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## STATEMENT OF FAITH

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1. We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God; that it is inerrant, infallible, and the final authority for life and faith. (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three unique, but equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1,26; John 4:24; Acts 5:3,4)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary; that He is truly God and truly man; and that He is the sufficient mediator between God and man. (Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; 1 Timothy 2:5)
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he fell into sin; that he is born with a sin nature; that he is spiritually dead, separated from God, and totally unable to save himself. (Romans 3:22,23; Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1-12)
5. We believe that Jesus Christ came to the earth to be a substitute sacrifice for man; that salvation is by grace through personal faith in Him; and that there is no salvation apart from Him. (Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 9:26-28)
6. We believe that Christ died for our sins; that He rose from the dead; that He ascended into heaven; and that His place of authority at God's right hand is secure forever. (John 20:25-29; 1 Corinthians 15:3,4; Hebrews 10:12)
7. We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells, regenerates, seals, sanctifies convicts, teaches, and empowers believers. (John 14:16,17; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 1:13, Ephesians 4:30, Ephesians 5:18; John 3:5,6; 1 Thessalonians 4:3)
8. We believe that the true Church is composed of those individuals who place their faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:3,4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26,27)
9. We believe that water baptism of believers and the Lord's Supper are ordinances to be observed in the Church. (Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 26:17-30)
10. We believe in the imminent return of Christ for His church. (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11; Titus 2:11-13; 1 John 3:2,3)
11. We believe in the personal, literal, and bodily resurrection of both the believer and the unbeliever; the eternal punishment of the unbeliever, and the eternal joy of the believer. (John 5:28,29; 1 Corinthians 15:42,43,51-54; Revelation 20:4-6,11-15)

### Amendments

This Statement of Faith was prepared by faithful but fallible men. Thus, if it appears that there is need to revise this document in any way, the elders shall determine the need for change and propose any necessary revisions to the congregation for their prayerful consideration at the Annual Meeting. At the next succeeding congregational meeting, a vote for affirmation of the proposed revisions shall be taken. (Refer to the By-Laws for additional criteria.) There shall be no amendments which result in a violation of the Scriptures.

# CONSTITUTION

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## Section 1 - Name

This church shall be known as Cornerstone Church of Skippack.

## Section 2 - Purpose

Our understanding of the purpose of the Church begins with the recognition that we do not belong to ourselves, having been purchased by the death of Jesus Christ, who alone is Lord. Enthroned with all authority, He is the head of the Church, the One to Whom entire allegiance is due. We thus seek in all things to follow His will as revealed in Scripture.

One of the primary goals of the Church shall be the Life-transformation of each of its members. This requires a strong program of Bible teaching and of training in discipleship and personal evangelism. Believers are admonished to be committed to the Lord Jesus Christ; moreover, they are commanded to be committed one to another. The Body of Christ is thus composed of the interdependent members, each having received from the Holy Spirit gifts which are to be exercised for the up building of the whole body and for the bearing of one another's spiritual and temporal burdens. We thus desire to encourage the development and use of each member's abilities, knowing that "From Him (Jesus) the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as every part does its work." (Ephesians 4:16)

Jesus said to His followers, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19,20)

We accept this commission as a chief priority of the Church collectively, and of each believer individually; and it is our desire to share as widely and effectively as possible the Good News of God's forgiveness in Christ. God equips and calls men into a variety of vocations and ministries, and within the context of every man's calling, he is to be a witness by word and deed to the Lord Jesus Christ. God offers His love to all men without distinction, and is concerned that men achieve their full potential in Christ. We thus desire that the proclamation of the Gospel be accompanied by genuine love and concern for all men, and for the whole man.

## Section 3 - Principles of Government

The corollary of union with Jesus Christ is that all believers become members one of another. There is one true Universal Church, which is composed of all people everywhere, living and dead, who have trusted in Christ alone for salvation without regard to organizational affiliation. God commands us to assemble together for the purposes of worship, edification, and mutual encouragement. Wherever God's people meet in obedience to this command there is a local expression of the Church. It is the responsibility of each member to keep the unity of the Spirit for the up building of the Body, to work with other members of the fellowship to show Christian concern for the needs of people everywhere, and to fulfill our Lord's final command to His Church: to spread the Good News of redemption throughout the world.

"And He (Jesus) is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything He might have the supremacy." (Colossians 1:18) The only head of the Church is Jesus Christ. He rules in the affairs of His Church by His Word and Spirit. He is the true source of all that the Church is and does, and His glory is to be the objective of every act, function and motive of the body, both individually and corporately.

