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# MEMBERSHIP BOOKLET

Blue Ocean Church, Ann Arbor

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## Introduction



Emily Swan, Lead Pastor

We have a “one year/renewable” approach to church membership at Blue Ocean—meaning we ask that, if you want to be a member for the coming year, you renew your membership each fall.

We also welcome new members on an ongoing basis; for example, if you start attending in the spring, you might want to become a member prior to the annual fall signup. This booklet provides background information and perspective for all those considering membership and serves as a supplement to our membership sermon series. Additional information about us can be found on our website, [a2blue.org](http://a2blue.org).



Caroline Kittle, Assoc Pastor

Whether you’ve been here since we started in 2014 or are new this year, we’d love to get to know you better!



Diane Sonda, Assoc Pastor



Molly Morton, Children's Pastor



Marcus Skinner, Worship Director

## Non-Denominational with a Difference

We are a non-denominational church with a difference (like **LGBTQ+ inclusion**). A little background might help: the earliest churches to accept LGBTQ+ people were Protestant mainline churches, so non-denominational churches like Blue Ocean Church are still relatively new. Most often, “non-denominational” churches are evangelical; as such, they are usually not LGBTQ+ inclusive. They also often limit how women can serve. So, we are a non-denominational church with some big differences: LGBTQ+ inclusion and gender equality (reflected in the makeup of pastors and board).

### Non-Denominational Doesn't Mean Disconnected: The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries (TFAM)

Like other non-denominational churches, we are part of a church network—in our case, **The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries (TFAM)**. Pastor Emily's second ordination was conducted by Bishop Yvette Flunder of TFAM and they hold our church under their umbrella of churches. The Midwest Bishop of TFAM is Bishop Tim Wolfe, who is based in Chicago; Bishop Wolfe and the other Midwest pastors meet regularly online for accountability, support, prayer, and community.



Bishop Yvette Flunder

The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries is a multi-denominational group of primarily African American Christian leaders and laity representing churches and faith-based organizations from the USA, Africa, and Mexico. Founded in 2000 by Rev. Dr. Yvette Flunder, pastor of **City of Refuge UCC** in Oakland, CA, the overriding purpose of The Fellowship is to support religious teachers and laity in moving towards a theology of radical inclusivity which, by its very nature, requires an equally radical social ministry, reaching to the furthest margins of society to serve all in need without prejudice and discrimination.



Bishop Tim Wolfe

### What We Like About the Non-Denominational Label

We believe Christianity is in a time of great change. Advances in science and the study of ancient documents (including the Bible) have challenged the way many churches think about faith. As a result, churches need to be able to adapt to a quickly changing landscape. Sometimes the structures of denominations hinder, rather than help—even as they connect us with the treasures of the past. Denominations can absorb a lot of energy. Also, at times, the needs of the institution (for financial security, mostly) trump progress. We don't believe our approach is better, just that it has some important advantages that we appreciate, and which fit our mission.

# Core Values of Blue Ocean

## Connection

We believe we need connection more than we need answers. The universe is richly relational, and it points us toward a God who wants to communicate with, guide, encourage, and motivate us.



The quest for certainty in matters of faith has proved inadequate for so many people. We've found that looking for connection—with ourselves, with others, with nature, and with our Creator—is what people find to be most helpful on their spiritual paths. When those connections exist, they help us thrive and cope. When they don't, no amount of answers or insights seems to soothe us in times of suffering or hardship.

This doesn't diminish the pursuit of knowledge; we should never have to check our brains at the door of any faith community. It's just that we find the search itself (in the company of God and others) to be more fruitful than the illusion of having figured everything out.

## Everyone is us.

It's tempting for people to divide the world into people like us and people not like us. But what if, in the end, there is only us—fellow human beings?

The late Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu wove the Zulu philosophy of ubuntu into his understanding of how humans are connected. Ubuntu boils down to the idea that, "I am because you are." It recognizes a universal bond between all people—good done to you is good done to me; harm done to you is harm done to me. Jesus said something similar in Matthew 25 when he said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me."

When we see others' humanity and connect it to our own, it helps us find empathy and compassion. We think that take on the world opens up powerful opportunities for the kind of potent connection and growth about which we're so excited.

