



**Fresh Start Community Church**

**By Laws**

**April 2022**

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the general assembly of Fresh Start Community Church, establish these bylaws for the proper handling of the temporal and financial affairs of this assembly.

We recognize the Word of God as the only divine standard of faith and practice and as our final authority in all matters of life and conduct on which it speaks. These bylaws are intended to be in harmony with Biblical principles (see Exodus 18:12-27, Exodus 25- 40, Nehemiah 1-13, Matthew 22:37-40, Acts 1:12-26, Acts 4:33-35, Acts 6:1-7, Acts 14:23, Acts 20:17,28, I Corinthians 12, II Corinthians 8, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9) and implemented under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit in an attitude of Christian love.

In matters not specifically addressed in the bylaws, the corporation will continue to be guided by the Holy Spirit in keeping with Biblical principles. It is further understood that these bylaws are not to change or interfere in any way with the divine government, doctrines, and practices as set forth in the Word of God and practiced by the Church of God, Anderson, IN.

## **BYLAWS ARTICLE I – NAME**

The corporate name of this general assembly shall be Fresh Start Community Church.

## **ARTICLE II – CORPORATION**

Fresh Start Community Church is an Oklahoma Corporation and as such, is incorporated in Oklahoma. This corporation is a religious corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

## **ARTICLE III – AFFILIATION**

Fresh Start Community Church is a member of the Church of God Reformation Movement with offices in Anderson, Indiana. [www.jesusisthesubject.com](http://www.jesusisthesubject.com)

## **ARTICLE IV – MISSION / PURPOSE**

The mission of Fresh Start is to bring spiritual growth and a relationship with God to all people so that they may develop a servant heart that invests in the present and future Kingdom of God.

The purpose of Fresh Start is Grow Inwardly- Serve Outwardly – Invest Eternally

## **ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP**

SECTION 1 – Membership at Fresh Start Community Church shall be open to all persons who profess an experience of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who take God's Word as their rule of faith and practice, and who choose to voluntarily affiliate themselves with this body of believers. The Bible says that Christ died for the church (Eph 5:25) so that anyone may become a member by believing in him. Salvation is the only requirement for church membership. Our membership is in both the universal and local church, because we are united in Christ with "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all" (Eph 4:5-6). Arlo F. Newell, Tell Me About Church Membership

SECTION 2 – Voting membership in Fresh Start Community Church shall be restricted to those who meet the following requirements:

- A. Meet the qualifications contained in Section 1 of Article V.
- B. Must be eighteen (18) years of age or older
- C. Worship regularly with Fresh Start Community Church for a period of at least six (6) months prior to any meeting in which they exercise their right to vote.
- D. Registered annually with the Secretary of the Leadership Council sometime after the congregants six (6) month period during a Sunday morning or at any Fresh Perspective meeting or a minimum of one (1) week before any special called business meeting or a minimum of two (2) weeks before the annual business meeting which occurs on the

first Sunday of June. Next registration period before any special called or annual business meeting

SECTION 3 – Any voting member may vote by being present at any scheduled or special called business meeting, by absentee ballot, or by online ballot. Absentee ballots and online ballots will not count toward obtaining a quorum.

#### A. Absentee Ballots

1. An absentee ballot can be issued up to one (1) week in advance of any regular or special called business meeting to any voting member who cannot attend due to illness, hospitalization, business, or travel. The absentee ballot must be obtained from the church office and returned to the church office in a sealed envelope at least two (2) days prior to the beginning of the business meeting.

#### B. Online Ballots

1. An online ballot may be accessed through email. This will be sent directly to the voter after being registered in the online church directory. Online ballots will be available three (3) days prior to any scheduled meeting and will close one (1) hour before the taking of the vote.

### **ARTICLE VI – ORGANIZATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

The ultimate authority of Fresh Start Community Church is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. For the purpose of carrying out our Lord's will, the church will follow the shepherding of the Lead Pastor, Pastoral Staff, and Leadership Council.