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit . . . one Lord . . ." (Ephesians 4:3,4) While diversity within the body is both natural and healthy, we are obligated in obedience to this headship of Christ to seek unity for the sake of the up building and growth of the Body as a whole.

Since in any matter unanimity should be the desired ideal, a unanimous vote should be sought among the elders. For the preservation of peace and unity in the church, officers and teachers shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith, which this church holds to be an accurate summary of what the Scriptures teach; and all members shall refrain from imposing doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in such a way as to encourage doctrinal disputes that would tend to destroy the peace and unity of the church.

# CONSTITUTION

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## **Section 4 - Form of Government**

This church shall be independent and self-governing, though it shall seek to fellowship with other local churches as widely as possible, and cooperate in joint efforts with other believers, which will demonstrate the oneness of the whole Body of Christ.

Scriptures indicate that the local church is to be governed by a plurality of elders (Acts 24:23) chosen from within the congregation. Scriptures designate those elders who give themselves to preaching and teaching as having the office of pastor, and thus a larger leadership role in the general superintendence of the church (1 Timothy 5:17-20). The pastor should exercise his pastoral oversight with a spirit of humility and accountability (1 Peter 5:1-4).

## **Section 5 - Amendments**

This Constitution was prepared by faithful but fallible men. Thus, if it appears that there is need to revise this document in any way, the elders shall determine the need for change and propose any necessary revisions to the congregation for their prayerful consideration at the Annual Meeting. At the next succeeding congregational meeting, a vote for affirmation of the proposed revisions shall be taken. (Refer to the By-Laws for additional criteria.)

There shall be no amendments which result in a violation of the Scriptures.

Note: All quoted Scripture verses are taken from the NIV Bible.

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**Article 1 - General**

Cornerstone Church of Skippack is a congregation composed of those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord of their lives, and who agree with the Statement of Faith.

**Section 1 - Worship**

The congregation shall meet each Sunday for worship.

**Section 2 - Ordinances and Practices**

We recognize two ordinances instituted by our Lord: The Lord's Supper and Baptism. We also follow two practices contained in Scripture: The dedication of children to the Lord by parents who so desire and the anointing of anyone who requests it.

**A. Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be held regularly at times and places set by the elders. The Lord's Table shall be open to all who sincerely trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and who are not currently under the discipline of the church (Article 2, Section 3). The Lord's Supper shall be administered under the oversight of the elders, though it is not required that each elder participate in the actual administration of the elements. The Lord's Supper shall be provided to shut-ins if desired.

**B. Baptism**

Baptism pictures the work of Christ on behalf of the believer. A credible profession of faith in Christ is required before baptism. Baptism is required before reception into the membership of the church (Article 2, Section 3). We believe that baptism is not essential for salvation, but a natural expression of the reality of conversion that every Christian should pursue as a public witness in obedience to Christ's command to be baptized. Therefore, we urge all believers to be baptized.

This church practices baptism by immersion but will accept those into membership who have been baptized by another mode and are under the conviction that it is a proper mode. If a baptismal candidate is unable to be immersed for physical or medical reasons, the elders, at their discretion, may baptize that individual using a different mode.

**C. Dedication of Infants**

Parents who wish to dedicate their children to the Lord at a formal dedication service may do so with the approval of the elders.

**D. Anointing**

The elders will minister to anyone who requests anointing in accordance with James 5:14,15.

## Article 2 - Congregation

### Section 1 - Authority

The congregation is to be led by the elders. However, the congregation has the authority to veto elder decisions, but it does not have the authority to make alternate decisions. It does have the right to recommend alternate considerations.

### Section 2 - Organization and Responsibility

The church has five administrative bodies which are addressed in these By-Laws. Their responsibilities are summarized as follows:

1. *Congregation*. Affirms all primary decisions and has the right to make recommendations to all legislative bodies of the church. (Article 2)
2. *Elders*. Recommend all primary action to be taken by the church and affirm all secondary actions which are made by its ministry teams and the deacons. (Article 3)
3. *Deacons*. Administrate the compassion ministry of the church and report to the elders for affirmation of their programs and policies. (Article 4)
4. *Salaried Employees*. Report directly to the senior pastor for the normal function of their responsibilities, and to the elders as their governing authority. The pastors are elders. (Article 5)
5. *Ministry Teams*. Support the elders and deacons in the fulfillment of their responsibilities. (Articles 3 and 4, Section 1.3)

The existence of every ministry of the church shall require the authorization of the elders. The existence of every permanent ministry of the church shall require the affirmation of the congregation.

### Section 3 - Membership

#### A. Requirements

Any person who has received Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior, who is in agreement with the Statement of Faith, and who desires to promote the fellowship and witness of this church, shall be eligible for membership. In the case of those under 16 years of age, parental consent is required. Baptism is required prior to membership.

