

**BYLAWS**  
of  
**FirstChurch, Inc.**  
**A State Nonprofit Religious Corporation**

**Preamble to the Bylaws**

FirstChurch endeavors to be a Church of the Lord Jesus Christ as described, established, and mandated by the New Testament. The purpose of these Bylaws is to help us accomplish the task of this Church in a "decent and orderly" manner through the use of effective and efficient means of good stewardship of the body's time, gifts and resources. Our ultimate desire is to bring glory to God through the Church.

These Bylaws are to provide general guidance on organization, governance and operation, based upon biblical principles and practices. However, the ultimate authority for FirstChurch's organization, governance and operation is the Bible. When a conflict or ambiguity exists with regard to these Bylaws, deference is to be given to the biblical reference to resolve the conflict or ambiguity.

**Article I**  
**Name and Principal Office**

The name of the Corporation is FirstChurch. This Corporation will be further referred to in the Bylaws as the "Church". The Church maintains its principal office at 1234 Straight Way, City, State.

**Article II**  
**Membership**

**Section 1: General**

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body. (Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor. 8:1; Phil. 1:1; Acts 11:26)

In order to implement the principles of accountability and commitment to the local body of Christ, as defined in the New Testament and practiced in the early churches, FirstChurch recognizes the need for formal membership. Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership and are listed on the membership role.

**Section 2: Candidacy and Membership**

Any person 16 years of age or older who has personally received Christ as their Savior and Lord, who has received baptism by immersion as a testimony of their salvation, and who desire to be committed to FirstChurch as a local body of believers may become members of FirstChurch through the following procedures:

1. Approach an elder, staff member, deacon or other ministry leader, or come forward during one of the worship service altar calls and share your desire to join FirstChurch.
2. Attendance at New Membership Classes. Periodically, membership classes shall be offered to provide, but not limited to, the following:
  - Introduction of elders and ministerial staff
  - History of FirstChurch
  - FirstChurch's Articles of Incorporation
  - Review of Bylaws
  - Overview of ministries and insights from selected ministry leaders
  - Spiritual gift studies
  - General Operating Budget
  - Leadership and membership responsibilities

3. Personal Interview

Following attendance at New Membership Classes, individuals desiring membership shall meet with an elder or appointed ministry leader to verbalize their personal testimony, and to determine the integrity of their faith and their desire to be committed to FirstChurch as a local body of believers.

4. Signed Statement of Acknowledgement and Commitment

A signed Member Statement of Acknowledgement and Commitment ([Form No. 11-11](#)) shall be used as an instrument to affirm one's desire for membership, to agree with the Church's covenant, and to serve as formal record of one's membership.

All such candidates shall be presented to this Church and membership by adding their name to the FirstChurch membership roll and publicizing their name and picture to the membership of FirstChurch in the Church's FirstEdition publication.

### **Section 3: Designations of Membership**

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the Church, two rolls shall be maintained. These rolls shall be updated periodically.

1. Active/Resident Members: All members who reside within the Church's ministry area or are currently active in the Church.