#### SECTION 1 – Leadership Council

##### A. Role

1. The Leadership Council is the governing body of Fresh Start Community Church. Their role in governance encompasses many duties and responsibilities. The Leadership Council is responsible for strategic planning and oversight of the Lead Pastor. Under the leadership of the Council chairperson, the Leadership Council offers advice and counsel to the Lead Pastor. The Leadership Council prepares all legal and fiduciary decisions for the congregational vote. The Leadership Council alongside the Pastoral Staff is responsible for developing and approving Fresh Start Community Church's mission, strategic goals and objectives, and establishing policies related to programs and services.

##### B. Qualifications

1. Meet the qualifications of membership in the church as stated in Article V, Sections 1 and 2, and be approved by using I Timothy 3:1-13 as a Biblical basis for leadership qualities.

2. Shall be a confessing Christian for a minimum of three (3) years.
3. Serve in a wide range of leadership experiences and be active within the church's ministry (e.g. church committees, Sunday School, small groups, or other areas that show servant leadership), demonstrating the discipline, vision, wisdom, discernment, servant hood, and spiritual maturity needed for such an assignment.
4. Worship consistently at Fresh Start Community Church for at least one (1) year.
5. Practice the biblical standard of tithing.
6. Hold in highest regard the ratified and appointed leadership of the church as well as the church staff so as to exemplify the servant hood of Christ.

### C. Duties

1. The Leadership Council will meet monthly.
2. The Lead Pastor will serve as the Director of the Leadership Council, but will not have voting privileges within the Leadership Council, except in the case of a tie.
3. The Leadership Council will appoint from among themselves a Chairperson, a Vice-chairperson, and Secretary to serve for a period of one (1) year.
4. The Vice-chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer will have signing privileges on all church accounts.
5. The Leadership Council will appoint a representative to perform a monthly reconciliation on all church accounts. This representative will not be the treasurer.
6. The Chairperson will be responsible for the Council agenda and parliamentary procedure and works with the Lead Pastor in defining the Council's responsibilities and setting the strategic direction for the institution. The Chairperson is to know and understand the bylaws and policies and to make sure that the council operates on a policy level. The Chairperson serves as the liaison between the Leadership Council and the Pastoral Staff and sets the tone and culture for the entire council.
7. The Vice Chairperson acts as a deputy for the chair, taking on the chair's role when the chair is absent.
8. The Secretary notes the main actions and decisions of the board during meetings and records them in the meeting minutes. After meetings, the secretary prepares the minutes for distribution to the trustees for board approval prior to the next meeting.

9. The Leadership Council will be responsible for the material and physical aspects of church administration.
10. Specific duties will include, but not be limited to, long range planning, mission support, administrative duties, manage buildings and finances.
11. The Leadership Council will prepare a yearly budget to be presented to the church at the Annual Business Meeting for approval. The yearly budget will be available to the church two (2) weeks prior to the Annual Business Meeting. The annual business meeting will occur on the first Sunday of June.
12. The Leadership Council will serve with the Lead Pastor in maintaining communication, harmony and unity in Christ's body through prayer, care and conversation.
13. They will assist in resolving problems submitted by the Lead Pastor, providing church discipline along Scriptural guidelines as may be required.

#### D. Number and Term of Office

1. The Leadership Council will consist of a minimum of six (6) ratified members.
2. All ratified members will have voting privileges.
3. The Leadership Council members will be ratified by the congregation at the annual business meeting for a term of three (3) years during the first week of June.
4. Members of the Leadership Council will be ratified on a rotating basis so that the terms of approximately one-third (1/3) of the members will expire annually.
5. A member ratified for a term of three (3) years may not serve more than two (2) terms consecutively; excluding time served fulfilling an unexpired term.
6. In the event of a member resignation, the Leadership Council will select a replacement to be ratified at a special called business meeting. The replacement will be ratified for the years remaining on the resigned member's term only.
7. Any member of the Leadership Council may be removed from the Leadership Council by a majority vote of the council members if corroborated evidence of misconduct is present.
8. Charges shall be presented to the chairman, in writing, by any member accusing such council member of conduct unbecoming a council member of Fresh Start Community Church, failure of duty or lack of interest and zeal in the work of the church.

9. A copy of such charges shall be given to the accused council member and the council member will be given full opportunity to be heard, subject to the action of the Leadership Council.

