

CONSTITUTION

AND BYLAWS

THE RIPLEY CHURCH

GREENWICH, OH

REVISED 11/2021

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE RIPLEY CHURCH GREENWICH, OHIO

PART ONE: CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I NAME

The name of this church shall be The Ripley Church, Greenwich, Ohio.

ARTICLE II PURPOSE

The object of this church is to bind together followers of Jesus Christ whose purpose shall be to Exalt Christ through Christ-centered worship and praise experiences; to Equip Christians through the regular study of Scripture with application to everyday life; to Encourage the Church through serving the needs of one another; and to Evangelize the Community through bridge-building ministries of visitation, outreach, and missions.

ARTICLE III COVENANT

We acknowledge God as our Father, Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, and the indwelling Holy Spirit as our constant Companion. We accept the Holy Scriptures to be the authority to direct our faith and lives.

We affirm God's purpose for the Ripley Church and commit ourselves to: Exalt Christ, Equip Christians, Encourage the Church, and Evangelize the Community.

ARTICLE IV STATEMENT OF FAITH

We of the Ripley Church believe the following articles to be a statement of those basic truths taught in the Bible which are essential to our faith and lives.

1. REVELATION - GENERAL: God has revealed Himself generally in Creation (Psalm 19:1-6; Romans 1:20). SPECIAL: God has revealed Himself more specifically through the scriptures [the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments] (Hebrews 1:1-3; John 20:30-31) which are Divinely Inspired (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:16-21.), Truthful (John 17:17.), and Authoritative (John 10:34-38; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Revelation 22:18-19)
2. GOD: The God of grace and glory and goodness (2 Peter 1:3) exists eternally as Three-In-One Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:1; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Genesis 1:26, and is the Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer (Genesis 1:1; Ephesians 1:3-14; Colossians 1:15-17).
3. MAN: Created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27, 2:7) but fallen in sin (Genesis 3) with a strong adversary (Genesis 3; Isaiah 14:12-15; 2 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Peter 5:8-9.) and in need of the new birth for salvation (John 3:3-5.).
4. JESUS CHRIST: The divine Son of God (Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-3; Philippians 2:6.; Hebrews 1:3) came in human form (Isaiah 7:14; John 1:14; Philippians 2:7-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 4:14-16) to provide salvation for sinful man (Romans 3:21-26, 5:8-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Hebrews 2:17; I John 4:10.).

5. HOLY SPIRIT: The divine Companion (John 15:26; Acts 5:3-4) was sent to dwell within and empower for Christian living (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 1:7-8; John 14:26, 16:7-11; I Corinthians 12:7-11; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30).
6. SALVATION: The gift of God's grace (Ephesians 2:4, 8-9) providing justification (Romans 5:1) through repentance and faith (2 Corinthians 7:10; 2 Peter 3:9).
7. THE CHURCH: The Body of Christ (Matthew 16:18; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:25-27) where Christ is head and believers are members, each with specific gifts and functions (Ephesians 4:11-13, 5:23-24; Colossians 1:18) with a mission both at home and abroad (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).
8. CHURCH PRACTICES: Practices of the church include the Ordinance of Baptism (Matthew 28:19; Mark 1:9), The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper (Mark 14:22-25; I Corinthians 11:23-26), Anointing with Oil (Mark 6:13; James 5:14-16), Confirmation (Proverbs 23:12; I Corinthians 1:4-9), Commissioning (Numbers 27:18-19; Acts 6:1-6, 13:3), and Ordination (Mark 3:14; Acts 14:23; I Timothy 2:7 II Timothy 1:8-11; Titus 1:5-9).
9. THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: Living the Christian life includes Good Works (Ephesians 2:10), Separation (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1), Speaking the Truth in Love (Ephesians 4:15,25), Submitting to one Another in Home, Family and Marriage (Ephesians 5:21-6:4) Resolving Conflicts (Matthew 5:23-26, 18:15-17; I Corinthians 6:1-8), Developing the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), Praise (Hebrews 13:15-16), Fasting (Joel 1:14, 2:12-13; Luke 5:33-35), Prayer (Philippians 4:6-7), Study of Scripture (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15), Worship (Psalm 29:1-2; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 10:19-25), Tithing (Genesis 14:20; Malachi 3:8-12; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8) Witnessing (Acts 1:7-8), and Perseverance (Romans 5:3-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Hebrews 2:1-13; James 1:2-4).
10. THE SECOND COMING: Jesus Christ will come again Personally (John 14:3), Physically (Acts 1:11), Unexpectedly (Matthew 24:36-44), Visibly and Triumphantly (Matthew 24:30) and admonishes everyone to be encouraged and prepared (Matthew 24:44).
11. FUTURE LIFE: Events that take place in the future life include the Resurrection of the body (Matthew 22:30-3; John 11:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58), the Final Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 14:10-12; 2 Corinthians 5:10), and Eternal Life/Punishment (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:10-15)

ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT

This church acknowledges Jesus Christ as its head. Its guidance in matters of faith and discipline are found in the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the Divine Spirit through reason, faith, and conscience.

The government of this church is vested in its members, who exercise the right of control in all its affairs, subject in legal matters to the Articles of Incorporation granted it by the Legislature of the State of Ohio. This church is not under the control of any higher church body.

In the event it becomes no longer practical to operate this church because of declining membership or financial difficulty, the church can be disbanded and discontinued by a three-fourths vote of the active membership present at a meeting called for this purpose. The assets of the church can then be disposed of by a majority vote of members in attendance.

ARTICLE VI MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - Principles and Purpose

- A. We believe Jesus Christ calls the church to be a visible body of his followers, composed of all who have received Him as Savior and Lord, and have committed themselves to follow Him as disciples.
- B. Through mutual trust and submission, we covenant together for the purpose of worship, fellowship, nurture, announcing the Good News, and service to the Kingdom.
- C. Membership in this church is a voluntary and ongoing commitment in response to our Lord's call to this particular gathered community.
- D. Membership in this church is first a commitment made between the believer and our Lord, and secondly a commitment made between members.
- E. We believe that when a person makes the commitment of membership to this church, the church also makes a commitment to encourage, support, enable and hold the individual accountable.
- F. Each member is called to maintain the peace and unity of the church.
- G. Members are called to support the leadership of the church as they see them following Christ.

