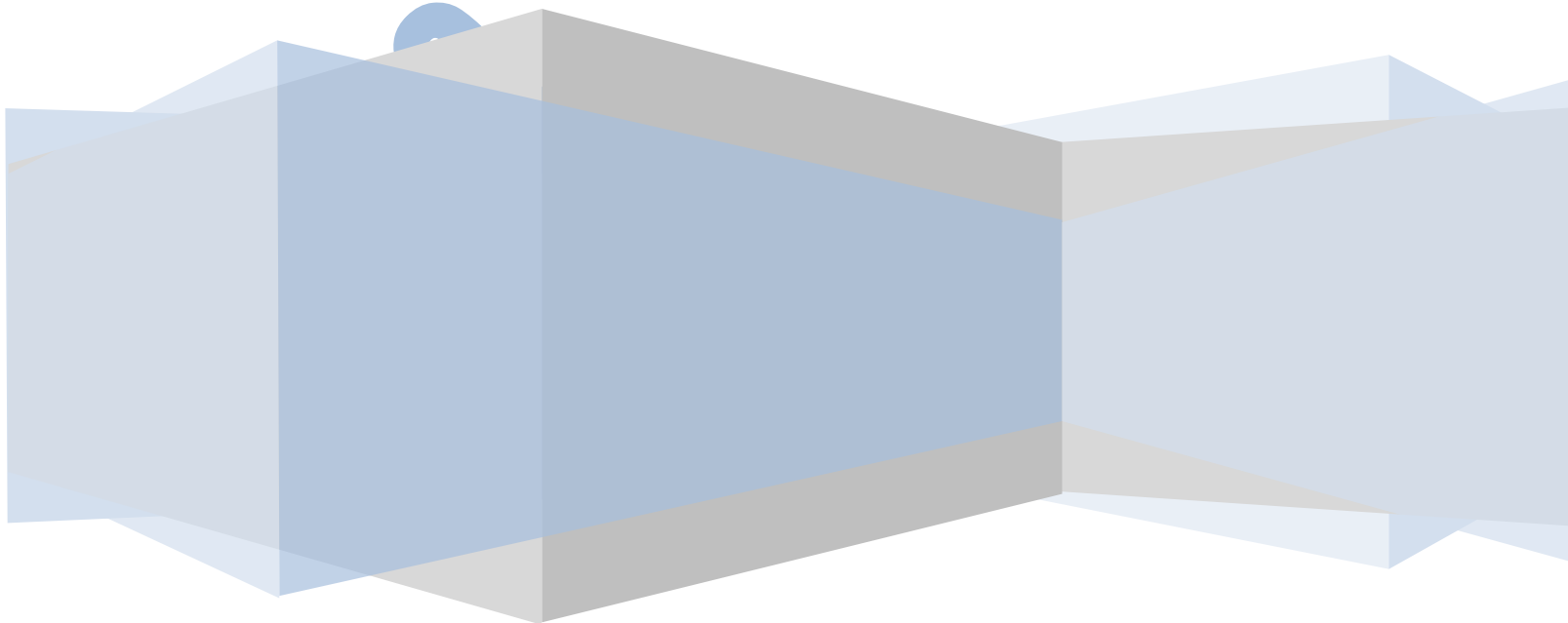




The Open House Church Constitution



THE OPEN HOUSE CHURCH

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

This body of believers shall be known as “**The Open House Church**” (hereinafter referred to as “The Church”).

2. IDENTITY

- 2.1.** The Open House Church is a Pentecostal assembly of Christian believers subscribing to the teaching of the holy Bible who have come together to worship the Lord Jesus Christ and advance the kingdom of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- 2.2.** The Church is open to people of all ethnic groups, social groups, races and diverse economic status.

3. VISION OF THE CHURCH

Open to Christ to impact the world

4. MISSION OF THE CHURCH

To be a Christ-centered people who love God, love people and are actively reaching out to the world.

5. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply in relation to this constitution

Church Council - The Governance organ responsible for leadership of the National Church as defined by the society's Act.

Church Board - The Governance organ responsible for leadership of a Local Church or Branch Church

Overseer - The spiritual leader of **The Open House Church**

Lead Pastor - The leading pastor of the Local Church (Church Branch).

Pastor - A Pastor ministering in a Local Church under the Lead Pastor

6. OBJECTIVES OF THE CHURCH

- 6.1.** To proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in obedience to the great commission (Matt 28:18-20).
- 6.2.** To worship and praise the one true God.
- 6.3.** To promote fellowship among Christian believers and edification through preaching and teaching of the Word of God.
- 6.4.** To actively participate in alleviating poverty and care for the vulnerable in the community including widows, widowers, orphans and senior citizens (James 1:27).
- 6.5.** To establish ministries and Church branches and maintain places of worship of the Almighty God in all nations.
- 6.6.** To train, equip and commission ministers and support them in their areas of calling.

- 6.7. To conduct Christian marriages between heterogeneous persons in consistence with the Church's statement of faith and core values.
- 6.8. To nurture strong families that serve God's purposes.
- 6.9. To raise funds in form of members' contributions, donations, grants, gifts, loans or other assistance to promote the Church's activities.
- 6.10. To do all such other things as are incidental or conducive to the attainment of any the Church's objectives.