## There should be no bad news in connecting with God.

If there is a Creator whose very essence is Love (as the Apostle John asserts), then there should be no downside to connecting with Them. As James Baldwin wrote, "If the concept of God has any validity or any use, it can only make us larger, freer, and more loving. If God cannot do this, then it is time we got rid of [Them]."

## Healthy Spirituality

The Apostle Paul wrote that we'll know whether our spirituality is healthy by what it produces in people. The "fruit of the Spirit," as he called it, is love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.



We seek to promote emotional health in our community. We don't feel like we need to "fix" or paper over uncomfortable feelings. We're at ease with sadness and grief as much as we are with joy and contentment—and we make space for the anger produced by systems of injustice.

We seek wisdom for our lives—not proficiency in rules-based behavior—knowing life is complicated and nuanced and that none of us is equipped to judge people adequately. (Both Jesus and Paul are particularly hard on judging others and appeal for us to leave the judging to God.)

We also seek to relieve people of shame. The work of Brené Brown has been particularly helpful for us as we articulate what it means to develop resiliency and cast-off messages that diminish who God created us to be. We seek to respect boundaries and won't pressure you to do anything you're not comfortable doing—whether that's taking communion, praying communal prayers, and so on.

We understand trauma and want to create a safe community. Our preaching staff is trauma-informed and sensitive to ways Christianity has harmed so many. We readily admit we are not perfect, but we're committed to continual growth and our posture is one of humility.

## Holistic Allyship

We believe liberation is a collective undertaking. We all manage various aspects of our identities and together we can expand our empathy and understanding for the collective benefit of all.

We are an LGBTQ+ affirming congregation that is queer-led, but about 75% of our congregants are not queer. I [Emily] have always said I don't want to be known as the "gay pastor." I'm a pastor and being gay happens to be one aspect of who I am and one of the many lenses I bring to imagining and interpreting our faith tradition. Part of the healing for many queer people who attend Blue Ocean Church is being able to participate fully in a diverse faith community without feeling scrutinized.





## Practical

Our hope is that growing in faith is helpful and practical. We seek to develop empathy, inclusion, and wonder. We endeavor to help people connect with the Creator for comfort, guidance, and wisdom. We gather each Sunday for worship because we believe inclusive community built around shared stories and rituals inspires us to pursue justice and live out our values.

## Theological Approaches of Blue Ocean Church

### Trinity: Source, Wellspring, and Living Water

In our faith, we talk about God as a Trinity of persons: an inherent relationship of three beings in one. It's a paradox, but it's the best way we have to talk about something indescribable.

The word “trinity” is never used in the Bible. The idea was codified at the Council of Nicaea in the fourth century. The picture of a three-in-one God is humans trying to express that we've experienced the Divine in distinct ways and forms over the last several thousand years. We believe in a Creator-God, but this Creator-God seems to manifest in three distinguishable ways that we relate to uniquely. There is the aspect of God who is the source of all. There is an aspect of God called Logos (or Word, or Wisdom—who, later, we Christians would claim incarnated as Jesus). And there is an aspect of God that is experienced as Spirit or breath or life force. In the Scriptures we see all three aspects present and distinct in both Genesis 1 and at Jesus's baptism.

Any way we talk about God is metaphor. Traditionally the metaphor used for the Trinity is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It's not surprising humans in male-centered cultures used masculine language to try and make sense of God. It's not even *wrong* as a metaphor, but we believe it's an *incomplete* metaphor if that's the primary or only way we conceive of the Trinity; it limits our concept of who God is. All our metaphors for God will always fall short because God cannot be contained within the boxes of our human imaginations and languages. So, you might hear us say Creator, Jesus, and Spirit. You might also hear us say Mother, Child, and Breath. You might just as easily hear us say Source, Wellspring, and Living Water.

## **Solus Jesus is our approach to church authority.**

The Protestant Reformation was shaped by reaction to the centralization of authority in the Pope. The Reformers replaced this by locating church authority in Scripture, a formulation dubbed *Sola Scriptura* or “Scripture Alone.” The Bible was regarded as a safe authority because it was unchanging and therefore wouldn’t be as capricious as some of the popes. This served many wonderful and needed purposes—it catalyzed a surge in literacy rates, and it encouraged Christians from all walks of life to read and meditate on the Bible for themselves.