Section 2 – Qualifications

Membership in this church shall be open to all who:

- A. Hear and believe the Gospel and follow Jesus Christ.
- B. Repent of their sins and confess Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord.
- C. Have been baptized.
- D. Subscribe to the Constitution and Bylaws of this church, its Statement of Faith and its practices.

Section 3 – Procedure

Persons shall be publicly received into membership at a communion service or such a time as may be determined by the pastor and the Diaconate, and shall give public assent to the Statement of Faith and principles of church membership.

Members shall be received by the following methods:

- A. On the presentation to the Diaconate of satisfactory letters of transfer from other churches:
- B. By reaffirmation of faith on recommendation of the Diaconate :
- C. On confession of faith and baptism, if not previously baptized;
- D. If previously baptized, either on confirmation or confession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Section 4 - Duties and Privileges

- A. A member may hold office and serve on a ministry of this church, and is expected to serve faithfully when elected or appointed to offices, boards or committees.
- B. A member shall be encouraged to support the work and worship of this church by willingly sharing time, talents and resources and by actively attending church functions.
- C. A member shall prayerfully support the work of this church and its members.
- D. A member shall financially support the work of the church and its members according to his ability.
- E. An active member may vote on all matters presented for congregational consideration, with the following exception: active members under age 18 may not vote on matters prohibited by law such as, but not limited to, the purchase or sale of land.
- F. Any member not attending worship service at least twelve times (12) per year or involved in ministry or who does not support The Ripley Church through giving will be considered

by the Diaconate for transfer to the Inactive List. Any member transferred to the Inactive List would lose voting privileges. (Amended November 12, 1995; April 26, 1998)

- G. A member who is home bound, confined to a Nursing Home, attending college or in the Military shall be exempt from the requirement of paragraph (F) above.

Section 5 - Roll Revision (Revised November 12, 1995)

- A. Diaconate will review the membership list annually to determine the current status, of each member and will revise the roll accordingly.
- B. A member who is involved in the duties and privileges of membership will be considered to be an active member.
- C. A member who discontinues his/her involvement in the duties and privileges of membership for one year will be considered to be an Inactive Member.
- D. Any member whose name is considered for inactive status will first be called or visited by Diaconate and/or assisted by Elder Board members when feasible, informing him/her of this fact and of the subsequent loss of voting privileges.
- E. Active membership may be reinstated by becoming involved in the duties and privileges of membership and meeting with the pastor to declare intent. Final approval for reactivation rests with Diaconate.

Section 6 - Termination of Membership

Membership in this church shall be terminated for the following reasons:

- A. By letter of transfer to another church;
- B. By request of the member;
- C. For matters of moral discipline (as found in Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13), and 2 Corinthians 2:5-11;
- D. Death.

ARTICLE VII ELDER BOARD

Section 1 - Purpose

A board responsible for seeking God's will in all matters of policy regarding the church and to share in the leadership of the church alongside the pastor.

Section 2 – Personnel

- A. The Elder Board shall consist of the moderator, the assistant moderator, and a maximum of five (5) other members, all biblically qualified and elected by the church membership at the annual meeting. Additionally, the senior pastor is a non-voting member of the Elder Board.
1. The terms of office of the moderator and assistant moderator are defined in the bylaws.
 2. The term of office for Elder Board members shall be three years, with the terms being arranged in an overlapping pattern.
 3. In case of a vacancy during a term of office, such vacancy may be filled by Elder Board appointment. Such interim appointees shall hold office only until the next annual meeting when a successor shall be elected in the usual manner to serve out the original term interrupted by the vacancy.
- B. A quorum shall consist of (4) four members unless there are fewer than four, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.

Section 3 – Qualifications

- A. Personal qualifications: As the behavioral model for the congregation, an elder must be striving to meet the following biblical qualifications:
 - 1. He must be spiritually mature, not a recent convert (1 Timothy 3:6).
 - 2. He must have a consistent testimony in all aspects of life (above reproach) (1 Timothy 3:2,7).
 - 3. If married, he must be the husband of one wife and clearly be devoted to his family in love and manage his family well (1 Timothy 3:2,4,5).
 - 4. He must consistently provide evidence of a Spirit-controlled temperament (1 Timothy 3:3).
 - 5. His home life and personal life must be distinctively marked by hospitality. (1 Timothy 3:2).
 - 6. He must not be preoccupied with the quest for material things (1 Timothy 3:3).
 - 7. He must have sound theological convictions and be capable of explaining and defending them.
 - 8. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. (Titus 1:9).
 - 9. He must be evidencing a maturing walk with the Lord which reflects consistent and regular periods of time alone with our Lord (Titus 1:8,9).
- B. Church body responsibilities:
 - 1. Ministry - consistent attendance and active participation in the ministry of the church. (Hebrews 10:24,25)
 - 2. Unity - willing to covenant to live by the Statement of Faith of the church; and willing to support, encourage, and work with other elders and the pastor to seek a united mind in the leadership of the church.
 - 3. Goals - committed to edification of believers and evangelism of unbelievers as the goals and reasons for existence of the church, for the glory of God.
 - 4. Pastoral - seeking to be vigilant as to the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of the congregation (1 Peter 5:2).
 - 5. Example - providing a living pattern for the church (1 Peter 5: 3).
 - 6. Faithful, consistent - willing to consistently invest the time and effort to do the work of an elder.

Section 4 - Selection

- A. Recommended and approved by the Elder Board.
- B. Elected by the congregation as leaders worthy of honor and respect (Hebrew 13:7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12), and meeting goals and qualifications as stated in Section 3 above.
 - 1. Each candidate must receive a 2/3 affirmative vote to be elected.
 - 2. The vote will be cast by written ballot.

Section 5 – Responsibilities (*Items which go to the congregation)

- *A. Make recommendations on all matters requiring approval by the membership.
- *B. Consider for approval the ballot presented by the Nominating Committee prior to recommendation to the active voting membership.
- *C. Consider for approval the budget prepared by the Board of Trustees prior to recommendation to the membership.
- D. Review and appraise monthly reports on attendance, budget, and giving.
- E. Conduct a required annual audit as of December 31 of all financial accounts of the church and its auxiliaries, and additional audits of specific accounts as deemed necessary.