7. STATEMENT OF FAITH

- 7.1. We believe in one God eternally existing in three persons; namely, God the father, God the son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is the creator and ruler of all things.
- 7.2. We believe in one savior who is Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God.
- 7.3. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His death, burial and resurrection. We believe that Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is today at the right hand of the Father as the mediator between God and man (John 3:16, Mathew 1:18, John 14:2).
- 7.4. We believe in the Holy Spirit as the third person in the trinity who bears witness to Jesus Christ and whose power works among men leading to conviction of sin and righteousness (John 16:8-11).
- 7.5. We believe in personal salvation through Jesus Christ upon belief in one's heart and confession and that it is the work of God's grace (Romans 10: 9-10, Ephesians 2:8)
- 7.6. We believe in the baptism and infilling of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in other tongues and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit thereof. (Isaiah 28:11; Luke 24:49; Acts 2:1-4, Acts 10:46; Galatians 5:16,22).
- 7.7. We believe that the Bible is the inspired, authoritative, inerrant and infallible word of God and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct. (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16).
- 7.8. We believe in water baptism by immersion of believers as a public declaration of a believer's identity with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection; and as a public declaration of the initiation into the body of Christ (Romans 6:3-4).
- 7.9. We believe in divine healing and that it is obtained on the basis of the atonement and faith in the healer Jesus Christ. (Matthew 9:12; Mark 2: 17; Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15; 1 Peter 2:24; Exodus 2:26; Psalms 103:3; Isaiah 53). We also believe in medical care.
- 7.10. We believe in the personal and pre-millennial second coming of Jesus visibly in power and in glory to consummate His salvation and judgment (Rev. 20:6, Rev. 22:12, John 14:2-3, Acts 1:11).
- 7.11. We believe in the unity of the universal body of Christ, which is made up of local Churches, and each believer should belong to a local Church for worship and fellowship and service (Ephesians 1:22-23; Hebrews 10:25).
- 7.12. We believe in the sanctity of human life from conception to death.

8. CORE VALUES

8.1. Worship

We are committed to loving God and worshipping Him whole-heartedly. (Psalm 86:12, Mark 12:30)

8.2. Openness

We are committed to be open to the Holy Spirit to guide and teach us. We are committed to be open to one another in fellowship and ministry. (John 16:13, Heb. 10:25)

8.3. Prayer

We seek to teach, inspire, motivate, challenge, and encourage members of the body of Christ to pray and grow in their relationship with God (Matt 21:13).

8.4. Excellence

We are committed to a culture of excellence, innovation, creativity and pursuing the highest standards of service and ministry (Dan. 6:3).

8.5. Nurturing

We seek to nurture and promote talents and gifts to positively affect the world. (2 Tim.1:6-7, 1 Pet. 4:10)

8.6. Holiness

We are committed to living holy lives as directed by the word of God (1 Peter 1:15-16).

8.7. Outreach

We are committed to reaching out to the world and bringing lost souls to Christ. (Mark 16:15-16)

8.8. Unity

We are committed to working together and supporting one another in ministry as one body of Christ. (1 Peter 3:8, 1 Cor. 1:10-12)

8.9. Stewardship

We are committed to be responsible and accountable for the resources and gifts that God has so graciously provided for us. We are also committed to tithing and generous offering as a way of supporting the Church's vision. (Psalm 24:1, Rom 13:7-8)

8.10. Empowerment

We are committed to empowering one another to develop spiritually, social and economically, and be responsible citizens. (1Thess. 5:11)

9. ORDINANCES

- 9.1.** The ordinance of baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins, and have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12).
- 9.2.** The ordinance of the holy communion shall be regularly observed as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

10. PRACTICES OF THE CHURCH

- 10.1.** Dedication of children to the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 10.2.** Prayer for the baptism and infilling with the Holy Spirit.
- 10.3.** Prayer and fasting.
- 10.4.** Prayer for divine healing of the sick and deliverance of the oppressed.
- 10.5.** Prayer for miracles, signs and wonders as a demonstration of God's power.
- 10.6.** Christian weddings between heterogeneous persons in consistence with the Church's statement of faith and core values.
- 10.7.** Christian burial rites and disposal of the dead.

11. MEMBERSHIP

The Church will be open for membership upon fulfilling certain mandatory requirements to all persons who:

- a) Have been born again by faith in Jesus Christ;
- b) Willingly subscribe to the practices and beliefs of the Church;
- c) Have regularly attended the Church services for at least four (4) months and:
 - Be a witness of the redeeming feature and the power of Jesus Christ.
 - Live in accordance with biblical teachings.
 - Are willing to be regular financial supporters of the Church.
 - Be committed and regular in attending worship services and other meetings.
 - Participate in other Church activities.
 - Adhere to the constitution and discipline of the Church.

11.1. Categories of Membership

11.1.1. Full Membership

This is open to all people who are born again, who have attended the Church regularly for a period of at least four (4) months, who are over eighteen (18) years of age and who wish to join themselves fully to the Church and who accept all the duties, responsibilities and rights of membership.

11.1.2. Associate Membership

This is open to all who are over eighteen (18) years of age, but who are members of other non-localized Churches and who wish to fellowship with the Church fully. These members have no voting rights at meetings but may attend all such meetings. Associate membership shall be valid for a period of two years by which time one may be requested to take full membership.

11.1.3. Junior Members

All persons between the ages of 12 and 18 who fulfill the requirements of membership shall be eligible for junior membership. Such members do not qualify for voting rights at any business meetings.

11.2. Privilege of Full Membership

It shall be the privilege of those who are full members of the Church to receive ministry from the Church. A member shall also be eligible to take part in all the activities of the Church and may fill official positions in the Church if eligible, to receive a membership card stating they are full members, and to have full voting and speaking rights in all business meetings.

11.3. Application for Membership

All applications for Church membership shall be made in writing on the official forms provided by the Church, upon which the forms shall be reviewed by the Church board and results of the review communicated to the applicant. Application for membership shall be made in the congregation where the applicant has been a regular attendant.

11.3.1. Rejection of Application

If for any reason, an application should be rejected, the applicant shall be notified accordingly.

11.3.2. Reception of new Members

Following the review of the applications, the Church shall receive into membership, all those whose applications have been accepted. The new members shall be admitted into membership during a Church service.

11.3.3. Register of Members

Membership application forms shall be kept in safe custody. A register of names and addresses of Church members shall be extracted from the application forms. The register shall be kept by the Church office at each local Church while the overall register (including electronic) shall be kept by the Church secretary in the head office. The register shall also be updated regularly to take into account membership suspensions and terminations. Grounds for deregistration shall be recorded in the register.

