



# **NEW LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**

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# CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF NEW LIFE ASSEMBLY OF GOD EAST BERLIN, PENNSYLVANIA

## PREAMBLE

1. For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means both at home and in the foreign lands; we do hereby recognize ourselves as a local Assembly in fellowship with and a part of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, and adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to the government of same.
2. It is our desire to be incorporated under the laws of the State of Pennsylvania, in order that we might hold property and manage our own affairs, give expression to our faith and adopt such rules as may be necessary to conduct business in harmony with the statutes of the State of Pennsylvania

*Note: In accordance with accepted rules of grammar the masculine personal pronoun, "he," and the masculine possessive pronoun, "his," is used in the constitution where the antecedent implies a mixed group or when it is not known whether the individual referred to is male or female.*

# CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Assembly shall be New Life Assembly of God of East Berlin, Pennsylvania.

## ARTICLE II. PREROGATIVES

**Sec. 1.** This Assembly shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the New Testament Scriptures, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace... ‘til we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” Eph. 4:3, 13.

**Sec. 2.** In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have the right to purchase or acquire by gifts, bequests or otherwise, either directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey, mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real estate or chattels as may be necessary for the furtherance of its purpose; all in accordance with its constitution and bylaws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

## ARTICLE III. AFFILIATION

While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty in the conducting of its own affairs, this assembly shall voluntarily enter into full cooperative fellowship with assemblies of like precious faith associated in the Pennsylvania-Delaware District Council and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with headquarters in Springfield, Missouri; and share in the privileges and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

## ARTICLE IV. TENETS OF FAITH

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, 1 Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

### 1. *The Scriptures Inspired*

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21).

### 2. *The One True God*

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM,” the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

### *The Adorable Godhead*

#### a) *Terms Defined*

The terms trinity and persons, as related to the godhead, while not found in the Scriptures, are words in harmony with Scripture, whereby we may convey to others our immediate understanding of the doctrine of Christ respecting

the Being of God, as distinguished from “gods many and lords many.” We therefore may speak with propriety of the Lord our God, who is One Lord, as a Trinity or as one Being of three persons, and still be absolutely scriptural (examples, Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 14:16,17).

b) *Distinction and Relationship in the Godhead*

Christ taught a distinction of persons in the godhead which He expressed in specific terms of relationship, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but that this distinction and relationship, as to its mode is inscrutable and incomprehensible, because unexplained (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 1:24; Matthew 11:25-27; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3,4).

c) *Unity of the One Being of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*

Accordingly, therefore, there is that in the Father which constitutes Him the Father and not the Son; there is that in the Son which constitutes Him the Son and not the Father; and there is that in the Holy Spirit which constitutes Him the Holy Spirit and not either the Father or the Son. Wherefore, the Father is the Begetter; the Son is the Begotten; and the Holy Spirit is the One proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, because these three persons in the godhead are in a state of unity, there is but one Lord God Almighty and His name one (John 1:18; 15:26; 17:11,21; Zechariah 14:9).

d) *Identity and Cooperation in the Godhead*

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are never identical as to person; nor confused as to relation; nor divided in respect to the godhead; nor opposed as to cooperation. The Son is in the Father and the Father is in the Son as to relationship. The Son is with the Father and the Father is with the Son, as to fellowship. The Father is not from the Son, but the Son is from the Father, as to authority. The Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son proceeding, as to nature, relationship, cooperation, and authority. Hence, no person in the godhead either exists or works separately or independently of the others (John 5:17-30,32,37; 8:17,18).

e) *The Title, Lord Jesus Christ*

The appellation Lord Jesus Christ is a proper name. It is never applied in the New Testament either to the Father or to the Holy Spirit. It therefore belongs exclusively to the Son of God (Romans 1:1-3,7; 2 John 3).

f) *The Lord Jesus Christ, God With Us*

The Lord Jesus Christ, as to His divine and eternal nature, is the proper and only Begotten of the Father, but as to His human nature, He is the proper Son of Man. He is, therefore, acknowledged to be both God and man; who because He is God and man, is “Immanuel,” God with us (Matthew 1:23; 1 John 4:2,10,14; Revelation 1:13,17).