#### B. Procedure

Any person who desires to unite with this church shall have his name posted and shall be required to attend a membership orientation class, followed by an interview by members of the elders. This interview is to determine the sincerity of the person's faith in Christ, agreement with the Statement of Faith, desire to involve himself in the life and mission of this church, and willingness to be subject to the leadership and discipline of the church. Upon approval by the elders, new member candidates shall be brought before the congregation for a vote of affirmation.

#### C. Discipline

The Scriptures admonish the Church to exercise discipline over those who threaten the peace and purity of the fellowship.

##### 1. Purpose

- a. To restore the offending member to fellowship with the Lord and His people.
- b. To preserve the peace and purity of the church.
- c. To protect younger or weaker members of the church from spiritual harm.
- d. To maintain the testimony of the church.

## 2. Causes

- a. The introduction of heretical doctrine which threatens the well-being of the church.
- b. The causing of divisions within the Body which threaten the unity of the fellowship.
- c. Disorderly conduct which threatens to damage other members of the church, or to bring scandal upon the name of Christ and His Church.

## 3. Procedure

Where there appears to be cause for disciplinary action against a member of the church, the following steps as outlined in Scripture (Matthew 18:15-20) shall be taken:

- a. One person shall go privately to the offending member, attempting, in a spirit of meekness and love, to restore the member to fellowship with the Lord. (Galatians 6:1)
- b. If this does not lead to a solution, two or three members of the elders shall consult with the individual involved to discuss the problem; if the suspicion remains, they shall exhort the person to repent.
- c. If this does not lead to a solution, the member shall be asked to appear before the elders.
- d. If the member fails to appear, or if a fair and impartial hearing indicates that the member is indeed in serious error and refuses to forsake his offensive condition, the elders shall vote for disciplinary action. Upon an affirmative vote, the erring member shall be notified in writing, advising him not to participate in the Lord's Table and denying him the right to vote or to hold any position of leadership within the church.
- e. All disciplinary action shall be followed by repeated appeals for repentance.
- f. If the offender steadfastly refuses to forsake his offense, the elders shall take the matter before the congregation and recommend disciplinary action.

## 4. Non-Members

If someone has maintained regular attendance at the church but is not a member and falls into error, the church should warn him out of Christian love. Appropriate disciplinary action may also be taken if such an attendee is guilty of one of the items above.

## 5. Restoration

The church shall reinstate a previously disciplined member upon his request, if that member demonstrates an expression of repentance and satisfactory evidence that he has made the necessary correction. A vote of the elders shall be required for reinstatement.

## 6. Dismissal of Members

The privilege of church membership involves the responsibility for regular attendance at church services, unless prevented by a legitimate reason, such as illness. Members who no longer attend should resign or may be dismissed for one of the following reasons:

- a. Transfer to another church.
- b. Inactivity without sufficient reason. Members who have been absent without just cause for a period of one year shall be removed from the list of active members and shall be informed of that action. The individual may be reinstated upon satisfactory explanation to the elders of the reasons for absence or upon their promise to resume attendance. Inactive members shall not be allowed to vote or to hold any position of leadership within the church.
- c. Discipline as outlined above.

## Section 4 - Fellowship Roster

Anyone desiring to serve in this church, without becoming a member may do so by enrollment on the Fellowship Roster. All criteria in Section 3 shall apply, except that baptism, the orientation class, and the congregational affirmation process are not required. Also, voting and holding of an office are not allowed. Teaching or leading requires elder approval.

**Section 5 - Meetings**

A. Annual

The congregation shall hold an Annual Meeting in January. The date, time and place shall be determined by the elders. Notice of the meeting shall be given in the morning services on the two Sundays preceding the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting:

1. To affirm the elders and pastoral staff, deacons, directors, and appointments to permanent ministry teams for the coming year.
2. To consider and affirm a budget for the following year.
3. To consider and affirm amendments to the Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws.
4. To receive reports from the various ministry teams functioning within the church.
5. To consider such other and further matters which may properly come before the congregation with regard to the affairs of the church. Any additional matters to be voted on shall be included in the announcement of the Annual Meeting.

B. Special

A special meeting of the congregation may be called at any time by the elders. Announcement of such special meeting shall be made in the services on the two consecutive Sunday mornings preceding the meeting. All matters to be voted on in the meeting shall be stated in the announcement.

C. Voting

The following criteria shall be used for determining the quorum for voting members required at meetings and the vote required from voting members to achieve affirmation. Voting by secret ballot shall be as specified. When not specified, the elders may decide.

