.1 Number, Tenure and Qualification.** The Board of Pastor/Elders shall consist of at least one Pastor/Elder and at most nine Pastor/Elders, which number within this shall be fixed from time to time by the Board of Pastor/Elders. Each Pastor/Elder shall be elected by the then current Pastor/Elder Board by a two-thirds majority vote of the Pastor/Elders and shall serve until death or the election of his duly qualified successor, unless sooner removed by action of the Board. There is no limit as to the term length that a Pastor/Elder may serve. The first Board of Pastor/Elders to serve will be those elected at the initial meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders.

**Section 6.2 Regular Meetings.** An annual meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders shall be held, without other notice than this Bylaw at such time and place fixed by the Board of Pastor/Elders. The purpose of the annual meeting shall be to nominate Pastor/Elders for any terms that expire and to transact such other business as may come before the meeting. The Board of Pastor/Elders may provide, by resolution, the time and place for the holding of additional regular meetings without other notice than such resolution.

**Section 6.3 Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the Board of Pastor/Elders may be called by or at the request of any two Pastor/Elders. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Board of Pastor/Elders may fix the place for holding any special meetings of the Board of Pastor/Elders called by them.

**Section 6.4 Notice.** Notice of any special meeting and the purpose thereof shall be given not less than five nor more than sixty days previously thereto by written notice delivered personally, mailed, or e-mailed to each Pastor/Elder at his home or business address. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail so addressed, with postage thereon prepaid. If notice is given by e-mail, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when the recipient downloads the e-mail. The attendance of a Pastor/Elder at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a Pastor/Elder attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Failure to object to notice prior to the next meeting of the Pastor/Elders shall be deemed as waiver of notice.

**Section 6.5 Quorum.** A majority of the number of Pastor/Elders shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders, but if less than such majority is present at a meeting, a majority of the Pastor/Elders present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

**Section 6.6 Manner of Acting.** Unless specified otherwise by statute, the Articles of Association, or within the Bylaws, the act of the majority of the Pastor/Elders present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Board of Pastor/Elders.

**Section 6.7 Vacancies.** Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Pastor/Elders, including a vacancy resulting from an increase by not more than two in the number of Pastor/Elders, may be filled at any meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders, regular or special, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining Pastor/Elders, though less than a quorum of the Board of Pastor/Elders.

**Section 6.8 Compensation.** Pastor/Elders as such shall not receive any stated salary for their services, but by resolution of the Board of Pastor/Elders to give such salary. The Pastor/Elders may be paid their expenses, if any, of attendance at each meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders, and may be paid a fixed sum for attendance at each meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders, at the discretion of the Pastor/Elder Board. No such payment shall preclude any Pastor/Elder from serving the Church in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefor.

**Section 6.9 Informal Action by Pastor/Elders.** Unless otherwise provided by law, any action required to be taken at a meeting of the Pastor/Elders or any other action which may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing which sets forth the action so taken shall be signed by all of the Pastor/Elders entitled to vote with respect to the subject matter thereof.

**Section 6.10 Presumption of Assent.** A Pastor/Elder of the Church who is present at a meeting of the Board of Pastor/Elders at which any corporate action is taken

shall be presumed to have assented to the action unless he objects at the beginning of the meeting, or promptly on his arrival, to holding or transacting specified business at the meeting or he votes against or abstains from the action taken.

## **ARTICLE 7 MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 7.1 Terms of Membership.** Members of the church shall have made a commitment, first to Jesus Christ our Lord, then to the local assembly and, thereby, be committed to the Pastor/Elders and the deacons and to the direction that they believe the Holy Spirit is leading them. He/she must be in full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement as set forth in Article 5 herein and in the Articles of Association. This does not preclude others from attending the services, and every effort shall be made to bring many to relationship with Jesus Christ.

**Section 7.2 Voting.** Members have no voting rights except as directed by the Pastor/Elders.

**Section 7.3 Open Sin.** If any member of this fellowship should deviate from the principles of a holy, righteous, and godly life that is not conducive to Christian character (i.e., adultery, immorality, embezzlement, heresy, etc. [Galatians 5:18-21]), or create dissension in the Body, make false accusations against any ministry or other office in this fellowship, . . . and is not willing to repent and submit to the leaders, then he/she will be asked to leave the fellowship in accordance with Matthew 18:15-19. The Church fellowship shall be notified of the leadership's decision, commonly called excommunication.

## **ARTICLE 8 MINISTRIES AND OFFICERS**

**Section 8.1 Officers in the Local Church.** The officers shall be (1) Pastor/Elder; (2) Deacon; (3) Treasurer; and (4) Administrative Assistant/Secretary.

**Section 8.2 Qualifications in General.** To hold office in the church, the person must be a member in good standing in the local fellowship and of good report in the community. He/she must be in full agreement with the Doctrinal Statement as set forth in Article 5 herein and in the Articles of Association. He/she must be faithful in

- stewardship,
- support of the ministry of the church, and
- regular attendance to the services.

**Section 8.3 Qualifications for Pastor/Elders.** Pastors must be "given" to prayer and seeking the face of the Lord.

- Their greatest concern must be "what is the Lord showing us to do."

- They should be willing listeners to apostles and prophets.
- They must “care for the sheep” and be available to ministry needs.
- A partial list of requirements is I Timothy 3.

## **ARTICLE 9**

### **MINISTRIES AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

**Section 9.1 Pastor/Elders.** Pastor/Elders shall be appointed by the Pastors/Elders already in place, and a decision shall be made depending on the needs of the congregation, and always with the leading of the Holy Spirit.

