



Long Branch, New Jersey

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

with Tenets of Faith

Searchlight Church was incorporated on March 19, 2010, according to the laws of the State of New Jersey. A new Constitution and By-Laws was adopted on April 12, 2015.

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## **PREAMBLE**

WHEREAS, it is the express purpose of God, our Heavenly Father, to call out of the world a people who shall constitute the body or church of our Lord Jesus Christ, built and established upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone; and,

WHEREAS, God having ordained that this universal church should find its expression in and through local churches, enjoining them to assemble together for worship, fellowship, counsel, instruction in the Word of God, for the work of the ministry, and to reaching people in our community and beyond with the gospel of Jesus Christ; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we whose names appear on the Church roster as of this date do recognize ourselves as a local Assembly, and do affirm ourselves to be in cooperative fellowship with the General Council of the Assemblies of God with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri, and an active member of the New Jersey District of the Assemblies of God, and do hereby adopt the following articles of church order this 12th day of April in the year of our Lord 2015, these to supplement the articles of incorporation and to supersede any and all other rules of church order.

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this church shall be Searchlight Church, Inc., of Long Branch, New Jersey, hereafter referred to as, Searchlight Church.

### **ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

**Section 1.** To establish and maintain a place of worship to Almighty God, Our Heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, His only Begotten Son, through the Holy Spirit, and for the promotion of Christian fellowship and edification.

**Section 2.** Mission Statement: Searchlight Church exists to REACH and TEACH people to LIVE and LOVE like Jesus.

**Section 3.** To obey, in our capacity, the Great Commission, (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8; 8:4) through the support of home and foreign missionaries.

### **ARTICLE III. PREROGATIVES**

**Section 1,** Searchlight Church shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace...till we all come in 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." (Ephesians 4:3,13).

**Section 2.** To have an ownership which is determined by the local Church and to teach, train and discipline its owners according to the Scriptures and the stated standard of membership as so cited in the bylaws.

**Section 3.** To empower its Pastor to lead the church, and to select and appoint The Leadership Team to transact all other business pertaining to its life and conduct as a local church.

**Section 4.** To purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its Constitution and By-Laws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

### **ARTICLE IV. AFFILIATION**

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conduct of its own affairs, Searchlight Church shall voluntarily enter into cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith associated in the New Jersey District of the Assemblies of God with its headquarters in Burlington, N.J and the General Council of the Assemblies of God with headquarters at Springfield, Missouri.

### **ARTICLE V. TENETS OF FAITH**

Searchlight Church shall accept the Holy Scriptures as the revealed Word of God, the all-sufficient rule for faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity, adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God as follows:

#### **1. THE SCRIPTURES INSPIRED**

*The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired by God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct. (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).*

## **2. THE ONE TRUE GOD**

*The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).*

## **3. THE DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

*The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:*

- (a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).*
- (b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).*
- (c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).*
- (d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).*
- (e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).*
- (f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).*

## **4. THE FALL OF MAN**

*Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).*

## **5. THE SALVATION OF MAN**

*Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.*

*(a) Conditions to Salvation: Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing, regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).*

*(b) The Evidences of Salvation: The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).*

## **6. THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH**

*(a) Baptism in Water*

*The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus*

*they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).*

*(b) Holy Communion*

*The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements - bread and the fruit of the vine: is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!".*

**7. THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**

*All believers are entitled to, should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. Baptism in the Holy Spirit results in enduement of power for life and service the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31).*

*This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth. (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8): a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28):an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work ( Acts 2:42); and a more active love for Christ, His Word, and the lost (Mark 16:20).*

**8. THE INITIAL, PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT**

*The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance. (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues. (1Corinthians 12:4-10,28) but different in purpose and use.*

**9. SANCTIFICATION**

*Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). The Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:15,16).*

*Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that*

*union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6:1-13; Romans 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).*

#### **10. THE CHURCH**

*The Church is the Body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Holy Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the General Church and Church of the First-born, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).*

#### **11. THE MINISTRY**

*A divinely called and Scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for a twofold purpose: (1) The evangelization of the world; (2) Worship of God; (3) Building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son; (4) Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Mark 16:15-20; Ephesians 4:11-13).*

#### **12. DIVINE HEALING**

*Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement, and is the privilege of all believers. (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).*