11.4. Suspension or Termination of Membership

Grounds for suspension or termination of membership shall include the following:

- 11.4.1.** Voluntary resignation or withdrawal from membership.
- 11.4.2.** Continuous absence from the regular worship services of the Church for three consecutive months without a valid reason.
- 11.4.3.** Any proven immoral act or unchristian conduct after full investigation or evidence and exhaustion of mechanisms outlined in this constitution.
- 11.4.4.** Issuance of a transfer letter to another Church other than an Open House Church congregation.
- 11.4.5.** The propagation of doctrines and practices contrary to those set out in The Open House Church statement of faith and core values, which cause serious discord, disunity and dissention with malicious intent – Romans 16:17 and 18, Proverbs 6:19.
- 11.4.6.** Open defiance of the Church governance and disciplinary measures.

11.5. Suspension or Termination of Membership Process

- 11.5.1.** In the event of a member failing in his or her Christian responsibility, the pastoral team shall do everything possible to help him/her resolve their problem and return them to active fellowship.

In seeking to restore a member to true belief and consistent Christian behavior, the pastors shall use plain teaching and principles of the bible as their authority. A member unwilling to respect this authority shall, by the recommendation to the board by the lead pastor, be removed from membership.

- 11.5.2.** Upon exhaustion of warnings, directions and advice to registered members of the Church, whose conduct is inconsistent with the Church has stated beliefs and practices, the leadership of the Church shall alert the respective local Church as appropriate.

11.6. Dispute Resolution

- 11.6.1.** In the event of serious differences between or among membership, the affected persons shall endeavor to reconcile their differences. If the parties involved at the branch Church level cannot effect reconciliation, they shall refer the dispute to the mother Church lead pastor and if it cannot be resolved at the pastors' level, it shall be referred to the Church board to deal. An appeal may be made to the Church board in the event any of the parties is still aggrieved. The decision of the Church board shall be final and binding.

- 11.6.2.** In the event of a dispute between members of different branch Churches, the parties affected shall refer the dispute to a joint Committee of the respective Church boards through the respective lead pastors. Any aggrieved parties

shall have the right to appeal to the Church boards as in 11.6.1 above.

11.7. Disciplinary Measures:

- 11.7.1.** Where a member is alleged to have contravened the statement of faith or doctrine, or accused of misconduct or an act justifying suspension or termination of membership, the Church board may use their discretion to commence investigation.
- 11.7.2.** Before any complaint or personal charge against a Church member formally proceeds, the Church board must satisfy themselves that the matter has been dealt with privately and in a brotherly manner, according to Matthew 18:15-17. Appeals may be made to a special appeals Board established by the lead pastor from among respected elders and deacons of the Church of good standing whose decision shall be final.
- 11.7.3.** Where the person charged is a member of the Church Board, he /she shall lodge an appeal to a special appeals Board of three (3) elders established by the lead Pastor, from among respected elders and deacons of the Church of good standing, whose decision shall be final.
- 11.7.4.** If guilt is established and the member is repentant, he/she may be warned, counselled and restored. If the member is found guilty and the verdict of suspension recommended, and contrition, sorrow and repentance are not evident, he/she shall be suspended.

11.8. Resignations

- 11.8.1.** Any member desiring to resign from the Church shall submit his/her resignation in writing to the Church secretary through the lead pastor of the respective local Church. The resignation shall take effect from the date of receipt of such notice, by the Church secretary.
- 11.8.2.** Any person who resigns or is removed from membership shall not be entitled to a refund of any part of monies or gifts contributed by him/her at any time.

12. THE CHURCH COUNCIL

The Governance organ responsible for leadership of the National Church as defined by the society's Act. The church council shall operate from the Church's secretariat.

12.1 The office Bearers

The Church Council office bearers shall be as follows as required by the Society's act:-

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary
- Vice Secretary

- Treasurer
- Vice Treasurer

These members shall be drawn from the Church Membership.

12.2 Duties of Office Bearers

12.2.1 Chairperson

- The chairperson shall chair all meetings.
- He/she shall have authority to act on behalf of the Church
- He/she shall be an ex-official member to all the Committees, departments

12.2.2 Vice-Chairperson

- He/she shall perform the duties of the chairperson in his absence.
- Shall also perform any other work prescribed.

12.2.3 Secretary

- He/she shall deal with all correspondence of TOHC in relation to the statutory requirements
- He/she shall issue notices convening all the general meetings of TOHC in consultation of the Chairman and shall be responsible for keeping minutes of all such meetings and records of proceedings of TOHC and of the Council.
- Shall be responsible for all TOHC filing system, developments, and reports from branches.
- Shall be the Custodian and enforcer of the Constitution and by-laws.
- Shall Receive and forward all marriages certificates and keep records or copies of the same
- Shall keep Proper records of all Churches branches and their location and Church pastors.
- Shall keep Information on all Commissioned, ordained pastors and records on ordination days and copies of commissioned/ordination certificates.
- Shall have a file of all Pastors and Overseers, their photos and identification documents.
- Any other duty as may be assigned by the Council

12.2.4 Assistant Secretary

In the absence of the Secretary, the Assistant Secretary shall perform all the duties of the Secretary and such other duties as shall be assigned to him by the Secretary or Council whether the Secretary is present or not.

12.2.5 Treasurer

- He/she shall ensure that finances are properly administered under the Council directions.
- He/she shall play a supervisory role of the financial transactions and ensure that the finance Committee does its work.
- He/she shall present a written financial report at each annual general meeting (AGM) of the ministry.
- He/she shall be a signatory to the accounts of the Ministry.
- He/she shall ensure that the ministry books of finances are regularly audited.
- He/she shall receive and issue receipts for all moneys received by him and preserve vouchers for all monies paid by him.

