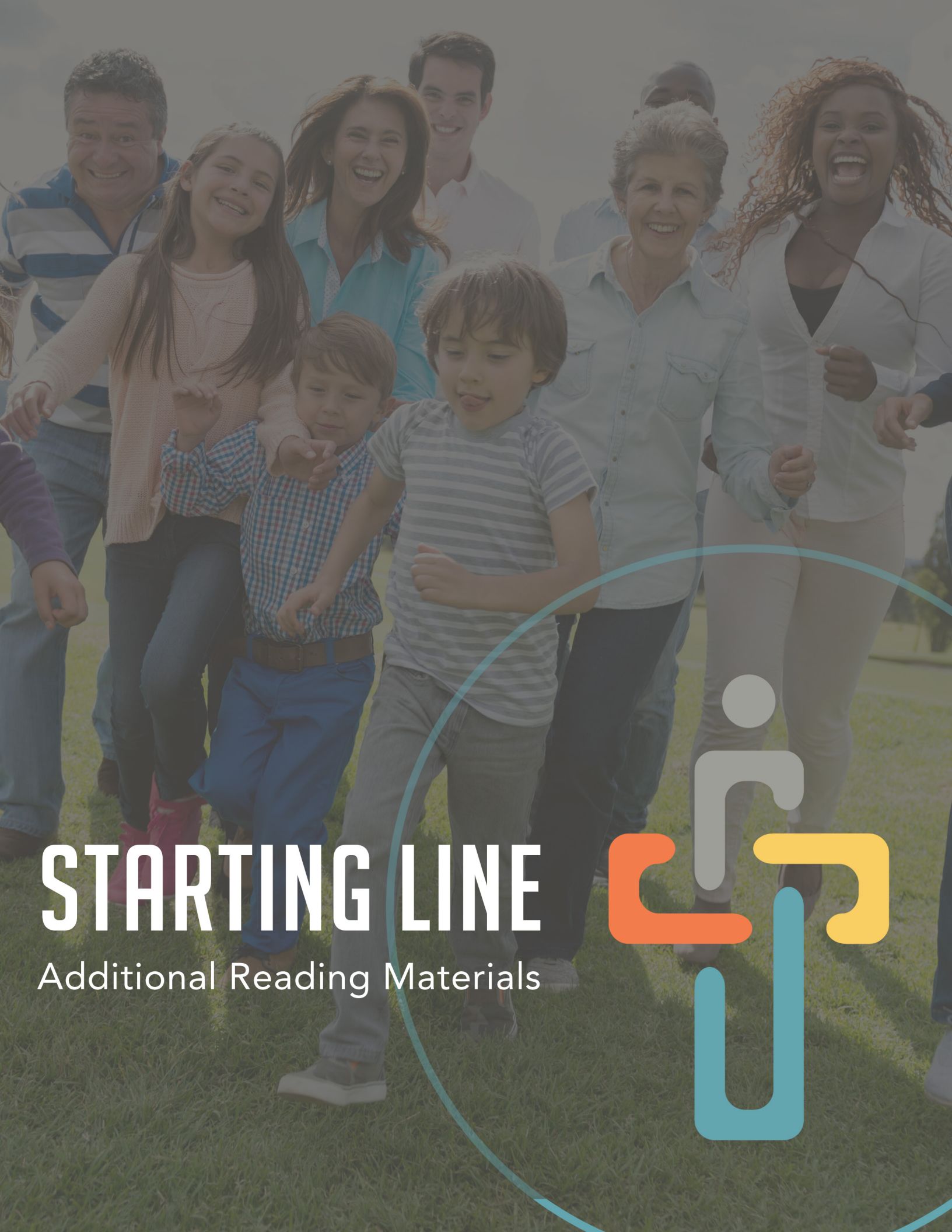

STARTING LINE

Additional Reading Materials

Starting Line Membership

Additional Reading Materials

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Our Faith Statement

What We Believe

In essential beliefs — we have unity.

There is one body and one Spirit … one hope … one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all … **EPHESIANS 4:4-6 (NIV)**

In nonessential beliefs — we have liberty.

