

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## PREAMBLE

We, the members of Harvest Fields Community Church, do ordain and establish the following articles, which form our Constitution.

### ARTICLE I HARVEST FIELDS COMMUNITY CHURCH

The name of this Church shall be Harvest Fields Community Church, whose primary address is 2626 East Tremont Ave, Bronx, New York, 10461

### ARTICLE II PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE CHURCH

1. Harvest Fields Community Church is a denominationally unaffiliated church. It is our purpose to be unhampered by the restrictions and decisions of other churches or denominations that would determine the ministry and message of our church.
2. Since we believe that the Bible is God's holy and inspired work, it is our purpose to draw from Scriptures the Principles that determines our beliefs and practices. As the name implied, it is the Word of God rather than the word of men that ultimately directs our church.
3. It is our purpose to meet frequently to ***Reveal God, Reach people and Restore lives*** in accordance with Acts 2:42. The message we declared to young and old alike is based upon a literal, grammatical, and historical interpretation of the entire Bible. We proclaim the truth of the Bible, being confident that God is glorified and man's needs are met when His truths are presented and obeyed.
4. We further believe that because Harvest Fields Community Church is a body of believers whose main mission is to make disciples. In keeping with Acts 2:42, this church has four major areas through which it fulfills its mission in the world.
  - A. **Worship has as its primary goal expressing to God the esteem, which his people hold for Him.**
  - B. **Christian education promotes learning among God's People and a response of personal obedience to the scriptures.**
  - C. **Fellowship is designed to promote the interpersonal caring And sharing of God's people one to another as an outgrowth of their fellowship with God.**
  - D. **Outreach that touches the world at large and engages our communities with the "Good News" of Jesus Christ and the seeing where God is moving and getting involved in His work.**

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

## **ARTICLE II**

### **PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE CHURCH      Cont.....**

5. Each of these four areas are designed to provide a distinct, divine option to the world's approach to living, starting within the church and extending to society at large.
6. Since Harvest Fields Community Church believes that each member of the body has received from the Holy Spirit a spiritual gift that he/she is to discover and develop, it is our goal to see that these spiritual gifts are exercised, contributing to the life of the body.

## **ARTICLE III**

### **DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH**

#### **SECTION 1.    THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

We believe the Holy Scripture to be the verbal, inspired Word of God, authoritative, and without error in the original manuscripts. We further believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are designed for our practical instruction in faith and conduct. (2 Timothy 3:16 – 17; 2 Peter 1:21)

#### **SECTION 2.    THE GOD HEAD**

We believe that the Godhead eternally exists in three persons – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – and that these three are one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19)

#### **SECTION 3.    THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, came into the world that He might manifest God to men, fulfill prophecy, and become the Redeemer of a lost world. To this end, He was born of the Virgin Mary, received a human body and a sinless human nature without ceasing to be God. (Luke 1:20-35; John 1:1, 14, 18; Hebrews 4:15; Philippians 2:5-11)

We believe that, in infinite love for the lost, He voluntarily accepted His Father's will and became the divinely provided sacrificial Lamb and took away the sins of the world. (Romans 3:25-31; 2 Corinthians 5:14; Hebrews 10:5-14)

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

## **ARTICLE III DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH      Cont.....**

We believe that He arose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He had lived and died and that His resurrected body is the pattern of that body which ultimately will be given to all believers. (John 20:20; Philippians 3:20-21)

We believe that, on departing from the earth, His Father accepted him and that his acceptance is a final assurance to us that His redeeming work was perfectly accomplished (Hebrews 1:3).

We believe that He became Head over all things to the church, which is His body, and in this ministry He does not cease to intercede and to be an advocate for the saved. (Luke 1:35; I Corinthians 15:1-3, Ephesians 1:23; Philippians 2:6-8; Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1-2)

### **SECTION 4. THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, indwells every believer immediately after he places his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and that God provides, through the Holy Spirit, power to live the Christian life.