		<b>Quorum (%)</b>	<b>Vote (%)</b>	<b>Secret Ballot</b>
<b>Service Positions</b>				
• Elders	Appointment	33	66	
	Annual Affirmation	33	66	
• Deacons	Appointment	33	66	
	Annual Affirmation	33	66	
• Permanent Ministry Teams	Appointment	33	50	
<b>Salaries Positions</b>				
• Pastors	Appointment	50	60	Y
	Dismissal	50	75	Y
• Directors	Appointment	50	66	Y
	Dismissal	50	75	Y
<b>Membership</b>				
	Enrollment	33	50	
	Dismissal	50	75	Y
<b>Creation or Dissolution of Positions</b>				
	Pastors	33	66	
	Directors	33	66	
	Permanent Ministry Team	33	66	
<b>Finances</b>				
	Budget	33	66	
	Borrowing Money	33	66	

	Property			
	- Acquisition	33	66	
	- Disposal	33	66	
<b>Dissolution</b>		33	66	
<b>Amendments</b>	Statement of Faith	50	75	Y
	Constitution	50	75	Y
	By-Laws	50	66	Y
<b>Other</b>		33	50	

D. Eligibility to Vote

All members of the congregation present, who are at least 16 years of age, are eligible to vote. Members who are unable to attend for a legitimate reason, such as illness, may vote in writing.

E. Officials

The chairman of the elders shall preside over meetings.

**Section 6 - Nomination, Recommendation and Affirmation Process**

**Section 6.1 - Ministry Positions**

A. Nominations

It is the responsibility of the elders to nominate all elders, deacons, pastors, directors, and members of the elders' permanent ministry teams, and to approve and submit nominations by the deacons for the deacons' permanent ministry teams.

Nominations shall begin with the posting of a list of positions to be filled, two months prior to the Annual Meeting. Any two members of the congregation may then make written recommendations to the elders for any position. All nominees shall be approved by the elders, regarding their spiritual and personal qualifications, before they may appear on the ballot. No member shall be eligible for election to any church office who has not been a member of the church for at least one year. Nominations shall be posted by the elders at least two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

B. Affirmation

The congregation shall affirm all candidates recommended by the elders. If a candidate fails to receive affirmation, the elders shall present another candidate to the congregation for affirmation at another duly called meeting.

C. Effective Dates

The term of office of all elected positions shall begin on Sunday, one week after the Annual Meeting.

D. Vacancies

In case of a vacancy in any office, a temporary appointee shall be named by the elders. Such appointees shall continue in office until

The next Annual Meeting at which time the slate of nominees shall include at least one name to fill the unexpired term. The person elected to the unexpired term shall be considered eligible for election to a full-term of office at the Annual Meeting coinciding with the completion of his term.

**Section 6.2 - Finances and Amendments****A. Recommendations**

It is the responsibility of the elders to recommend action on finance related items and amendments to the Statement of Faith, Constitution and By-Laws.

Any two members of the congregation may make written recommendations to the elders. Recommendations for action by the elders shall be presented at least two weeks prior to the congregational meeting.

**B. Affirmation**

Affirmation by the congregation is required for the approval of all recommendations by the elders.

**Article 3 - Elders****Section 1 - Ministry****Section 1.1 - Purpose and Authority**

The purpose of the elders is to lead the church in all matters. Consequently, they have authority in all matters, but shall not act in a manner which is displeasing to the Lord, and should not act in a manner which is displeasing to the congregation.

**Section 1.2 - Responsibilities**

The elders' responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. A continued ministry of fellowship, outreach, missions, teaching, discipleship, and counseling.
2. Oversight of the worship services of the church, including the administration of the ordinances.
3. The training, nomination, ordination, and installation of new elders and deacons, and the annual affirmation of incumbent elders and deacons.
4. Examination of applicants for membership.
5. Oversight of the ministry of the church, including the approval of all members of all ministry teams.
6. The administration of church discipline.
7. Nomination of deacons and oversight of their activities.
8. Maintenance of job descriptions with standards of performance for each salaried employee.
9. Selection and hiring of salaried employees (Article 5, Section 2.2).
10. Annual review of the performance of individual elders and deacons in accordance with their job descriptions.
11. Maintenance and care of all real property owned and operated by the church, and presentation of proposed acquisitions and divestitures to the congregation for affirmation.
12. Determination of the financial policies of the church; monitoring all church expenses; supervising the annual financial review; preparing the annual budget, and presenting the budget to the congregation for affirmation.
13. Amendment of the Statement of Faith, Constitution, and By-Laws.

**Section 1.3 - Ministry Teams**

The elders may establish any functional, temporary or permanent ministry team; oversee its proper functioning and the fulfillment of its responsibilities; and shall make selections for its filling.