#### **13. THE BLESSED HOPE**

*The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).*

#### **14. THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST**

*The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).*

#### **15. THE FINAL JUDGMENT**

*There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to*

*everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8)*

## **16. THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH**

*"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:22).*

### **ARTICLE VI. ORDINANCES AND PRACTICES**

*The ordinances of the Lord's Supper, Baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit shall be observed at stated times and as requested. The Scriptural practice of anointing the sick with oil for healing and the dedication of children shall also be observed at stated times and as requested (1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38; James 5:14; Matthew 19:13-15).*

### **ARTICLE VII. THE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

*The Leadership Team of the church shall be: The Pastor; The Elders; The Deacons and the Trustees. There shall be no less than 2 Elders, 2 Deacons and 1 Trustee assisting the Pastor in ministering to the spiritual and practical needs of the church through teaching, training, outreach, visiting, praying, maintaining the buildings and grounds, community service and other responsibilities appointed by the Pastor. The Leadership Team shall constitute the legislative body of the church.*

### **ARTICLE VIII. OWNERSHIP**

*Individuals shall be eligible for ownership in Searchlight Church who give evidence of a personal living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith, who lead lives in keeping with Biblical Christian ethics, and who agree to be governed by its Constitution and By-Laws as herein set forth.*

### **ARTICLE IX. MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** *Meetings for public worship shall be held each Lord's Day and/or during the week under the direction of the Pastor.*

**Section 2.** *There shall be an annual "State of the Search" Sunday, at which time the general progress of all major areas of the church shall be reviewed and the selection of The Deacons for The Leadership Team shall take place. This meeting shall be held on or before February 15th, due notice being given to the congregation two Sundays prior to the date of meeting.*



**Section 3.** *Special meetings of the Owners may be called by the Pastor and/or by a two-thirds majority of The Leadership Team, after due notice has been given by the Pastor to the congregation two Sundays prior to the date of the meeting*

**Section 4.** *Quorum: No record of any "State of the Search" Sunday or special meetings of the Owners shall be made unless one-third or more of the active owners shall be present to constitute a quorum. In the event that two duly called meetings of the Owners fail to produce a quorum, the Pastor and The Leadership Team shall be empowered to act upon the matters in question.*

**Section 5.** *Leadership Team Meetings: the Pastor shall call such meetings at least once every three-months unless otherwise directed. A majority of The Leadership Team must be present to constitute a quorum. In the event that two or more members of The Leadership Team wish to have a special meeting for the sake of discussing official church business, the Pastor must first grant prior approval for such a meeting.*

#### **ARTICLE X. FINANCES**

*The Church shall be financed according to the Scriptural method of the tithes and offerings of the owners, attendees and friends of the Church (Malachi 3:10; Matthew 23:23; Hebrews 7:4-9).*

#### **ARTICLE XI. PROPERTY**

**Section 1.** *All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the name of the Church.*

**Section 2.** *No real or chattel property of the Church having a value of \$2,000 or more shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated, without the same having been authorized by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the Pastor and The Leadership Team at one of their meetings. A special meeting of the Owners will be called in the event that the proposed real or chattel property to be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated exceeds twenty five thousand dollars (\$25,000).*

**Section 3.** *The Secretary of the Church shall certify that such conveyance, lease, or mortgage has been duly authorized by vote of the Pastor and The Leadership Team and /or the Ownership. Such certificates shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof.*

**Section 4.** *In the event the church ownership is ever divided because of doctrinal differences, the entire real and mortgaged properties including all assets in whole and audited liabilities shall revert to the church owners holding to the tenets of faith as stated in the Constitution as of 2015. In the event that the membership herein mentioned ceases to function as a church body, all liabilities, assets and properties real*

*or mortgaged shall revert to the New Jersey District of the Assemblies of God, a Corporation, which shall then have full authority to use or liquidate in part or in whole at its sole discretion in the furtherance of the Gospel of Christ.*

## **ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS**

*Amendments to this constitution with the exclusion of section 4, may be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the ownership of the Church who are in attendance at any "State of the Search" Sunday or special meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice of such meeting shall have been made at all services on at least two Sundays preceding the time for such meeting. Furthermore, such proposed changes in the constitution shall be mailed to all voting members two weeks prior to the meeting.*

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. OWNERSHIP**

#### **Section 1. STANDARD OF OWNERSHIP**

The standard of Ownership of Searchlight Church shall be:

(a) Any person eighteen years of age or older professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, giving evidence of regeneration, accepting the tenets of faith as set forth in the Constitution and having completed the ownership class shall be received into the ownership of our Church. (John 1:12,13;1 Peter 18-25).

