

# **Bylaws of Three Stones Church, Inc.**

Three Stones Church, Inc. (the “Church”) in order to effectively carry out the commission given by Jesus Christ does ordain and establish the following Bylaws. The Board of Elders (“Board”) and the Senior Pastor shall provide spiritual leadership to the Church. Any disputes that arise over the interpretation of these Bylaws shall be decided by the Board.

## **Table of Contents**

ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP .....	2
ARTICLE II – CHURCH LEADERS .....	3
ARTICLE III – DISCIPLINE OF CHURCH LEADERS .....	8
ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS .....	8
ARTICLE V – CHURCH RECORDS.....	9
ARTICLE VI – CLERGY PENITENT PRIVILEGE.....	9
ARTICLE VII - INDEMNIFICATION.....	9
ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS and OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.....	9

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## **ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP**

### **1. MEMBERSHIP PROCESS**

- a. A person is eligible for membership in this church who gives evidence of his/her faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptized as a believer, who participates in membership preparation, and who reads and agrees to be governed by the Constitution and Bylaws of this Church as herein set forth.
- b. The Church is a fellowship of believers and seekers participating in the labors of the Holy Spirit in, or sent from, this community. An Applicant seeking to become a Member of this church must submit a Membership Request in writing using a form prescribed by the Church. The Membership Request and review process shall be determined by the Board.

### **2. THE STANDARDS OF MEMBERSHIP**

- a. Evidence of a genuine experience of regeneration
- b. Evidence of a consistent Christian life
- c. Baptism as a believer
- d. Regular attendance at services
- e. Participation in the ministries and discipleship efforts of the church
- f. Willingness to contribute to the financial support of the church according to his or her ability through tithes and offerings
- g. Willingness to serve in the ministries of the church according to his or her ability in teaching, worship, missions, visitation, and other ministry areas as called and enabled by the Holy Spirit

### **3. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS**

- a. If approved, the Applicant will be notified accordingly and received into the Church as an official Member.

### **4. DISCIPLINE**

- a. Grounds for Discipline – Church Members may be subject to discipline on the grounds of: immorality; heresy in doctrine; apostasy by declaration or in practice; conviction of a felony; fraud or financial malfeasance in handling of church assets; public conduct contrary to the best interest of the Church.
- b. Process – The Board is responsible for discipline of Members. The Board shall follow the biblical pattern (Titus 3:9-11) consisting of personal warnings and confrontation by two or more Elders or designates with the goal of reconciling the Member to the Lord and to the Church. However, if such efforts fail, the Board may remove the Member from Church membership. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Board may, at its sole discretion in the best interest of the Church, suspend this process and act immediately.
- c. Unless attendance at Church would be cause for scandal, the removed person should be permitted to attend Church services in the hope that he/she would be reconciled to the Lord and to the Church. Should he/she be reconciled and wish to rejoin the Church, he/she shall follow the normal Membership Process.

5. MEMBERSHIP REFERRAL

- a. Letters transferring Members to other churches will be granted upon request. All individuals desiring membership in the Church shall follow the normal Membership Process.

6. RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

- a. Members in good standing have the right to participate in affirmation as prescribed by the Board.
- b. The Church subscribes to a nonvoting, participatory membership. The purpose of the church is not to do the will of the majority, but the will of God. However, as part the discernment process, the Board may seek the opinions and as prescribed, the affirmation of the Members, and prayerfully consider those opinions in all matters as they seek the will of God.

7. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- a. The Board shall be authorized to remove from membership those deemed necessary for reasons including, but not limited to:
  - i. By request of the Member
  - ii. Death of the Member
  - iii. Member has been inactive for six months or more
  - iv. Disciplinary action (as documented previously)

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**ARTICLE II – CHURCH LEADERS**

The table below is a simplified representation of the Church leadership. If there is any contradiction between the table and the rest of the Bylaws, the Bylaws shall prevail.