In all cases of establishing permanent ministry teams, affirmation by the congregation shall be required.

Any two members of the congregation may submit written recommendations to the elders at any time.

**Section 2 - Administration**

**Section 2.1 - Structure**

A. Size and Term

The number of elders, both lay and salaried, shall be determined by the elders in accordance with the Lord’s provision and the needs of the congregation.

The board of elders may choose to adopt a class system and allocate serving elders in terms of yearly classes. Each class will consist of a three year term.

An elder may serve for two such terms before he goes off the elder board for a period of one year. The elder may or may not serve after his year off the board.

An elder who has served on the board of elders at Cornerstone Church but is not presently serving on the board is still to be regarded by the church as an elder. He may be called upon by the board of elders to serve in shepherding roles with the authority of an elder and is to be recognized as such by the congregation.

The pastors shall be considered members of the elders.

B. Officers

The elders shall annually elect from its lay elder membership the following officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The officers of the elders shall be the officers of the corporation.

**Section 2.2 - Meetings**

A. Time

The elders shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called by the chairman, or shall be called upon request of any two or more elders.

B. Voting

The following criteria shall be used for determining the quorum for members required at meetings and the vote required to achieve affirmation.

		<b>Quorum (%)</b>	<b>Vote (%)</b>
<b>Service Positions</b>			
• Elders	Appointment	75	100
	Annual Affirmation	75	100
	Vacancy	75	100
• Deacons	Appointment	75	66
	Annual Affirmation	75	66
	Vacancy	75	66
• Permanent Ministry Teams	Appointment	50	50
	Vacancy	50	50
<b>Salaries Positions</b>			
• Pastors	Appointment	75	100
	Dismissal	75	75
	Vacancy	75	75
• Directors	Appointment	75	75
	Dismissal	75	75
	Vacancy	75	75
• Others	Appointment	50	66
	Dismissal	50	66

<b>Membership</b>	Enrollment	50	66
	Dismissal	75	75
	Reinstatement	75	75
<b>Creation or Dissolution of Positions</b>	Pastors	75	66
	Directors	75	66
	Others	50	50
	Ministry Teams	50	66
<b>Finances</b>	Budget	75	75
	Borrowing Money	75	75
	Property		
	- Acquisition	75	75
	- Disposal	75	75
<b>Dissolution</b>		75	75
<b>Amendments</b>	Statement of Faith	75	100
	Constitution	75	100
	By-Laws	75	75
<b>Other</b>		50	50

The final vote on any issue may be postponed one and only one meeting, at the request of any elder.

**Section 3 - Lay Elder Appointments**

**Section 3.1 - Qualifications**

Anyone aspiring to the office of elder shall meet the Biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). An elder must not be a new convert. He shall exhibit in his personal life and in the example he sets within and outside the home the following qualities:

1. Proven ability to exhort and refute with respect to Bible doctrine (Titus 1:9).
2. Proven ability to teach, discipline and give sound Biblical counsel (Titus 1:9; 1 Timothy 3:2).
3. Proven ability to manage, govern or rule: the demonstration of which includes the home, particularly, the raising of a godly family (1 Timothy 3:4,5).
4. Proven demonstration of Christ like character qualities (1 Timothy 3:2,3; Titus 1:7,8), including a positive reputation in the community (1 Timothy 3:7).
5. A Christian for at least five years and a member of this congregation for at least two years (1 Timothy 3:6,10).

Each elder shall annually, in writing, certify his scriptural qualifications as outlined above and his ability to serve.

**Section 3.2 - Selection**

Because of the responsibility of the eldership, the incumbent elders shall select from the membership of the congregation male members who are reported to have the above qualifications and aspirations for the office of elder. Such men shall be invited to participate in an elder training program. Any two members of the congregation may, in writing, suggest male members of the congregation to the elders for consideration for elder training.

When vacant positions exist on the elders, the elders shall select men who have the qualification and training for eldership and present them to the congregation for affirmation at the Annual Meeting.

**Section 3.3 - Affirmation**

## A. Initial

Affirmation by the congregation is required. If a candidate fails to receive affirmation, the elders shall present another candidate to the congregation for affirmation at another duly called meeting.

## B. Annual

To continue in office, each incumbent member shall be reaffirmed annually by the elders and congregation.

Once all elders are affirmed, the congregation shall be asked to recommit themselves to the leadership of the elders.

**Section 3.4 - Ordination and Installation**

Elders shall be ordained, if not previously ordained, and shall be installed in the Sunday morning service, one week after the Annual Meeting.