However, *Sola Scriptura* also resulted in 30,000 church denominations as church after church parted ways over this, that, or the other—all while insisting the Bible was “clear” about various issues and that their interpretation was more authoritative than anyone else’s. If the fruit of entrusting the authority of Scripture is 30,000 denominations in the span of 500 years, then maybe we’ve missed the mark.

Contrary to Jesus’s whole point in the Parable of the Sower, trying to follow a *Sola Scriptura* approach to church authority equated following Jesus to mastering a user’s manual rather than interacting with the very-much-alive Jesus. Keeping our eyes on Jesus and following where he leads is the heart of Christian faith.

This does not by any means negate Bible reading and scholarship. Instead, it puts the Bible back into the category it claims for itself of being an invaluable guide as we follow Jesus. You may hear us use the term *means of grace*—as in “The Bible is one of many *means of grace* through which the church connects with the Divine.” Other *means of grace* include community, experience, practices, and reason.

## **We wholly reject supersessionism.**

Supersessionism (or replacement theology) is a belief embraced by a large chunk of the Western Church that says Christianity replaced Judaism after Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection. It is an anti-Semitic theology meant to discount the faith of our Jewish friends.

We remember that Jesus was himself a Jewish rabbi—not a Christian. He taught from the streams of his own Jewish faith and never rejected his tradition. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is recorded as saying, “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore, anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kin-dom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kin-dom of heaven.”



We believe part of our faith community's calling is to help root out the anti-Semitism so rampant in much of Western Christian teaching. Part of this calling entails learning from Jewish scholars, rabbis, and practitioners. Part of this calling entails trying to better understand the Jewish context in which Jesus lived and taught, in order to truly respect what shaped his spirituality. We also hope to become better allies to our Jewish friends when they're made out to be scapegoats by people in our society.

**Ecumenical is our connection to other faith communities.**

At Blue Ocean Church we learn from various Christian traditions (and beyond). Many of us, for instance, have found that our best teachers on spirituality have been from the Eastern Orthodox arm of the faith, the Episcopalian tradition, or the progressive Black Church stream. We recognize there have been four historic types of churches as described by Phyllis Tickle in *The Great Emergence*: liturgical, evangelical, social justice, and renewalist. We believe the Spirit is calling churches to circle toward the center where the treasures in each sector of the quadrant are most concentrated. In the center of this quadrant is Jesus himself.

We also take a humble posture toward other faith traditions—knowing that, while we can fully embrace our own faith, *we could be wrong*. The Creator is big enough to bust open all our human containers, and we should humbly accept the gifts others offer us, and humbly offer what's proved helpful for us in return.

**We follow a Jesus-shaped path toward liberation, justice, and expanding love.**

We read Jesus, a Jewish rabbi, as part of a reformation movement within his own tradition. He called for imaginative thinking—new wineskins—to cast off some of the corruption that inherently builds up in all religious systems over time. We believe his devotion to the streams of Judaism that advocate for the oppressed, stand against empirical power, and invite everyone to the table of God is what ultimately led to his being sentenced to death by the Roman state. He was made a scapegoat—an innocent on whom the collective sins of an anxious political system were placed. In the Christian tradition, God overturned this unjust death sentence by raising Jesus from the dead. In doing so, God stood with the collective scapegoats of the world and called all of us to do the same. This is the Jesus-shaped theology of justice we embrace.

Every week when we take communion we say, “Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim his death until he comes again.” In other words, whenever we remember the death of Jesus, we declare that his is to be the final scapegoat death. No more.

## **We renounce white Christian nationalism.**

A significant number of (mostly) white American Christians have embraced a political movement where they seek power as a means of propagating their idea of Christianity. Jesus never advocated seeking political power in his (or any other) name. This doesn't mean Christians can't work for the government or seek political office—functioning social services run with integrity help communities thrive—but that seeking power to use the levers of empire specifically to impose Christianity on others is counter to the project to which Jesus calls us.

When the writers of the New Testament made the claim that Jesus was Lord, Emmanuel, Savior, Redeemer, Son of God, etc., they were committing what the Romans called *majestas* and what we call high treason—because those titles were reserved for Caesar. It's why early Christians were often jailed, beaten, or put to death in the Roman Empire. It's why they were sent to be eaten by animals in the Roman colosseum or at the Circus Maximus. They refused to bow to Roman gods or to call Caesar, *Lord*. Jesus was Lord and Caesar was not.