We believe that every believer receives grace from God in the form of a spiritual gift, which enables him to function as a member of the body of Christ. (Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:7)

### **SECTION 5. THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN**

We believe that Satan, the devil is the prince of demons and is the declared adversary of God and man. However, when the Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross, He limited the power of the devil and guaranteed the ultimate triumph of God. (Ephesians 2:2; I Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:10; Colossians 2:13-15)

### **SECTION 6. SALVATION**

We believe that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless born again spiritually, and that the new birth of the believer comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

We believe, also, that our redemption has been accomplished by the grace of God, an unmerited gift, given in love by God and not the result of any human works. (John 3:7-18; 2 Cor. 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Romans 4:4-5).

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE III

### DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH Cont.....

We believe that upon receiving the Lord Jesus Christ by faith, the believer passes immediately out of spiritual death into spiritual life, and into fellowship with God (John 1:12, 5:24)

We also believe that once this salvation is accomplished, we and all true believers everywhere shall **be kept saved forever**, (John 10:28-29; Romans 3:24, 8:35-39; 2 Timothy 2:11-12; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:5, 8-10)

#### SECTION 7. THE CHURCH

We believe that all who are united to the risen and ascended Son of God are members of the Church which is the body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Acts 2:42-47)

We believe that the explicit message of our Lord Jesus Christ to those whom He has saved is to make Christ known to the whole world and that this is the purpose of the Church through the individuals within it. (Matthew 28:18-19; Acts 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:11-21)

We believe that the local churches, such as Harvest Fields Community Church, gather together for practical instruction in the Scriptures, for fellowship with God and with other believers, and for corporate witness to the unsaved world. Our common spiritual goal is to grow toward Christ's likeness. (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:42-47; Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:13-16)

#### SECTION 8. THE RAPTURE AND THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that a future period of great tribulation on earth will climax by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to the earth as He went in person in the clouds with power and great glory to establish His millennial kingdom. But prior to this tribulation, we believe there will be the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air to receive to Himself into Heaven both His own who are alive and remain until His coming and also all who have died in Christ Jesus. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17, Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 3:10)

#### SECTION 9. ETERNAL STATE

We believe that at death the spirits and souls of those who have trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the glorified body when Christ comes for his own, whereupon soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory. All those who rejected Jesus Christ will eternally be separated from God to endure His eternal wrath forever. (2 Corinthians 5:8; Revelations 20:11 – 15, 21:1-27)

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

## **ARTICLE III**

### **DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH Cont.....**

#### **SECTION 10. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LEADERS**

We believe that God appoints leaders (Elders and Deacons) to guide His church in the understanding and application of Holy Scripture. It is their responsibility to be examples of Godliness as they see to the spiritual well-being and protection of the flock over which God has given them charge. (Acts 6:1-8; Acts 20:28; Hebrew 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

#### **SECTION 11. CHURCH ORDINANCES**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be observed by all believers until His return. (Matthew 28:19; Luke 22:19-20; Acts 10:47-48)

We believe that the ordinance of Baptism is immersion of the believers in water as it sets forth the essential facts in redemption – the death and resurrection of Christ and the essential resurrection to newness of life. (Romans 6:4; Acts 8:26-39)

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a privilege afforded to all believers in commemoration of the Lord's death until He comes. (1 Corinthians 11:23-28)

#### **SECTION 12. SAME SEX MARRIAGE & ABORTION**

We believe that God marriage to be exclusive between one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:18-25) Based on the teaching of scripture this is the only union God acknowledges and blesses. Christian marriage is a representation of Christ's relationship to His church. As minister of the gospel we are prohibited from performing any ceremony involving those of the same sex. We also believe that children are a blessing from the Lord. Thus all human life is sacred and worthy of protection from the moment of conception. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:24; Psalm 127 & 128; 139:13-16; Matthew 19:1-10; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrew 13:4.)

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH**

#### **SECTION 1. QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**

##### **A. Permanent Members**

Membership in the church shall be acquired by affirmation of personal faith in

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the believer's baptism, a clear understanding of the purposes, goals, and doctrinal statement of the church, and the successful completion of the church's Experiencing God course. The applicant shall fill out a personal profile and be interviewed by at least one of the following: Pastors, Elders, Deacons and/or specified representatives as to personal salvation. No church letter of transfer shall be accepted or granted.