**Section 3.5 - Vacancies**

The elders may appoint men they deem qualified according to Section 3.1, to fill vacancies until the next Annual Meeting. (Article 2, Section 5.1)

**Article 4 - Deacons and Deaconesses [Deacons]****Section 1 - Ministry****Section 1.1 - Purpose and Authority**

The purpose of the deacons is to lead the compassion ministry of the church. Consequently, they shall make decisions in all matters pertaining to the operation of this ministry, subject to the approval of the elders.

**Section 1.2 - Responsibilities**

The deacons shall be responsible for the compassion ministry of the church. Their responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Visitation of the sick and shut-ins.
2. Family assistance related to sickness and death.
3. Comfort to the distressed and needy.
4. Administration of the benevolence fund.

The deacons shall be directly responsible to the elders and assist them as needed. They shall submit all proposed programs, policies and ministry team assignments to the elders prior to implementation.

**Section 1.3 - Ministry Teams**

The deacons may establish any functional, temporary or permanent ministry team; oversee its proper functioning and the fulfillment of its responsibilities; and shall make selections for its filling.

In all cases of establishing permanent ministry teams, affirmation by the elders and congregation shall be required.

Any two members of the congregation may make written recommendations to the deacons at any time.

**Section 2 - Administration****Section 2.1 - Structure****A. Size and Term**

The number of deacons shall be determined by the elders, but shall be no less than three. The number of deacons shall exceed the number of deaconesses.

Deacons shall serve an indefinite term, provided that they are recommended by the elders and affirmed by the congregation annually. Any deacon may elect to not serve for a period of time. Only serving deacons will be included in the deacon voting process.

**B. Officers**

The deacons shall annually elect from its own membership the following officers: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be men.

**Section 2.2 - Meetings**

## A. Time

The deacons shall meet regularly. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or shall be called upon request of any two or more deacons.

## B. Voting

A quorum for the transaction of all business shall be 50% of its membership. The approval for all action shall be 50% majority vote.

The final vote on any issue may be postponed one and only one meeting, at the request of any deacon.

**Section 3 - Appointment****Section 3.1 - Qualifications**

Anyone aspiring to the office of deacon shall meet the Biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:8-13). A deacon must be a convert who has exhibited in his personal life, and in the example he sets within and outside the home, the following qualities:

1. Lives honorably and is worthy of respect (1 Timothy 3:8-10,12); demonstrates a Christ like character, including a positive reputation in the community (1 Timothy 3:7).
2. Holds the truths of faith with a clear conscience (1 Timothy 3:9), and demonstrates sound understanding and belief in the purpose and mission of Jesus Christ.
3. Manages his own family well (1 Timothy 3:11,12) and sets an example of spiritual leadership.
4. Demonstrates the ability to carry out the diaconal responsibilities to offer mercy and compassion for the material needs within the Body of Christ and within the community (Acts 6:3-6).
5. A Christian for at least three years and a member of the congregation for at least one year.

**Section 3.2 - Selection**

The deacons shall be nominated by the elders. Any two members of the congregation may, in writing, suggest members of the congregation to the elders as potential candidates for the deacons.

**Section 3.3 - Affirmation**

## A. Initial

Affirmation by the congregation is required. If a candidate fails to receive affirmation, the elders shall present another candidate to the congregation for affirmation at another duly called meeting.

## B. Annual

To continue in office, each incumbent member shall be reaffirmed annually by the elders and congregation.

**Section 3.4 - Installation**

Deacons shall be installed in the Sunday morning service, one week after the Annual Meeting.

**Section 3.5 - Vacancies**

The elders may appoint members they deem qualified according to Section 3.1, to fill vacancies until the next Annual Meeting. (Article 2, Section 5.1)

**Article 5 - Salaried Employees****Section 1 - Ministry****Section 1.1 - Purpose and Authority**

The salaried employees are to oversee the daily operation of the church. The pastors, as elders, are to maintain continuity in fulfilling the responsibilities of the elders on a daily basis. As such, they shall make all necessary decisions concerning the life of the church, within the limits of these By-Laws. All salaried employees shall report directly to the senior pastor in the normal function of their responsibilities and are under the direct authority of the elders.

The establishment of all permanent salaried positions shall be at the recommendation of the elders and the affirmation of the congregation.

**Section 1.2 - Responsibility**

Job descriptions and standards of performance of all salaried employees shall be prepared by the elders.

At a minimum, it shall be the responsibility of the senior pastor to preach the Word of God for the edifying of the church and the salvation of souls each Sunday morning. It shall be his duty to maintain a home visitation program and to visit the sick; to conduct funeral services; to perform Christian marriage ceremonies; to baptize approved candidates; to lead the communion service; and to publicly welcome new members into the church membership. In the event of his absence from the church for any reason, the pastor should arrange to have the pulpit supplied by some qualified person who shall meet the approval of the elders.