Early Christians made a strong distinction between the Empire of Rome and the Empire of God—or kin-dom of God. The kin-dom of God was meant to be a counter way of living to that of the way of Rome, just as the kin-dom of God is meant to be a counter way of living to the way of the American Empire today.

## Expectations of Membership

1. Make regular financial contributions as you are able. Every member makes a financial pledge for the coming year. This is simply a statement of the amount you intend to give barring unforeseen circumstances. We encourage you to give online through one of our monthly recurring gift options (via **credit/debit card** or direct bank deposit).
2. Serving as you are able. There are many different ways to serve, and we encourage our members to find one that works for your schedule. Because without people who sign up and show up, church doesn't happen.
3. Participating as you are able. Simply being present to connect with others in worship, in service, in a visit to the hospital or a meal brought to a new mom or person recovering from surgery, joining a 6-week connect group or an ongoing small group, or stopping by for one of our monthly connect events/parties, makes a huge difference for all of us who are enriched by the connections of a faith community.

## Budget Process

In the fall, the board and staff work together on preparing a budget for the coming year. The board approves an estimated income (based on pledges members indicate on their membership letters, past giving history, etc.) The staff then works up a proposed budget, working with any ministry leaders who oversee budget categories. This budget is presented to the board for preliminary approval.

The board makes this budget available to our members three weeks prior to our annual business meeting, per our bylaws. Members are able to give input on the upcoming budget at an open board meeting for this purpose held after church. After considering this input, the board finalizes the budget and it is presented to the church members for approval by a vote in early December.

## Staff and Blue Ocean Church Board

Biographies and photos of our current staff and board members are available on our website at [a2blue.org/leadership](http://a2blue.org/leadership)

# Ann Arbor Blue Ocean Church Bylaws (amended 2022.01.09)

## DEFINITIONS

Church = Ann Arbor Blue Ocean Church

Board = duly elected members of the Church Board

## ARTICLE I - OFFICES

A. The Church shall maintain a registered office in the State of Michigan and a registered agent at such office. The Church may have other offices.

## ARTICLE II - MEMBERS

### A. Classes of Members

1. The Church shall have one class of members.

### B. Membership Process.

1. A prospective member will:

- a. complete the membership process provided by the Church.
- b. submit a letter stating their intention to fulfill the responsibilities of membership and make a financial pledge in accord with their ability to contribute.
- c. agree to support the Vision, Mission, and Core Values of the Church,
- d. agree to be bound by the provisions of this set of Bylaws.

2. Candidates for membership shall be accepted by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors.

3. The membership rolls may be reviewed at any time by the Board to ensure that all members are in good standing according to the provisions of this Article.

### C. Responsibilities of Membership

1. The responsibilities of membership include:

- a. regular participation in the life and communal worship of the Church,
- b. financial support of the Church,
- c. contribution of services to implement the Vision and Mission of the Church,
- d. maintaining an attitude of cooperation with the pastors and leaders of the Church, pursuit of personal integration of the Church's Vision, Mission, and Core Values.

### D. Resignation of Membership

1. Any member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors.

### E. Forfeiture of Membership and Removal

1. Members forfeit their membership who:

- a. refuse to abide by or support the Bylaws of the Church; or
- b. disrupt the Church or its activities.

2. If a member is in violation of section E(1)(a) or (b) above, the member shall be removed by majority vote of the Church Board and will communicate with the member removed at their discretion. If

cause for removal from membership shall be found in any member, the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors or the pastors' designated representative shall attempt to communicate with the member privately in order to seek the appropriate resolution. If this fails, the Board or its representatives shall seek to communicate with the member to achieve resolution. In the absence of resolution, the Board will consider removal from membership.

Under the above circumstances, persons can only be removed from membership by a majority vote of the Board. Decisions to remove a person from membership will be communicated to the individual and will be recorded in the minutes of the Board. Further communication to the Church regarding the removal of a member shall be made at the discretion of the Board.

3. Membership is renewable by the member on an annual basis.

### **ARTICLE III - MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

#### **A. Conduct of Meetings.**

The Chair of the Board or the Chair's designated alternate Board member shall preside over all meetings of the members.