1. Elder Board shall appoint a committee of three (3) active members to conduct the audit.
 2. No active Trustee may serve on the audit committee.
 3. The audit report shall be filed with the Elder Board by January 20.
- F. Consider for approval new offices or leadership positions or special committees needed for the church.
 - G. Consider for approval, at the regular November meeting of the Elder Board, those who are appointed to serve in special positions.
 - *H. Deal with the discipline of members as outlined in the constitution, Article VI, Section 5, C.
 - *I. Make recommendations to the membership about initiation or dissolution of standing committees.
 - J. Write or revise bylaws, defining responsibilities of each officer and committee, and make records of these available to members requesting them.
 - K. Review brief monthly summary reports from the pastor, all standing committees of the church and special committees as requested.
 - L. Individual members will serve as liaison representatives between the Elder Board and those committees designated in the bylaws. The moderator shall make these appointments at the first meeting of the year.
 - M. Serve as coordinator for committees, making decisions of arbitration or judgment as needed where committees cannot agree on areas of responsibility, policy or direction.
 - N. Consider for approval any special events or activities taking place on the church premises.
 - O. Project church growth and needs and implement methods and specifics for meeting those needs.
 - *P. Establish major thrusts in church ministries or endeavors that will involve large expenditures of time and money on the part of the whole church.
 - Q. Approve active cooperation as a church with other churches, fellowships or ministry efforts.
 - R. Seek to give support to the pastoral staff and to serve as a united mind in helping them carry out responsibilities (as noted in Article VIII).
 - S. Act as liaison between the congregation and the pastor, encouraging the membership and the pastor alike to bring to their attention dissatisfactions and concerns for further discussion and evaluation.
 - T. The Elder Board shall have the power and duty to interpret the intent and meaning of the constitution and bylaws of this church and such interpretation is to be final and binding.
 - *U. Make recommendations to the membership about additions to senior pastoral staff.

Section 6 - Meetings

- A. Regular meetings of the Elder Board will be held monthly on a regularly scheduled basis. In the event of cancellation of a regular meeting, an attempt shall be made by the clerk to contact each member. If any member, however, feels there is a need for a meeting and a quorum can be assembled, the meeting will be held as scheduled.
- B. Special meetings of the Elder Board may be called by the moderator, the pastor or any two elders. The request shall be filed with the church clerk, who shall notify all members.

ARTICLE VIII STAFF

- A. Selection of Senior Pastor - When a vacancy occurs in the senior pastor position, the Elder Board shall appoint a Search Committee of seven (7) members total. The Search Committee shall be made up of three (3) Elders and four (4) active church members representative of The Ripley Church congregation. The Search Committee shall proceed with diligence to search for qualified candidates who can adhere to the Statement of Faith and practices of The Ripley Church. The Search Committee will select the top two or three applicants from resumes received. After conducting interviews and seeking God's discernment, the Committee will present their candidate of first choice to the full Elder Board. The Elder Board and Search Committee will then present this candidate to the congregation. The candidate shall be called upon to present a sermon to the congregation at a given Sunday morning service. Following the service the congregation shall vote on accepting the candidate as the Senior Pastor of The Ripley Church. Acceptance of the candidate for the position requires a two-thirds affirmation vote of the members present. A member of the pastoral staff and spouse will automatically be granted membership when the pastor accepts the call to serve the church as pastor. (Amended April 26, 1998, November 11,2012)
- B. Resignation - If the pastor decides to discontinue his service with the congregation, he shall give 30 days written notice to the Elder Board.
- C. Dismissal - A petition shall be presented to the Elder Board stating that the pastor's services are unsatisfactory, which petition shall be signed by a minimum of 33% of the active members of the church. After due investigation, the Elder Board may sustain the petition by a two-thirds vote, after which it shall present the petition to the church membership at a business meeting. The Elder Board shall explain the complaint and read the names of the members who made it. If two-thirds of the members at the business meeting called for this purpose shall vote for the dismissal of the pastor, he will be notified that his call to service will close in 30 days.
- D. Duties - The pastor shall have charge of the spiritual welfare of the church with the assistance of the Diaconate. He shall be an ex officio advisory member of all committees, boards, and organizations. He shall be moderator pro tem of the church and of the Elder Board in the absence or disability of the moderator and assistant moderator.
- E. Consideration of Associate Pastor - If The Ripley Church has an associate pastor on staff at the time a vacancy occurs in the senior pastor position, the associate may submit his name as a candidate for the senior position. The associate pastor must submit a current resume to the Search Committee identifying his qualifications for becoming senior pastor. His resume will follow the same procedure of review as would an outside candidate. (Article VIII, Paragraph A)
- F. Selection of Associate Pastor and Church Staff - The Senior Pastor and Elder Board shall serve as the Search Committee for all vacant associate pastor and office staff personnel positions. After searching for qualified applicants, conducting interviews, and prayerful discernment, the Senior Pastor and Elder Board will select the best candidate, confer with the Board of Trustees in regard to pay package, and communicate their choice to the congregation.

ARTICLE IX, SERVICES, MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

A. Worship Services

1. Regular services of worship shall be held at a stated hour or hours each Sunday, except when temporarily suspended by agreement of the pastor, the chairman of the Diaconate and the moderator. Other services may be held from time to time as the Diaconate of the church may determine with the advice and consent of the pastor.
2. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall be celebrated at such times as the pastor and the Diaconate may determine, there being at least quarterly celebrations.

B. Business Meetings

1. Annual Meeting - The annual meeting shall be held on the second Sunday of November to elect officers and committee members, to adopt plans for the new year, to approve the budget, and to conduct other pertinent business.
2. Special Meetings - Special meetings may be called by the pastor, the moderator, Elder Board, or any five (5) active members of the church by written request to the Elder Board. The nature of the business to be transacted shall be stated in the call.
3. Rules and Regulations
 - a. Notice - Notice of special meetings shall be given by announcement from the pulpit or publication in the church bulletin on three Sundays immediately preceding the meeting. The meeting may be held following worship on the Sunday of the third notice.
 - b. Quorum - A quorum shall be made up of ten percent of the active members.
 - c. Voting - All church members whose names are on the active list shall be entitled to vote, and a majority vote of those present in addition to any absentee ballots shall be decisive unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the constitution. (Amended Oct. 12, 1997)
 - d. The Official Year - The official year of the church shall begin January 1 and all officers and committees shall assume their duties at that time.
 - e. Annual Reports - Annual written reports of the pastor, officers, committees, boards, and organizations of the church shall be filed with the church secretary by January 15, and published for membership review.
 - f. All other matters of church procedure not regulated by law or these articles shall be governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
 - g. Absentee ballots may be requested in writing as soon as available. The church may mail the ballot when requested and the member must return the ballot to the church by the Saturday prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE X EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

This congregation shall conduct an educational ministry to lead its members to perceive and respond to God's gift of salvation through His son Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, to develop character which shall be genuinely and consistently Christian in all human relationships. It shall provide schools and other learning activities; and equip and support members for educational leadership using appropriate scripturally based educational materials.