**Section 2 - Pastors****Section 2.1 - Qualifications****A. Senior Pastor**

The senior pastor must possess the gifts and experience sufficient to enable him to fully teach and preach the Word of God, to lead the congregation in its search for God's Will, to equip the congregation for ministry, and to perform the other necessary functions incumbent upon this position. He shall become a member of the church and wholeheartedly accept the Purpose of the church (Constitution, Section 2) and Statement of Faith of the church and be in agreement with the Constitution and By-Laws of the church. These shall be affirmed in writing.

His daily life shall be consistent with the Christian life as set forth in Scripture; he shall be a testimony to the love and grace of God; and he shall set an example of spiritual leadership in his home, and involve his family in the life of the church. He must possess all of the qualities of an elder.

**B. Other Pastoral Staff**

Pastors must possess the gifts and experience sufficient to enable them to teach and preach the Word of God, to lead the congregation in its search for God's Will, to equip the congregation for ministry, and to perform the other necessary functions incumbent upon their positions. They shall become a member of the church and wholeheartedly accept the Purpose of the church (Constitution, Section 2) and Statement of Faith of the church and be in agreement with the Constitution and By-Laws of the church. These shall be affirmed in writing.

Their daily lives shall be consistent with the Christian life as set forth in Scripture; they shall be a testimony to the love and grace of God; and they shall set an example of spiritual leadership in their homes, and involve their families in the life of the church. They must possess all the qualities of an elder.

**Section 2.2 - Appointment****A. Selection of a Senior Pastor and Pastoral Staff**

The following process shall be followed in the search of pastors. In the event that a preferred, qualified candidate exists within the congregation, steps 2 and 3 may be skipped.

1. The elders shall constitute the Nominating Committee and shall appoint a search team from its membership.
2. They shall compose a list of prospective candidates.
3. They shall interview priority candidates.
4. Once there is an agreement upon a single candidate, the candidate shall be invited to speak at the church.
  - a. A written notice of his candidacy and a candidacy agenda shall be posted at least two weeks prior to the time of the candidacy.
  - b. Opportunity for questions from the congregation shall be made available.
5. A congregational meeting shall be called in order to vote for the candidate.
  - a. Two weeks shall elapse between the candidate's appearance and the congregational vote.
  - b. Discussion of the candidate shall be permitted prior to the vote.
  - c. Vote shall be by secret ballot.
  - d. The result shall be announced immediately.
6. The candidate shall be informed of the vote in writing.

**B. Term**

A pastor's call shall not be for any specified duration.

**C. Ordination, Licensing and Commissioning**

1. Ordination to the gospel ministry refers to the unanimous recognition by the elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. Ordination shall be conferred for life, so long as the man continues to qualify for the office.
2. Licensing enables a man to perform ministry functions within the church. The license is issued by the elders on recognition of the man's call to ministry.
3. When local church certification is required, a person is commissioned by the elders to minister. This authorization continues as long as the opportunity for ministry remains in effect.

**Section 2.3 - Resignation and Dismissal****A. Resignation**

Notice of resignation shall be delivered in writing to the elders at least one month in advance of the effective termination date.

**B. Dismissal**

If the relations of a pastor with another employee or the congregation become detrimental to the welfare of the church, or if the pastor becomes an offense to the church or engages in heretical teaching, the relationship of that pastor to the church shall be terminated. Recommendation for such termination shall be activated by the elders. The proposed dismissal shall be submitted in writing to the congregation at least two weeks prior to a duly called meeting for dismissal. A vote by secret ballot shall be required for affirmation.

Should the grievance be of such a serious nature as to warrant suspension of the pastor during the course of the above procedure, such suspension shall be at the discretion of the elders. However, the congregation shall be advised immediately of this action and the reasons for it.

**Section 2.4 - Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy in the pastorate, the elders shall select an interim pastor to carry out the responsibilities of the vacant pastor until one is elected. He shall have the same qualifications as required of a permanent pastor.

**Section 3 - Directors****Section 3.1 - Qualifications**

Directors must possess the gifts and experience sufficient to enable them to perform the necessary functions incumbent upon their position. They shall become a member of the church and wholeheartedly accept the Purpose of the church (Constitution, Section 2) and Statement of Faith of the church and be in agreement with the Constitution and By-Laws of the church. These shall be affirmed in writing.

Their daily lives shall be consistent with the Christian life as set forth in Scripture.