#### **B. Annual Business Meeting.**

1. An Annual Business Meeting shall be held to approve the budget for the upcoming fiscal year, elect board members or transact other appropriate business.
2. Copies of the proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year will be made available to the congregation at least three weeks before the Annual Business Meeting.
3. The Board will hold a board meeting open to all members at least two weeks before the Annual Business Meeting for the express purpose of receiving any input from the members regarding the budget. Members who wish to ask questions, make recommendations, or offer comments may do so by sending their comments in writing before this meeting of the Board, or by attending the Board meeting in person.
4. The Board will then finalize and approve the budget and present it at the Annual Business Meeting for a vote in accordance with this Article.

#### **C. Special Meetings.**

1. Special meetings of the members may be called by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors or by the Board.

#### **D. Notice of Annual Business or Special Meetings.**

1. The place and time of meetings shall be determined by the Board.
2. A notice stating the place, day and hour of the meeting and the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be issued not less than ten nor more than forty days before the date of the meeting.
3. Such notices shall be by one or more of the following:
  - a. Oral or written notice—consisting of announcements at regularly scheduled meetings of the Church.
  - b. Electronic - consisting of email as it appears on the records of the Church, posting on the Church website or other electronic media.

- c. Mailed - consisting of United States mail with postage thereon prepaid addressed to the member at his or her address as it appears on the records of the Church.
4. If the purpose of the meeting includes the approval of any proposals, the Board shall provide information prior to the meeting. Such information may include (but is not limited to) the list of candidates for positions, annual budget, proposed amendments, etc.

#### E. Voting.

1. Each member present shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the members. Absentee votes in writing will be accepted in the Church office provided that they are received by the end of the meeting.
2. Except as otherwise noted, a simple majority of the votes cast by the members present at the meeting or cast as absentee is sufficient for approval.
3. Voting by members shall only be conducted at a meeting called in accordance with this article.

### **ARTICLE IV - GOVERNMENT**

#### A. Church Board.

1. The Church Board (Board) shall be the governing body of the Church in respect to matters related to conduct of business affairs by the Church (e.g., including but not limited to budgets, compensation, employment, financial investment, buying or leasing of facility, maintenance, contract negotiation, etc.) and any other matters specifically given to the Board in the Bylaws.
2. The Board shall provide prayer, advice, counsel, and support to the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors regarding the life and the ministry of the Church.
3. Subject to limitation of the Articles of Incorporation, other sections of the Bylaws, and of Michigan law, all corporate powers of the corporation shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board and the business and affairs of the corporation shall be controlled by the Board.
4. The Board shall have the following powers:
  - a. To select and remove all other officers and agents, and employees of the corporation, prescribe such powers and duties for them as may be consistent with the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws, and fix their compensation of employees.
  - b. To conduct, manage, and control the business affairs of the corporation, and to make rules and regulations consistent with the Articles of Incorporation, and the Bylaws.
  - c. To borrow money and incur indebtedness for the purpose of the corporation and for that purpose cause to be executed and delivered, in the corporate name, promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, or other evidence of debt and securities.
  - d. To conduct an annual performance review of the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors at least every two years.
  - e. To fix the fiscal year of the corporation by resolution.
  - f. To resolve serious complaints within the scope of the Bylaws between parties within the Church when normal efforts to resolve the concern have failed. The Board shall serve as the final appeal within the Church for complaints.
    - Members wishing to bring a complaint must provide a written request to the Board Chair (or a Board member designated by the Board) stating the nature of the issue and efforts undertaken to resolve the concern.



- The Board will determine if there is a reasonable basis for the complaint, and that the underlying issue is weighty enough to justify Board action, and communicate this determination to the member bringing the complaint.
  - The Board will establish and execute a process for handling the complaint, which will be dependent on the nature of the specific complaint, and will communicate this process to the member bringing the complaint.
5. A majority of Board members then in office constitutes a quorum for the transaction of any business at any meeting of the Board. Actions voted on by a majority of Board members present at a meeting where a quorum is present shall constitute authorized actions of the Boards. Actions submitted to an email vote by the Board chair and voted on by email and approved by a majority of all Board members then in office shall also constitute authorized actions of the Board.
  6. The Chair of the Board or designee shall make an annual written report of the Church finances from the previous fiscal year. At any time during the fiscal year, any member of the Church may submit a written request to the Board for the most current budget report.

