

THE SULLY COMMUNITY CHURCH
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

With Approved Amendments and Revisions, October 2015

ARTICLE I

The name of this organization shall be, “The Sully Community Church.”

ARTICLE II

The object of this church shall be that which is common to any Christian Church, namely the salvation of souls, cultivation of the Christian character, development of Christian piety, and to encourage its members to so live that they may honor and glorify Christ.

ARTICLE III

STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. The Holy Scriptures.

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired of God and inerrant in the original writings and that they are of supreme and final authority in faith and life. (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:21).

2. The Godhead.

We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfections. (I John 5:7; Deuteronomy 6:4; II Corinthians 13:14).

3. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

a. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men. (John 1:1, 2, 14; Luke 1:35; John 8:58; Isaiah 7:14).

b. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the Cross as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made sure by His literal and physical resurrection from the dead. (Romans 3:24, 25; I Peter 2:24; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3-5).

c. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God, where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Intercessor and Advocate. (Acts 1:9,10; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24; I John 2:1,2).

4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit.

a. We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Person who convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and, that He is the supernatural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the Body of Christ, indwelling, and sealing them unto the day of redemption. (John 16:8-11; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 3:6; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13, 14).

b. We believe that He is the Divine Teacher who guides believers into all truth; and that it is the privilege and duty of all the saved to be filled with the Spirit. (John 16:13; Ephesians 5:18; I John 2:20, 27).

5. The Total Depravity of Man.

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, and became alienated from God; and that man is totally depraved; and of himself utterly unable to remedy his lost condition. (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3).

6. Salvation.

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7, 2:8-10; I Peter 1:18, 19).

7. The Eternal Security of Believers.

We believe that, because of the eternal purpose of God toward the objects of His love; because of His freedom to exercise grace toward the meritless on the ground of the propitiatory blood of Christ; because of the prayer of the Son of God while here on earth; because of the very nature of the divine gift of eternal life; because of the present and unending intercession and advocacy of Christ in heaven; because of the immutability of the unchangeable covenants of God; because of the regenerating, abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all who are saved; we, and all true believers everywhere, once saved, shall be kept saved forever. (John 5:24; 10:28; 13:1; 14:7; 16; 17:11; Romans 8:29; I Corinthians 6:19; Hebrews 7:25; I John 2:1, 2; 5:13; Jude 24).

8. The Assurance of Believers.

We believe it is the privilege, not only of some, but of all who are born again by the Holy Spirit through faith in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, to be assured of their salvation from the very day they take Him to be their Saviour; and that this assurance is not founded upon any fancied discovery of their own worthiness or fitness, but wholly upon the testimony of God in His Written Word, exciting within His children filial love, gratitude, and obedience. (Luke 10:20; 21:32; II Corinthians 5:1, 6-8; Hebrews 10:22; II Timothy 1:21; I John 5:13).

9. The Church.

a. We believe that the Church, which is the Body of the espoused Bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made up of all born-again persons of this present age. (I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 1:22, 23; 5:25-27).

b. We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures. (Acts 14:27; 20:17, 28-32; I Timothy 3:1-3; Titus 1:5-11).

c. Two ordinances are given to the Church by her Lord in Scripture, they are baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are not sacraments (means of grace), and they have no part in one's salvation.

1. We do not believe that baptism is essential to or a part of salvation. However, the Bible teaches that it is an important act of obedience to the Lord (Mt. 28:19-20). Therefore, believer's baptism by immersion shall be urged upon each candidate for church membership (Acts 2:41-42). Believer's baptism by immersion symbolizes the identification of Christians with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Romans 6:3-4).

2. The Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He comes, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination (I Corinthians 11:23-28). This ordinance shall be observed monthly on the Sunday designated by the elder board either in the morning or evening service. This ordinance is to be observed by believers in Christ who are walking in obedience to their Lord.

10. Separation.

We believe in separation from all worldly practices and associations and in a whole-hearted devotion to the Person of Jesus Christ as the only Scriptural basis for a happy and useful Christian life. (Romans 12:1, 2; 14:13; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17).