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters … Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls … So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God … So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. **ROMANS 14:1, 4, 12, 22 (NIV)**

In all our beliefs — we show charity.

… If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. **1 CORINTHIANS 13:2 (NIV)**

The Essentials We Believe

About the Bible

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. **(2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17; 2 PETER 1:21)**

About God

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **(MATTHEW 28:19; JOHN 14:10, 13, 16, 17, 26; 2 CORINTHIANS 13:14)**

About Jesus Christ: His Person

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. **(MATTHEW 1:18, 23; LUKE 1:35; JOHN 17:11, 21)**

About Human Beings

We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also spiritual death, which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature; and, in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word and deed. **(GENESIS 1:26-27, 2:7; JEREMIAH 17:9; EZEKIEL 18:4; ROMANS 3:23, 5:12; EPHESIANS 2:3)**

About Jesus Christ: His Work

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. **(ISAIAH 53:6; JOHN 3:16; ROMANS 5:9, 12, 6:23; 1 CORINTHIANS 15:3, 21; 1 PETER 2:24)**

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life for us there as High Priest and Advocate. **(LUKE 24:6; ACTS 1:9; HEBREWS 4:14, 10:12)**

About Salvation

We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby become children of God. **(JOHN 1:12-13, 3:3; 1 PETER 1:23)**

About Eternal Security

We believe that those who have been born again have everlasting life and will not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life; and that the Lord Jesus Christ gives them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither will any man pluck them out of God's hand. **(JOHN 5:24, 10:28-29)**

About the Church

We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and that it includes all who have been born again. Its mission is to offer acceptable worship to God and to serve Him faithfully by spreading the Gospel and making disciples of all nations. The ordinances of the Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. **(MATTHEW 16:18, 28:19-20; ACTS 2:41; 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-29; EPHESIANS 1:22-23, 3:10-11, 4:11-16)**

About the Second Coming

We believe in "that blessed hope," the personal return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **(JOHN 14:3; ACTS 1:11; 1 THESSALONIANS 4:13-18; TITUS 2:13; REVELATION 1:7)**

About Eternity

We believe in the physical resurrection of the body. Unbelievers will be eternally separated from God's presence, but believers will live and reign with Him forever. **(MATTHEW 25:46; JOHN 3:36; 5:28-29; REVELATION 20:12, 15).**

Our Membership Commitment

Desiring fellowship with the members of this church, I now reaffirm my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. Being in agreement with Walnut Hill's statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Walnut Hill church family. Submitting myself to the church's constitution and bylaws, I further commit myself to God and to other Walnut Hill members to support my church in the following ways:

1. I Will Protect the Unity of My Church

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. **ROMANS 14:19 (NIV)**

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **ROMANS 15:5,6 (NIV)**

... by acting in love toward other members
My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **JOHN 15:12 (NIV)**

... by refusing to gossip
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs... **EPHESIANS 4:29 (NIV)**

... by following the leaders
Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. **HEBREWS 13:17 (NIV)**

2. I Will Share the Responsibilities of My Church

... by praying for its growth
To the church ... we always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. **1 THESS. 1:1,2 (NIV)**

... by inviting the unchurched to attend
Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. **LUKE 14:23**

... by warmly welcoming those who visit
So reach out and welcome one another ... Jesus did it; now you do it! **ROMANS 15:7 (MSG)**

3. I Will Serve The Ministries of My Church

... by developing a servant's heart
Each one of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus; who ... made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant ... **PHILIPPIANS 2:4-7 (NIV)**

... by discovering and using my gifts and talents
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others ... **1 PETER 4:10 (NIV)**

... by allowing my church to equip me

God gave ... some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. **EPHESIANS 4:11,12 (NIV)**

4. I Will Support the Vision and Testimony of My Church

... by attending faithfully

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another ... **HEBREWS 10:25 (NIV)**

... by living a godly life

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel of Christ. **PHILIPPIANS 1:27 (NIV)**

... by giving regularly

Every Sunday each of you make an offering ... Be as generous as you can. **1 CORINTHIANS 16:2 (MSG)**

The Meaning of Baptism

A. Why should I be baptized?

1. Because Christ submitted to it.

One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and He was baptized by John in the Jordan River. **MARK 1:9 (NLT)**