g) *The Title, Son of God*

Since the name Immanuel embraces both God and man, in the one person, our Lord Jesus Christ, it follows that the title Son of God describes His proper deity, and the title Son of Man, His proper humanity. Therefore, the title Son of God belongs to the order of eternity, and the title Son of Man to the order of time (Matthew 1:21-23; 2 John 3; 1 John 3:8; Hebrews 7:3; 1:1-13).

h) *Transgression of the Doctrine of Christ*

Wherefore, it is a transgression of the doctrine of Christ to say that Jesus Christ derived the title Son of God solely from the fact of the Incarnation, or because of His relation to the economy of redemption. Therefore, to deny that the Father is a real and eternal Father, and that the Son is a real and eternal Son, is

a denial of the distinction and relationship in the Being of God; a denial of the Father and the Son; and a displacement of the truth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh (2 John 9; John 1:1,2,14,18,29,49; 1 John 2:22,23; 4:1-5; Hebrews 12:2).

i) *Exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord*

The Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, having by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, angels and principalities and powers having been made subject unto Him. And having been made both Lord and Christ, He sent the Holy Spirit that we, in the name of Jesus, might bow our knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father until the end, when the Son shall become subject to the Father that God may be all in all (Hebrews 1:3; 1 Peter 3:22; Acts 2:32-36; Romans 14:11; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

j) *Equal Honor to the Father and to the Son*

Wherefore, since the Father has delivered all judgment unto the Son, it is not only the express duty of all in heaven and on earth to bow the knee, but it is an unspeakable joy in the Holy Spirit to ascribe unto the Son all the attributes of deity, and to give Him all the honor and the glory contained in all the names and titles of the godhead except those which express relationship (see paragraphs b, c, and d), and thus honor the Son even as we honor the Father (John 5:22,23; 1 Peter 1:8; Revelation 5:6-14; Philippians 2:8,9; Revelation 7:9,10; 4:8-11).

3. *The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ*

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

- a) His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
- b) His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
- c) His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
- d) His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
- e) His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
- f) His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. *The Fall of Man*

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. *The Salvation of Man*

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

- a) *Conditions to Salvation.* Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5-7).
- b) *The Evidences of Salvation.* The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

## 6. *The Ordinances of the Church*

- a) *Baptism in Water.* The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).
- b) *Holy Communion.* The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread and the fruit of the vine—is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers “till He come!”

## 7. *The Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31).

This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as:

- a) An overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8)
- b) A deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Hebrews 12:28)
- c) An intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42)
- d) A more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20)

## 8. *The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4-10,28), but different in purpose and use.

## 9. *Sanctification*

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1,2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command: “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:15,16). Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, and by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13; 1 Peter 1:5).

## 10. *The Church and Its Mission*

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her Great Commission. Each believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22,23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

Since God's purpose concerning man is to seek and to save that which is lost, to be worshiped by man, to build a body of believers in the image of His Son, and to demonstrate His love and compassion for all the world, the priority reason for being of the Assemblies of God as part of the Church is:

- a) To be an agency of God for evangelizing the world (Acts 1:8; Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16).
- b) To be a corporate body in which man may worship God (1 Corinthians 12:13).
- c) To be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 14:12).
- d) To be a people who demonstrate God's love and compassion for all the world (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

The Assemblies of God exists expressly to give continuing emphasis to this reason for being in the New Testament apostolic pattern by teaching and encouraging believers to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. This experience:

- a) Enables them to evangelize in the power of the Spirit with accompanying supernatural signs (Mark 16:15-20; Acts 4:29-31; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- b) Adds a necessary dimension to a worshipful relationship with God (1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 1 Corinthians 12-14).
- c) Enables them to respond to the full working of the Holy Spirit in expression of fruit and gifts and ministries as in New Testament times for the edifying of the body of Christ and care for the poor and needy of the world (Galatians 5:22-26; Matthew 25:37-40; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 14:12; Ephesians 4:11,12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Colossians 1:29).