(b) All Owners shall adhere to The Ownership Covenant as follows:

Having received Christ as my Lord and Savior and having been baptized in water, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Searchlight Church family through ownership. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other owners to do the following:

#### **1. I WILL PROTECT THE UNITY OF MY CHURCH**

...By acting in love toward other members

...By refusing to gossip

...By following the leaders

*"So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up."*

*(Romans 14:19)*

*"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them." (Ephesians 4:29 NLT)*

*“Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.” (Hebrews 13:17 NLT)*

## **2. I WILL SHARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MY CHURCH**

- ...By praying for its growth
- ...By inviting the Unchurched to attend
- ...By warmly welcoming those who visit

*“We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly.” (1 Thessalonians 1:2 NLT)*

*“So his master said, ‘Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. For none of those I first invited will get even the smallest taste of my banquet.’” (Luke 14:23-24 NLT)*

*“Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.” (Romans 15:7 NLT)*

## **3. I WILL SERVE THE MINISTRY OF MY CHURCH**

- ...By discovering my gifts and talents
- ...By being equipped to serve by my pastors
- ...By using my gifts as part of the body
- ...By developing a servant’s heart

*“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.” (1 Peter 4:10 NLT)*

*“Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11-12 NLT)*

*“Don’t be selfish; don’t try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. ... Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being....” (Philippians 2:3-4, 7 NLT)*

## **4. I WILL SUPPORT THE TESTIMONY OF MY CHURCH**

...By attending faithfully  
...By living a godly life  
...By giving regularly  
...By participating in Life Groups

*“And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:25 NLT)*

*“Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing side by side, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News.” (Philippians 1:27 NLT)*

*“On the first day of each week, you should each put aside a portion of the money you have earned. Don’t wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.” (1 Corinthians 16:2)*

*“One tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain from the fields or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD and must be set apart to him as holy.” (Leviticus 27:30 NLT)*

## **Section 2. RECEPTION OF OWNERS**

- (a) Persons desiring to become owners of the Church shall attend the Ownership Class, sign the ownership covenant and return it to the church office by the prescribed date
- (b) The Pastor shall present to The Leadership Team the names of those who apply for ownership. The Leadership Team shall have the prerogative to interview any applicant. After due consideration, those whom The Leadership Team commend to the Church for ownership shall be inscribed in the Church roster book.

## **Section 3. REVISION OF ROSTER AND DISCIPLINE OF OWNERS**

- (a) Any owner of the Church who shall willfully absent them self from the regular worship services and/or who ceases to contribute to the ministry for a period of three consecutive months, or who shall be under discipline by The Leadership Team, shall be temporarily suspended from active ownership. The Pastor shall appoint someone from The Leadership Team to follow up with the individual/family.

(b) Unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith held by Searchlight Church shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as an owner. Such discipline shall be prayerfully administered by The Leadership Team according to the Scriptures (Matthew 18:15-17,35; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15).

(c) Annual Review: The Trustees shall perform an annual review of the ownership roster. Any owners who have been missing from fellowship and participation will be presented to the Leadership Team for suspension from active ownership and follow up (Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15).

#### ***Section 4. OWNERSHIP ROLL***

The ownership roll shall be divided in two sections as follows:

(a) Active Owners - Those who actively take part in attending the services, sharing the financial responsibility of the church and participating in the mission of the church.

(b) Inactive Owners - Those temporarily suspended from ownership for reasons stated in Section 4 (a). Such persons may be reinstated to active ownership by a majority vote of The Leadership Team.

