

Versailles Christian Church (VCC) By-Laws



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By-Laws

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ARTICLE I: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: General

Reception of new members, dismissal due to church discipline, or reinstatement to membership following disciplinary action shall be conducted under the purview of the church Pastor(s) and Lay Elders. The Pastor(s) and Lay Elders comprise an Elder Team, herein referred to simply as the Elders, with the exception of those instances that one or the other has specific duties called out below. Reception of new members (Section 2) may be acted upon without prior notice at any regular or special worship service of the church. Issues of either church discipline (Section 5) or reinstatement to membership (Section 6) will be handled by the Elders.

SECTION 2: Reception of New Members

Any person meeting the qualifications of Article IV of the Church Constitution may be received into the membership following the Standard Operating Procedures as established by the Elders.

SECTION 3: Responsibility of Members

Members are expected to regularly attend worship services (Hebrews 10:25) participate in small groups (Acts 2:42-47), and give financially to support the ministries of the church (2 Corinthians 9:7). They are to joyfully support, encourage, edify, pray for, and fellowship with other members and regular attendees of the body. They should accept encouragement, teaching support, and discipline from other members of this body.

SECTION 4: Inactive Members

Inactive members shall be identified as those who voluntarily absent themselves from the church services for a period of three months or more. Exceptions will be made for those with health issues, those traveling long-term, and those with other extenuating circumstances. Inactive members shall be removed from the official church rolls. The VCC Standard Operating Procedures provide instructions for consideration of reinstatement.

SECTION 5: Church Discipline

- (A) **Grounds:** Grounds for discipline of any member may include but not be limited to persistent unbiblical behavior or unbiblical belief.
- (B) **Goal:** The goal of church discipline is to restore the person being disciplined to fellowship with God and other members.
- (C) **Procedure:** The proper procedure for church discipline follows the guidelines of Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1.
 1. If an individual is at fault as far as violating a Biblical principle, then he/she should be counseled in private.

2. If the individual does not modify his/her behavior, then at least two Elders should discuss the situation with him/her.
3. If the individual still refuses to change, then their status in the church will be discussed within the elders and could possibly lead to revocation of their membership. If this last step is taken, the individual will be notified by the Elders in writing prior to the decision being made. The member may be removed by a simple majority vote of the elders. The congregation will be informed of the removal in an appropriate way and encouraged to love and pursue the former member with the goal of reconciliation to God and others. (*Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 2 Corinthians 2:5-8, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15, 1 Timothy 5:19-20*)

(D) **Restoration:** Disciplined individuals may apply for restoration to the fellowship based on the steps called out in Section 6 below.

SECTION 6: Reinstatement of Members

Any individual whose membership has been revoked through the process of Church Discipline (Section 5 above), may be restored to the fellowship via the following steps.

1. The individual in question must submit a letter to the church Elders requesting restoration. This letter must acknowledge the purpose/behavior for removal, steps taken/to be taken to ensure said behavior is not repeated, and a commitment on the part of the individual to adhere to the responsibilities of church members as called out in Section 3 above.
2. The Elders will take the letter under advisement and decide whether to proceed to the next step in the process.
3. The Elders will conduct a follow-up interview with the individual applying for reinstatement. Sincere repentance must be evident at such a meeting
4. The individual will come before the congregation to repent and share his/her testimony of how God has drawn him/her back.
5. After a period of six months, if the individual shows fruit evidencing his/her repentance is genuine, assuming the Elders are satisfied, a simple majority, affirmative vote of the Elders will allow reinstatement. The Elders have freedom to require a longer period of time, participation in counseling, participation in a Welcome To VCC Class, etc. before approving reinstatement. The individual will be reinstated publicly as a member of the church.

ARTICLE II: GOVERNMENT

SECTION 1: Officers - General

(A) The church board shall be comprised of the Elders and Ministry Team Leads (referred to as officers of the church). The Elders shall be appointed by the Elder Team and affirmed by the congregation. The Lead Elder (see Section 3(A) below) will be responsible for chairing the board. The Elders shall nominate the Ministry Team Leads whom will be presented to the church membership for affirmation provided in these By-Laws (see Section 4(A) below). The VCC Board shall be organized into Areas of Ministry with underlying service areas as depicted in Attachment 2.