#### B. Board Members.

1. The Board shall consist of a minimum of seven members and a maximum of thirteen members, including the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors. There shall always be an odd number of members.
- 2. No one gender will comprise more than 60% of the board.**
3. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall solicit input from the members of the Church for potential Board members. Board members shall be members of the Church, nominated by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors and individually approved by a majority vote of the Board, excluding the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors, and individually approved by a majority vote of the members of the Church.
4. A majority of the Board must not be employed by the Church, and the ratio of lay members to paid staff members shall be 2:1 or greater.
5. Vacancies shall be filled by members of the Church, nominated by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors and approved by a majority vote of the Board, excluding the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors. A successor Board member so appointed shall serve for the unexpired term of the predecessor.
6. The Board Chair shall be nominated by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors and approved by a majority of the remaining Board members.
7. The term of office for Board members shall be three (3) years or until a successor is appointed. Board members shall serve for staggered terms of office not to exceed three years per term. Staggered terms allow for a degree of continuity that might be lost if the entire board turned over at the same time. The Board shall be divided into three classes with staggered terms, with each class as nearly equal in number as possible. Each class shall be up for re-election every third year. If Members are added to the board, the new Member will be given an initial term of years that creates a balance in years of experience across Board Members. This may include serving a partial term. The Board reserves the right to decrease a Member's term if it serves the purpose expressed in this item.
8. Successors for Board members whose term of office are expiring shall be nominated and approved at the Annual Business Meeting.
9. A Board member and the Board Chair may succeed themselves in office if nominated and approved.
10. The Board Chair shall serve for a one-year term as part of the member's normal term of office.

11. A Board member other than the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors may be removed from office by the vote of a majority of the Board membership. The Board member being considered for removal may not vote on their own dismissal. Grounds for removal include, but are not limited to, significant breach of the Bylaws, failure to carry out the Responsibilities of Membership, or failure to faithfully fulfill the duties of the office.
12. The Board members shall receive no compensation for their services as Board members.
13. Individual Board members do not have the power to conduct business on behalf of the Church, direct pastors or staff or otherwise exercise the powers of the Board unless specifically delegated by the Board.

#### C. Place, Time, and Minutes of Board Meetings.

1. Regular meetings of the Board may be held at any place and time that has been designated by the Board.
2. The Board Chair shall appoint a Board member to record minutes of every meeting which will be filed in the designated location in the Church office after approval at a subsequent Board meeting.
3. The Board will meet a minimum of 6 times per year.
4. Special meetings of the Board for any purpose may be called at any time by the Board Chair, Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors(s) or a majority of the other Board members.
  - a. A special meeting may be in person or held by conference telephone or similar communication equipment, so long as all members participating in the meeting can hear one another, and all such members shall be deemed to be present in person at the meeting. Non-participating members shall be notified within 48 hours of the occurrence of said meeting and any actions approved during said meeting. Written minutes shall be prepared and filed.
5. Action Without a Meeting.
  - a. Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Board may be taken without a meeting, if members of the Board shall individually or collectively consent in writing to that action. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the Board at the subsequent meeting. Written consent may include email or similar electronic communication

#### D. Corporate Officers.

1. The corporate officers of the Church shall be a President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer and such other officers as the Board may appoint. No two offices may be held by the same person.
2. The Board shall appoint all officers of the corporation by majority vote. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment of the Board. Officers shall be members of the Church. Members of the paid staff and their families shall not serve as officers.
3. The officers shall have power to execute documents, contracts, and routine legal or financial business of the Church, as directed by the Board. At any time, the Board may review a financial or legal decision of the officers and may overrule any action by a two-thirds majority vote.
4. Terms of office shall be one year for all officers. In the event of death, resignation, or removal before a term expires, the new officer shall complete the term. Each officer shall hold office until a successor shall have been duly appointed, or until death, resignation, or removal as provided herein.
5. Any officer may be removed by the Board at any time, by a majority vote of the Board members.

6. The Board Chair shall fill the office of President, ex-officio. The President shall be the principal executive officer of the corporation and shall see that the resolutions and directives of the Board are carried into effect, except in those instances in which that responsibility is assigned to some other person by the Board, and, in general, shall discharge all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed by the Board. Except in those instances in which the authority to execute is expressly delegated to another officer or agent of the corporation or a different mode of execution is expressly prescribed by the Board or these Bylaws, the President may execute for the corporation any contracts, deeds, mortgages, bonds, or other instruments which the Board has authorized to be executed, and the President may accomplish such execution either individually or with the Secretary, any assistant, or any other officer thereunto authorized by the Board, according to the requirements of the form of instrument.
7. The Secretary of the Board shall fill the office of Secretary, ex-officio. The Secretary shall see that the minutes of the meetings of the Board and meetings of the members are recorded and filed in the location designated by the Board, see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws or as required by law, be custodian of the corporate records, and perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to by the Board.
8. The Treasurer shall see that budgets are prepared by the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors and that reports to the Board regarding the financial affairs of the Church are provided.