The administration of this ministry shall be the responsibility of the Board of Christian Education.

ARTICLE XI OFFICERS

Officers, their terms of office and their duties shall be as determined or approved by the Elder Board of the church. Details shall be included in the bylaws.

ARTICLE XII COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

Section 1 - Standing Committees

Standing church committees and boards may be created or dissolved only by the Elder Board of the church, with the approval of the church membership. These committees and boards shall be composed of active members of the church. Each committee will report to and be subject to the Elder Board. Responsibilities and terms of office are defined in the bylaws.

Section 2 - Special Committees

Special committees for a specific project may be appointed by the Elder Board. Sub-committees may be recommended by individual standing committees to the Elder Board for their approval. Members of special and sub-committees may be members or constituents of the church.

Section 3 - General

- A. Each committee, board or auxiliary of the church shall organize by the election of a chairman and secretary and such other officers and sub-committees as it determines. Each committee shall decide upon the time, place and frequency of its meetings.
- B. To take action, committees shall have a quorum of regular members present.
- C. Committees are subject to the call of the chairman, pastor, moderator, a majority of its members, or the Elder Board.
- D. In case of vacancies during the term, such vacancies shall be filled by the committee involved and presented for approval to the Elder Board. Such interim appointees shall hold the office only until the next annual meeting when a successor shall be elected in the usual manner to serve out the original term interrupted by the vacancy.

Section 4 - Nominating Committee

- A. Personnel
 1. The Nominating Committee shall consist of four (4) active members of the church. They shall be elected at the annual business meeting of the church in November and shall begin their duties on January 1.
 2. The term of office shall be two years with the terms being arranged in an overlapping pattern.
- B. Duties
 1. The Nominating Committee shall submit recommendations for nominations to the Elder Board for their approval. The ballot of nominees shall be presented to the Elder Board for its consideration at least one week before the Elder Board meets for this purpose.
 2. The Nominating Committee, upon approval of the Elder Board, shall bring recommendations for nominations at each annual election.
 3. This committee is basically independent of all other authority regarding the preparation of the ballot. It is responsible to the Elder Board to fulfill its duties.

ARTICLE XIII ELECTION

- A. The nominating committee, with approval of the Elder Board, shall bring recommendations at each annual meeting.
- B. Every active member has the right to vote on all matters presented for congregational consideration, with the following exception. Active members under age 18 may not vote on matters prohibited by law such as, but not limited to, the purchase or sale of land.
- C. Voting by written ballot shall be required for the election of the moderator, assistant moderator and members of the Elder Board. A written ballot may be requested for other offices and issues by a motion from the floor.
- D. A majority of votes cast shall be required for election. If there is only one person nominated for an office, that person must receive a majority vote, except where other provisions apply.

ARTICLE XIV ORGANIZATION

Only those organizations approved by the Elder Board as integral parts of the church program shall be recognized as official auxiliaries of the church. Compliance with the constitution of the church shall be the basis for approval of these organizations.

ARTICLE XV AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of active members present at any regular or special meeting. A notice specifying the time of the meeting and the substance of the proposed amendment shall be given from the pulpit or printed in the bulletin on the three Sundays immediately preceding said meeting. The vote may be taken on the Sunday of the third notice.

ARTICLE XVI REPEAL OF PREVIOUS CONSTITUTIONS

All constitutions, bylaws, rules or regulations previously adopted by this church, particularly the previous constitutions of 1851, 1960, and as amended prior to this date, are hereby repealed.

ARTICLE XVII BYLAWS

A bylaw is a "working paper" of the church. All boards, committees, officers and members shall minister in compliance with the bylaws. No bylaw shall be in contradiction to this constitution. Bylaws must be written by the Elder Board of the church. All bylaws must be in written form and available to any member requesting them.

A member may request a vote on a bylaw at any regular membership meeting. If a majority of those present agree to consider this request, the following procedure shall be followed:

- A. A notice specifying the time of the meeting and the substance of the request shall be given from the pulpit or printed in the bulletin on three Sundays immediately preceding said meeting.
- B. The vote may be taken on the Sunday of the third notice. A majority vote will be required for approval.

ARTICLE XVIII REGARDING THE FAITH COMMUNITY AND MISSION OF THE RIPLEY CHURCH

Section 1 - Key Characteristics of The Ripley Church Faith Community and Mission

The Ripley Church (here after referred to as the “Church”) is a community of faith that exists to exercise and express its biblical beliefs. These beliefs are grounded in a shared understanding of the Bible including those beliefs and standards specifically addressed in the *Constitution and Bylaws of The Ripley Church* (Constitution and Bylaws).

A. The Biblical Beliefs of The Ripley Church

The Ripley Church is a community of faith based on its biblical beliefs, which include the following.

1. *Statement of Faith.* The Ripley Church has adopted the Statement of Faith set forth in the Article IV of the Church Constitution.
2. *Christian Mission and Values* The Ripley Church directs all of its activities in accordance with the Purpose, Covenant, and the Statement of Faith set forth in Articles II, III, and IV of the Church Constitution.

B. Church Representatives and Other Participants

The Church’s faith community is represented by all of The Ripley Church pastors, Elder Board, and committees established under the Church Constitution and Bylaws. The pastors, Elder Board and committee members are integral parts of the Church faith community (each such person or entity is described for purposes of this Article only as a “Church Representative”) and are expected to serve the Church mission. All other Church community participants, including Church members and volunteers, contribute to the Church faith community, but they do not represent the Church unless they are also Church Representatives or have been designated as representatives by the Elder Board, or congregation, in accordance with the Church Constitution and Bylaws.