(B) Only the Elders and Ministry Team Leads shall have voting privileges at Board Meetings. If a Board Member heading up an Area of Ministry will miss a meeting, he or she should ask a member from their team to attend in his/her stead without voting privileges. Additionally, a service area member(s) may attend a board meeting to explain a particular issue to the board, after which they will be excused.

Note: All VCC Board Meetings will be closed with the exception of a 20-minute “open forum” at the beginning for church members to address the board on any issue of interest. If a member of the church wishes to address the board, they should schedule time with the Board Chair.

(C) Removal.

- (1) Resignation: An officer may resign his/her office at any time if he/she is no longer able to discharge the duties of the office.
- (2) Grievance: Where a grievance exists against an officer, either due to the adherence to and/or propagation of beliefs contrary to the beliefs of the church as set forth in Article II, Statement of Faith, of the Constitution or to alleged conduct on his/her part calling into question his/her qualifications to continue in office, such grievance may be brought before the Elders by any two active members of the church. If the Elders, after thorough investigation and consideration, believe the grievance to be true and substantial, the board member may be removed upon the recommendation of the Elders when supported by a closed ballot of a majority of church members present and voting at a duly called meeting of the members of the Church.

(D) Financial Obligations. At the direction of the Board, following approval of the congregation, the Lead Elder and Financial Team Lead may obligate the church as co-signators on financial documents such as loans. The procedures of how to handle both budgeted and unbudgeted items, as well as corresponding dollar levels, is documented in the VCC Standard Operating Procedures.

SECTION 2: Pastor(s)

(A) Definition: Vocational Pastors of the church are men who, in response to God's call upon their lives, have devoted their lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in service to the Church. Vocational Pastors are typically, but not necessarily supported financially by the church in return for their labor. Vocational pastors may include a senior pastor, associate pastors, youth pastor, or other titles appropriate to their ministries, and will be assigned functions and duties as described in paragraph (G) of this section. Vocational Pastors function as peers with Lay Elders as members of the Elder Team.

(B) Vocational Call by the Church: The Elders, or a search committee appointed by the Elders, will be charged with making a recommendation to the congregation to call a vocational pastor. The new vocational pastor will be called by a vote of the congregation at a duly announced meeting (Article V, Section 2). Seventy-five percent of the ballots cast must be affirmative in order to extend a call.

(C) Qualifications: All vocational Pastors shall meet the qualifications of Elder as defined in Section 3(B) below.

- (D) If at any time a vocational pastor's personal belief, practice, preaching or teaching is not in full accord with the Statement of Faith and Constitution of this church, the Elders will hold the pastor accountable, and take steps to terminate his services if necessary, according to established church policy (see Article II, Section 1, Para (C)(2)). A pastor's tenure of office is for an indefinite period of time, but may be terminated for cause at any time by a 75% vote of the congregation at a meeting with or without the support of the elders (Article V, Section 2 below). In the event a vocational pastor's services are terminated, the Elders shall determine, with due consideration of the circumstances of the termination, what severance pay or other financial support, if any, shall be rendered.
- (E) A vocational pastor who resigns or retires shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days' notice before termination of his services.
- (F) Any vocational pastor whose services are terminated shall withdraw himself from the congregation immediately unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the Elders and that pastor.
- (G) Duties: Vocational pastors shall perform ministerial duties as determined by the Elders. The duties shall be documented in a functional position description at the time of his call to service.

SECTION 3: Elders

(A) **Composition:** The Elders shall be comprised of a team of men as appointed by the residing Elders with the affirmation of the congregation. The size of this team is dynamic, based on the needs of the congregation and the availability of qualified and willing men. It is the responsibility of the Elders to ensure that there are enough Elders to care for the spiritual needs and shepherding of the people and provide for the wise and effective leadership of the church. If the number of lay elders is not sufficient in a particular season, they may enlist the help of Ministry Team Leads and/or former lay-Elders in the exercise of their duties. This may include the evaluation of Vocational Pastors, setting of compensation for staff members, etc. The Elders shall appoint a Lead Elder to represent them and facilitate their work as a team. This Lead Elder should be a Lay Elder and will have responsibilities **chairing the board and** of financial oversight with the Financial Team Lead – See Article II, Section 1-D