#### **ARTICLE V - INDEMNIFICATION**

- A. To the extent permitted by law, the Church will indemnify and hold harmless its officers, Board members and employees against any claim or liability and will hold said individual(s) harmless from and pay for any and all expenses incurred arising out of or in connection with any act or omission performed or made in good faith on behalf of the Church, regardless of negligence. Additionally, the Church will provide employee, officers and directors liability insurance covering acts or omissions by the individual(s) in the performance of their duties for the Church.

#### **ARTICLE VI - PASTORS AND STAFF**

- A. Lead Pastor and Co-Pastor.
  1. The Lead Pastor shall, at his/her discretion, appoint a Co-Pastor with the approval of the board (simple majority.) The Lead Pastor and the appointed Co-Pastor will then function by consensus. They will be referred to as Co-Pastors. At any time, the original Lead Pastor with approval of the board (simple majority) may end the Co-Pastor arrangement.
  2. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall provide spiritual leadership to the Church and oversight for matters relating to the spiritual health of the Church, matters of doctrine and interpretation, matters of spiritual ordinances for the Church, direction of the Church's ministry, and any other matters reasonably connected to the spiritual life of the Church, with advice and counsel being received from the Board.
  3. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall oversee the operation of the Church on a daily basis and give leadership to the pastoral staff, the Church body and its ministries.
  4. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall provide a regular report to the Board regarding the Church's ministries and the performance of the paid staff.

5. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors or designee shall make an oral or written report to the members regarding the activities and plans for the Church.
6. The Board shall seek and nominate a candidate for Lead Pastor should a vacancy arise in the pastorate. Two-thirds majority of the full Board and a majority of members of the congregation must approve the candidate for Lead Pastor.
7. The Lead Pastor shall resign, or his/her pastorate be terminated, upon a two-thirds vote of the Board and a two-thirds vote at a Meeting of Members (see Article IV Voting). Grounds for removal include departure from the Vision, Mission and Core Values, significant breach of the bylaws, failure to execute the Responsibilities of Membership, or failure to faithfully fulfill the duties of the office.

#### B. Pastoral Staff

1. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall define pastoral staff positions, in writing, as necessary to conduct the ministry of the Church. They shall serve under the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors' direction in the pastoral care and oversight of the Church.
2. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall nominate pastoral staff positions, for approval by a majority of the Board.
3. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors, after counseling with the Board, shall fix compensation for pastoral staff, subject to the requirements of the approved budget.
4. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors, after counseling with the Board, may require the resignation, or terminate the employment, of pastoral staff.
5. The Board, after counseling with the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors, may by a two-thirds vote, require the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors to terminate the employment of other pastoral staff.

#### C. Staff

1. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors shall define staff positions, in writing, as necessary to conduct the ministry of the Church. They shall serve under the direction of the Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors or designee.
2. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors is/are responsible for employment, direction and termination of staff.

#### D. Conflicts of Interest

1. Board members or paid members of the Church may conduct for-profit personal business with Church members, but may not conduct for-profit personal business with the Church as an organization.
2. For any Board member or paid member of the Church staff to be a leader of another religious group unaffiliated with Blue Ocean requires approval by a majority vote of the Board.

## **ARTICLE VII - ORDINATION**

### **A. Process for Ordination.**

1. The Lead Pastor or Co-Pastors and Board shall establish and administer a written ordination process.

## **ARTICLE VIII - AMENDMENTS**

- ### **A. These Bylaws may be amended, provided the amendment is approved by a majority vote of the Board and majority vote of the Church members at a Meeting of Members.**

## **ARTICLE IX - DISSOLUTION**

- ### **A. In the event of the dissolution of this organization, the distribution of the assets shall be to one or more non-profit, Christian organizations, and shall be decided by the Board at the same time as the dissolution of this organization.**