## E. Ex-Officio members

### 1. Treasurer position and requirements

- a. A Treasurer will be selected as an ex-officio member of the Leadership Council holding no voting power, but acts as a resource for the Leadership Council in making financial decisions. The Treasurer will be selected by the Leadership Council based on financial capabilities, education, and ability to work with and around a budgeted organization.
- b. The Treasurer position will not be term limited. In this position, long terms of service may provide more stable leadership and continuity of the financial program of the church. The Treasurer will remain in office until he/she tenders a resignation, in writing, to the church or is removed from office by the Leadership Council.
- c. The Treasurer will be required to uphold the qualifications stated in Article VI, Section 1, Part B. as a leader in the church. The Treasurer has a critical role in maintaining the business integrity of the church body.

### 2. Treasurer Responsibilities

- a. The Treasurer will attend all Leadership Council meetings and present the financial report monthly at each meeting. The Treasurer will also act in an advisory capacity in any purchases or monetary decisions made by the Leadership Council exceeding two thousand dollars. (\$2000.00)
- b. The Treasurer will present financial reports to the congregation in a format that helps the congregation understand Fresh Start Community Church's financial position. The Treasurer will also submit a yearly financial statement for presentation to the church at the Annual Business meeting
- c. The Treasurer will assist by acting as a liaison with professional advisors such as Fresh Start's insurance provider, banks, business vendors, and any other entity where the church is requiring financial guidance. The Treasurer holds an important and vital position within the church ministry and represents the church in the community.

- d. The Treasurer ensures compliance with applicable federal, state, and local reporting law and keeps the Leadership Council updated on non-profit status and legal issues.
- e. The duties of the treasurer will also include being a part of the tithe/offering count.

## SECTION 2– Congregation

A. The congregation will consist of all members of the church and will be responsible for the following:

1. Ratification of Leadership Council members.
2. Calling and dismissing pastors.
3. Approving the yearly budget at the Annual Business Meeting.
4. Selling, purchasing, or leasing of real estate.
5. Approval of non-emergency additional general fund expenditures to the budget in excess of \$20,000. The Leadership Council may forego the approval of the congregation in the case of emergency issues that require less than 48 hours' notice. The congregation will be notified of the cost and reason for the expenditure at the next congregational gathering.

## SECTION 3 – Lead Pastor

### A. Term of Office

1. The Lead Pastor will be chosen by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation at a special called business meeting.
2. The Lead Pastor will remain in office until he/she tenders a resignation, in writing, to the church or is removed from office by recommendation of the Leadership Council and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation.
3. The Lead Pastor will be accountable to the Leadership Council.

### B. Qualifications

1. The Lead Pastor will be in complete agreement with Section 1 of Article V, Article III, and conform to all scriptural requirements contained in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and I Peter 5:1-5.



### C. Duties

1. The Lead Pastor duties will include, but not be limited to, preaching, teaching, prayer, pastoral care, discipleship and shepherding.
2. He/She will serve as the director of the Leadership Council.
3. He/She will serve as the chairperson of the Pastoral Staff.

## SECTION 4 – Other Pastor(s)

### A. Term of Office

1. Other pastor(s) will be chosen by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation at a special called business meeting.
2. They will remain in office until they tender their resignation, in writing, to the church or are removed from office by recommendation of the Leadership Council and a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation.
3. The other pastor(s) will be accountable to the Lead Pastor or the Leadership Council in the absence of the Lead Pastor.

### B. Qualifications

1. Other pastor(s) will be in complete agreement with Section 1 of Article V, Article III, and conform to all scriptural requirements contained in I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9 and I Peter 5:1-5.

### C. Duties

1. The duties of the other pastor(s) will be assigned by the Lead Pastor and Leadership Council in the form of a job description.
2. Will meet once a week as a staff to review needs and goals of Fresh Start Community Church.

## SECTION 5– Staff

### A. Term of Office

1. Full-time and part-time staff positions will be filled by the Leadership Council.
2. Staff members will be accountable to their Supervisor and/or the Lead Pastor as well as the Leadership Council in the absence of the Lead Pastor.

3. They will remain on staff until they tender their resignation, in writing, to the Leadership Council or are removed from office by a majority vote of the Leadership Council.

#### B. Qualifications

1. Full-time and part-time staff will meet the qualifications described in the position job description.

#### C. Duties

1. Duties will be assigned by the supervisor and/or the Lead Pastor as well as the Leadership Council in the absence of the Lead Pastor in the form of a job description.