The Elders shall not be limited by term limits, but shall be called for life as long as they remain qualified, willing, and needed. The Biblical qualifications for an elder are primarily based on character and spiritual maturity. God raises up men who have the character, calling, and desire to be elders, and they are given to the church as a gift for the equipping of the saints for ministry (Eph 4:11). We desire to recognize and affirm those whom God has already called to serve as lay-Elders. We expect such men to live their lives as elders whether or not they are actively serving in the office of elder. The elders shall make provision for periodic seasons of sabbatical for elders, providing flexibility for the changing seasons and circumstances of an elder's life and family. During a time of sabbatical, an elder will not function as a member of the elder team or board. The Elders shall also design and implement a rigorous process for training and equipping potential future Elders.

(B) Qualifications: Elders and candidates for the office of Elder shall meet the qualifications of Scripture, specifically 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4 as listed below.

- (1) MaleI Timothy 3:1, 2; Titus 1:6
- (2) DesireI Timothy 3:1; I Peter 5:2
- (3) Above ReproachI Timothy 3:2
- (4) The Husband of One WifeI Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6
- (5) Temperate and Self-ControlledI Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8
- (6) Sensible, Prudent, ReasonableI Timothy 3:2
- (7) Respectable, HonorableI Timothy 3:2
- (8) HospitableI Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8
- (9) Skilled in TeachingI Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; Acts 20:28-31
- (10) Not Addicted to WineI Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7

Note: The Biblical reference is to “wine” as that was the standard drink of the time. In application to today’s environment, we expand this definition to mean any type of addicting drink, i.e., beer, liquors, wine, etc.

- (11) Not Pugnacious or BelligerentI Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7
- (12) GentleI Timothy 3:3
- (13) PeaceableI Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7
- (14) Not a Lover of Money.....I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7; II Cor. 9:6-7; I Peter 5:2
- (15) Leader of a Well-Ordered HouseholdI Timothy 3:4-5
- (16) Children Who BelieveTitus 1:6
- (17) A Mature Believer, Not a New ConvertI Timothy 3:6
- (18) A Good Reputation with Non-BelieversI Timothy 3:7
- (19) BlamelessTitus 1:7
- (20) HumilityTitus 1:7; I Peter 5:3
- (21) Lover of GoodnessTitus 1:8

- (22) Just or UprightTitus 1:8
- (23) Devout, HolyTitus 1:8

(C) Responsibilities: The primary responsibility of Elders is to provide oversight of the church and shepherd the flock of God (I Peter 5:1-2).

- (1) They shall be responsible for the stewardship of truth in the teaching of the church and for guarding against false doctrine (Acts 6:1-7; 20:26-32; I Timothy 3:2; 5:17).
- (2) They shall be responsible for determining the spiritual direction of the church.
- (3) They shall oversee the general administration and operation of the church including the establishment of policies and procedures.
- (4) They shall oversee discipline issues.
- (6) They shall oversee the appointment and process of nominating potential Elders and Ministry Team Leads.
- (7) They shall oversee and approve the hiring/dismissal of all church staff.
- (8) They shall oversee and appoint a search committee when pastoral staff is needed.
- (9) They shall ensure that they are represented on all church ministries either personally or through the Ministry Team Leads.
- (10) They shall aid the Senior Pastor as called upon in the administration of the Lord’s Supper, baptism, worship services, prayer meetings, visiting the sick and sorrowing, visiting the membership, and participating in outreach ministries
- (11) The Finance Team Lead shall report to the Lead Elder. The Lead Elder shall oversee the development of the annual budget in conjunction with the finance team.

(D) Organization: The Elders shall determine how best to shepherd the flock and accomplish the mission of the church; and shall review the way the church is organized at least once each year to ensure the needs and mission of the church are being addressed. The Elders may establish positions of oversight such as those responsible for specific ministries, operations and administration, and others as deemed necessary. When such positions are established, the Elders shall fill those positions according to their gifts. Every Elder is expected to actively exercise his gift(s) by serving in a specific function or position of oversight with the exception of being a Ministry Team Lead (see Section 4 below).