2. Because Christ's last words on earth reaffirmed it.

Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. **MATTHEW 28:19 (NLT)**

3. Because the Apostles practiced it.

Peter replied, "Each of you must turn from your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." **ACTS 2:38 (NLT)**

B. What is the significance of baptism?

1. Through baptism, we declare our allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Those who believed what Peter said were baptized ... **ACTS 2:41 (NLT)**

2. Through baptism, we illustrate our new life in Christ.

For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. **ROMANS 6:4 (NLT)**

3. Through baptism, we affirm our connection to Christ's Church.

Those who believed ... were baptized and added to the church ... **ACTS 2:41 (NLT)**

*Baptism doesn't make you a Christ-follower – it simply shows that you are a Christ-follower. Baptism does not save you; only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring. It's a symbol of your salvation, an outward sign of an inward reality.

C. Who should be baptized?

Every person who has believed in Christ.

But now the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized. **ACTS 8:12 (NLT)**

... Many others in Corinth also became believers and were baptized. **ACTS 18:8 (NLT)**

D. What about children?

Children should be old enough to give a true profession of faith. We do not deny the validity of infant baptism, where it anticipates conversion, nor do we demand rebaptism when it is performed in infancy or by some form other than immersion. We leave the issue of rebaptism at the discretion of the individual believer.

Baby Dedication: We dedicate children to God at Walnut Hill as a way for parents to publicly commit to teach their children about Jesus and raise them in a loving, godly home. We pray that the child will come to know Christ and commit as a church to help impact the child's life in every way possible.

E. When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have believed.

Those who accepted His message were baptized … that day. **ACTS 2:41 (NIV)**

As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?" He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. **ACTS 8:36,38**

F. How should a believer be baptized?

We do not aim to be divisive on this point but here at Walnut Hill we practice baptism by immersion.

a. We do this because we believe **Jesus was baptized this way**.

*As Jesus was coming **up out** of the water …* **MARK 1:10 (NIV)**

b. We do this because we believe the word "baptize" means "to plunge, dip, immerse."

- Martin Luther … "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the word imports and the mystery signifies."
- John Calvin … "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."
- John Wesley … "Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

c. We do this because we believe immersion best symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

d. Other modes may be necessary due to circumstances.

e. We do this because the early history of the church clearly confirms baptism by immersion.

The Meaning of the Lord's Supper

(1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34 NLT)

Jesus never asked His disciples to remember His birth. But He did instruct them to remember His death and resurrection. The Lord's Supper was designed for this very purpose. Like baptism, it is an object lesson that helps us focus our attention on the grandeur of our salvation and center our faith in the Lord of our salvation. Because it is a family meal, the Lord's Supper also reflects our connection to our Christian brothers and sisters around the world.

A. What is the Lord's Supper?

1. It is a simple meal, not an elaborate ceremony.

On the night when He was betrayed, the Lord Jesus ***took a loaf of bread*** *...* (V. 23)

2. It is a reminder of what Christ did.

... and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in ***remembrance*** *of me."* (V. 24)

3. It is a symbolic meal.

*In the same way, He took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "****This cup*** *is the new covenant between God and you, sealed by the shedding of my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it."* (V. 25)

4. It is a statement of faith.

For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, ***you are announcing the Lord's death*** *until He comes again.* (V. 26)

B. Who should take the Lord's Supper?

Only those who have surrendered their lives to Christ and are prepared to participate.

For if you eat the bread or drink the cup ***unworthily, not honoring the body of Christ****, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself.* (V. 29)

C. How do I prepare myself for the Lord's Supper?

1. By examining my life before God

So if anyone eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord unworthily, that person is guilty of sinning against the body and the blood of the Lord. ***That is why you should examine yourself before eating the bread and drinking from the cup.*** *For if you eat the bread or drink the cup unworthily, not honoring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God's judgment upon yourself. That is why many of you are weak and sick and some have even died.* ***But if we examine ourselves, we will not be examined by God and judged in this way.*** (V. 27-31)

2. By confessing my sins to God

But if we ***confess our sins*** *to Him, He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong.*
I JOHN 1:9 (NLT)