### SECTION 6– Ministry Team Leaders

#### A. Term of Office

1. 1. Ministry Team Leader positions will be filled by the pastoral staff after consultation with the Leadership Council.
2. They will serve for a term of one (1) year.

#### B. Qualifications

1. Meet the qualifications of membership in the church as stated in Article V, Sections 1 and 2, and be approved by using I Timothy 3:1-13 as a biblical basis for leadership qualities.
2. Shall be a confessing Christian for at least three (3) years.
3. Serve in a wide range of leadership experiences and are active within the church's ministry (e.g. church committees, Sunday School, small groups, or other areas that show servant leadership), demonstrating the discipline, vision, wisdom, discernment, servant hood, and spiritual maturity needed for such an assignment.
4. Worship consistently at Fresh Start Community Church for at least one (1) year.
5. Practice the biblical standard of tithing.
6. Hold in highest regard the ratified and appointed leadership of the church as well as the church staff so as to exemplify the servant hood of Christ.

#### C. Duties

1. Duties will be assigned by the Pastoral Staff and Leadership Council in the form of a job description.

## SECTION 8 – Pulpit/Search Committee

### A. Qualifications

1. Meet the qualifications of membership in the church as stated in Article V, Sections 1 and 2.
2. Hold in highest regard the ratified and appointed leadership of Fresh Start Community Church as well as the Pastoral Staff so as to exemplify the servant hood of Christ.

### B. Duties

1. The Lead Pastor pulpit/search committee will consist of the chairperson and two (2) other Leadership Council members, along with four (4) members from the congregation at large appointed by the Leadership Council.
2. A pastor pulpit/search committee will consist of a Leadership council member and four (4) members from the congregation appointed by the Leadership Council that participate in the specific area of ministry relating to the pastoral position.
3. The pulpit/search committee(s) will be enacted whenever there is a vacancy in the position of a pastor
4. They will submit the candidate for the Lead Pastor/pastor position to the congregation for approval through a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation at a special called business meeting.

## **ARTICLE VII – OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

### SECTION 1 – Meetings

- A. Fresh Start Community Church will have an Annual Business Meeting during the month of June for the presentation of reports, approval of the annual budget and filling of leadership council positions for the ensuing year.
- B. The congregation may be called together for a special business meeting by the chairperson of the Leadership Council or the Lead Pastor. This meeting must be announced in church services, directory e-mails, and online presence at least three (3) days in advance with the purpose being stated and posted.

- C. The Lead Pastor will serve as chairperson for all business meetings. The Leadership Council chairperson of the Leadership Council will serve as meeting chairperson in the absence of the Lead Pastor.
- D. The rules contained in the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall guide the meeting in all cases which are applicable and in which they are consistent with the Constitution & Bylaws of Fresh Start Community Church.

## SECTION 2 – Quorum

- A. A quorum consisting of not less than twenty-five percent (25%) of the voting membership will be required at all business meetings.
- B. Members who vote by absentee ballot will not count toward obtaining a quorum.

## SECTION 3 – Nominating Committee

- A. The Leadership Council and Pastoral Staff will be responsible for nominating individuals to fill any vacant Leadership Council positions.
- B. The Leadership Council and Pastoral Staff will seek guidance for nominee from ministry leaders throughout the congregation.
- C. The final list of nominees will be presented at the Annual Business Meeting for ratification by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the registered voting members of the congregation.

## SECTION 4 – Fiscal Year

- A. The church fiscal year will be July 1 through June 30.

## SECTION 5 – Amendments to the Constitution & Bylaws

- A. Any congregational member can propose changes to the constitution & bylaws by submitting the proposal in writing to the Leadership Council.
- B. Proposed changes must be approved by the Leadership Council and presented to the congregation at least two (2) weeks prior to a business meeting.
- C. Any proposed changes must be approved by two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the registered voting members of the congregation.

Acknowledgement

This constitution & bylaws were adopted by the congregation of Fresh Start Community Church, as provided by these constitution & bylaws on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2022 and were amended on the following dates:

The 1<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2022 The 1<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2022



Chairperson



Secretary

Revised 04/2022