**Section 3.2 - Appointment****A. Selection**

The following process shall be followed in the search of directors. In the event that a preferred, qualified candidate exists within the congregation, steps 2 and 3 may be skipped.

1. The elders shall constitute the Nominating Committee and shall appoint a search team from its membership.
2. They shall compose a list of prospective candidates.
3. They shall interview priority candidates.
4. Once there is an agreement upon a single candidate, the recommendation shall be posted for at least two weeks, followed by a congregational meeting to vote on the candidate.

**B. Term**

A director's appointment shall not be for any specified duration.

**Section 3.3 - Resignation and Dismissal****A. Resignation**

Notice of resignation shall be delivered in writing to the elders at least one month in advance of the effective termination date.

**B. Dismissal**

If the relations of a director with another employee or the congregation become detrimental to the welfare of the church, or if the director becomes an offense to the church or engages in heretical teaching, the relationship of that director to the church shall be terminated. Recommendation for such termination shall be activated by the elders. The proposed dismissal shall be submitted in writing to the congregation at least two weeks prior to a duly called meeting for dismissal. A vote by secret ballot shall be required for affirmation.

Should the grievance be of such a serious nature as to warrant suspension of the director during the course of the above procedure, such suspension shall be at the discretion of the elders. However, the congregation shall be advised immediately of this action and the reasons for it.

**Section 3.4 - Vacancies**

In the event of a vacancy in a director's position, the elders shall select an interim director to carry out the responsibilities of the vacant director until one is elected. He shall have the same qualifications as required of a permanent director.

**Section 4 - Other Employees**

The elders shall be responsible for filling all other established salaried positions. Temporary employment shall be at the discretion of the elders.

**A. Resignation**

Notice of resignation shall be delivered in writing to the elders at least two weeks in advance of the effective termination date.

**B. Dismissal**

Dismissal shall be determined by the elders.

**Article 6 - Finances****Section 1 - General****Section 1.1 - Policy**

The financial policy shall be the responsibility of the elders.

The elders shall not incur expenses for the church exceeding the revenue of the church, except to meet salaries promptly and such other current expenditures as may be necessary to secure continuity and effectiveness in the work of the church.

They shall have no power to build or involve the church in extraordinary expenses without special affirmation from the congregation.

When it becomes necessary to exceed the current revenues of the church, the elders shall render complete statements to the church of their action and necessity thereof and endeavor to secure relief as soon as possible.

**Section 1.2 - Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of the church shall coincide with the calendar year.

**Section 2 - Annual Finances****Section 2.1 - Budget**

It shall be the responsibility of the elders to develop a detailed budget within the overall budget limits and philosophy set by these By-Laws, and propose the annual budget to the congregation for discussion, modification and affirmation at the Annual Meeting. Expenditures on budgeted items shall not exceed the budget in excess of 20% without affirmation of the congregation. Items not included in the budget may be approved by the elders, provided such additional items do not cause the total expenditures to exceed the budget by more than 10%. Total expenditures shall not exceed the budget in excess of 10% without the affirmation of the congregation.

**Section 2.2 - Annual Report**

A final and complete report of the elders, deacons, pastors, directors, and all ministry teams, covering all operations of the church year up to and including December 31, shall be made available to the congregation by the Annual Meeting. (These reports are to be presented to the church secretary by January 1.)

**Section 2.3 - Records Review**

It is the responsibility of the elders to have the final records of the church reviewed annually.

**Section 3 - Miscellaneous****Section 3.1 - Borrowing**

The elders are authorized to borrow money in the name of the church, when they deem necessary, provided that the total aggregate sums borrowed under this section at any one time do not exceed 15% of the current year's operating budget. If it is required that larger sums be borrowed, the elders shall first obtain affirmation of the congregation.

**Section 3.2 - Gifts**

The elders shall accept a gift only if its intended use is consistent with the purposes and plans of the church.

**Section 3.3 - Property**

All property already owned or subsequently acquired by the church shall remain the property of Cornerstone Church of Skippack and may not be signed over to any organization, denomination, or religious group, except by recommendation of the elders and affirmation of the congregation.

**Section 3.4 - Dissolution**

In the event of the dissolution of the corporation, all assets shall be contributed to another tax-exempt organization which has the same PURPOSE of this church (Constitution, Section 2), and is in agreement with the STATEMENT OF FAITH of this church.

**Article 7 - Amendments**

Recommendation for amendments to the By-Laws shall be made by the elders. Any two members of the congregation may make written recommendations to the elders at any time. Proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the congregation at least 30 days prior to a duly called meeting for affirmation. A vote by secret ballot shall be required for affirmation.

There shall be no amendments which result in a violation of the Scriptures.