- He/she shall ensure proper books of accounts of all moneys received and paid by TOHC are written and available for inspection.
- Any other duty as may be assigned by the Council

12.2.6 Assistant Treasurer

Assistant Treasurer shall perform such duties as may be specifically assigned to him by the Treasurer or by the Council and in the absence of the Treasurer shall perform the duties of the treasurer.

12.3 The Council

- 12.3.1** The Council shall consist of Nine (9) Members who shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Vice Secretary, Treasurer and Vice Treasurer and three (3) other Council members. The Council shall meet at such times and places as it shall resolve but shall meet not less than once in any three months. The quorum for meetings of the Council shall be not less than two thirds of the members. The Overseer may serve in any of the offices save for the offices of the Chairman and the treasurer. The term of the overseer shall be Eight (8) years which is renewable upon satisfactory review by the Council.
- 12.3.2** The Council shall have a Secretariat to manage the affairs of the Church.
- 12.3.3** The Council and office bearers shall serve for a period of five (5) years after which they will retire. However, any outgoing member is eligible for re-election if the members so wish during an annual general meeting. Half of the council members shall retire at the end of the Five-year term but eligible for re-appointment. The Chairperson shall be the last to in the ten-year cycle.
- 12.3.4** Council members may serve for a period of five years continuously and then be eligible for re-election for a further period of five years.
- 12.3.5** During the first meeting, the Council members shall determine the order of rotational retirement.
- 12.3.6** The Council shall fill any casual vacancies for members of the Council caused by death, resignation or removal from office until the next annual general meeting of the Church.

12.4 Duties of the Council

- a) The Council shall be responsible for the management of the Church and for that purpose may give directions to the office bearers as to the manner in which, within the law, they shall perform their duties. The Council shall have power to appoint such sub-Committees as it may deem desirable to make reports to the Council.
- b) All moneys disbursed on behalf of the Church shall be authorized by the Council.
- c) Encourage and support pastors and their spouses.
- d) Draw and maintain exchange programs for Ministers in all Churches.
- e) Arrange regular ministers and members meetings, seminars, retreats etc.
- f) Arrange Ministers trainings and recommend bible schools that offer proper and relevant training.

- g) Establishing and upholding sound doctrines, teachings, liturgy, practices and sacraments in the ministry.
- h) Appoint Lead Pastors of Local Churches with the recommendation of the Overseer
- i) Be involved in policy formulation.
- j) Handle disciplinary cases of Leaders, Pastors and settle their disputes.
- k) Articulate and safeguard the doctrines of the Church
- l) Ensure compliance with this constitution and the governance laws
- m) Approve recommendations on Church leadership structure and reorganization to achieve the Church's vision
- n) Review and approve proposals on acquisition, management, maintenance and disposal of Church property.
- o) Final authority in matters of finance and property (Acts 11:28, 29).
- p) Appointment of the Overseer of the Church
- q) All Council members shall be subject to one another, and they shall regularly meet together to pray and discuss the spiritual and Development matters of the Church (Acts 13:2).

12.5 Appointment of Overseer of the Church

An Overseer's Search Committee shall be formed by the Council to deal with appointment of the Overseer of the Church when the need arises.

- I) The Committee shall invite applications from interested candidates
- II) The Search Committee shall interview possible candidates and select one to serve as the interim leader.
- III) The candidates shall appear for the interview with their spouses
- IV) The candidate shall be invited to serve in the capacity of interim leader for a probationary period of six (6) months. The Council shall determine his/her job description, leave entitlement, remunerations and benefits.
- V) After the successful completion of the six (6) months' probation, the Council shall formally appoint the leader during a Special General Meeting or Annual General Meeting.
- VI) The release from service for the Overseer shall be as per clauses 13.9 and 13.10 of this constitution

12.6 Roles of the Overseer of the Church

The Overseer of the Church shall be a member of the Church council and in charge of all spiritual matters. The Overseer shall work hand in hand with the Church Council to ensure the smooth running of the Church. The Overseer shall undertake the following specific roles:

- 12.6.1** Providing spiritual leadership for the Church with accountability to the Church membership through the Church council.
- 12.6.2** He shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Church
- 12.6.3** Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Church including implementation of plans and programs, which support the vision of the Church.

12.6.4 Implement activities towards achievement of the vision of the Church and set the overall direction of Church.

12.6.5 Review and monitor the ministry goals and performance and seek support from the council

12.6.6 Chair pastoral meetings comprising other pastors of the branch Churches

12.6.7 The Overseer with the assistance of the pastors (the pastoral team), shall provide the Spiritual leadership for the Church/branch Churches

12.6.8 Be the Church spokesperson and represent the Church in national and international fora.

12.6.9 Provide leadership in Stewardship, worship, evangelism, discipleship and mentoring for the spiritual growth of the Church members.

12.6.10 Overall responsibility for the Secretariat staff

12.6.11 Abide, subscribe and protect the Church constitution.

12.6.12 The role of the Overseer's spouse will be to support the overseer in execution of the Church's mandate.

12.6.13 The Overseer shall recommend persons to be appointed as pastors to the council. The Council shall make the final decision.

12.6.14 The Overseer may recommend to the Church Council one of the Pastors to assist him in the day-to-day running of the Church. Once approved by the Council, such pastor may sit in the Church Council meetings as an ex-official and substantially represent the Overseer in his/her absence.

12.6.15 The Overseer shall report the performance and progress of the Church programs to the council for review

12.6.16 The Overseer may be entitled to receive allowances for his service as determined by the Council.

12.7 Church Meetings

There shall be two classes of General meetings – “Annual General Meeting” and “Special General Meeting”:

12.7.1 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

12.7.1.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of members shall be the supreme organ of the Church and shall be convened by the Council.