11. The Personality of Satan.

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire. (Job 1:6,7; Isaiah 7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

12. The Second Advent of Christ.

We believe in that "Blessed Hope" the personal, imminent, pretribulational, and premillennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom. (Zechariah 14:4-11; I Thessalonians 1:10; 4:13-18; Revelation 3:10; 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

13. The Eternal State.

a. We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men, the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28, 29; 11:25, 26; Revelation 20:5, 6, 12, 13).

b. We believe that the souls of the redeemed are, at death, absent from the body and present with the Lord, where in conscious bliss they await the first resurrection, when spirit, soul and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord. (Luke 23:43; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Revelation 20:4-6).

c. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious misery until the second resurrection, when with soul and body reunited they shall appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and shall be cast into the Lake of Fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment. (Matthew 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-26; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6, 7; Revelation 20:11-15).

14. The Charismatic Movement.

a. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and, that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today; and, that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established (I Corinthians 12:4-11; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).

b. We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith, in accord with His own will, for the sick and afflicted (John 15:7; I John 5:14-15).

15. Dispensationalism.

We believe that the Scriptures interpreted their natural, literal sense reveal divinely determined dispensation or rules of life which define man's responsibilities in successive ages. These dispensations are not ways of salvation, but rather divinely ordered stewardships by which God directs man according to His purpose. Three of these – the age of law, the age of the Church, and the age of the millennial kingdom – are the subjects of detailed revelation in Scripture (John 1:17; I Corinthians 9:17; I Corinthians 3:9-18; Galatians 3:13-25; Ephesians 1:10; Colossians 1:24,25; Hebrews 7:19; Revelation 20:2-6).

16. Marriage

We believe that marriage as properly defined by the Scriptures consists of the union of one man and one woman in a holy covenant before God. (Matt. 19:4-7; Gen. 2:18-25; I Cor. 7:2; I Tim. 3:2; Eph. 5:22-25)

We further believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and merits the wrath of

God which can only be averted through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (I Thess. 4:3; Heb. 13:4; I Cor. 6:9-11; Romans 1:26-27; Exodus 20:14; Rev. 21:8)

ARTICLE IV

This church shall be non-denominational, independent and self-governing in form of government, the majority of votes cast ruling in matters of business in all cases. However, the Elder Board reserves the right to require a two-thirds or three-fourths majority vote as it deems necessary. Any active member not able to attend a meeting – for reasons beyond his control – for the purpose of voting, may submit his vote to the chairman of the Elder Board prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE V

All persons desiring to become members of this church shall be required to appear before the Elder Board, to make confession of his or her faith in Christ as personal Savior, to be urged to follow the Lord in believer's baptism, satisfy the board that he has no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness and give an affirmative answer to each of the following statements of faith:

- 1.** I believe the Bible to be the inspired, and infallible, authoritative Word of God.
- 2.** I believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- 3.** I believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return to power and glory.
- 4.** I believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful men, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
- 5.** I believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by Whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
- 6.** I believe in the resurrection of both the saved and lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.
- 7.** I believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ.
- 8.** I will try to live my daily life, under the leading and guidance of the Holy Spirit, to honor and glorify Christ.

9. I agree to submit to the authority and discipline of the church should I be found delinquent in doctrine or life.

10. I am in full agreement with the articles of faith as described in the church constitution.

The pastor, or anyone acting as chairman, may at some public meeting extend the hand of fellowship to such person without a public vote.

A member of this church who shall willfully, without plausible reason or excuse, absent himself from the services of this church for a period of 2 years shall be removable from membership at the discretion of the Board of Elders.

ARTICLE VI

In the calling of a pastor it shall be the duty of the Elder Board to recommend to the church at a member-meeting previously called, the name of the minister agreed upon by said board. A two-thirds majority of the members present shall be considered a call.

The pastor shall continue his duties as long as he is led of the Lord, or until dissension shall arise. In event of dissension among members of the church, they shall make a written request to the Elder Board to act upon the matter. If such request is received by the board, it shall be their duty to confer with the pastor to attempt to work out a satisfactory solution. The board may also take action without a written request if they think it necessary. If a conference with the pastor is unsuccessful, a special meeting of the church membership shall be called at the discretion of the board for the purpose of taking a vote of confidence for the pastor. Should their fail to be a two-thirds majority vote of the members present in favor of retaining the pastor, his responsibilities to the church shall cease after a period of time determined by the Elder Board.

If the pastor desires that his responsibilities to the church be terminated, it shall be his duty to notify the Elder Board 30 days previous to his release.

ARTICLE VII

The duties of the pastor shall be those common to his office. He shall strive to visit the members of the congregation as needed, and take general oversight as spiritual shepherd of the same.