### ***ARTICLE II. THE LEADERSHIP TEAM***

The Leadership Team shall consist of: The Lead Pastor, at least 2 Elders, at least 2 Deacons and the Trustee(s). There shall be no more than 7 voting members on the Leadership Team at one time. All staff members, whether pastoral or laity, full time or part time, paid or volunteer, shall be subjected to the authority of the Lead Pastor and The Leadership Team. The role and responsibilities of the Leadership Team are as follows:

#### ***Section 1. THE LEAD PASTOR***

The Church finds it headship, under the Lord Jesus Christ, in its Lead Pastor, hereafter referred to as Pastor. He shall be honored in his sacred office as the spiritual overseer and Lead Elder of the church (Ephesians 4:11,12; I Timothy 3:1; 5:17,18). He shall be the president of the corporation and chairman of The Leadership Team. He shall serve as the chairman of all State of the Search Sundays and special member meetings of the church. By virtue of his office, the pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all committees and departments of the

church. No person shall be invited to speak, preach or teach in the church without his prior approval.

### ***Section 2. THE ELDERS***

Elders shall be men or women who are recognized for their spiritual maturity, who are at least 25 years of age, owners in good standing of Searchlight for at least one year, active in the body life of the church, who shall minister in a serving capacity through giving assistance to the Lead Pastor in meeting the spiritual needs of the church. The Elders responsibilities shall include: teaching; training; discipleship; visiting the sick; anointing with oil; church discipline; and other such responsibilities as outlined in I Timothy 3:1-7 and/or assigned by the Pastor. By virtue of his / her call the Pastor shall serve as the Lead Elder. Elders shall be appointed by the Pastor, with counsel from the pastoral staff, and ratified by a majority vote of The Leadership Team. Their term of office shall be 3 years, staggered so that not all terms expire at once, and if appointed to a second term, there shall be a mandatory "sabbatical" year off at the end of the second term as an Elder.

### ***Section 3. THE DEACONS***

Deacons shall be men or women who are well respected, responsible, and who meet the general guidelines of I Timothy 3:8-13. They shall have been an owner in good standing at Searchlight Church for at least one year, at least 25 years old and active in the body life of the church. The Deacons shall minister in a serving capacity through giving assistance to the Lead Pastor in meeting the physical/ practical needs of the church body. The Deacons responsibilities shall include acts of service that help meet the practical needs of the church family and facilities as assigned by the Pastor.

### ***Section 4. THE TRUSTEES***

Trustees shall be men or women who have been owners of Searchlight Church for at least one year, who are at least 25 years old and who exhibit the expertise needed to serve in the corporate offices of Secretary and Treasurer. The Trustees shall be appointed by the Pastor and The Leadership Team, and shall serve 3-year terms, with no limitation of re-appointment. The Trustees will serve as the official, legal servants in all matters pertaining to the fiscal management of the church and as the custodians of all official church documents. They are not a legislative body, and as such are non-voting members of The Leadership Team, but are respected for their counsel and mutual assistance in the administration of business matters of the church. There will be a Secretary, a Treasurer or a combination Secretary/ Treasurer, who will serve with the Pastor as signatories on all legal documents pertaining to the church. As custodians, Trustees shall insure proper documentation of insurances, titles of ownership, deeds for building lots, houses, etc. of church

owned properties and shall act on behalf of the church in the selling and acquiring property.

***(a) The Secretary (Corporation Clerk)***

The Secretary shall be responsible, either directly or by delegation to another party, for: the recording and keeping of the minutes of The Leadership Team; State of the Search Sunday; specially called meetings of the ownership. The Secretary shall see that adequate records are kept of the ownership of the assembly. The Secretary, along with the Pastor, shall have access to a safe deposit box as authorized by the congregation and see that all legal documents and church related Insurance policies are deposited therein. The Secretary, along with the Pastor, shall be a signatory on all legal documents pertaining to the church and its properties.

***(b) The Treasurer***

The Treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly, subject to the supervision of the Leadership Team. The treasurer is responsible for designing, implementing and monitoring a system of internal accounting controls sufficient to provide assurance to the congregation, the Leadership Team and other stakeholders that policies and procedures are in place and working so that financial assets are safeguarded and financial reports are timely and accurate.

The Treasurer shall be responsible, either directly or by delegation to another party, for the following:

1. Counting of all offerings;
2. The recording of monies given by individuals in envelopes;
3. The reporting of such records to the individuals at least once per year;
4. The deposit of all funds into a bank account authorized by the church;
5. The payment of all bills;
6. Payroll distribution;
7. The keeping of itemized account of all receipts and disbursements;
8. Quarterly financial report to The Leadership Team;
9. An annual financial synopsis/ overview to the congregation.