## **B. Associate Members**

Applicants who desire to retain their membership in another church outside the city or state, but who residing temporarily in New York for educational, vocational, military or other purposes as recognized by the elders, may be admitted into the membership of this church in the same manner as prescribed for permanent membership. Associate members shall possess the same rights and privileges as regular members while attending Harvest Fields Community Church.

## **SECTION 2. RECEIVING MEMBERS**

All applicants shall be publicly presented to the church body at a regular worship service. At which time, they shall be extended the right hand of fellowship signifying membership.

## **SECTION 3. GENERAL ATTENDANCE**

All persons are welcomed to attend the services of the church.

## **SECTION 4. CONGREGATIONAL INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING**

Whereas governing of the church is vested in the Board of Elders, the Board may from time to time bring before the congregation matters/issues, which are currently being considered by the Board. Any matter/issue so presented to the congregation may be for the purpose of, solicitation of advise, input seeking, and/or for any other data gathering nature which the Board deem necessary to assist in making the best possible decision. Those outside of our local body may be solicited for their specific expert advise on the matter/issue under consideration. That expert advise will be solicited as deemed necessary by the Board.

## **SECTION 5. MEETING OF MEMBERS**

### **A. Annual Meetings**

There shall be at least one annual meeting of the members of the church. In this annual meeting, the membership shall receive: (1) an annual report of the actions of the Board of Elders, (2) the Senior Pastor's report, update and perspectives, (3) a review of the church's performance in the most recent budget period, (4) An analysis of the next proposed budget along with (5) a complete set of minutes from the most recent annual meeting.

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE IV

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH ..... CON'T.

#### B. Semiannual Meetings

In an effort to keep the congregation informed as to the business, direction and needs of the church, the Board of Elders may convene a second meeting during the year for a half year update of the members. This semiannual meeting should have an agenda similar to the annual meeting, affording an opportunity for members to pose pertinent questions and leaders to answer.

#### C. Regular Meetings

Weekly worship, midweek Bible study, and other regular meetings for the entire congregation may be set and established by the Board of Elders; notice of regularly scheduled meetings shall not be required.

#### D. Special Meetings

Other special meetings of the membership shall be called by the Board of Elders and /or the Senior Pastor as they deem necessary. The Board of Elders shall attempt to give the membership as much advance notice of such meeting when possible.

### SECTION 6 WITHDRAWALS AND DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

#### A. Withdrawal

Members may withdraw from the church at their own request by giving a written notice. Such withdrawal request and any notices of change of church membership shall be recorded by the administrative staff and a letter of acknowledgement sent to the withdrawing member.

#### B. Dismissal

In harmony with the scriptural teaching of the Christian faith, discipline must be a functional part of the local church (Matthew 18:15-20; Galatians 1:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13). The Board of Elders shall discipline any member who knowingly holds false or heretical doctrine, who knowingly lives inconsistently with their Christian profession, or who knowingly would disturb the unity and peace of the Church shall be subject to Church Discipline. The goal of discipline is to restore the person to the church whenever there is repentance and

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

evidence of spiritual change. The Board of Elders shall oversee all disciplinary action. After prayerful consideration and the implementation of the discipline

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH ..... CON'T.**

#### **SECTION 6 WITHDRAWALS AND DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS (CON'T)**

##### **C. Dismissal (Cont'd)**

process, as outlined in the church's discipline policy, and person may be dismissed from membership, and his/her name stricken from the church roll by a 2/3 majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present.

#### **SECTION 7 RESTORATION OF DISMISSED MEMBERS**

The church also has responsibility of restoring dismissed members who give satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6-8) and who have corrected the offense. Such membership restoration occurs only by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present, who shall inform the congregation of the same.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **BOARD OF ELDERS**

#### **SECTION 1 QUALIFICATION OF THE ELDER BOARD**

Qualifications of the Elders shall be in accordance with the guidelines established in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9; that is, an Elder must have a reputation which is above reproach, be the husband of one wife, be pleasant, sensible, respectable, not self-willed, not be quick tempered, and not be confrontational or controversial. An Elder must be free from the love of money, a good manager of his household, a lover of what is good, a just and devout man, and he must not be a new convert to the faith. An Elder must hold minister credentials with a recognized fellowship or denomination.