The pastor shall be an honorary member of all committees and all branches of the church.

ARTICLE VIII

1. An annual meeting of the church shall be held during the month of September each year. The specific time and date of the meeting shall be decided by the Elder Board and announced at least two weeks prior to the meeting. At this meeting a written report of the grand total of all work done during the past year shall be submitted from each department to the church. Also, officers of the church and Sunday School for the following year shall be elected.

2. All congregational meetings or elections shall be announced at two separate meetings in advance; one announcement to be made at a regular Sunday morning service and preferably at two successive Sunday morning services. If time does not allow, the second announcement can be made at another meeting, or in some other manner deemed sufficient by the Elder Board.

ARTICLE IX

The election of Elder Board members and church officers shall be as follows. A nominating committee composed of the Pastor, Chairman of the Elder Board, Sunday School Superintendent, and one member at large – appointed from the membership by the Chairman of the Elder Board – shall be responsible for the following:

1. Nominations shall be as follows: a recommendation form shall be given to each active member of the church on the third Sunday of July. Each member shall be given the opportunity to volunteer for an area of service or nominate another person for that service. Nominations shall be for: (1) Elder Board, (2) Sunday School Superintendent, (3) Elementary Superintendent, (4) Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, and (5) Assistant Elementary Superintendent. The recommendation forms are to be returned to the chairman of the Elder Board by the first Sunday of August. There shall be no nominations from the floor during the annual meeting for the purpose of nominating someone to fill an office.

2. In preparing the ballot for the election it shall be the responsibility of the nominating committee to review the names on the recommendation forms and select the best qualified candidates for each position. The nominating committee may make additional recommendations as well as reject any and/or all nominations on the recommendation forms. Each candidate for office shall be an active member of the church, in good standing, meeting the Scriptural qualifications according to I Timothy 3. The nominating committee shall strive to provide two candidates for each office except in the cases of Assistant Sunday School Superintendent and Assistant Elementary Superintendent, where those nominated for the office of Sunday School Superintendent and Elementary Superintendent, but not elected, shall then be considered for these positions. Each nominee shall be contacted before his or her name is placed on the ballot. The ballot shall be posted in the church bulletin at least two weeks before the election takes place.

3. Each candidate shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present at a meeting called for the purpose of electing officers of the church. If a person does not receive a majority vote on the first ballot, it becomes necessary to vote again. This may be accomplished by voting again between the top two nominees. The dropped names shall then be reinstated for the next vote if needed. In the event the ballot offers no contest to fill any or all offices, each candidate shall be voted upon individually and must be approved by a majority vote of the members present. If a nominee is not approved, it shall be the responsibility of the Elder Board to seek a willing and qualified person to fill the vacancy and appoint him or her to that office.

4. Those chosen shall assume the responsibilities of their office on the first (1st) day of October for as long as their term has been designated in the election.

ARTICLE X

A Board of Elders shall be maintained and composed of Scripturally qualified men (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) who shall shepherd the flock of God, exercising general oversight over the ministry and functions of the church (Acts 20:17, 28; I Peter 5:1-3). The Elder Board shall carry out the business of the church, with the authority to disburse funds as deemed necessary and consistent with the purposes of the church (Acts 11:29, 30). The Board members shall serve as trustees, to hold in trust and protect all property belonging to the church, exercising general supervision and control in all departments of the church.

The Elder Board shall consist of seven men elected from within the membership of the church along with the Pastor (I Tim. 5:17). The term of office shall be three years, provided Scriptural qualifications are maintained, and will be so arranged that not more than three shall be released in any one year. The pastor shall serve as an Elder for the duration of time he serves as pastor of the church. In the event of a vacancy, the Elder Board shall have authority to appoint a member to fill the vacancy until the next election at which time the congregation shall select a member to fill the unexpired term. The Elder Board shall choose a chairman, secretary and treasurer for a term of one year. The majority of the Elder Board shall constitute a legal quorum for the transaction of business. When the term of office for an Elder expires, the rotary system shall be used; that is, there shall be at least a one year leave of absence.

ARTICLE XI

It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep a record of all Elder Board meetings and all the congregational meetings, and report the same at their respective succeeding business meetings, and to make an annual report to the church.