	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Scope of Duty</b>	<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Ordinances</b>	<b>Selection</b>	<b>Discipline / Removal</b>
<b>Elder</b>	No	Elder	3 years, 2 terms	Church	Yes	No	Board	Board
<b>Senior Pastor</b>	Yes	Elder	Non-expiring	Church	Ex-officio	Yes	Board	Board
<b>Pastor</b>	Yes	Elder	Non-expiring	As designated	No	As approved	Board & Sr. Pastor	Board
<b>Licensed Minister</b>	Board decision	Elder	Board decision	As designated	No	As approved	Board & Sr. Pastor	Board
<b>Deacon</b>	No	Deacon	Non-expiring	As designated	No	No	Board & Sr. Pastor	Board
<b>Ministry Director</b>	Board decision	Deacon	Board decision	As designated	No	No	Board & Sr. Pastor	Board

1. Board of Elders

- a. Initial Board – Upon adoption of these Bylaws, the initial Board of Elders shall consist of those previously holding such positions in the Church at the time of the adoption. At the first Board Meeting following adoption, the Board shall select the Officers as designated herein.
- b. Size – The Board shall consist of no less than four, and no more than nine, members each holding voting status. The size of the Board may be changed upon approval by two-thirds majority of the Board.
- c. Term – The term of an Elder shall be no more than three years, and no Elder shall serve more than two consecutive terms, followed by a period of at least one year not on the Board. The Board should establish the terms of individual Elders at the time they are appointed in such a way that the overall term expirations occur in a balanced manner from year to year.
- d. Selection – When an Elder position is vacant for any reason, the Board shall appoint an Elder by whatever manner they choose, upon approval by a two-thirds majority of the existing Board. The Board may stipulate an effective date for the appointment, and may also stipulate a term on no more than three years as the Board deems appropriate.
- e. Officers – The Board shall designate by whatever manner they choose, a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary of the Board. These officials shall have authority for execute contractual obligations on behalf of the Church, including hiring. To facilitate effective transition of Officers, the Board may stipulate an effective date for the assumption of the duties of any or all Officers. The Officer term shall not expire aside from the expiration of the Officer’s individual term as an Elder.
- f. Senior Pastor – The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board, exempt from term limitations.
- g. Purpose and Focus – The Board shall endeavor to give primary focus to the overall spiritual health and well-being of the Church, the Senior Pastor, other pastors, Deacons, and Ministry directors, principally through casting vision, mission, and strategy for the Church. To that end, the Board should organize and staff departments and ministries, empowering them appropriately, so that the Board is not unduly burdened with operational aspects of the Church.
- h. Trustees – In so far as it concerns any governmental entity, the Board of Elders shall be construed to be the Board of Trustees for all aspects of the Church.

2. Elder

- a. Compensation Status – The Elder shall not receive any compensation for their service. If an Elder is employed by the Church as a full-time or part-time employee, they shall immediately forfeit their position as Elder.
- b. Qualifications – Each Elder must be a Member of the Church, must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4 and Titus 1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.

- c. Discipline – Each Elder is subject to discipline or removal as an Elder by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
  - d. Responsibilities – Each Elder is responsible to serve faithfully to accomplish the overall Purpose and Focus of the Board of Elders as stated above.
  - e. Selection – The selection process for an Elder is documented in the section entitled Board of Elders.
3. Senior Pastor
- a. Compensation Status – The Senior Pastor shall be a paid Church employee. The Senior Pastor and Board shall enter into Employment and Compensation agreements as deemed necessary.
  - b. Qualifications – The Senior Pastor must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4 and Titus 1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.
  - c. Relationship to the Board of Elders – The Senior Pastor is accountable to the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board of Elders.
  - d. Term – The Senior Pastor shall serve without term limit.
  - e. Ordination and Licensing – Upon selection by the Board, the Senior Pastor shall be deemed ordained and licensed within the state of Delaware for all purposes commonly associated with a minister of the gospel.
  - f. Discipline – The Senior Pastor is subject to discipline or removal by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
  - g. Responsibilities – The Senior Pastor is responsible for, and shall focus upon, the overall spiritual life of the Church, accomplished principally through preaching, teaching, and ministry to the Church (shepherding or pastoring).
  - h. Selection – Upon termination or pending vacancy of the Senior Pastor, the Board shall select the new Senior Pastor in such manner as they deem appropriate. The Board may stipulate an effective date for the appointment in order to facility an orderly transition of duties. Simultaneous with the selection and appointment, the Board and selected Senior Pastor shall execute Employment and Compensation Agreements.
4. Pastor
- a. Compensation Status – The Pastor shall be a full-time or part-time paid Church employee. The Pastor and Board shall enter into Employment and Compensation agreements as deemed necessary.
  - b. Qualifications – The Pastor must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4 and Titus 1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.
  - c. Term – The Pastor shall serve without term limit.