***(c) Secretary/ Treasurer***

The combination of Secretary/Treasurer shall encompass the duties outlined in subsections a and b.

**ARTICLE III. PASTORAL STAFF**

### ***Section 1. Titles***

Pastoral staff members may carry the title of Associate, Assistant, Youth or Children's Pastor as well as Church Administrator, Minister of Music or other titles which the Pastor and The Leadership Team deem necessary to fit the position.

### ***Section 2. Appointments***

Pastoral Staff members will be appointed at the discretion of the Pastor as the need arises and the finances of the church are sufficient. Such appointments shall be ratified by The Leadership Team.

### ***Section 3. Duration of Appointments***

Pastoral staff members will be appointed for a period of one year, after which their performance and the position they fill will be evaluated by the Lead Pastor annually.

### ***Section 4. Church Affiliation and Offices***

The Pastoral staff members and spouses (if married) will automatically become owners of the congregation and entered as active owners on the church roster and have full voting privileges at any State of the Search Sunday or special business meeting of the church. Staff members will not be eligible to hold the offices of Elder, Deacon or Trustee. Though their presence may be required at The Leadership Team meetings, they will not have voting privileges.

### ***Section 5. Duties and Responsibilities***

Staff members will be responsible directly to the Lead Pastor. Staff members' portfolios and job descriptions will be assigned by the Lead Pastor. Any addition to or deviation from these duties, must first go through the Lead Pastor and have his approval.

## ***ARTICLE IV. ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS***

### ***Section 1. THE LEAD PASTOR***

The Lead Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time. At such time as the position of Lead Pastor becomes available, The Leadership Team, acting in the capacity of a pulpit committee shall call a meeting with the District



Superintendent, for his counsel and input, as the process begins. The Leadership Team, after prayerful inquiry, and with judicious counsel, full consideration being given to the leading of the Holy Spirit, shall select an available, Scripturally qualified, ordained Assemblies of God minister as nominee to the office of Lead Pastor, and shall present his name for the vote of the ownership without delay. Election shall be by secret ballot. After a quorum has been satisfied, a two-thirds vote of the owners present shall be required to constitute an election.

## ***Section 2. THE LEADERSHIP TEAM***

All members of The Leadership Team shall be marked by spiritual maturity, proven leadership ability, faithfulness in all things and a life that gives evidence of the fruit and gifts of the Holy Spirit. Including the Lead Pastor as the chairman of The Leadership Team, there shall typically be no fewer than 5 and no more than 7 voting members serving on The Leadership Team. If there are not enough qualified leaders to serve, there shall be a minimum of 3 voting members (including the Pastor) on The Leadership Team.

### ***(a). Elders***

In addition to the Pastor, as the Lead Elder, there shall be a minimum of two Elders. Elders shall be men appointed by the Pastor and ratified by a majority of The Leadership Team. An Elder shall serve a 3-year term. If two consecutive terms have been served, the Elder is to take a sabbatical year of rest and refreshing before serving another term as an elder.

### ***(b). Deacons***

There shall be a minimum of two Deacons. Deacons shall be men or women who complete the nominee questionnaire and are then approved by the nominating committee as a candidate for the office of Deacon. Those selected as Deacons shall be chosen by the casting of lots, following prayer, at the annual State of the Search Sunday. Deacons serve 2-year terms. If a Deacon has been selected to serve for 2 consecutive terms, he or she is to take a sabbatical year of rest and refreshing before serving another term as Deacon.

### ***(c). Trustees***

There shall be a minimum of one and a maximum of two Trustees who shall serve the capacities of Secretary and Treasurer. Trustees shall be appointed by unanimous decision of The Leadership Team, with recommendations from the Pastor. Trustees will serve 3 –year terms with no limitation of terms.

## ***Section 3. NOMINATING COMMITTEE***

The Leadership Team shall meet two months prior to the State of the Search Sunday to select potential nominees from the active ownership list. They shall send an information questionnaire to every Deacon nominee. Each questionnaire that is completed and returned to the church office by the prescribed due date will be reviewed by the committee.

(1) The Lead Pastor shall appoint a five-member nominating committee, which shall consist of: The Lead Pastor, two members of the Leadership Team, and two members of the congregation.