ARTICLE XII

It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive all offerings, donation, gifts and etc., pay all current expenses previously contracted by the members of the Elder Board, such as the pastor's salary, fuel, lighting, and janitor's expenses. But all special bills he shall not pay until authorized by the Elder Board or members. He shall keep a correct account of all receipts and expenditures and report the same at the monthly meetings of the Elder Board and at the annual business meeting.

ARTICLE XIII

Church Discipline

Members are expected to demonstrate special loyalty and concern for one another (I Jn 3:16, Jn 13:34, 35). When a member becomes knowledgeable of an offense of the magnitude to hinder spiritual growth and testimony, he is to implement the disciplinary process in a spirit of humility, self-examination, and prayer with the goal of repentance and restoration (Mt 18:15-20).

Issues worth of discipline include the unwillingness to repent of the following sins, but do not exclude sins of a similar nature (I Cor 5:9-11; Gal 5:19-21; 2 Thess 3:6, 11, 14):

- A. Sexual immorality (pre- or extra-marital sex, homosexuality, sexual misconduct, etc.)
- B. Greedy covetousness
- C. Idolatry or participation in heathen practices
- D. Slanderous or abusive speech
- E. Drunkenness/intoxication
- F. Thievery/extortion
- G. Unruly living (gossip, refusing to work, etc.)

In the event of differences between members, it is recommended that they be settled personally in accordance with Mt 18:15-16.

Step 1 Go privately to the individual(s) with the goal of repentance and restoration (Gal 6:1-2). If unsuccessful, proceed to step two.

Step 2 Coordinate your efforts with those (one or two more) who would be willing to come alongside to witness the second meeting and promote the needed repentance and restoration. If unsuccessful, proceed to step three.

Step 3 Inform the elders of the need for this step.

A. An elder(s) will then go to the offending believer with the restorer to again attempt to bring about repentance and restoration. If they together are unsuccessful, the elder handling the case shall confer with the other elders who shall proceed with the following:

B. Send a registered letter to the sinning believer warning him that the church will be informed unless he repents. Include in the letter that unless we hear from him prior to the next communion service (service #1), the issue will be presented to the church. Submit a copy of this letter to the senior pastor's office.

If repentance should take place anytime before the communion service (#1), notify the senior pastor's office immediately. If no repentance has been reported, step 3 will be carried out by "telling it to the church" so that the entire body will be mobilized toward the restoration of the sinning believer (Mt 18:17).

C. It shall then be the duty of each member to seek the repentance of the offending party for his complete restoration to God and the church by the next communion service (#2).

Step 4 If no repentance is reported by the next communion service (#2), an additional registered letter shall be sent indicating that at the next communion service (#3) the sinning believer will be dismissed from our fellowship. Submit a copy of this letter to the senior pastor's office.

If repentance does take place, notify the senior pastor immediately so the person may come before the elders and then be restored publically at the next communion service (#3).

Restoration and Repentance

With the dismissal from our fellowship, we would still desire and pray that there would be repentance and restoration. If, at any time, the individual should indicate repentance, notify the senior pastor or another elder so he may be helped to acquire the needed forgiveness, assistance, and reaffirmation (2 Cor 2:7-8).

Upon satisfactorily being cleared by the elders, the individual will be restored to fellowship at the next communion service.

Note: A member who has conducted himself in such a manner as to be cited for disciplinary action may not be dropped from membership at his own request since such a procedure would remove him from the authority and watchcare of the church.

ARTICLE XIV

Licensing and Ordaining.

1. Licensing.

Any man who has been a member in good standing for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding application for license to preach; and who in the judgment

of the church gives evidence by his piety, zeal, and “aptness to teach;” and that he is called of God to the work of the ministry, shall proceed as follows:

- a.** Submit a request for licensing in writing to the senior pastor.
- b.** The pastor shall submit this request to the Elder Board for approval.
- c.** Upon approval of the Elder Board, a recommendation for final action shall be presented to the membership at a meeting called for this purpose and at which time the candidate shall preach a sermon. The license shall be good for a period of not longer than one year, and may be renewed by the Elder Board.