- d. Ordination and Licensing – The Board shall separately determine if and when the Pastor shall be ordained and licensed within the state of Delaware for all purposes commonly associated with a minister of the gospel.
  - e. Discipline – The Pastor is subject to discipline or removal by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
  - f. Responsibilities – The Pastor shall serve as directed by the Board and under the direction of the Senior Pastor. The Pastor shall focus upon the spiritual life of the Church principally through a designated area of ministry. The Pastor is authorized to perform sacerdotal services.
  - g. Selection – The Board and Senior Pastor must agree to the need for a Pastor position to be filled, whether an additional position or to fill a vacancy. The Board and Senior Pastor shall be responsible to select the new Pastor in such manner as they deem appropriate.
5. Licensed Minister
- a. Compensation Status – The Licensed Minister may be employed as a full-time or part-time Church employee, or serve as a non-compensated worker, at the discretion of the Board. If employed, the Licensed Minister and Board shall enter into Employment and Compensation agreements as deemed necessary.
  - b. Qualifications – The Licensed Minister must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 1 Peter 5:1-4 and Titus 1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.
  - c. Term – The Board may, at their discretion, establish a term limit for any individual appointed as a Licensed Minister.
  - d. Ordination and Licensing – The Board shall separately determine if and when the Licensed Minister shall be ordained and licensed within the state of Delaware for all purposes commonly associated with a minister of the gospel.
  - e. Discipline – The Licensed Minister is subject to discipline or removal by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
  - f. Responsibilities – The Licensed Minister shall serve as directed by the Board and under the direction of the Senior Pastor. The Licensed Minister shall focus upon the spiritual life of the Church principally through a designated area of ministry. The Licensed Minister is authorized to perform sacerdotal services with the prior approval of the Senior Pastor.
  - g. Selection – The Board and Senior Pastor must agree to the need for a Licensed Minister position to be filled, whether an additional position or to fill a vacancy. The Board and Senior Pastor shall be responsible to select the new Licensed Minister in such manner as they deem appropriate.

6. Deacons

- a. Compensation Status - The Deacon is a non-compensated Church worker.
- b. Qualifications – The Deacon shall be an active Member who meets the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures as seen in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Romans 16:1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.
- c. Term - The Deacon shall serve without term limit.
- d. Discipline - The Deacon is subject to discipline or removal by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
- e. Responsibilities - The Deacon shall serve as directed by the Board and under the direction of the Senior Pastor or a designated Pastor or Ministry Director. The Deacon shall focus upon the spiritual life of the Church principally through a designated area of ministry.
- f. Selection - The Board and Senior Pastor must agree to the need for a Deacon position to be filled, whether an additional position or to fill a vacancy. The Board and Senior Pastor shall be responsible to select the new Deacon in such manner as they deem appropriate.

7. Ministry Directors

- a. Compensation Status - The Ministry Director may be a compensated Church employee or non-compensated Church worker at the discretion of the Board
- b. Qualifications – The Ministry Director shall be an active Member who meets the qualifications set forth in the Scriptures as seen in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 and Romans 16:1, and must be in agreement with the Constitution which includes the Tenets of Faith.
- c. Term - The Board may, at their discretion, establish a term limit for any individual appointed as a Ministry Director.
- d. Discipline - The Ministry Director is subject to discipline or removal by the Board according to the Disciplinary Process documented herein.
- e. Responsibilities - The Ministry Director shall serve as directed by the Board and under the direction of the Board, the Senior Pastor or a designated Pastor or Ministry Director. The Ministry Director shall focus upon the spiritual life of the Church principally through a designated area of ministry, and may be delegated authority to execute selected actions on behalf of the church (e.g. Treasurer).
- f. Selection - The Board and Senior Pastor must agree to the need for a Ministry Director position to be filled, whether an additional position or to fill a vacancy. The Board and Senior Pastor shall be responsible to select the new Ministry Director in such manner as they deem appropriate.

8. Ordination and Licensing – The Board shall be responsible for determination of ordination and licensing of the Senior Pastor, Pastors and/or Licensed Ministers.