3. By recommitting my life to God

And so, dear Christian friends, I plead with you to ***give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice*** *— the kind He will accept. When you think of what He has done for you, is this too much to ask?* **ROMANS 12:1 (NLT)**

4. By restoring my relationship with others

So ***if you*** *are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly* ***remember that someone has something against you****, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar.* ***Go and be reconciled to that person.*** *Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.* **MATTHEW 5:23,24 (NLT)**

D. How often should we observe the Lord's Supper?

Scripture does not tell us. Some churches do it weekly; others quarterly. Here at Walnut Hill, we have chosen to observe it monthly in most of our services and biweekly at our 8 a.m. service in Bethel.

Constitution and Bylaws

Revision Date: November 2005

WALNUT HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH
CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I
Name

The name of this church is WALNUT HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH, incorporated in the State of Connecticut.

ARTICLE II
Purpose

By the grace of God, this church exists to make the invisible Christ visible in the Greater Danbury area and around the world. To fulfill this purpose, the church shall provide an evangelical Bible teaching and preaching ministry to be accomplished through the assembling of God's children for Bible reading, prayer, worship and work; the administration of the New Testament ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism; and the maintenance of a preaching and teaching ministry of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ both at home and abroad for the salvation of souls and the spiritual growth of believers.

ARTICLE III
Confession of Faith

The doctrinal position of this church shall be based upon the following confession of faith:

1. We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21)
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19; John 14:10, 13, 16, 17, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14)
3. We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man. (Matthew 1:18, 23; Luke 1:35; John 17:11, 21)
4. We believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature; and, in the case of those who reach moral responsibility, become sinners in thought, word and deed. (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7; Jeremiah 17:9; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:3)
5. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice; and that all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood. (Isaiah 53:6; John 3:16; Romans 5:9, 5:12 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15:3, 15:21; 1 Peter 2:24)
6. We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into Heaven, and in His present life for us there as High Priest and Advocate. (Luke 24:6; Acts 1:9; Hebrews 4:14; 10:12)
7. We believe that all who receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit, and thereby, become children of God. (John 1:12-13, 3:3; 1 Peter 1:23)
8. We believe that those who have been born again have everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death unto life; and that the Lord Jesus Christ gives unto them eternal life and they will never perish, neither will any man pluck them out of God's hand. (John 5:24, 10:28-29)
9. We believe that the Church is the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head and that it includes all who have been born again. Its mission is to offer acceptable worship to God and to serve Him faithfully by spreading the Gospel and making disciples of all nations. The ordinances of the Church are baptism and the Lord's Supper. (Matthew 16:18, 28:19-20; Acts 2:41; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; Ephesians 1:22-23, 3:10-11, 4:11-16)

10. We believe in “that blessed hope,” the personal return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7)

11. We believe in the physical resurrection of the body. Unbelievers will be eternally separated from God’s presence, but believers will live and reign with Him forever. (Matthew 25:46; John 3:36, 5:28-29; Revelation 20:12, 20:15)

ARTICLE IV
Membership

To be accepted into membership of this church, a person shall be a believer in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and shall be received into the fellowship of the church in accordance with the bylaws.

ARTICLE V
Covenant of Fellowship

Desiring fellowship with the members of this church, I now reaffirm my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and acknowledge Him to be the Lord and Master of my life. I covenant and promise by His grace to submit to the practice and discipline of this church body as it seeks to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. I also promise to share in its work and support it by attendance, prayer and gifts as the Lord enables and leads me.

I further understand that if my views on the church Covenant of Fellowship change, or if my doctrinal views change in such a way as to alter or negate any of the doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith and Covenant of Fellowship of this church, it is my responsibility to notify the Pastor or the Chairman of the Board of Elders of this change and submit to the decision of the Board of Elders as outlined in the bylaws regarding membership.

ARTICLE VI
Government

The Lord Jesus Christ is recognized as the head of the Church and the Holy Scriptures as the supreme guide. The earthly government of this church is vested in its members who exercise the right of control in all of its affairs, limited only by this constitution and bylaws.

This church is free and independent of other churches and ecclesiastical authorities, unaffiliated with any denomination. It will, however, work in harmony with other individuals, churches or organizations of like precious faith.