#### 11. *The Ministry*

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church in:

- a) Evangelization of the world (Mark 16:15-20)
- b) Worship of God (John 4:23,24)
- c) Building a Body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11,16)
- d) Meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

#### 12. *Divine Healing*

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17; James 5:14-16).

#### 13. *The Blessed Hope*

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

#### 14. *The Millennial Reign of Christ*

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27,30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zephaniah 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micah 4:3,4).

#### 15. *The Final Judgment*

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and



brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. *The New Heavens and the New Earth*

We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21,22).

## **ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES**

**Sec. 1.** The ordinances of Baptism by immersion in water (Matt. 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins and who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls and who give clear evidence of their salvation. (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12)

**Sec. 2.** The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall regularly be observed as enjoined in the Scriptures. Luke 22:19, 20; I Cor. 11:23-26.

## **ARTICLE VI. OTHER MINISTRIES**

**Sec. 1.** Infants and children may be dedicated to the Lord upon request. (Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-16)

**Sec. 2.** The sick shall be ministered to according to Mark 16:18; James 5:14

## **ARTICLE VII. FINANCES**

### **Sec. 1. In General**

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the voluntary giving of tithes and offerings by the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the Official Board and shall be administered by the treasurer under their direction. (Mal.3:10; Luke 6:38; I Cor.16:1-2; II Cor. 9:6-8)

### **Sec. 2. Handling of Offerings**

All offerings shall be counted by at least two or more authorized persons with at least one of them not being related to the other individuals before the funds are removed from the church building. An offering receipts form shall be signed by those counting the offering and recorded for future reference. A record shall be kept of all receipts and disbursements of the local assembly and of all individual giving.

### **Sec. 3. Pastoral Remuneration**

a) Regular Remuneration

The pastor shall be remunerated for his services by a salary or by other means agreed upon by the church board and himself. The church board shall review the pastor's remuneration at least annually.

b) Reimbursement for Expenses

The pastor shall be given consideration by the church board for expenses incurred by his attendance at District Councils, General Councils, and other District functions by reimbursement of such expenses, or by an offering to help defray such expenses, according to the ability of the church as determined by the church board.

c) **Severance Pay**

In the event a pastor is removed from office by a vote of the active voting membership of the church, he shall be given a minimum of 2 months regular or average remuneration as severance pay, except in the case of moral turpitude.

## **ARTICLE VIII. MEMBERSHIP**

**Sec.1.** Membership in this Assembly shall be available to all those who give scriptural evidence of their saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith and agree to be governed by its constitution and bylaws as herein set forth.

### **Sec. 2. Active Membership**

All those who meet the Scriptural standards for membership whose names appeared on the original membership roll of the Assembly at the time the Assembly was first organized, together with those names which shall be added from time to time, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the Assembly, provided they are sixteen years of age, or over, except in the case of purchasing or selling of real estate, that they regularly attend the means of grace and take part in the services, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony.

### **Sec. 3. Inactive Membership**

Enrolled members who shall without good cause absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of three consecutive months or more, and who cease to contribute of their means to its support, who may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries or who shall be under charges for misconduct or who have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, shall be considered inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the assembly through its elected officers.

### **Sec. 4. Junior Membership**

To encourage our young to be a part of the church, they are encouraged to become a junior member (ages 12-16). When they become sixteen, they will be interviewed by the pastor and transferred to the adult membership providing they meet the requirements of Active Membership.

### **Sec. 5. Pastor and Spouse**

By virtue of office the pastor shall be considered an active voting member of the church during his tenure. The pastor's spouse shall become an active voting member simultaneously with the pastor.

### **Sec. 6. Transfer Members**

A member in good standing of another Assemblies of God church, who satisfies the standards for membership eligibility specified in Section 1 of this Article VI (other than the attendance and support requirements), may apply for membership by submitting a letter of transfer from the pastor of the other assembly, upon the approval of a majority of the church board.