12.7.1.2 The annual general meeting shall be held not later than 31st December in each year.

Notice of such annual general meeting shall be announced by the secretary of the Council to all members not less than 21 days before the date of the meeting. The Venue of AGM shall be determined by the Council. The agenda for any Annual General Meeting shall consist of the following:

- Confirmation of the minutes of the previous annual general meeting.
- Consideration of the accounts
- Ratification of office Bearers
- Appointment of auditors
- Such other matters as the Council may decide.

- Any other business with the approval of the chairperson.

12.7.2 Special General Meeting (SGM)

A special general meeting may be called for any specific purpose by the office bearers. Notice in writing of such meeting shall be announced to all members not less than 14 days before the date thereof. The Venue of the SGM shall be determined by the Council.

A special general meeting may be held to make resolutions on any of the following:

- I. Dissolving the Church
- II. Any specific purpose by the Council. Notice in writing of such meeting shall be sent to all members not less than 14 days before the date.
- III. A special general meeting may also be requisitioned for a specific purpose by order in writing to the secretary of not less than **a third of the** members and such meetings shall be held within 21 days of the date of the requisition.

The Quorum for the General Meetings shall be not less than two thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the registered members of the Church.

12.7.3 Procedure at the General Meetings

- a) At all meetings, the chairperson, or in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson, or in the absence of both these officers, a member selected by the Board shall take the chair.
- b) The Chairperson may at his/her discretion limit the number of persons permitted to speak in favor of and against any motion
- c) Resolutions shall be decided by simple voting by a show of hands. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

12.8 Co-option of Members to the Church Council

The Council may co-opt people who represent a specific area of interest or issue under consideration by the Council. The co-option of a member shall be based on their expertise, knowledge and experience and his/her mandate shall be based on terms approved by the Council. The co-opted member shall serve only for the specific assignment and shall participate on the discussion and decision making though without voting rights.

13. LOCAL CHURCH GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The Church Board shall lead the day to day operations of each Local Church (Church Branch)

13.1. The Church shall govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures (Ephesians 4:3, 13)

13.2. The lead pastor shall be the Chief Executive Officer and the spiritual leader of the Branch; leading the Church on day to day basis, providing spiritual leadership for the

Church, and accountable to the Church membership; through the Church Board. The lead pastor shall lead the pastoral team.

13.3. Church Board:

- 13.3.1.** The Church Board shall be the leadership body of the Local Church. The Church Board shall comprise not more than nine (9) members.
- 13.3.2.** The Board shall have a chairperson, lead pastor, secretary and the treasurer who shall form the executive Committee. The executive team shall be elected during the first Board meeting.
- 13.3.3.** A third of the Board members shall retire annually but eligible for re-appointment. The chairperson shall be the last to retire in any three (3) years cycle.
- 13.3.4.** During the first meeting, the Board members shall determine the order of rotational retirement.
- 13.3.5.** Board members may serve for a period of three years continuously and then be eligible for re-election for a further period of three years. After serving for six consecutive years, a Board member shall stand down for at least one year before being eligible for re-election.
- 13.3.6.** The Board shall meet at such times and place as it shall resolve but shall meet not less than once in any three months.

13.4. Functions of the Church Board

The Church Board shall take responsibility for safeguarding the vision and mission of the Church, in particular, they will execute the following functions:-

- 13.4.1.** Provide general oversight of the vision and mission of the Local Church
- 13.4.2.** Provide oversight in the formulation and implementation of the strategic plan of the Church and provide any support required by the lead pastor in realizing the objectives.
- 13.4.3.** Financial oversight to ensure that there is responsible stewardship of the Church's resources including banking mandate. The Board shall approve and oversee the annual Church budget.
- 13.4.4.** Approve all Church annual plans, monitor and evaluate the performance
- 13.4.5.** Approve all appointment/employment of Church staff
- 13.4.6.** Responsible for the Church staff welfare including chartering and review of compensation plan for the lead pastor, pastoral team and Church staff.
- 13.4.7.** Articulate and safeguard the doctrines of the Church
- 13.4.8.** Ensure compliance with this constitution and the governance laws
- 13.4.9.** Responsible for all disciplinary matters including overseeing and making decisions on members, leaders and pastors' disciplinary issues.
- 13.4.10.** Approve recommendations on Church leadership structure and

reorganization to achieve the Church's vision

- 13.4.11.** Review and approve proposals on acquisition, management, maintenance and disposal of Church property.
- 13.4.12.** Act as the Church trustees
- 13.4.13.** Final authority in matters of finance and property (Acts 11:28, 29).
- 13.4.14.** All Board members shall be subject to one another, and they shall regularly meet together to pray and discuss the spiritual matters of the Church (Acts 13:2).

13.5 Qualifications of the Board Members

Board members shall be members of the Church who:

- 13.5.1 Are of mature spiritual judgment;
- 13.5.2 Have rendered valuable service in the Church;
- 13.5.3 Have been regular members in the Church for at least three (3) years;
- 13.5.4 Are highly respected within and outside the congregation(s);
- 13.5.5 Do not drink intoxicating liquor, smoke or engage in substance abuse.
- 13.5.6 A Board Member must possess all the personal, domestic and pastoral qualifications for the office as clearly laid down in 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Tit. 1:5-9.
- 13.5.7 A husband and wife shall not serve in the same Board

13.6 Appointment of Board Members

- 13.6.1 Proposals for member(s) to be nominated to the Church Board will be made by the members of the Church (Acts 6:3).
- 13.6.2 The proposed name(s) shall be prayerfully considered and subjected to an approval process by the existing Local Church Board.
- 13.6.3 The Board shall make the final list based on the recommendation. The new Board members shall be ratified by the members at the next general meeting of the Church before they start serving
- 13.6.4 The nomination of the Board member shall be publicly confirmed with the laying on of hands of the elders and the prayer of the whole Church (1 Tim 4:14).
- 13.6.5 Appointment shall be for a three-year period as per clause 11.6.5.