ARTICLE VII
Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any business meeting called for such purpose. Such a meeting may be an annual meeting or a congregational meeting.

The announcements for such meetings will take the form of written notices to be sent to the active membership within a period of not less than 30 days before the proposed meetings. They must be supplemented by written announcements in the bulletin for the two Sundays preceding the meetings.

The quorum will consist of 20% of the voting members entitled to vote.

An amendment to the constitution shall require a nine-tenths (90%) affirmative vote of the voting members in attendance.

No proxy or absentee votes will be honored.

ARTICLE VIII
Organization

This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious and educational purposes, including for such purposes the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c) (3) the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE IX
Exclusion

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article VIII, hereof.

No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and in the corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the corporation shall not carry on other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE X
Dissolution

Should God, in His sovereignty, allow this organization to cease its ministry and thereby dissolve as a corporation, all remaining assets shall, after paying any existing liabilities, be distributed, as the existing membership directs, to exclusively religious, charitable or educational organizations which are in keeping with the purpose and objectives of the corporation, under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding revision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

WALNUT HILL COMMUNITY CHURCH
BYLAWS

ARTICLE A
Membership

Section A.1 - Procedure

Persons shall be received into the membership of the church by confession of a personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

All candidates will undergo the following membership procedure:

1. Attend an orientation class unless waived by the Board of Elders for extenuating circumstances.
2. Sign a statement declaring their support for the constitution and bylaws.
3. Bear testimony to their faith and acknowledge that they have received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior before two Elders.
4. Be voted into membership by the Board of Elders.
5. Be introduced to the congregation.

Letters of termination or recommendation from any other church shall be accepted, but they are not part of the membership procedure for this church.

Reception of new members may take place during the worship service on any Lord's Day.

Section A.2 - Age and Privileges

No persons will be received into membership until they have reached their 12th birthday; and no members will have a vote

until they have reached their 18th birthday. Except for the power of voting, all members under 18 will have all the privileges of the church, including the right to attend business meetings and expression from the floor.

No member under 21 years of age shall be elected to the stated offices of the church as described in section B.1 of the bylaws.

Section A.3 - Responsibilities

The members shall exercise their responsibilities, and respond to the spiritual leadership and oversight of the Board of Elders (acting under the authority of God and His Word) as declared in their support of the constitution's Covenant of Fellowship (Article V).

Discipline of the members shall be in the hands of the Board of Elders and shall be in accordance with Scripture.

Section A.4 - Demonstration of Church Unity and Steps for Dispute Resolution

To support the purpose of this church (re: Article II of the Constitution) and in obedience to the Scriptures, members are exhorted to maintain unity in the church (1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesians 4:3-5). Members will at all times strive to live in love (Hebrews 13:1), peace (Romans 14:19), harmony (Romans 12:6) and mutual acceptance of one another (Romans 15:7).

When disagreements or disputes in all matters arise between members, the parties involved will be encouraged to resolve their differences according to Scripture so as to maintain a spirit of unity and love. Such disagreements or disputes shall, as far as possible, be settled under the guidance of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-17) as follows:

1. The two parties will first seek to resolve their differences between themselves. (verse 15)
2. If step 1 fails, they will attempt to resolve them with witnesses. (verse 16)
3. If step 2 fails, the matter will be referred to the Board of Elders for resolution. (verse 17)

In extreme situations when a disagreement or dispute cannot be resolved in the above manner, members will submit to binding arbitration by a panel of three mutually respected Christian leaders. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8)

Section A.5 - Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated in any one of the following ways:

1. By death.
2. By resignation received in writing and approved by the Board of Elders.
3. By inactivity for a period of one year, as determined by the Board of Elders. These members will, when practical, be contacted by the church prior to their termination.
4. By exclusion from membership where appropriate in accordance with the Scriptures, and the Confession of Faith and Covenant of Fellowship contained in Articles III and V of the church's constitution, and as determined by the Board of Elders.

Following termination, their names will be removed from the membership list. This will be reported to the congregation at the next annual meeting.