(2) Each appointee to the nominating committee must be an owner in good standing at Searchlight Church.

(3) The Leadership Team shall present names of potential Deacons to the nominating committee.

(4) The nominating committee may choose to interview any or all nominees. The committee will then submit the names of all who qualify to the ownership for the casting of lots at the State of the Search Sunday.

#### ***Section 4. THE CASTING OF LOTS- Proverbs 16:33; 18:18; Acts 1:26***

The names of those individuals who have been reviewed and approved for service as Deacons by the nominating committee shall be written on paper, placed in a concealed container, prayed over for the Lord's Appointment and then individually selected according to the number of vacancies needing to be filled among the Deacons. This will be done by a member of the Elder team.

### ***ARTICLE V. VACANCIES***

#### ***Section 1. THE LEAD PASTOR***

(a) In the event the Lead Pastor has serious charges preferred against him, i.e.

(1) Unscriptural conduct

(2) Doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith

(3) Incompetency in office or failure to successfully fulfill the Biblical role of Pastor

It is required of The Leadership Team to first contact the New Jersey District Superintendent to inform him of the situation and receive his counsel. Power is then vested in The Leadership Team to ask for the resignation of the Pastor. If the Pastor refuses to resign, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until two-thirds majority of The Leadership Team call a special meeting of the owners to discuss the matter. After discussion and prayer, no action will be taken unless there is a quorum present and the end of the Pastor's tenure has been decided through a

secret ballot vote by a two-thirds majority of the owners present, notice of such meeting having been given on the two Sundays prior. Such meeting must be presided over by the District Superintendent or his designated representative. In the case of a Lead Pastor's removal from office a full report of such action must be made to the District Office.

(b) If the Pastor's credentials are withdrawn by the NJ district or the General Council, the pastor's term of office is over.

(c) When a vacancy of the Lead Pastor occurs, speakers shall be arranged for by The Leadership Team until a Lead Pastor shall be chosen. The District Superintendent shall be consulted and informed of all actions by the Leadership Team.

## **Section 2. LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS**

(a) Any position may be declared vacant by an act of a recommendation by the Lead Pastor and a majority ratification of the members of The Leadership Team at any regular or special Leadership Team meeting. Grounds for such action shall be:

- (1) Unscriptural conduct
- (2) Doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith
- (3) Incompetency in office or failure to successfully fulfill the Biblical role and ministry description of Elder or Deacon
- (4) Failure to abide by the qualifications set forth in Article III, Section 2 of the bylaws
- (5) Exhibiting a divisive contrary spirit toward the lead pastor and/or The Leadership Team.

(b) The Leadership Team, at the recommendation of the Lead Pastor, is empowered to fill by appointment any irregular vacancy for the remainder of the unexpired term.

## **Section 3. PASTORAL STAFF**

(a) Positions on the paid pastoral staff shall be filled by qualified persons chosen by the Lead Pastor and ratified by a two thirds majority of The Leadership Team.

(b) The term of service of any person on the paid Pastoral staff may be terminated by their resignation or by the decision of the Lead Pastor ratified by a majority of the Leadership Team.

(c) No person shall be employed on the pastoral staff of this church who is living a lifestyle contrary to Biblical Christian ethics.

(d) Laity Staff - No person shall be a part of the laity staff of this congregation who is living a lifestyle contrary to Biblical Christian ethics.

## **ARTICLE VI. FINANCES**

**Section 1.** The Leadership Team shall have general oversight in all financial matters of the Church.

**Section 2.** All staff salaries, benefits and allowances shall be reviewed and renewed annually by the Elders and presented to The Leadership Team for Approval.

**Section 3.** Through a commitment to the Great Commission, Searchlight Church shall participate in missionary support to the Home and Foreign Missions Departments of the General Council of the Assemblies of God and to other missionary endeavors authorized by the Lead Pastor and The Leadership Team.

## **ARTICLE VII. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these By- Laws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the ownership of the Church who are in attendance at any State of the Search Sunday or special meeting called for that purpose, provided that notice of such meeting shall have been made at all services on at least two Sundays preceding the time for such meeting. Furthermore, such proposed changes in the by-laws shall be mailed to all voting members two weeks prior to the meeting.