13.7 Co-option of Members to the Church Board

The Board may co-opt people who represent a specific area of interest or issue under consideration by the Board. The co-option of a member shall be based on their expertise, knowledge and experience and his/her mandate shall be based on terms approved by the Board. The co-opted member shall serve only for the specific assignment and shall participate on the discussion and decision making though without voting rights.

13.8 Duties of the Executive Committee and Office Bearers

The executive committee of the Board shall comprise of the Chairperson,

Secretary, Treasurer and the Lead Pastor

- 13.8.1 The chairman shall chair all board meetings.
- 13.8.2 The Church secretary shall deal with all the general correspondence of the Church under the supervision of the board.
- 13.8.3 The secretary shall be responsible for maintenance of the list of Church members and shall be the custodian of all the Church documents.
- 13.8.4 The secretary shall be responsible for convening all meetings of the board including all general meetings of the Church and the keeping and preserving of records of all such meetings.
- 13.8.5 The lead pastor shall report the performance and progress of the Church programs to the board for review
- 13.8.6 The treasurer shall be responsible to the board and to the members on all receipts and disbursements and shall maintain proper books of accounts and records of all receipts and expenditure.
- 13.8.7 The treasurer shall ensure that books and records are up to date, preserved and made available for audit and inspection.
- 13.8.8 Any member of the Church may request to inspect the books of accounts and the list of members of the Church upon giving seven days' notice in writing to the Secretary.
- 13.8.9 The board may appoint a Church administrator to deal with Church business as delegated.

13.9 Meetings of the Board

- 13.9.1 The chairperson shall chair the Board meetings. In the absence of the Chair, the Board members in attendance shall appoint one from among them as the Chair.
- 13.9.2 The Board secretary shall, in consultations with the chair and lead pastor, set the agenda, issue notices of meetings, and keep a record of the proceedings at all meetings of the Board. In the absence of the secretary, the Board members shall appoint a recording secretary to record the minutes of meetings.
- 13.9.3 The meetings of the Board shall be held at least once every three months.
- 13.9.4 On matters requiring urgent attention, a meeting may be held on one day's notice if a quorum of the Board is present. The Board quorum shall be 50% of the Church Board members.
- 13.9.5 For efficiency and effectiveness, the Board shall constitute, with clear terms of reference, thematic Committees to deal with finance, human resources, building and maintenance, among others whose decision shall be ratified by the Church Board.

13.10 Release of Board Members from Service

A Board member shall be released from the Board on the following grounds;

- 13.10.1 Transfer/relocation to a new environment inhibit him/her from serving in the Board
- 13.10.2 A calling to minister the word of God elsewhere.
- 13.10.3 Any circumstance or reason making him/her not to fully agree with the confession of faith as outlined in this constitution
- 13.10.4 Preaching, teaching or manner of life which is inconsistent with the doctrinal or moral standards of the Church.'
- 13.10.5 At will.

13.11 The Release process from service for Board members

The release process for Board members shall be as follows:

- 13.11.1 The receipt of the formal complaint or request which shall be recorded through the Board secretary and itemized as an agenda item for the Board next meeting or special sitting that follows.
- 13.11.2 The Board shall make a decision to suspend or relieve the Board member of any Board duties for a while as the matter is being deliberated on
- 13.11.3 The Board shall appoint a special Committee to look into the matter if necessary including giving an opportunity for the member to be heard and make submission to the Board
- 13.11.4 The Board sub-Committee shall present their report to the Board and the Board decision shall be final.
- 13.11.5 Release of the Board member from service if found culpable.

13.12 The pastoral team

The lead pastor shall be the spiritual leader and the chief executive officer of the Local Church. The lead pastor shall be accountable to the Church Board and may sit in any or all Committees as may be established by the Board. Pastors shall be accountable to the lead pastor and may be responsible for Church departments.

13.12.1 The Lead Pastor

The lead pastor shall be a member of the Church Board and in charge of all spiritual matters. The lead pastor shall work hand in hand with the Church Board to ensure the smooth running of the Church. The lead pastor shall undertake the following specific roles as the chief executive officer of the Church:

- 13.12.1 Providing spiritual leadership for the Local Church with accountability to the Church membership through the Church Board.
- 13.12.2 Overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Church including implementation of plans and programs, which support the vision of the Church.
- 13.12.3 Implement activities towards achievement of the vision of the Church and set the overall direction of Church programs
- 13.12.4 Review and monitor the ministry goals and performance and seek support

from the Board

- 13.12.5 Chair pastoral meetings comprising other pastors of the branch Churches
- 13.12.6 The lead pastor with the assistance of the pastors (the pastoral team), shall provide the Spiritual leadership for the Church/branch Churches
- 13.12.7 Be the Church spokesperson and represent the Local Church in the Society.
- 13.12.8 Provide leadership in worship, evangelism, discipleship and mentoring for the spiritual growth of the Church members.
- 13.12.9 Overall responsibility for the Church staff
- 13.12.10 Abide, subscribe and protect the Church constitution.
- 13.12.11 The role of the lead pastor's spouse will be to support the pastor in Execution of the Church's mandate. He/she may be asked to lead specific Ministries in Church.
- 13.12.12 The lead pastor shall recommend persons to be appointed as pastors to the Board. The Board shall make the final decision.
- 13.12.13 The lead pastor shall be responsible for the appointment of Church leaders.
- 13.12.14 The lead pastor may recommend to the Church Board one of the pastors to Assist him in the day-to-day running of the Church. Once approved by the Board, such pastor may sit in the Church Board meetings as an ex-official and substantially represent the pastor in his/her absence.
- 13.12.15 The lead pastor shall report the performance and progress of the Church programs to the Board for review
- 13.12.16 The lead pastor shall be entitled to receive allowances for his service.