#### **SECTION 2 PURPOSE, POWERS AND AUTHORITY**

##### **A. Government**

The Board of Elders or their qualified appointees, who shall be ultimately responsible to the Board, shall govern the spiritual activities and affairs of the church. As the church holds the belief that the New Testament placed the burden of governing on a plurality of Elders, the Board of Elders shall oversee the congregation and make policy decisions with regard to the affairs, functions, and direction, of the church. These decisions must reflect a clear



# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

biblical perspective and the best interest of the church. Authority to execute documents of the church shall be vested in the Board of Elders.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **BOARD OF ELDERS**

#### **B. Pulpit Supply**

The Board of Elders shall make provision for the supply of the pulpit if the Senior Pastor fails to do so, or in his absence.

#### **SECTION 3 SPIRITUAL OVERSIGHTS**

The Board of Elders shall be responsible for assisting and supporting the Senior Pastor. The Board of elders is to provide the personal professional resources necessary for him to effectively lead the ministry of the church and ensure that the spiritual purposes of the church, as set forth in Article II, are realized.

#### **SECTION 4 CHURCH ADMINISTRATION**

The Senior Pastor shall represent the Board of Elders in the development and administration of the programs of the church. Such programs shall be in accordance with the purpose and goals of the church as defined in Article II of this constitution.

#### **SECTION 5 COMPOSITION OF BOARD AND TERM OF OFFICE OF ELDERS**

##### **A. Number of Elders**

The number of Elders shall not be less than three (3) and not more than twenty (20).

##### **Term of Office of Elders**

The term of office for Elders shall be three (3) years. An Elder may succeed himself in office. The process for succession shall be written notice to the Board of Elders at least 30 days prior to Expiration of his term.

#### **SECTION 6 NOMINATION, APPOINTMENT, AND AFFIRMATION**

##### **A. Nomination of Elders**

Nomination of men to be considered for the office of Elder shall come from the Board of Elders. The Board shall have the responsibility of assessing the qualifications of each prospective candidate. (As prescribed in Article V Section 1) "Making selections and oversight of training of those men".

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE V

### BOARD OF ELDERS ..... CON'T.

#### B. Appointment of Elders

Upon the successful completion of the Elder's training program, each candidate will be presented to the Board for approval as a qualified candidate for the office of Elders. Upon approval by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present, each candidate shall be presented before the congregation.

#### C. Affirmation of Elders

The members of the congregation shall have a specified period of time (exact amount of time will be communicated at the time in which the names are presented) to bring forward any cause for denial of office, be it unfitness or other cause that would prevent a candidate from faithfully serving in the office of Elders. After the specified time period the candidate from faithfully serving in the office of Elders. After the special time period, the candidate will be presented to the congregation for their affirmation.

### SECTION 7 QUORUM OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS

The quorum necessary to conduct the business of the Board shall be two-thirds of the members of the Board of Elders. The proxy of an Elder may not constitute an attendance for the purpose of a quorum.

### SECTION 8 VOTING OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS

#### A. Voting

A two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present is required for the adoption of any motion.

#### Proxy

An Elder may vote by proxy executed in writing and filed with the Chairman of the Board before the meeting is called to order; however, such proxy shall not be counted toward the majority attendance required for a quorum. No proxy shall be valid beyond the meeting for which it was filed.

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE V BOARD OF ELDERS ..... CON'T.

### Revocation of Proxy

No proxy shall be valid after three months from the date of its execution. Each proxy shall be revocable unless expressly provided therein to be irrevocable or unless made irrevocable by law.

### SECTION 9. MEETING OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS

#### A. Regular Meetings

There shall not be less than one regular annual meeting of the Board of Elders.

#### B. Special Meetings

1. The Chairman of the Board may call a special meeting of the Board when necessary or expedient in the absence of the Chairman, or in the event of a disability, inability to service, removal of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman of the Board calls a special meeting of the Elders when necessary or expedient.
2. Chairman of the Board of Elders

At the discretion of the Board of Elders, a member or members of the congregation may address the Board of Elders in person on a specific issue.