C. Christian Exercise and Expression

1. *As a Community.* The Ripley Church believes that the church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ. Those who participate in the life of the Church, including its Church Representatives, are following the biblical command to live out their faith in community and association with other believers. Accordingly, the Church is itself an exercise and expression of its biblical beliefs and standards.
2. *Through its Mission Based Activities.* The Ripley Church believes that all its activities, including the responsibilities of every Church member, volunteer, and employee, should be rendered in service to God as a form of worship. Therefore, The Ripley Church as a community of faith exercises and expresses its biblical beliefs in every activity, action, and responsibility.

Section 2 - Christian Community Standards for Ministry Activities

A. General Standards

The Ripley Church shall engage in activities and use its facilities solely to exercise and express the biblical beliefs of The Ripley Church and to further its purpose. In furtherance of this purpose, the Church, at its sole discretion may provide services or goods to, and may allow use of its facilities by, groups and persons who are not members of the Church community. But no Church activity, nor any use of Church facilities or other resources by another group or person, may be conducted or permitted if The Ripley Church determines that such activity or use expresses a message of support by The Ripley Church for any view contrary to the Church’s biblical beliefs.

B. Specific Concerns

For many years The Ripley Church as a faith community has had concerns with

cultural and legal trends in the United States. These cultural concerns include but are not limited to marriage, human sexuality, and the sanctity of human life. The Church hereby affirms and reiterates its long held biblical beliefs as follows:

1. *Marriage and Human Sexuality*

As such, The Ripley Church subscribes to the biblical belief that God creates human beings in His image; as two distinct genders, male and female (Genesis 1:27), and that the intended gender identity of an individual is determined by such individual's biological sex at birth (Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 139:13-14). The Church applies this belief regarding gender identity in all policies and programs related, directly or indirectly, to the Church. In addition, the Church subscribes to the biblical belief that God has instituted marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:18,23-24; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 19:4-9, Ephesians 5:21-32, 1 Corinthians 7:39). The Church recognizes only such marriages. Further, the Church subscribes to the biblical belief that sexual desire is rightfully fulfilled only within marriage between one man and one woman (1 Corinthians 7:1-5, 10-16, 27) and that unmarried individuals who abstain from sex can be whole, mature persons, as pleasing to God as persons who are faithful in marriage (1 Corinthians 7:6-9).

2. *Sanctity of Life*

The Ripley Church subscribes to the biblical belief that all human life is sacred from conception to natural death, that individuals are known by God from before the foundation of the world, that human life begins at conception, and that God, and not man, is sovereign over death. (Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13-14).

The Church accordingly believes that no medical procedure should be performed for the objective of taking the life of an individual prematurely ("euthanasia"). The Church's beliefs prohibit funding or otherwise facilitating euthanasia in any way, directly or indirectly.

The Church also accordingly believes that no procedure should be performed for the objective of terminating a pregnancy or taking the life of an unborn child ("abortion") except when it is medically impossible to save the life of both the mother and the child ("Medical Impossibility Exception").

Because of these beliefs, the Church shall abide by the following Abortion Funding Ban: the Church shall not fund or otherwise facilitate abortion in any way, directly or indirectly, except for an abortion pursuant to the Medical Impossibility Exception. This Abortion Funding Ban extends to, applies to, and bans Church involvement, directly, or indirectly, with any health care benefit plan that covers drugs, treatments, or other practices or instrumentalities (collectively, "medical means") that induce abortion, unless in the particular situation (i) the medical means is provided and used solely for a non-abortive therapeutic treatment of a covered medical condition or for an abortion pursuant to the Medical Impossibility Exception, and (ii) coverage is approved by the plan's governing body or the appropriate Church's authority under the Church Constitution and Bylaws. In addition, the Church shall not participate through its health care benefit plan or otherwise in any program that uses a benefit plan or other instrumentality, directly or indirectly, to provide medical means used to induce abortion ("Abortion Program"), except for an abortion pursuant to the Medical Impossibility Exception. The Church shall not assent to any requirement

to participate in any Abortion Program or any other program or entity in contravention of the Abortion Funding Ban; nor shall the Church assent to any similar requirement with regard to euthanasia. Participation in any Abortion Program or any other program or entity in contravention of the Abortion Funding Ban (“Involvement”), as well as assessment or payment of any fee or penalty for refusing Involvement, would directly and substantially burden and undermine the Church’s exercise and expression of its biblical beliefs.

3. *Religious Activities*

In conformance with these biblical beliefs and standards, The Ripley Church engages solely in activities that further its faith mission. All Church activities can and should be vehicles for spiritual growth. Therefore, the Church considers all of its activities to be a form of religious worship.

The Church distinguishes between Exclusive Religious Activities and Integrated Religious Activities. Exclusive Religious Activities include devotional worship services such as chapel services conducted by the Church and distinctly theological education or pastoral counseling.

Integrated Religious Activities include activities similar to those conducted by nonreligious organizations for the benefit of society. The Church conducts such activities in furtherance of and in accordance with its biblical beliefs.

With respect to restrictions that may be imposed on the use of funds or other benefits offered to the Church, the Church shall not agree to any restriction that would preclude it from conducting its integrated religious activities in furtherance of and in accordance with its religious beliefs. The Ripley Church may agree, at its sole discretion, not to use funds or other benefits for exclusive religious activities.

C. Implementation

To the extent the Elder Board and Senior Pastor determine it to be necessary or advisable to furthering the Church’s mission or to cultivating the Church’s faith community, they may, to the extent permitted by the Church Constitution and Bylaws, establish additional standards based on the Bible and the beliefs and standards addressed in the Church Constitution and Bylaws for the activities and programs conducted within, for, or by Church community members, Church Representatives or other participants. The determination as to whether any particular activity or use of the Church facilities is not permitted under this Article requires spiritual discernment and an understanding of the Church’s beliefs and standards which are applied to each particular circumstance. Such determination shall be made in conformance with this discernment and these beliefs and standards in the sole discretion of the spiritual leaders of the Church as set forth in the Church Constitution and Bylaws. With respect to uses by other groups or persons, the Church may consider without limitation the content of the proposed activities and whether the group or person is generally perceived by the public as advocating views contrary to the biblical beliefs of the Church.