13.13 Appointment Process of the Lead Pastor

- 13.13.1 A Pastors Search Committee shall be formed by the Church Council in agreement with the overseer of the Church to deal with appointment of a lead pastor when the need arises.
- 13.13.2 The Overseer of the Church shall prayerfully recommend to the Management Council the possible candidates for interview
- 13.13.3 The Search Committee shall interview possible candidates and choose one to serve as the interim lead pastor.
- 13.13.4 The candidates shall appear for the interview with their spouses
- 13.13.5 The candidate shall be invited to serve in the capacity of interim lead pastor for a probationary period of six (6) months. The Board shall determine his/her job description, leave entitlement, remunerations and benefits.
- 13.13.6 After the successful completion of the six (6) months' probation, the Board shall formally appoint the lead pastor during the next Special General Meeting or Annual General Meeting.
- 13.13.7 The release from service for the lead pastor shall be as per clauses 13.9 and

13.10 of this constitution.

13.14 Pastors

The following shall apply for a pastor

- 13.14.1 The pastors shall be appointed by the Overseer of the Church in consultation with the Church Board upon recommendation of the lead pastor if their gifting are already evident in the service to God. No man/woman shall be nominated without his/her prior consent and such consent should arise out of a personal conviction of the Lord's calling.
- 13.14.2 The Church shall appoint into its pastoral team both men and women pastors.
- 13.14.3 Roles of the pastors will be assigned by Church Board upon recommendation of the lead pastor.
- 13.14.4 The appointment of a pastor shall be publicly confirmed with the laying on of hands and prayer by the entire Church (one Tim 4:14).
- 13.14.5 The pastors may receive allowances for their services as may be determined by the Church Board from time to time.
- 13.14.6 The role of the pastor's spouse will be to support the associate pastor in execution of the Church's mandate. He/she may be asked to lead specific ministries in Church.

13.15 Appointment process of the Pastors

- 13.15.1 The lead pastor shall recommend persons to be appointed as pastors to the Board.
- 13.15.2 A Pastors Search Committee shall be formed by the Overseer the Church in agreement with the Church Board to deal with appointment of a lead pastor when the need arises.
- 13.15.3 The Lead pastor shall prayerfully recommend to the Church Board the possible candidates for interview
- 13.15.4 The Search Committee shall interview possible candidates and choose one to serve as the interim lead pastor.
- 13.15.5 A candidate shall appear for the interview with his/her spouse, if married.
- 13.15.6 The candidates shall be invited to serve in such capacity for a probationary period of six (6) months.
- 13.15.7 The Board shall determine his/her job description; leave entitlement, remuneration and benefits.
- 13.15.8 After the successful completion of the six months' probation, the lead pastor shall confirm the pastor to service upon being laid hands on by the Overseer.
- 13.15.9 Pastors shall be required to abide by and uphold Church doctrine and the Church Constitution.

13.16 Release of Pastors from Service

A pastor shall be released from service on the same ground as outlined in 13.9 and 13.10

13.17 The Release process

The release process for a pastor shall be as outlined in 13.9 and 13.10

13.17 Church Administration

The Board may appoint a Church administrator to deal with Church business as delegated.

14. CHURCH DEPARTMENTS

There shall be established departments to address specific needs of the Church. The departments shall be led by departmental leaders. This shall be the action level and shall focus on specific functions directed towards achievement of the vision of the Church.

The main function of departmental leaders in the local Church shall be to assist the lead pastor in implementing the ministry goals and action plan in order to achieve the Church's vision. The duties of the departmental leaders include:

- a) Coordinating department activities.
- b) Develop annual plans and budgets for the departments.
- c) Periodically monitor and evaluate departmental activities.
- d) Ensuring harmony across the department, he/she is in charge.
- e) Implementing strategic actions within the department.
- f) Administering the ordinances of the Church, such as preparation for the Lord's table.
- g) The departmental leadership shall regularly meet under the chair of the department's leader. It is desirable that departmental leaders meet together from time to time under the leadership of the lead pastor.

14.1. Qualifications of Departmental Leaders

14.1.1. The departmental leadership shall be composed of men and women who meet qualifications for leaders as stipulated in Acts 6:3 and 1 Timothy 3: 8-13.

14.1.2. Anyone who is 21 years of age and above and who is a member of the Church is eligible for nomination as a department leader provided that he or she:-

- I. Has been a member and a regular attendant of the Church for not less than three (3) years.
- II. Has served in a ministry of the Church where commitment and

leadership qualities have been demonstrated.

14.2. Appointment of Departmental Leaders

- 14.2.1.** The lead pastor shall be responsible for appointment of departmental leaders.
- 14.2.2.** The lead pastor shall present the list of names of the persons to be appointed to the Board.
- 14.2.3.** Notification of the persons to be appointed as leaders shall be made to the Church membership and if no objection is received within the stipulated time of 21 days.
- 14.2.4.** The appointment shall be formalized through laying on of hands.

14.3. Termination of Office of Departmental Leaders:

A departmental leader shall be released from service on the following grounds:

- 14.3.1.** Transfer or relocation to a new environment, which inhibit him/her from serving in the department.
- 14.3.2.** A calling to minister the word of God elsewhere.
- 14.3.3.** Any circumstance or reason making him/her not to fully agree with the confession of faith as outlined in this constitution.
- 14.3.4.** Preaching, teaching, serving or manner of life, which is inconsistent with the doctrinal or moral standards of the Church.
- 14.3.5.** At will.

14.4. The Release process for Departmental Leaders

The release process for departmental leaders shall be as follows:

- 14.4.1.** The receipt of the formal complaint or request which shall be recorded through the pastoral secretariat and itemized as an agenda item for next meeting or special sitting that follows.
- 14.4.2.** The pastoral team shall make a decision to suspend or relieve the departmental leader from duties temporarily as the matter is being deliberated on.
- 14.4.3.** The pastoral team shall appoint a special Pastoral Committee to look into the matter if necessary, including an opportunity for the departmental leader to be heard and make submission pastoral team.
- 14.4.4.** The pastoral sub-Committee shall present their report for a decision, which shall be final.
- 14.4.5.** Release of the departmental leader from service if found culpable.