#### C. Action of the Board Without Meeting

1. Requirement for Action Without Meeting

Any action of the Board may be taken without a meeting if unanimous consent shall be reach among all the members of the Board entitled to vote. Action taken in this manner shall be recorded in the official minutes of the next meeting of the Board.

2. Limits of Action Without Meeting

The terms of the preceding paragraph shall not apply to the procedures for removal of an Elder, Pastor, or Deacon from office.

### SECTION 10 RECORDS OF MEETINGS

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

- A. Written records, resolutions, and minutes of the proceedings of the Board shall be Maintained at all times and shall be kept at the office of the church.

## ARTICLE V

### BOARD OF ELDERS..... CON'T.

- B. The Board of Elders shall appoint one of its members to the office of Secretary of the Board. The Secretary shall be responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the written records, resolutions, and minutes of the proceedings of the Board.
- C. Upon request of a member to inspect specific records of the Board of Elders, those records may be inspected, with the Secretary of the Board, at such reasonable time as determined by the Secretary. The records will not be shown if it is determined by the Board of Elders that the showing of such records might be detrimental to an individual member or to some pending issue of the Board.

## SECTION 11 RESIGNATIONS AND DISMISSAL OF ELDERS

### A. Resignation of Elders

The resignation of an Elder from office shall be in writing, subscribed by him, and submitted to the Board. If personal illness, infirmity, or inability to service prevents the resigning Elder from fulfilling this responsibility, another may act on his behalf in submitting his resignation from office.

### B. Dismissal of an Elder Other Than the Senior Pastor

If, for any reason, whether for unfaithfulness, unfitness, or other cause, the Board of Elders at a properly held meeting shall deem it necessary or desirable to remove an Elder from office, the Board of Elders at such meeting shall select and appoint a committee of four to inquire into, investigate, and examine the validity of the reasons or cause.

After such inquiry, the committee shall make a written report of its recommended action to the Board of Elders. If the committee recommends removal of the investigated Elder from office, a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present, shall be necessary to remove such elders shall allow the Elder to appear and speak to the Board in his own defense.

## SECTION 12 VACANCIES OF THE BOARD

When a vacancy (other than the Chairman) occurs on the Board, such vacancy shall be filled according to the procedures for nomination, appointment, and election of Elders set forth in these by-laws.

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE V

### BOARD OF ELDERS..... CON'T.

#### SECTION 13 OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF ELDERS

**A. The Senior Pastor shall service as the Chairman of the Board of Elders**

The Chairman shall preside over all meetings of the Board and of all congregational business meetings and shall set agenda for all board meetings. The offices of Chairman and Secretary of the Board shall not be held by the same person.

**B. The Assistant Pastor shall serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Board**

The Vice-Chairman shall reside over the meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairman or when designated by the Chairman. He shall be authorized by the Chairman to act in the Chairman's place and on his behalf as an ex-officio member of any committee designated by the chairman.

**C Secretary of the Board**

The Board of Elders shall appoint one of its members to the office Secretary. The Secretary shall preside over meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording, preparation, and maintenance Of the records, resolutions, minutes, and other actions of the proceedings of the Board of Deacons.

**D. Reports of the Board to the Church**

**1. Annual Report of the Board**

The Board shall make an annual report of the actions of the Board to the church during the first quarter of each year.

**2. Other Reports of the Board**

The Board, may at its discretion, make other reports of the actions, business, and status to the church at such times as deemed necessary.

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## 3. Other Reports of the Board

The Board, may at its discretion, make other reports of the actions, business, and status to the church at such times as deemed necessary.

## SECTION 14 SENIOR PASTOR

### A. Nomination of The Senior Pastor

The Board of Elders shall appoint a committee, composed of Elders and members of the congregation, to seek candidates for the position of Senior Pastor. The Committee will be chaired by an Elder, and shall recommend candidates for the office of Senior Pastor to the Board of Elders. The candidate for Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present. He shall thereafter be recommended to the members of the church at a meeting of the church called for the purpose.

### B. Election and Calling of the Senior Pastor

After the nomination and recommendation of the Senior Pastor by the Board of Elders, he shall be elected by a two-thirds vote of those members present at a congregational meeting called for the purpose of electing the Senior Pastor. The meeting shall have been announced by a written notice mailed not less than fourteen (14) days prior to said meeting. Should the candidate receive less than two-thirds majority vote of the members present, the matter of nomination and election shall be returned to the Board of Elders.