Section A.6 - Inactive Members

Upon the decision of the Board of Elders, members will retain their membership but will be placed on inactive status in any one of the following ways:

1. By relocating outside the Greater Danbury area
2. By not attending services or inactivity in the church for a period of one year because they have been ill, away at school, on special assignment or involved in Christian service

Such members will be notified of this change in status in writing by the Board of Elders. Their names will be reported to the congregation at the next annual meeting.

Inactive members will not be eligible to vote.

Upon their request, inactive members may be reinstated by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE B
Officers, Staff and Committees

Section B.1 - Stated Officers
The stated officers of this church will consist of the Board of Elders, office of secretary and office of treasurer. All officers and committee chairpersons must be members of the church.

Section B.2 - Senior Pastor
The senior pastor must qualify as an Elder in accordance with Scripture. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)

Candidates for the senior pastor will be nominated by the Board of Elders. The members will vote on the selected candidate at announced meetings in accordance with the bylaws.

The senior pastor will shepherd the flock, preach and teach the Word, and promote the spiritual welfare of the church and those whom it serves.

The senior pastor will without further election be a member of the Board of Elders.

The senior pastor will be responsible for the leadership of the pastoral staff. With the consent of the Board of Elders, the senior pastor will also be responsible for the hiring and termination of full-time pastoral staff.

The senior pastor's relationship with the church may be terminated by a written notice of such intention three months in advance by either the Board of Elders or the senior pastor.

The Elders may nominate, and members of the congregation approve, more than one person to serve in the role of senior pastor. In such circumstances, each will without further election, be a member of the Board of Elders; however, they shall only be entitled to one unified vote on any motion before the Elders. The pastor with executive pastor responsibilities shall modify church policies accordingly. In the case of a vacancy by one or more person serving in the senior pastor role, the Elder Board will institute an interim solution until a proposal to address the vacancy is approved by members of the congregation.

Section B.3 - Pastoral Staff
All pastoral staff must demonstrate spiritual leadership qualities in accordance with Scripture. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9)

Candidates for the pastoral staff will be approved by the Board of Elders. They will hold their office under the leadership of the senior pastor.

The pastoral staff (except for the senior pastor as described in Section B.2 and appointments as described in Section C.1) are not members of the Board of Elders. However, they may, from time to time, be requested to serve on Board-appointed committees as part of their pastoral responsibilities.

All full-time pastoral staff and their spouses will be considered as members of the church.

Section B.4 - Deacons and Deaconesses
Deacons and Deaconesses are those who assist the Board of Elders in the leadership, oversight, shepherding and administration of the church. They must qualify for their duties according with Scripture. (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

They will be appointed by and will be responsible to the Board of Elders to perform a specific task or ministry.

Section B.5 - The Office of Secretary
The secretary will be appointed by the Board of Elders.

The secretary will keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the church, and will also keep a register of the members of the church, the date of their reception and removal, and a record of baptisms, marriages and deaths.

The secretary will be responsible for the notices of all meetings when such notice is required, and handle correspondence pertaining to the duties and responsibilities of the office.

Section B.6 - The Office of Treasurer
The treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Elders.

The treasurer will account for the general finances of the church that fall under the jurisdiction of the Board of Elders. He/she shall be responsible for the proper fund accounting and dispersal under the direction of the Board of Elders. Upon request by the Board of Elders, the treasurer will attend the meetings of the Board of Elders and report on the financial condition of the church. The treasurer's records will be balanced monthly for the protection of the office holder and the church.

The treasurer will be bonded for a reasonable percentage of the annual church budget as determined annually by the Board of Elders.

Section B.7 - The Office of Assistant Treasurer
The assistant treasurer will be appointed by the Board of Elders as necessary. This person will assist the treasurer of the church in his/her designated duties and will be authorized to assume these duties for periods of time designated by the treasurer. All standards required of the Treasurer shall be applied to the assistant treasurer.

The Assistant Treasurer will be bonded for a reasonable percentage of the annual church budget as determined annually by the Board of Elders.

Section B.8 - Audit of Church Finances
An external audit will be authorized annually by the Board of Elders to perform a review of the church's finances. The audit will include the examination and review of the books and records of the church treasurer and a report to the congregation.