SECTION 4: Ministry Team Leads (MTL)

(A) The Elders shall ensure that all nominees for MTLs are individuals who meet the qualifications of Elders with the exception can be either a man or woman, are members in good standing with the church, and are willing to serve. An MTL shall serve a two-year term but not to exceed three consecutive two-year terms provided he/she remains qualified and willing to do so. Individuals will be presented for affirmation to the church membership by the Elders for the positions of MTLs.

(B) Responsibilities: The role of an MTL is one of serving. In that regard:

- (1) The primary role of MTLs is to assist the Elders so that they can devote their time to the oversight and shepherding of the church (Acts 6:1-6).
- (2) MTLs shall assist the Elders in the shepherding of the congregation. This may include leadership or caring responsibilities for a small group, a Sunday School class, or a group of individuals/families assigned by the Elders.
- (3) They shall aid the Elders as called upon in the administration of the Lord's Supper, baptism, worship services, prayer meetings, visiting the sick and sorrowing, visiting the membership, and participating in outreach ministries.
- (4) MTLs will be assigned the responsibility of representing the Elders on various ministry areas of the church.

ARTICLE III: AREAS OF MINISTRY

SECTION 1: General

- (A) Board Members will lead the various Areas of Ministry (Facilities, Outreach, Youth, Worship, and Adult Ministry) as depicted in Atch 1. Those members will recruit individuals for their respective underlying service areas.
- (B) For all other (ad hoc) Areas of Ministry and/or service areas, the Elders shall determine the term of service. Under normal circumstances ad hoc Areas of Ministry/Service Areas will be formed to complete a defined, limited scope task, and the term of service shall be the amount of time needed to complete that task, making formal terms of service unnecessary. Individuals assigned for these positions will be at the sole discretion of the Elders and will not have to be vetted with the congregation.
- (C) Each MTL shall make reports of its activities to the Board monthly which are then disseminated to the congregation via publication on the VCC website.
- (D) If an MTL and/or service area member is no longer fulfilling his/her responsibilities, he/she shall be removed by action of the Elders.

SECTION 2: Ministry Areas

Each MTL will be responsible for staffing their service area as he/she sees fit. The intent is to raise leaders from within the church to serve in the various areas and to keep the pool of willing and qualified workers “refreshed.” Ideally someone would serve for no more than two to three years and then step-aside for someone else to serve.

Each Team Lead shall establish and document their Standard Operating Procedures thereby easing the transition from one team lead to the next. The operating procedures shall be reviewed by the board for thoroughness and consistency between ministry areas.

Facilities Team

The Facilities Team Leader is responsible for the physical operations of the church, providing oversight of campus maintenance to include all aspects of the church grounds, i.e., the church building, the parsonage, and the parking lots. Before the Senior Pastor vacates the parsonage, the Facilities Team Lead, and/or a duly-noted representative, shall conduct a “walk-through” of the premises to inspect for any damages other than normal wear and tear, or necessary repairs prior to the new Pastor assuming residence. The Team Leader shall also be responsible for establishing the annual budget for this ministry area and monitoring execution of the budget to ensure it is not exceeded without explicit direction of the board at large.

Outreach Team

The Outreach Team Leader shall provide oversight and guidance to the following service areas: Local Outreach, National Outreach, and Global Outreach. The Team Leader shall also be responsible for establishing the annual budget for this ministry area and monitoring execution of the budget to ensure it is not exceeded without explicit direction of the board at large.

Worship Team

The Worship Team Leader is responsible for ensuring a meaningful and uplifting worship service is attainable through the music program as well as ensuring ushers and greeters are trained and assigned, communion is prepared as required, and that the decorations contribute to the overall experience. The Team Leader shall also be responsible for establishing the annual budget for this ministry area and monitoring execution of the budget to ensure it is not exceeded without explicit direction of the board at large.

Youth Team

The Youth Team Leader is responsible for the planning and implementation of the Sunday School and Youth programs of the church for all ages; Nursery, Children, Jr. High, Sr. High, College. Such programs may include youth Bible studies, special programs and/or events, and fund raisers. All individuals involved in the youth program from Nursery up through College must submit to and successfully pass a background investigation. The Team Leader shall also be responsible for establishing the annual budget for this ministry area and monitoring execution of the budget to ensure it is not exceeded without explicit direction of the board at large.