### C. Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor

1. The Senior Pastor shall be the recognized leader of the church. He shall be responsible for providing general guidance to the Church and overseeing the implementation of the policies established by the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be the chairman of the Board.
2. As the chief administrator of the church, the Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the general oversight, coordination, administration, and operation of all programs and personnel of the church.
3. It shall be the duty and obligation of the Senior Pastor to be the primary teacher of the Word of God as contained in the Old and New Testaments and to oversee the spiritual ministry of the church, which shall include but not limited to the administration of the ordinances and direction of worship services.

## **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

4. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of each council, and he can attend any meetings of the groups within the church.
5. It shall be the responsibility of the Senior Pastor to be the primary spokesperson of the policies, goals, direction, vision, and ministry of the church to the members as well as to the broader community at large.

### **D. Dismissal of the Senior Pastor**

The Board may act to terminate the services of the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor is excluded from attending the meeting of the Board called to consider the termination of the Senior Pastor and shall have no right to vote at such meeting either in person or by proxy. His duties at such meeting shall be assumed by the Vice-Chairman.

The removal of the Senior Pastor shall be by the same procedure as is provided for the calling, nomination, and election of a Senior Pastor. Before such action of removal is taken, the Board shall allow the Senior Pastor to speak to the Board in his own defense.

If for any reason, whether for unfaithfulness, unfitness, or other cause, the Board at a properly held meeting shall deem it necessary or desirable to remove the Senior Pastor from office, the Board at such meeting shall select and appoint a committee of four to inquire into, investigate, and examine the validity of the reasons or cause. The Vice-chairman shall chair the committee, The Senior Pastor, who is the subject of such inquiry shall not have the power to vote and shall not cast a vote at any meeting relating to such inquiry or removal from office.

### **E. The Untimely Death of the Senior Pastor**

In the event of the Senior Pastor's death or the Senior Pastor is unable to function due to long term illness or terminal illness the Assistant Pastor would be assigned to serve as interim Senior Pastor until the Board of Elders, Deacon Board and Congregation vote him in as Senior Pastor. The Assistant Pastor will always be the first candidate to be presented to the congregation for the office of Senior Pastor in the event of untimely death or incapacitating or terminal illness.

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

## **ARTICLE VI**

### **SECTION 1 QUALIFICATION OF DEACONS (ESS)**

The qualifications of the Deacons shall be in accordance with the guidelines established in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 where it is written the Deacons are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truth of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested and then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Jesus Christ.

### **SECTION 2 PURPOSE OF DEACONS**

The purpose of Deacons is to assist the Elders in servicing the needs of the members of the church.

### **SECTION 3 DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEACONS**

A. The duties of Deacons are to assist in meeting the spiritual, physical, materials, and temporal need of the members; to encourage and develop individual moral and spiritual character; to serve as an advisor and support group to the Elders; to guard the unity of the spirit within the church and to perform other duties and responsibilities delegated and prescribed by the Board of Elders.

#### **B. Funds of the Church**

The duties of the deacons shall be responsible for ensuring that the funds of the church are received and distributed in accordance with the goals and purposes of the church, as stated in Article II of this constitution.

#### **C. Salaries, Remuneration, and Expenses**

The duties of deacons shall set and structure guidelines to determine the salaried, wages, and benefits for all pastors, staff and employees of the church.

#### **D. Conservation of Church Property**

The duties of Deacons shall make provisions for the conservation and maintenance of all the property of the church.



# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE VI

### DEACON (ESS) Cont....

#### E. Secretary of the Board

The Board of Deacons shall appoint one of its members to the office Secretary. The Secretary shall preside over meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.

The Secretary shall be responsible for the recording, preparation, and maintenance Of the records, resolutions, minutes, and other actions of the proceedings of the Board of Deacons.

#### F. Treasure of the Board

The Board of Deacons appoint on of its members to the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer shall preside over meetings of the Board in the absence of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the proper records, reporting, and safeguarding of the funds of the church. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the Financial Statements, and presentation to the Board of Elders, and congregation.