15. TRUSTEES

- a) All land, buildings and other immovable property and all investments and securities which shall be acquired by the Church shall be vested in names of not less than 3 (Three) trustees drawn from the Church Council who shall be members of the

- Church and shall be ratified at an annual general meeting for a period of five years. On retirement such trustees shall be eligible for re-election.
- b) The trustees shall pay all income received from property vested in the trustees to the Treasurer.

Any expenditure in respect of such property which in the opinion of the trustees is necessary or desirable shall be reported by the trustees to the Board, which shall authorize expenditure of such moneys as it thinks fit.

16. FORMATION OF CHURCH BRANCHES

- 16.1 One of the goals of the Church is to extend the Gospel through the planting Church Branches
- 16.2 The Church will have branches
- 16.3 The Open House Church shall hold all Church assets in trust.
- 16.4 Being one of the key goals of the Church, The Open House Church will commission
In addition, release leader(s) to plant new branches in other locations.
- 16.5 The commissioned leader/s and the new Church branch will remain under the Oversight of The Open House Church until the new Church leadership is Constituted and is financially stable.
- 16.6 Each new branch established shall be a fully independent branch, although it Remains affiliated and with very close fellowship with the main Church.
- 16.7 The Church Council is mandated to review, vet and approve or revoke any Request for Church cover.

17. CHURCH FUNDS

- 17.1 The Church funds will mainly be derived from Tithes and offerings, borrowing, Hire of church facilities and equipment, Fundraising activities and Donations.
- 17.2 The funds of the Church shall be used for such purposes as shall be determined by the Board, which shall have authority to disburse the funds of the Church for, among others the following purposes:
- a) General ministry expenses
 - b) Compensation/remuneration of Church staff
 - c) Evangelistic activities
 - d) Benevolence
 - e) Maintenance of buildings and contents therein
 - f) Capital development
 - g) Tithe to the Secretariat
 - h) Investment
 - i) Compassion initiatives
- 17.3 The treasurer shall be responsible for all monies and funds received by and paid by the Church. The collection and payments shall be done in line with best practice adhering to internal controls and checks and balances. This role shall be supported by specific appointment of responsible members.

- 17.4 The Church may borrow or raise money on such terms and on such security as shall be agreed and sanctioned by the Church Board.
- 17.5 Church income shall be raised from members giving, hire of premises or facilities and other income generating activities sanctioned by the Church Board.
- 17.6 The Church shall operate bank accounts upon approval of the Board with a clear banking mandate approved and reviewed by the Board on an annual basis.
- 17.7 Church funds shall be managed with clear authorization policies. Procurement and all other policies shall be geared to achieve value for money to the Church in an efficient and competitive way.
- 17.8 The banking mandate shall include the Board chairperson, the treasurer, the secretary, the lead pastor and one other Board member with the treasurer and lead pastor as either mandatory signature.
- 17.9 A sum to be determined from time to time by the Board may be kept in cash and/or bank accounts to be operated by persons appointed by the Board for petty cash disbursements to meet office and ministries expenses and for which proper records shall be kept.
- 17.10 No funds of the Church shall be distributed among the members of the Church for personal gain.
- 17.11 The Church books of accounts shall be audited annually.
- 17.12 The Church shall operate on an annual budget.
- 17.13 Any member of the Church may request to inspect the books of accounts and the list of members of the Church upon giving seven days' notice in writing to the Secretary.

18 AUDITOR

- a) An auditor shall be ratified for the following year by the annual general meeting. All the Church's accounts, records and documents shall be opened to the inspection of the auditor at any time. The Treasurer shall produce an account of his receipts and payments and a statement of assets and liabilities made up to a date, which shall not be less than six weeks and not more than three months before the date of the annual general meeting.

The auditor shall examine such annual accounts and statements and either clarify that they are correct, duly vouched and in accordance with the law or report to the Church in what respect they are found to be incorrect, un vouched or not in accordance with the law.

- b) A copy of the auditor's report on the accounts and statements together with such accounts and statements shall be furnished to all members at the same time as the notice convening the annual general meeting is sent out. An auditor may be paid such honorarium for his duties as may be resolved by the annual general meeting appointing him.

No auditor shall be an office bearer, a member of the Council of the Church or member of the Local Church Board.

19. AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the constitution of the Church must be approved by at least a two-thirds majority of members at an Annual General Meeting of the Church. They cannot, however, be implemented without prior consent in writing of the Registrar, obtained upon application to him made in writing and signed by three of the office bearers.

20. DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

- a) The Church shall not be dissolved except by a resolution passed at a general meeting of members by a vote of two-thirds of the members present. The quorum at the meeting shall be as shown above. If no quorum is obtained, the proposal to dissolve the Church shall be submitted to a further general meeting which shall be held one month later. Notice of this meeting shall be given to all members of the Church at least 14 days before the date of the meeting. The quorum for this second meeting shall be the number of members present.
- b) Provided, however, that no dissolution shall be effected without prior permission in writing of the Registrar, obtained upon application to him made in writing and signed by three of the office bearers.
- c) When the dissolution of the Church has been approved by the Registrar, no further action shall be taken by the Council and office bearers of the church in connection with the aims of the Church other than to get in and liquidate for cash and all the assets of the Church. Subject to the payment of all the debts of the Church, the balance thereof shall be distributed in such other manner as may be resolved by the meeting at which the resolution for dissolution is passed.

21. INSPECTION OF ACCOUNTS AND LIST OF MEMBERS

The books of account, all documents relating thereto, and a list of members of the Church shall be available for inspection at the registered office of the Church by any officer or member of the Church on giving not less than seven 6 days notice in writing to the Church.

22. INTERPRETATION OF CONSTITUTION

The Church Council shall have final authority in matters of interpretation and application of the letter and spirit of this constitution.

END