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**ARTICLE III – DISCIPLINE OF CHURCH LEADERS**

1. Grounds for Discipline – Church leaders (as delineated above) may be subject to discipline, including dismissal, on the grounds of: immorality; heresy in doctrine; apostasy by declaration or in practice; gross insubordination toward the Board; conviction of a felony; fraud or financial malfeasance in handling of church assets; public conduct contrary to the best interest of the Church, unbecoming conduct, dereliction of duty, or when irreconcilable differences arise that cannot be resolved through mutual agreement.
2. Process – The Board is responsible for discipline of Church Leaders. The Board shall exercise discretion (1 Timothy 5:19) in considering accusations against Church Leaders (excluding the Senior Pastor). The Board shall follow the biblical pattern (Titus 3:9-11) consisting of personal warnings and confrontation by two or more Elders or designates with the goal of reconciling the Leader to the Lord and to the Church. However, if such efforts fail, the Board may dismiss the Leader from their position. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Board may, at its sole discretion in the best interest of the Church, suspend this process and act immediately.
3. Discipline of the Senior Pastor – The Board is responsible for discipline of the Senior Pastor. It is to be considered with great prayer and discernment (1 Timothy 5:19) in considering accusations against the Senior Pastor. The Board shall investigate any matter thoroughly. The primary goal shall be to reconcile the Senior Pastor to the Lord and to the Church. However, if such efforts fail after due diligence, the Board may dismiss the Senior Pastor upon a three-fourths majority of the full Board.
4. Notification – In the event a Church leader is disciplined or dismissed, the following notification shall be given to the church.
  - a. Senior Pastor – Announcement shall be made by the Chairman of the Board at a general worship service of the Church. The Board may, at its discretion, request affirmation of the action by the Church Members.
  - b. Elder or Pastor – Announcement shall be made by the Chairman of the Board, or if unavailable or vacant, by the Vice Chairman, at a general worship service of the Church.
  - c. Other Leaders – Announcement shall be at the discretion of the Board.

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**ARTICLE IV – MEETINGS**

1. Worship - The Church shall meet regularly for corporate worship, including but not limited to preaching the gospel, studying the Bible, prayer and praise.
2. Business – The Board shall, at its discretion, hold meetings to conduct various aspects of Church-related business. The Chairman of the Board of Elders shall serve as the moderator of the business meetings. If the Chairman is absent, the Vice Chairman shall moderate or if unavailable another Elder shall moderate.

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**ARTICLE V – CHURCH RECORDS**

1. Privacy and Confidentiality – Confidential Church information shall not be released to any outside agency, person or entity unless due process has been served and a certified subpoena has been personally delivered. The Church shall comply with state and federal statutes pertaining to review and examination of Church information. The Board shall adopt and maintain appropriate policies to maintain Privacy and Confidentiality.
2. Access - All non-confidential church records, financial information and financial transactions shall be available for membership review upon reasonable notice. The Board shall adopt and maintain appropriate policies for such access.

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**ARTICLE VI – CLERGY PENITENT PRIVILEGE**

1. Applicability – The Clergy Penitent Privilege applies to the Senior Pastor, Pastors, and Licensed Ministers of the Church, hereinafter referred to as “Clergy”.
2. Obligation – The Clergy is responsible to understand and apply the practices under applicable law to preserve Clergy Penitent Privilege.
3. Notice – When practical under the circumstances, the Clergy should confirm the intent of the individual to communicate with them in their capacity as clergy, seek appropriate privacy, and notify the individual as to the confidentiality of the communications.

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**ARTICLE VII - INDEMNIFICATION**

The Church shall indemnify any person who is or was an employee, agent, representative, member of the Board of Elders, or one of the other Church Leaders, against any liability asserted against such person and incurred in the course and scope of his or her duties or functions within the Church to the maximum extent allowable by law, provided the person acted in good faith and did not engage in an act or omission that is intentional, willfully or wantonly negligent, or done with conscious indifference or reckless disregard for the safety of others. The provisions of this article shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which such person may be entitled under any bylaw, agreement, insurance policy, or otherwise.

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**ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS and OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a seventy-five percent (75%) vote of the Board and with the Senior Pastor's approval.

Anything that has not been addressed in either the Constitution or these Bylaws shall require approval by the Board of Elders.

Resolved:

These Bylaws adopted on this day makes null and void all prior Bylaws including any addenda or amendments.

Signed and certified on March 6, 2013, to be effective immediately.

**/s/ James M. Dorton, Jr.**

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Senior Pastor  
Three Stones Church, Inc.

**/s/ Jeffrey Townsend**

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Secretary, Board of Elders  
Three Stones Church, Inc.

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