**Section 9.2 Length of Service.** Pastors shall serve for an indefinite time.

**Section 9.3 Resigning Pastoral Leadership.** If a Pastor feels led of the Lord to move in a new direction and location, he will be released from being a Pastor at the time of his leaving.

**Section 9.4 All Pastor/Elders Must Agree.** A Pastor or other leader shall not try to take away a part of the existing congregation to start a new one, except with the blessing of the other Elders.

**Section 9.5 Ethics.** All Pastors shall operate with a high standard of ethics. In the event any Pastor deviates from the character, integrity, and ministry he represents (i.e., adultery, or any immoral act, heresy, embezzlement, etc., Galatians 5:18-21) then the other Elders shall challenge his conduct and relive him as a Pastor/Elder.

**Section 9.6 Duties.** The duties of Pastors shall be first and foremost to lead by example and to demonstrate a godly life.

- Pastors shall bring forth the Word of God and lead in time spent in prayer and worship.
- They shall be overall leaders of all church functions and shall delegate using the natural and spiritual gifts of the people.
- They shall be responsible for the services and bringing forth ministry gifts.
- They shall be responsible for the spiritual direction of the congregation.
- They shall appoint the head of Christian Education.
- They shall recommend to the congregation other kinds of leadership.
- With the deacons, shall serve as trustees for the congregation and render legal documents as representatives of the people.

**Section 9.7 Deacons.** Deacons shall be men chosen for their faithfulness and have the gifts needed to fulfill this function.

- They shall be of the character put forward by the Apostle Paul in I Timothy 3.

- They shall be appointed by the Pastors upon the recommendation of the congregation or on their own initiative as they see need.

The pastors shall determine if the recommended persons are qualified and have the final decision.

**Section 9.8 Duties of a Deacon.** The duties of a Deacon shall be to assist the overall ministry of the congregation. A Deacon shall be responsible for equipment, building, and property maintenance, and assist in the acquisition of new properties. Deacons shall, with the Pastor/Elders, serve as trustees and render legal documents as representatives of the Congregation.

**Section 9.9 Character Problems.** In the event any Deacon deviates from the character, integrity, and ministry he represents (i.e., adultery, or any immoral act, heresy, embezzlement, etc., Galatians 5:1-21) then the Pastor/Elders shall challenge his conduct and relive him as a Deacon.

**Section 9.10 Treasurer.** A treasurer shall be appointed by the Pastor/Elders. The time served as Treasurer is at the discretion of the Pastor/Elders. Regular reports shall be made to the congregation. No funds shall be disbursed without the knowledge of the Pastor/Elders. Pastor/Elders are responsible to oversee and insure integrity.

## **ARTICLE 10 BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**Section 10.1 Congregational Meetings.** Business meetings shall be called whenever the need arises. Normally, a meeting should be called at least once a year, but more often, if needed.

**Section 10.2 Calendar Year.** The fiscal year for the church shall be the calendar year, January 1 through December 31, for annual reports and annual giving records, and any other record requiring an annual definition.

**Section 10.3 Quorum.** A representative of at least 31 percent of the adult members shall be required. No congregational business meeting shall be conducted without a quorum.

## **ARTICLE 11 FINANCES**

**Section 11.1 Ministry Funds.** All funds for the ministry of New Harvest Christian Fellowship shall be provided by the voluntary contributions of the titles and offerings of the members and friends of the church. Recognizing that the Lord blesses our giving by giving to us (Luke 6:3 and Malachi 3:10-12), the Pastors should continually encourage tithing and giving, that all might prosper.

## **ARTICLE 12 MISSIONS**

**Section 12.1 Outreach.** The Pastors shall insure that goodly portions of income for the church go to home and foreign missions, never less than 10% of general giving. Recognizing that the Lord blesses our giving by giving to us, this becomes the standard for prosperity of the local church body.

## **ARTICLE 13 AMENDMENTS**

**Section 13.1 Bylaw Changes.** Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any regular or special meeting of the pastors and such amendments shall be made available to the congregation not less than two (2) weeks prior to the meeting of the Pastors. Members may ask to give “advice and counsel” and every effort should be made to honor that request.

## **ARTICLE 14 PROPERTY**

**Section 14.1 Disposition of Property.** In the case of a division of the Congregation, the disposition of the Church property shall be for the use of those members who abide by these Bylaws, regardless of majority.

**Section 14.2** Resolved, that should conditions arise at any time, for any reason, that the work of the Church cannot continue, the Church property will be disposed of as follows: After all indebtedness has been paid, the balance is to be given to New Harvest Christian Fellowship, in or around Amissville, VA, (originator of these Bylaws), or to its successor that brings forth the Full Gospel Message, or to another Church organization that exists for the furtherance of the Full Gospel Message. Such other corporation is to be agreed upon and approved by the church at its dissolution.

## **ADDENDUM**

The Church is a spiritual Body, but meets in a physical building, carries on business to facilitate the ministry. These Bylaws are an attempt to honor the spiritual nature of the Church and to deal with the physical needs, too.

Nowhere in the Bible is there “Congregational rule” ... that is, man’s invention. The church is to be led by spiritual men the Lord raises up who use every effort to discern the will of the Lord and to bring forth the gifts and talents of the people to get the job done. Suggestions are welcomed and will be presented to the Lord for His counsel!



We are a voluntary coming together of people, like-minded on the essentials, and willing to let the non-essentials rest in the hands of the Lord.

Working together in harmony takes work, but not only is it possible, it is essential. And worth every effort it takes.

AMEN!