ARTICLE C
The Board of Elders

Section C.1 - Qualifications and Composition
Elders must qualify for their duties according to Scripture. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)

There will be no specified number of Elders. The Elders will be chosen for a term of four years with one year off between consecutive terms before being considered for re-election. They, severally, will be ex-officio members of all boards and committees.

The senior pastor will, without further election, be a member of the Board of Elders (cf. Section B.2 of the bylaws).

At the discretion of the Board of Elders, members of the pastoral staff may be invited to serve on the Board of Elders at their meetings without voting rights.

Section C.2 - Election
Nominees to fill vacancies on the Board of Elders shall be selected by the Elders. The membership shall approve these nominations by elections at the business meetings in accordance with the bylaws.

Section C.3 - Spiritual Leadership and Oversight
The Board of Elders are given the vested authority by the congregation to oversee the church. They will oversee the congregation without compulsion, but with loving willingness as examples to the church. Care must be exercised to scripturally use the authority vested in them, and as a shepherd cares for the sheep, the Elders are to care for the church.

The Board of Elders will comprise the ruling body of the church and as a body will have the power and authority to act on behalf of the church and its spiritual condition, guard the purity of the doctrine and the life of the church, and discipline the church members in accordance with the Word of God.

They will be responsible for the teaching of the Word of God, administering the ordinances, counseling the erring and needy, comforting the sick and afflicted, distributing the benevolent funds, and may supply the pulpit in the preaching pastor's absence.

In all congregational matters, the congregation is to be accountable to the care and leadership of the Board of Elders as the Elders themselves are accountable to Christ.

Section C.4 - Other Duties and Responsibilities

Nominees to fill vacancies on the Board of Elders and the position of senior pastor will be selected by the Board of Elders (cf. Sections B.2 and C.2 of bylaws).

The Board of Elders and pastoral staff will have the responsibility to appoint committee chairpersons as deemed necessary.

The Board of Elders will act as trustees for the corporation, and shall be empowered to act on behalf of the corporation on all matters of civil law. They will, however, be required to place all real estate transactions regarding purchases, sales, and mortgages, before the membership to vote according to Section G of the bylaws.

It will be the duty of the Board of Elders to oversee all matters pertaining to the physical properties of the church. They will take all necessary measures for the protection and maintenance of the church buildings and property, and will supervise the use of same.

The Board of Elders will be responsible for all matters pertaining to the finances of the church. They will oversee and exercise due diligence in the receiving, counting and safekeeping of church funds, and they will direct the disbursement of such funds within the limits of the current church budget and the articles of the constitution to promptly meet all obligations incurred by the church.

They will be responsible for a budget that reflects the operating expenses for the coming year and set salaries for the paid staff of the church annually. The church budget will be prepared and presented at the annual business meeting. It will be approved by the members according to Section G of the bylaws.

The Board of Elders will also review all pastoral staff periodically concerning responsibilities and financial arrangements.

ARTICLE D
Ordinances

Section D.1 - The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is administered as a commemoration of His death — the elements being used as emblems of His body and blood. It will be observed on such occasions as the Board of Elders deem desirable. It will be open to all self-examined believers, regardless of church affiliation.

Section D.2 - Baptism

Since baptism is an outward testimonial of an inward spiritual transformation, it will be administered only to those who have given evidence of having been born again by faith in Jesus Christ. The church will recognize as valid any regular form of believer's water baptism if it is in agreement with the considered convictions of the individual believer, but the church will practice believer's baptism by immersion, a mode recognized as biblical, accurately portraying the believer's death, burial and resurrection with Christ.

ARTICLE E
Commissioning, Licensing and Ordaining

The commissioning, licensing and ordaining will be a witness to the world that the church believes the Holy Spirit has called the candidate to a particular work and the church has subsequently set the candidate apart for that work.

Section E.1 - Commissioning

Members who are first-time missionary candidates accepted by a missionary board may make a commissioning request. Such a request should be made through the Missions Committee to the Board of Elders. If approved, an appropriate service will be scheduled and a certificate issued by the church to the commissioned members.