Section 3 Community Standards for Church Representatives and Others

A. Roles and Expectations

In response to God’s calling on their lives, the Church Representatives exercise and express both their own and the Church’s biblical beliefs and standards by working together to advance the Church’s faith purpose. The Church’s Representatives are responsible for defining, cultivating, leading, and/or representing the Church’s faith

community as an expression and exercise of their and the Church's biblical beliefs and standards. Accordingly, each Church Representative shall be expected to (i) model these biblical beliefs and standards for others, (ii) perform all of their responsibilities as a service to God, and (iii) comply with the following obligations:

1. *Christian Mission Values.* Each Church Representative shall affirm their agreement with the purpose statement, covenant, and statement of faith set forth in Articles II, III, IV of Church Constitution.
2. *Christian Conduct Standards.* The Church Representatives shall at all times (both during working and nonworking hours) endeavor to conduct themselves in a manner that affirms biblical standards of conduct in accordance with their and the Church's biblical beliefs.
3. *Distinctly Christian Activities.* Each Church Representative shall be ready, willing and able to lead or contribute to distinctly Christian activities such as worship or prayer services.

B. Noncompliance by Church Representatives

If any Church Representative does not comply with the obligations set forth above, such representative shall have an obligation to disclose such noncompliance to the Church. The Church may determine whether such Church Representative intends or is likely to continue in such noncompliance. If so, then the Church may, at its sole and unfettered discretion, dismiss such Church Representative from his or her position on the basis that such Church Representative's noncompliance is inconsistent with or undermines the expression and exercise of the Church's biblical beliefs or faith community, or on any other basis the Church sees fit. Such action may be taken in accordance with any applicable procedures in the Church Constitution and Bylaws, as applicable.

C. Volunteers and Contract Workers

Volunteers and contract workers are not considered to be representatives of the Church's faith community unless they are serving in leadership positions. Nevertheless, when volunteers and certain contract workers as determined by the Church serve with the Church they shall be required to acknowledge that they understand and agree to support the Church's mission and values. The Church may give preference for such service to volunteers and contract workers who share its biblical beliefs.

PART TWO: BYLAWS

I. OFFICERS

Section 1 – Moderator

- A. Term of office
The moderator shall be elected for a one-year term.
- B. Election
 - 1. The vote will be cast by written ballot.
 - 2. A 2/3 affirmative vote of active members present shall be required.
- C. Qualifications
 - 1. Same as the members of the Elder Board (see Article VII, Section 3).
 - 2. Special abilities of leadership and administration.
- D. Duties and Responsibilities
 - 1. To preside at all meetings of the church membership.
 - 2. To serve as the chairperson of the Elder Board.
 - 3. To act as the lay administrative head of the church and to perform such duties as are prescribed by law.
 - 4. To share with the pastor the responsibility for the general welfare of the church and its organizations.
 - 5. To be the lay spokesman for the church in its relationships with other churches and organizations.
 - 6. To implement actions approved by the Elder Board or authorized by the membership.
 - 7. To be alert that the church constitution is being followed as interpreted by the Elder Board.
 - 8. To appoint, at the first Elder Board meeting of the year, individual members of Elder Board to be liaison representatives to designated standing committees.
 - 10. To be an ex officio member of all-church committees and boards.
 - 11. The moderator, by approval of majority of Elder Board members, shall provide for the supply of the pulpit in the absence of the pastor. In such case of an emergency to fill the pulpit, the moderator only needs the approval of those Elder Board members immediately available or present.

Section 2 - Assistant Moderator

- A. Term of Office
The assistant moderator shall be elected for a one-year term; the number of terms shall not be limited.
- B. Election: Same as moderator.
- C. Qualifications: Same as moderator.
- D. Duties and Responsibilities:
 - 1. To attend and be an active participant in meetings of the Elder Board.
 - 2. To act as liaison between the Elder Board and a designated standing committee as defined in Article VII, Section 5, L.
 - 3. To assist with the duties of the moderator.
 - 4. To perform the duties of the moderator in the absence or disability of the moderator.

Section 3 – Clerk

- A. Term of Office
The term of office shall be one year; the number of terms shall not be limited.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities
 1. To keep a faithful record of the meetings of the church and the Elder Board.
 2. To keep a record, with addresses, of members of the church, with dates and methods of their reception and removal.
 3. To keep a record of baptisms, marriage and deaths.
 4. To issue letters of transfer of membership upon approval of the Diaconate, notifying the churches to which they are addressed.
 5. To preserve on file all communication and written official reports.
 6. To give legal notices of all meetings when such notices are necessary.
 7. To conduct all correspondence as far as not otherwise provided for.
 8. To perform such other duties as are prescribed by law or as usually pertain to the office of clerk or secretary of an assembly.

Section 4 - Assistant Clerk

- A. Term of Office
The term of office shall be one year; the number of terms shall not be limited.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities
 1. To assist with the duties of the clerk.
 2. To perform the duties of the clerk in the absence or disability of the clerk.

Section 5 - Church Treasurer (Amended Nov 14, 2004)

- A. Term of Office
This is a paid staff position.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities
 1. To cooperate with the Financial Secretary of the church receiving and recording all reports of church income.
 2. To pay out funds on order of the membership, Elder Board, Trustees or any other properly authorized officer or committees.
 3. To prepare monthly and quarterly reports for the Board of Trustees on income and expense and account balances.
 4. To prepare a complete annual report as of year-end for the membership of the church, upon request.
 5. To attend the Board of Trustees meetings and, when requested, to attend meetings of the Elder Board.
 6. To assist the Board of Trustees in the preparation of the annual church budget.
 7. To respond to a call for audit of accounts by the Elder Board as of December 31, or on other occasions if requested.
 8. To handle funds given to the church in memorials, the expenditure of which shall be authorized by the Board of Trustees.

Section 6 - Financial Secretary

- A. Term of Office
The term of office shall be one year; the number of terms shall not be limited.
- B. Duties and Responsibilities
 1. To cooperate with and assist the Church Treasurer.
 2. To receive on behalf of the church treasury all funds designated for the general fund, mission giving and special offerings.
 3. To deposit these funds as soon as practicable to the designated bank depository.
 4. To provide weekly reports to the Church Treasurer of all income received.
 5. To maintain accurate and confidential records of individual giving, summarizing the individual accounts semi-annually.
 6. To record individual mission giving and provide monthly reports to the Church Treasurer designating the amount to be forwarded to each recipient.
 7. To prepare monthly and quarterly reports of income for the Board of Trustees.
 8. To prepare a complete annual report of income as of year-end for the membership of the church.
 9. To respond to a call for audit of accounts by the Elder Board as of December 31, or on other occasions if requested.