Adult Ministry Team

The Adult Ministry Team Leader shall recruit workers for and coordinate the various offerings of ministry to both men and women to include overseeing the small group Bible Studies and discipleship groups such as Outposts. Additionally, the Team Leader shall be responsible for coordinating the various fellowship opportunities. The Team Leader shall be responsible for establishing the annual budget for this ministry area and monitoring execution of the budget to ensure it is not exceeded without explicit direction of the board at large.

Finance Team

The Finance Team Leader is responsible for providing financial oversight of cash receipts, cash disbursements, payroll and preparation of financial statements. The Finance Team Leader serves as a co-signatory with the Lead Elder on financial obligations of the church and bank accounts. The Finance Team in conjunction with the Lead Elder is responsible for development of the annual budget. The Finance Team Leader shall recruit and manage a team to facilitate counting and recording of weekly giving and other finance and accounting task as required.

ARTICLE IV: SUPPORT STAFF

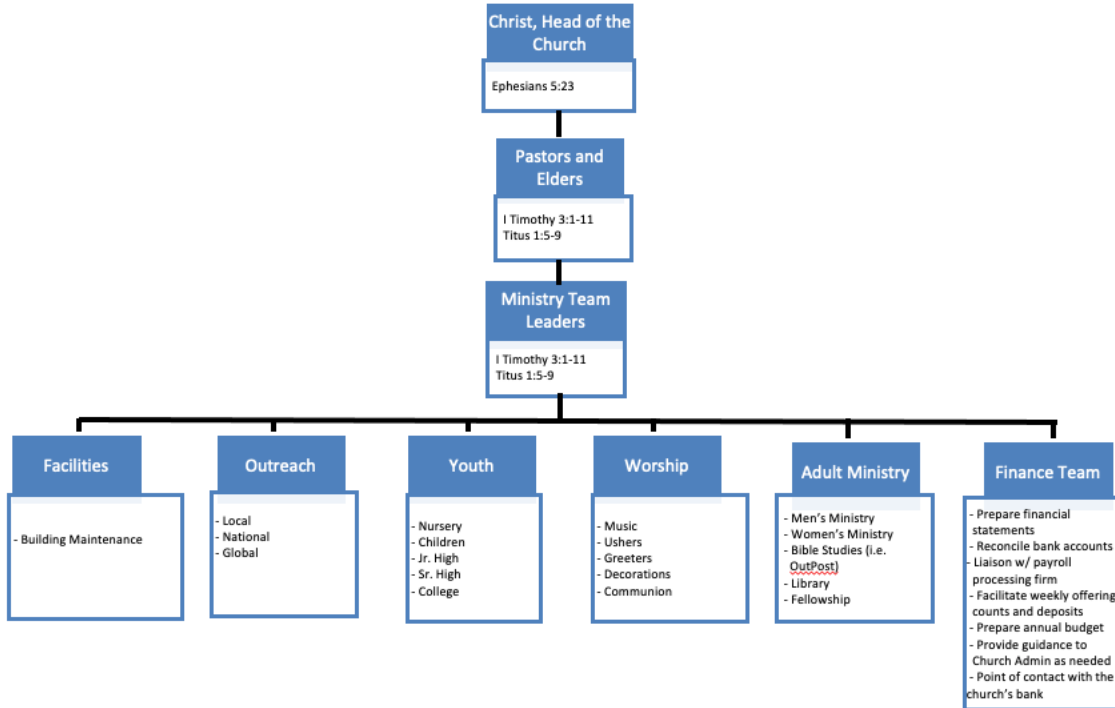
The paid staff shall serve under the direction of the Lead Pastor, the Lead Elder or an MTL as determined by the board. Staff members shall be recruited, hired, and dismissed according to processes set forth by the Elders. Such hiring shall not exceed the approved budget, unless a budget change is approved by the board and then confirmed by a vote of the congregation at a duly called meeting.

ARTICLE V: MEETINGS

SECTION 1: The fiscal year of the church shall end on the thirty-first (31st) day of December. The Board shall determine the exact time, date and agenda of an Annual Congregational Meeting if required, but no later than 31 January.

SECTION 2: In addition, a specially-called congregational meeting can be directed by the Lead Elder. At least three days' notice to that meeting must be given via the church one-call system supplemented with e-mail notification.

Versailles Christian Church Organizational Structure



Atch 1