## **ARTICLE IX. OFFICERS**

**Sec. 1.** There shall be a Pastor, and Official Board, Trustees, a Secretary and Treasurer. Other officers shall be added as may be needed.

## **Sec. 2. Official Board**

- a) The Official Board, under the leadership and guidance of the pastor, shall be responsible for the spiritual leadership of the assembly. Of this Official Board, one may be the Secretary and one the Treasurer.
- b) The Official Board shall consist of not less than four members including the Pastor, Secretary and Treasurer, along with those duly elected as Board Members.
- c) All matters of church government shall be carried on by the Official Board except in matters affecting the entire body. In such cases they shall present their recommendations to the church for ratification.
- d) The Official Church Board shall constitute the Board of Trustees and shall be the custodians of all church property.

## **Sec. 3. Qualifications For Official Board Members**

- a) The Board Member must:
  1. Be a member of the congregation for at least six months.
  2. Be at least 21 years of age.
  3. Be a person of maturity and of a good reputation.
  4. Be filled with the Holy Spirit according to acts 2:4, or be ardently seeking this experience.
  5. Be a person of proven service. Having shown a willingness to serve elsewhere in the body.
  6. Be a person faithful with his tithe.
  7. Be a person faithful in attendance.
  8. Have a stable family with a trustworthy spouse, not given to gossip, slander or other practices that would hinder the ministry.
  9. Be a person willing to undergo examination.
- b) All Board Members meeting the additional requirement of not having experienced any previous marital entanglements (divorced and remarried) shall be considered a deacon of the church.

## **ARTICLE X. MEETINGS**

### **Sec. 1. Meetings for Worship**

Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the Pastor and Official Board.

### **Sec. 2. Annual Business Meeting**

There shall be an annual business meeting of the Assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be read. This meeting shall be held during the month of March. The time and place to be announced by the pastor. Due notice is to be given on the two Sundays prior to the date of meeting.

### **Sec. 3. Special Business Meetings**

Special business meetings of the Assembly may be called when necessary, after proper notice has been given by the Pastor or by the secretary of the Assembly, provided the meeting has been agreed upon by a majority of the Official Board. Special meetings may also be called by petition having been signed by not less than one-third of the active membership of the Assembly, the petition to be placed in the hands of the Pastor or the secretary and announcement two Sundays prior to the date of meeting.

### **Sec. 4. Quorum**

No record of any special or regular business meeting of the Assembly shall be made unless one-third or more active members shall be present to constitute a quorum.

### **Sec. 5. Board Meetings**

The Official Board, with the Pastor, shall meet once a month or as the need may require for the transaction of routine business for the Assembly, time and place to be announced by the Pastor.

### **Sec. 6. Parliamentary Order**

All business meetings of the church shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Revised, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship.

### **Sec. 7. Voting Constituency**

- a) Qualifying of Voters: The voting constituency at all business meetings of the assembly shall consist of all active voting members who are present and who are 16 years of age or older (By Laws Article III, Section 1).
- b) Transfer Members: Transfer members shall have voting privileges after 30 days of transfer of membership (Article III, Section 6).
- c) Members Under Process of Discipline: No member under the process of discipline shall be entitled to a vote until the process is completed (Article VI, Section 9).

### **Sec. 8. Membership Roll**

The church board shall review the list of active voting members at least annually, at the regularly scheduled meeting of the board immediately preceding the annual business meeting, and compile a current list of active voting members.

## **ARTICLE XI. DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES**

This assembly shall create and maintain such departments and sub-organizations as may be necessary and advisable for the extension of its work. All such departments and organizations shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the Pastor and Official Board, and the Pastor shall be an ex officio member of all committees or departments.

## **ARTICLE XII. PROPERTY**

All property of the Assembly shall be deeded to the Assembly and held in its name. No real property of the Assembly shall be sold, leased or mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of without the same shall have first been recommended by a vote of at least two-thirds of the voting membership who are in attendance at a regular meeting or special meeting of the Assembly which has been called for the consideration of the proposal.

