

# The Bylaws of Willowdale Chapel

These Bylaws are adopted consistent with the Articles of Incorporation of Willowdale Chapel, a non-profit corporation established under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for the administration of its affairs. The Elder Team shall have the authority to lead the church as those designated “Trustees” in the Articles of Incorporation.

## 1.0 Member Qualifications and Responsibilities

- 1.1 Members shall enter into covenant commitment to fulfill the church’s mission, and shall renew their covenant annually.
- 1.2 Members shall subscribe to the Core Convictions listed at the end of these Bylaws.
- 1.3 Members 18 years of age and older shall be called upon to vote on the following matters at congregational meetings as determined by the Elder Team: the selection of elders and deacons; the calling of the senior pastor; the church’s annual budget; the sale or acquisition of real property; and amendments to these Bylaws. Affirmation shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those members in attendance.

## 2.0 Elder Qualifications and Responsibilities

- 2.1 Elders shall meet the biblical character qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- 2.2 Elders shall lead the church, model Christ-centered living, teach and exhort, guard sound doctrine and practice, and pray for those in need. *(See Acts 20:28-31; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3; 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:9; James 5:14)*
- 2.3 The Elder Team shall be comprised of the Lead Pastor and at least four qualified members of the congregation. Should the team ever fall below the minimal number of four members, the nominating process, as described below, shall be initiated.
- 2.4 The Lead Pastor shall be the co-chairman of the Elder Team. Another Elder, selected by a majority of his peers on the board, will serve as co-chairman. Associate pastors may serve as adjunct members of the Elder Team, at the team’s invitation.
- 2.5 The Elder serving as co-chairman of the Elder Team will be responsible for the following:
  - Leading the Elder Team in periodic evaluations of the pastor and organization
  - Together with the Lead Pastor, overseeing the Elder Selection process detailed in Section 4.1
  - Together with the Lead Pastor, establishing the agenda of Elder Team meetings
  - Any other duties as assigned by the Elder Team
- 2.6 Elders (with the exception of the Lead Pastor) shall serve three-year terms, which may be renewed once for a total of six years of continual service. At the conclusion of two terms, an elder shall take a sabbatical of at least one year, before becoming eligible to serve again.

### **3.0 Deacon Qualifications and Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Deacons shall meet the biblical character qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- 3.2 The Deacon Team shall be subject to the Elder Team in all matters. The Deacon Team is charged by the Elder Team with the responsibility of managing the finances and facilities of the church, along with its legal affairs, as well as any other ministry activities delegated by the Elder Team.
- 3.3 The Deacon Team shall be comprised of at least four qualified members of the congregation. The Lead Pastor is an ex-officio member of the Deacon Team. The Deacon Team shall nominate its own chairperson, who will serve with the approval of the Elder Team.
- 3.4 Deacons shall serve three-year terms which may be renewed once for a total of six years of continual service. At the conclusion of two terms, a deacon shall take a sabbatical of at least one year, before becoming eligible to serve again.

### **4.0 Elder and Deacon Selection**

- 4.1 At least annually, the Elder Team shall initiate this leadership selection process:
  - Review elder and deacon qualifications with the congregation and solicit nominees.
  - Select for candidacy those who have the initial support of the Elder Team.
  - Contact candidates and invite them to engage in a period of prayer and personal evaluation regarding their qualification and calling to the office.
  - Interview and evaluate those candidates who wish to be considered.
  - Introduce final candidates to the congregation, inviting further input regarding each candidate's qualifications to serve.
  - Provide at least three weeks advance notice for a congregational meeting at which a vote of affirmation shall be taken. Affirmation shall require a two-thirds majority of those in attendance.
- 4.2 Portions of the nominating, contacting, and interviewing process may be delegated to a nominating committee of the Elder Team's choosing.

### **5.0 Pastor Qualifications, Responsibilities, and Selection**

- 5.1 All pastors shall meet the biblical character qualifications for elders described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, and shall subscribe to the Core Convictions listed at the end of these Bylaws.
- 5.2 The Elder Team, or a designated team of its choosing, shall identify candidates for Lead Pastor and Associate Pastor positions. Pastors shall be called upon the recommendation of the Elder Team and a two-thirds majority vote of the membership.
- 5.3 All ministry directors and other staff personnel shall be hired by the Lead Pastor and the Elder Team, or by those they so designate to do the hiring.

5.4 The Lead Pastor shall be responsible for the overall leadership of the staff; shall determine or approve the specific roles and job descriptions of each staff member; and, in consultation with the Elder Team, shall make decisions regarding hiring and dismissal.

5.5 All pastors and staff members serve on an “at will” basis and may be dismissed by the Elder Team.

## **6.0 Committees**

Committees may be established by the Elder Team to serve defined purposes for limited periods of time. They shall disband upon completion of their task or upon determination by the Elder Team.

## **7.0 Congregational Meetings**

Congregational meetings shall be called by the Elder Team at least annually to transact church business. Congregational meetings involving voting shall be announced at least three weeks prior to their gathering.

## **8.0 Grievances and Discipline**

8.1 Members with grievances shall direct them to the Elder Team. The Elder Team shall exercise appropriate diligence in responding to grievances and resolving conflicts, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

8.2 The Elder Team shall determine the appropriateness of disciplinary measures in a case of flagrant misconduct, in accordance with Matthew 18:15-20. The Elder Team shall have authority to revoke the membership of a person who is persistently unwilling to repent of such behavior.

## **9.0 Fundraising**

Methods of fundraising shall be subject to the approval of the Elder Team.

## **10.0 Ordination**

The Elder Team shall have the power to convene an ordination council to examine and credential those seeking a formal commission into ministry. The Elder Team shall have the power to review and revoke the credentials of any minister whose conduct so warrants it.

## **11.0 Amendments**

11.1 Amendments and changes to these Bylaws shall be proposed to the congregation by the Elder Team, and shall be adopted upon a two-thirds majority vote of those members present at a called congregational meeting.

11.2 One-third of the membership can propose amendments or changes to these Bylaws, via petition to the Elder Team, which shall call a congregational meeting. Such amendments or changes shall be adopted upon a two-thirds majority vote of those members present at the congregational meeting.