2. Ordaining.

Any many who has been a member in good standing for a period of not less than one year immediately preceding application, and who in the judgment of the church possesses the Scriptural qualifications for full ordination, shall proceed as follows:

- a.** Submit a request for ordination in writing to the senior pastor.
- b.** The pastor shall submit this request to the Elder Board for approval.
- c.** Upon approval of the Elder Board, a recommendation for final action shall be presented to the membership at a meeting called for this purpose and at which time the candidate shall preach a sermon. On a three-fourths affirmative vote of the voting members present the right to ordination shall be approved.
- d.** The Board of Elders shall then call a council of ministers and Christian laymen to examine the qualifications of the candidate, to which council the right of the ordination shall be wholly referred.
- e.** The ordaining council shall thoroughly examine all applicants for ordination as to their call to the Christian ministry, Christian experience, reputation, character, education, doctrinal belief, and demonstrated efficiency in Christian service. The ordination service shall be held at a convenient time but preferably not the same day.
- f.** It shall be within the province of the Board of Elders to discipline, even to revoking the ordination credentials of any minister ordained under this Constitution, if the said minister is found guilty of heresy or sinful practices after an impartial trial conducted in the spirit of I Corinthians 13.
- g.** The minister under trial shall have the privilege of appealing his case to the congregation within sixty days after the decision of the Elder Board.

ARTICLE XV

A board of Christian Education shall be maintained, and shall consist of the pastor, one member of the Elder Board, the Sunday School Superintendent (serving as chairman), Assistant Sunday School Superintendent, Mid-Week Representative, Elementary Superintendent, and one member at large appointed by the Elder Board. It shall be the duty of this board to review and approve curriculum materials for the Sunday School, youth groups, and other educational agencies of the church; to issue letters of call and appoint teachers in all teaching agencies of the church; to promote teacher training; to seek to maintain the highest possible standards of teaching for the church; and to provide general oversight of the educational program of the church.

1. All teachers or regular substitutes for Sunday School or any other classes or teaching agencies of the church will be asked to subscribe to the following standards which will be stated in the letter of call. Letters of call, once submitted may be kept on file by the Christian Ed. Board and considered valid as long as the teacher is in good standing. A letter of call asks for:

a. An affirmation of his or her faith in Christ as personal Savior and an affirmative answer to the brief statements of faith set for the Article V of the Constitution and By-laws of the church, or if unable to do so on any point to give a satisfactory reason to the Board of Christian Education.

b. A statement of his or her willingness to cooperate with the church in its teaching program, to use the materials provided, and to seek, with the Lord's help, to so live and teach that his or her class will be led to know Christ as Savior, and to come to maturity in Him.

2. The Board of Christian Education may submit recommendations at any time to the Elder Board or to the Sunday School concerning expenditures for teaching materials and equipment which are considered important to maintaining or improving the educational program of the church.

In addition, the Board of Christian Education shall submit a yearly report of its activities to the congregation.

3. The Board of Christian Education shall appoint the Mid-Week Representative, Sunday School Secretary, and Sunday School Treasurer. All members of this board shall be members of the church.

ARTICLE XVI

A Mission Board shall be maintained to approve missionaries and mission organizations for support by this church and shall determine the disposition of its funds. This board shall consist of the pastor, one other member of the Elder Board, Assistant

Sunday School Superintendent, two members appointed by and from the Women's Christian Fellowship, and two members chosen by the Elder Board from the congregation. A chairman, secretary, and treasurer shall be appointed by this board. All members of this board shall be members of this church.

ARTICLE XVII

A Women's Christian Fellowship (WCF) is recognized as an auxiliary of the church. The purpose of the WCF is to provide fellowship and Bible study for women and to give aid to our church missionaries. As an extension of the church it will be under the jurisdiction of the Elder Board. Officers are to be church members.

ARTICLE XVIII

Realizing the seriousness of this subject and the diversity of views held by Bible-believing Christians, the following is offered as a standing policy for the Sully Community Church:

1. A divorce which has occurred before one's salvation experience is that which belonged to the individual's unsaved life and should not be brought into account as to his/her moral and spiritual character (I Cor. 6:11; II Cor. 5:17).

"And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (I Cor. 6:11).

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (I Cor. 5:17).

A divorce which has occurred after one's salvation experience shall constitute reason for questioning the individual's moral and spiritual character. Each case shall be handled individually and shall rest on its own merits.

2. We in no way condone divorce, however, due to man's hardness of heart, God allowed divorce in Scripture for the following reasons:

a. Unfaithfulness (adultery) – Matthew 19:9

"And I say unto you, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her who is put away doth commit adultery."

b. Abandonment by an unsaved partner – I Cor. 7:15

“But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases; but God hath called us to peace.”

ARTICLE XIX

These articles may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present at a regular business meeting.