II. COMMITTEES

SECTION 1 - DIACONATE

Ephesians 2:10 "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

- A. Purpose
The purpose of the Diaconate shall be to encourage the church through serving the needs of one another. The Diaconate, in cooperation with the pastor, shall minister to the spiritual, social and physical needs of the congregation and community.
- B. Membership
There shall be eight (8) members on the committee, consisting of four (4) deacons and four (4) deaconesses.
- C. Term of Office
The term of office is three (3) years, the members being elected in an overlapping pattern.
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of (4) four members unless there are fewer than four members in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The Diaconate shall be represented at the Elder Board by a duly appointed member of the Elder Board who will serve as liaison as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Qualifications
 1. 1 Timothy 3:8-11 "Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not insincere, not prone to drink much wine, not greedy for money, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then have them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things."
 2. Members shall be encouraged to be involved in Sunday School or a Bible study at least one quarter per year.
 3. Members shall be faithful in church attendance.

4. Members shall be committed to encouraging the church through serving the congregation and the community.
 5. Members shall be willing to spend whatever time is required to fulfill duties on the committee.
- G. Duties and Responsibilities
1. To coordinate its purpose and goals with others of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
 2. To schedule all communion services, including those taken to shut-ins, rest homes, or others.
 3. To prepare the communion elements and arrange for their service.
 4. To approve all baptisms and dedications.
 5. To oversee all matters involving church membership. They shall:
 - a. Approve new members.
 - b. Approve all requests for letters of transfer.
 - c. Provide membership classes on a regular basis.
 - d. Review annually the status of the active membership list as defined in Article VI, Section 6
 6. To develop and administer directly, or through subcommittees, ministries to carry out its stated purpose.
 7. To plan and implement special worship services and church activities such as revivals and united community services.
 8. To prepare a budget for the Diaconate and present it for approval to the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2 - BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- A. Purpose
The Board of Trustees shall have general care and custody of all church property, either real or personal, and the property of its auxiliary organizations.
- B. Membership
There shall be five (5) members on the board.
- C. Term of Office
The term of office shall be three (3) years, the members being elected in an overlapping pattern.
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of three (3) members unless there are fewer than three members, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The Board of Trustees shall be represented at Elder Board meetings by a duly appointed member of the Elder Board who will serve as liaison provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Qualifications
1. Members shall exhibit a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be faithful in church attendance.
 2. Members shall be sensitive to the physical and material needs of the church and its property.
 3. Members shall exhibit a character of integrity and honesty and understand the responsibility of proper money management.
 4. Members shall be willing to spend the time required to fulfill their duties on the committee.

- G. Duties and Responsibilities
1. To coordinate its purpose with other of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as per Article VII, Section 5, L.
 2. To provide care and maintenance for all physical property of the church, both real and personal.
 3. To have the power and authority to receive and administer on behalf of the church, deeds and devises of real estate, gifts, bequests, trusts, and trust funds.
 4. To have the responsibility for the strict execution of stipulations attached to trust funds that are subject to specific purposes of restrictive conditions.
 5. To have the authority to invest trust funds, stocks, bonds, securities and other property, real or personal, subject to the restrictions imposed by law, the donor, and/or the church membership.
 6. To have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer real property without specific authority by vote of the active membership.
 7. To have general charge of the financial affairs of the church.
 8. To supervise the raising of all funds affecting the general fund.
 9. To approve all general fund expenditures.
 10. To prepare a budget with the cooperation and assistance of all boards and committees, and submit it to the Elder Board for approval. Said budget shall be presented to the Elder Board for its consideration at least one week before the Elder Board meets for this purpose.
 11. To supervise and care for the physical property of the parsonage.
 12. To oversee memorial contributions, having responsibility for the strict execution of stipulations attached to said funds, and to authorize all expenditures.

SECTION 3 - WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Psalm 29:2 "Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness."

- A. Purpose
The purpose of the Worship Committee is to assist the pastor in maintaining a Christ-centered worship service that exalts Christ and provides a reverent atmosphere for those who worship.
- B. Membership
There shall be four (4) members on the committee.
- C. Term of Office
The term of office shall be three (3) years, the members being elected in an overlapping pattern.
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of three (3) members unless there are fewer than three members, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The Worship Committee shall be represented at the Elder Board by a duly appointed member of the Elder Board who will serve as liaison as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Qualifications
1. Members should exhibit a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and be faithful in church attendance.
 2. Members should be sensitive to the purpose of the Worship service and the needs of the congregation in regard to worship.

3. Members should be willing to spend whatever time is required to fulfill their duties on the committee.
- G. Duties and Responsibilities
1. To coordinate its purpose and goals with others of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as provided in Article VI, Section 5, L.
 2. To cooperate with the pastor and other congregational leaders in developing and implementing dynamic and inspirational worship services through the creative and productive use of Scripture, music, testimonies and sermons.
 3. To schedule and oversee the following ministry:
 - a. Upstairs and Downstairs Greeters
 4. To oversee the following areas:
 - a. Altar Candles
 - b. Church Bulletins
 - c. Sound System
 - d. Ushers
 - e. Tape Ministry
 - f. Music Ministry

SECTION 4 - MISSIONS COMMITTEE

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

- A. Purpose
The purpose of the Missions Committee shall be to assist the church in its efforts to evangelize, make disciples, and minister to the needy for the sake of the Gospel as it seeks to fulfill the Great Commission; and to encourage members and attendees to participate in and support this effort with their resources of time, money, energy, spiritual gifts, and prayer.
- B. Membership
There shall be four (4) members on the committee,
- C. Term of Office
The term of office shall be three (3) years, the members being elected in an overlapping pattern.
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of three (3) members unless there are fewer than three members, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The Missions Committee shall be represented at the Elder Board meetings by a duly appointed member of the Elder Board who will serve as liaison as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Qualifications
1. Members should practice a faithful, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
 2. Committee members should strive to be good stewards of their time and money.
 3. Members should be committed to the vital role of missions in the life of the church.
 4. Members should be willing to spend whatever time is required to fulfill their duties in the committee.