Section E.2 - Licensing

A member who is involved in full-time vocational Christian work, but who has not yet been ordained, may request licensing by the church. The Board of Elders, together with the cooperation of the pastoral staff, will determine the eligibility for licensing and shall act on each application.

The licensing is for a period of one year and must be renewed annually if it is to be maintained.

Section E.3 - Ordaining

A Christian who desires to be ordained to the Christian ministry must fulfill the Scriptural qualifications. (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) The person will not be considered unless and until the church has had an opportunity to have sufficient knowledge of the person's qualifications. After examination by the Board of Elders and a recommendation by this Board, the candidate will be presented to the church for ordination. The ordination will take place at a subsequent meeting or service.

ARTICLE F
Services

The church will meet at times designated by the Board of Elders for public worship, prayer and Bible study. Special meetings such as Bible conferences, missionary conferences or evangelistic services will be arranged by the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE G
Business Meetings and Rules of Order

Section G.1 - Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the church will be held during the month of June. This meeting will transact the following business matters: hold all annual elections, vote on the annual budget and deal with any other business deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.

The fiscal year of the church will be from July 1 to June 30.

Section G.2 - Congregational Meetings

Congregational meetings will be called whenever requested by the Board of Elders or by 25% of the voting membership making a signature petition to the Chairman of the Board of Elders.

Section G.3 – Procedure for All Business Meetings

The announcements for business meetings stated here shall apply to an annual meeting or a congregational meeting. Such announcements shall communicate clearly to the congregation the main purpose of the meetings.

All business meetings shall be announced in the bulletin on the two Sundays preceding the meetings, and may be supplemented by verbal announcements from the pulpit.

All business meetings shall be held either as a single meeting on a specific date and time, or as a close series of identical meetings called for the same purpose. In the case of the latter, the intent is to facilitate church member attendance and participation. The quorum determination and vote totals will be cumulative from all the meetings and the results will not be final until the end of the last meeting.

The announcements for business meetings to approve a real estate transaction or amend the By-laws shall also include written notices to be sent directly to the entire voting membership within a period of not less than thirty days before the proposed meetings.

e. Members of the Church may participate in any meeting of Church by means of remote communication to the extent that the Board of Elders authorizes such participation. Participation by means of remote communication shall be subject to such guidelines and procedures as the Board of Elders adopts and shall be in conformity with subsection (f) of this section.

f. Members of the Church participating in a Church meeting by means of remote communication shall be deemed present and may vote at such a meeting if the Church has implemented reasonable measures: (1) To verify that each person participating remotely is a Member, and (2) to provide such Members a reasonable opportunity to participate in the meeting and to vote on matters submitted to the Members, including an opportunity to communicate and to read or hear the proceedings of the meeting, substantially concurrent with such proceedings.

g. The Board of Elders may determine that any meeting of Members of the Church shall not be held at any place and shall instead be held solely by means of remote communication, but only if the Church implements the measures specified in subsection (f) above. The Board of Elders shall make the list of Members entitled to vote available for inspection by any Member beginning two business days after notice of the meeting is given for which the list was prepared and continuing through the meeting on a reasonably accessible electronic network, provided that the information required to access such list is provided with the notice of the meeting. The Church may take reasonable steps to ensure that such information is available only to Members of the Church.

Section G.4 - Quorum

For annual meetings and congregational meetings to approve a real estate transaction, amend the bylaws or vote on the selection of the senior pastor, the quorum needs to consist of 20% of the voting members.

For other congregational meetings, the quorum needs to consist of 10% of the voting members.

Section G.5 - Voting Procedure

Approval of business transactions involving real estate, bylaw amendment, budget, senior pastor appointment and elections require a three-fourths affirmative vote of the ballots received, provided a quorum is present.

All other issues will be decided by a simple majority.

Section G.6 - Other Rules of Order

The Chairman of the Board of Elders, or in his absence the Vice-Chairman, will preside at all business meetings.

Robert's Rules of Order will be used in the transaction of business, except in cases where these might be in conflict with the bylaws.

ARTICLE H
Bylaw Amendments

Amendments to the bylaws may be presented by the Board of Elders or 25% of the voting membership. These amendments may be approved at any business meeting according to Article G.5 of the bylaws.

WALNUT HILL
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