### SECTION 4 NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS, AND ELECTION OF DEACONS

#### A. Nomination of Deacon (ESS)

Nominations of persons to be considered for the office of Deacon may come from the Congregation to the Board of Elders, as well as, from the Board itself. the Board shall have the responsibility of assessing the qualifications of each prospective candidate. (as prescribed in Article 6 Section 1) "Making selections, and oversight of training of those individuals".

#### B. Appointment of Deacons

Upon successful completion of the Deacon's training program, each candidate will be present to the Board of Elders for approval as a qualified candidate for the office of Deacon. Upon approval of the Board by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present, each candidate shall be presented before the congregation.

# The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields

## ARTICLE VI

### DEACON (ESS) Cont....

#### C. Election of Deacons

The members of the congregation shall have a specific period of time (exact amount of time will be communicated at the time in which the names are presented) to bring forward any known reason, whether unfaithfulness, unfitness, or other cause, that a candidate shall not be deemed worthy to assume the office of Deacon. After the specified time period, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation.

The Elder board will vote on the candidate and once elected the deacon will be brought to the congregation.

#### SECTION 5 NUMBER AND TERM OF OFFICE OF DEACONS

The number of Deacons shall be set by the Board of Elders and determined in accordance with the size of the congregations. The term of office for Deacon shall be three years. A Deacon may succeed himself in office. The process for succession shall be written notice to the Board of Elders of at least 30 days prior to the expiration of his term.

#### SECTION 6 RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL OF DEACONS

##### A. Resignation of Deacons

The resignation of a Deacon shall be in writing, subscribed by him, and submitted to the Board of Elders. If because of illness, infirmity, or inability, any Deacon is unable to serve, and other Deacon may act on behalf of that Deacon in submitting his resignation to the Board.

##### B. Removal of Deacons

If for any reason, whether for unfaithfulness, unfitness, or other cause, the Board at an officially held meeting shall deem it necessary to remove a Deacon, the Deacon, the Elders shall appoint a committee of at least four Deacons, chaired by an Elder, to inquire into, investigate, and examine such reason or cause. As part of the inquiry process, the Deacon in question will be allowed to speak on his own behalf.

After such inquiry, the committee shall make a written report of its recommended action to the Board of Elders. If the committee recommends removal of the Deacon

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

investigated, a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Elders, a quorum being present, shall be necessary to remove such Deacon from office.

## **ARTICLE VII**

### **RECORDS**

#### **SECTION 1. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS**

The church, or the duly appointed officer through action of the Board of Elders or through proper delegation to one or more members of the church, shall keep accurate and complete financial, administrative, and other records. This includes minutes of the proceedings of meetings of the Board committees, and shall keep at the principal office a record of the names and address of the members entitled to vote.

#### **SECTION 2. INSPECTION OF RECORDS**

At the discretion of the Board, such written records shall be open for inspection by the members, upon request, at such reasonable times and places as determined by the Secretary of the Board.

#### **SECTION 3. REVISION OF MEMBERSHIP RECORDS**

In an effort to maintain accurate and complete church records, the membership list will be review every six (6) months.

If a member has not attended the church during the six-month prior under review, the Elders or their appointee shall contact said member to determine the member's possible need for counsel or ministry and desire regarding church membership.

If it is determined that said member no longer worships at Harvest Fields Community Church, or if the member cannot by any reasonable means be located, his/her name shall be removed from the membership list.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION**

The corporation may be dissolved under the terms and provisions of the Non-Profit Corporation Act of the State of New York, under the character of the corporation and under the appropriate provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of the federal government.

# **The Constitution and By-Laws of Harvest Fields**

## **ARTICLE X**

### **CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

#### **SECTION 1 AMENDMENTS**

The constitution may be amended or revised by a two-third-majority vote of the Elders. However, prior to said vote, the Elders are to receive input from the congregation at a regularly scheduled business meeting. A copy of such proposed amendments or revisions should be distributed to the membership at least two (2) week prior to the meetings.

#### **SECTION 2 CONSTITUTIONAL REVIEW**

The Elders or representatives so designated by the Elder Board shall review this constitution at least every three years for update, revision and ratification of changes.