- G. Duties and Responsibilities
1. To coordinate its purpose with others of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as per Article VII, Section 5, L.
 2. To educate and inspire the congregation in the field of missions.
 3. To stimulate the congregation to pray for evangelism and missionaries.
 4. To involve the congregation in mission opportunities such as summer and project work, short-term programs, and visitation of missionaries.
 5. To encourage the congregation to develop and maintain personal contact with missionaries.
 6. To organize an annual missions conference to be held at approximately the same time each year.
 7. To prepare the missions budget subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees and the Elder Board.

SECTION 5 - BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV) "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

- A. Purpose
The purpose of the Board of Christian Education shall be to assist the church in its efforts to equip Christians by providing and encouraging opportunities for the regular study of Scripture with application to everyday life.
- B. Membership
There shall be six (6) members on the board.
- C. Term of Office
The term of office shall be three (3) years, the terms being arranged in overlapping pattern.
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of three (3) members unless there are fewer than three members, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The Board of Christian Education shall be represented at the Elder Board by a duly appointed member of Elder Board who will serve as liaison as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Qualifications
1. Members should practice a faithful, personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
 2. Members should be committed to vital role of Christian education as it serves to equip people of all ages to live a more Christ-like life.
 3. Members should be willing to demonstrate this commitment by devoting the time necessary to fulfill the responsibilities of this position.
- G. Duties and Responsibilities
1. To coordinate its purpose and goals with others of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
 2. To organize, maintain and direct a Church Sunday School program for children and adults.
 3. To develop and administer further educational opportunities for children and adults including, but not limited to, Bible studies and Vacation Bible School.
 4. To make available and promote organized camping programs.

5. To retain the power and responsibility to appoint and remove teachers of the Church Sunday School and Bible School, and leaders, directors or officers of all Christian educational activities, the selection of which is not otherwise provided.
6. To support and encourage those teachers and leaders in positions of educational leadership within the church.
7. To provide scripture-based educational materials for the Sunday School, Bible School, and other educational opportunities sanctioned by the Board.
8. To oversee the use of funds received through contributions to the Sunday School, Bible School and other educational opportunities under the Board's domain.
9. To oversee all aspects including the staffing and funding of Children's Ministries, Children's Church and Junior Church.
10. To oversee all aspects of the nursery including staffing, funding, Nursery coordinator and Nursery Nanny.

SECTION 6 – YOUTH COMMITTEE

I Timothy 4:12 “Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.”

- A. Purpose
The purpose of the Youth Committee is to recognize the importance and value of our youth and their contribution to the body of Jesus Christ and the Ripley church. In an effort to support and encourage those who want to develop their personal relationship with God, this committee will provide a distinctly Christian atmosphere for their growth and maturity of faith.
- B. Membership
There shall be five (5) members, four (4) of which shall be elected from the church membership. The fifth shall be a member of the youth groups and shall be elected to the committee by the members of the youth groups.
- C. Term of Office
The term of office for church-elected members shall be three (3) years, the members being elected in an overlapping pattern
- D. Quorum
A quorum shall consist of three (3) members unless there are fewer than three members, in which case all members must be present to form a quorum.
- E. Elder Board Liaison
The youth Committee shall be represented at the Elder Board by a duly appointed member of the Elder Board who will serve as liaison as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
- F. Duties and Responsibilities
 1. To coordinate its purpose and goals with others of the church through its liaison representative to the Elder Board as provided in Article VII, Section 5, L.
 2. To be responsible to organize and maintain a junior youth program and a senior youth program.
 3. To approve youth leaders, meeting sites, recreational activities, special programs and other elements pertinent to this program.
 4. To arrange for leadership when a vacancy occurs among the youth leaders or in the temporary absence of a leader.
 5. There shall be a limit of two consecutive full terms.
 6. To assist leaders in the planning and implementation of programs of a spiritual, social and physical nature.

7. To accept responsibility to plan and arrange regular social activities, transportation to special events. To assist in fund raising and similar activities to free the youth leaders to maximize their efforts toward the needs of the youth.
8. To prepare a budget for the youth program and present it for approval to the Board of Trustees.
9. To oversee the election of the youth member of the committee.
 - a. Nominees may come from either group.
 - b. All members of youth groups are eligible to vote.

III. OTHER

SECTION 1 - POLICIES

Policies may be established by the Elder Board, church-established committees, ministries and church office for certain purposes to aid in effective and efficient operation or function of such group.

All policies must be submitted to the Elder Board for approval. All policies submitted should state a clear reason and purpose for why policy is required. The Elder Board will review submitted policy verifying and determining whether policy will be in conflict with Church constitution, bylaws or other established policies and/or whether policy's purpose is needed.

Adopted: January 17, 1993

Revised: November 14, 1993; November 12, 1995; October 12, 1997; April 26, 1998; November 8, 1998;

August 19, 2003

Amended November 14, 2004

Amended November 13, 2005

Amended November 12, 2007

Amended November 13, 2011 – Sunday School Secretary / Treasurer, Section 7 and Article X Educational Ministry

Amended November 11, 2012 - Pastoral Staff and Stewardship/Mission Committee

Amended July 19, 2015 – Addition of Article XVIII Regarding the Faith Community and Mission of The Ripley Church

Revised June 13, 2017 by Lay Council – Removal of Bylaw Part II. Committees, Section 1. Diaconate, G. Duties and Responsibilities, Item 6. “Provide for Supply of Pulpit” – Addition of Bylaw Part I. Officers, Section 1. Moderator, Item D. Duties and Responsibilities, Item 10. “Moderator and Lay Council Provide for Supply of Pulpit”

Revised September 12, 2017 by Lay Council – Addition of Bylaw Part III. Other, Section 1 – Policies “Lay Council Approval of Church Policies”

Revised January 9, 2018 by Lay Council – Remove from By Law: Section 7 – Sun day School Secretary/Treasurers

Amended November 14, 2021 – Lay Council designated as “Elder Board” throughout the Constitution with changes to Article VII, Section 2, 3, 5; Article XIII Elections “additional nominations” clause removed; Change in committee term limits; Change in committee quorum guidelines; Diaconate qualifications added (1 Timothy 3:11)