The Pastor and Secretary of the assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease or mortgage, that the same has been duly authorized and recommended by a vote of the assembly. Such certificate shall be held to be conclusive evidence thereof. In the event the assembly should cease or fail to function, all properties deeded it would become property of the Pennsylvania Delaware District of the Assemblies of God.

## **ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS**

This constitution may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the membership of the Assembly in attendance at any regular or special meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed change shall have been made at all the services on at least two consecutive Sundays immediately prior to the time of such meeting. It

shall be understood that this does not apply to the Articles of Faith, which stands regardless of majority.

## **BY-LAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

#### **Sec. 1. The Pastor.**

The Pastor shall be considered as the spiritual overseer of the Assembly and shall direct all of its activities. He shall be president of the corporation and shall act as chairman of all the business meetings of the Assembly and of the Official Board. He shall be the ex officio member of all committees or departments. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions or revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the Assembly without his approval.

#### **Sec. 2. The Official Board**

The Official Board is chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in an advisory capacity with the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the Assembly in its spiritual life and in the ministry of its ordinances. They shall act in the examination of applicants for membership and also in the administration of the discipline of the Assembly. They may appoint, from among the membership of the church, a Board of Trustees.

#### **Sec. 3. The Board of Trustees**

The members of the Board of Trustees, shall be the custodians of all property of the Assembly, and shall be responsible for the maintenance of same. They shall meet for the discharge of their duties as necessity may demand, upon request of the Pastor.

#### **Sec. 4. The Secretary**

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the Official Board and of the annual and special meetings (business) of the Assembly. He shall keep records of the membership and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his duties. He shall be custodian of all legal documents, and be in possession of the corporate seal.

#### **Sec. 5. The Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be entrusted with the finances of the Assembly which may be committed to him. He shall deposit all funds in a responsible bank in the name of the Assembly and shall disburse the same by check as authorized by the Pastor and the Official Board. All check shall be counter-signed by the Secretary or Pastor. The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of the receipts and disbursements. He shall make an itemized report at the regular business meetings. His accounts shall be audited under the direction of the Pastor and the Official Board

### **ARTICLE II. ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES**

#### **Sec. 1. Elections**

##### *a) Pastor*

1. The pastor shall be nominated by the church board. Recommendations may be made to the church board by any member of the assembly.
2. The pastor shall be elected to serve for an indefinite period of time.

3. Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting of the assembly or at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.
  4. A two-thirds majority vote of all votes cast shall be required to constitute an election.
  5. In the event either the pastor or any other member or members of the assembly shall challenge the validity of an election, the validity of the election shall be arbitrated by the District Executive Presbytery, or any three persons of its choice, and its decision shall be final.
- b) *Secretary & Treasurer*
1. The Secretary & Treasurer shall be elected by the church board from among its members. The term of office shall be one year.
  2. The secretary and Treasurer may serve consecutive terms.
- c) *Official Board*
1. The Official Board shall be nominated by a nominating committee (see By-Laws: Article II, section 1D), and they shall be elected by a majority vote of those active voting members present at an annual business meeting of the assembly at which an election is to be conducted.
  2. Active voting members may recommend nominees to the nominating committee; however, nominations for Board Members shall not be accepted from the floor during any business meeting without prior proof that the nominee meets the qualifications for a Board Member.
  3. Board Members shall be elected for a 3-year term, and shall hold office until the annual business meeting at which their successor is elected.
  4. Board Members may not serve more than two consecutive 3-year terms. The terms of Board Members shall be staggered appropriately.
- d) *Nominating Committee*
1. A Nominating Committee of five active members shall be chosen by the Pastor and ratified by the Official Board.
  2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of two members from the Official Board, two members from the Congregation other than Official Board members, and the Pastor.
  3. It shall be the duty of the Nominating Committee to select nominees for the offices to be voted on at the annual business meeting.
  4. The nominee's names shall be posted two Sundays prior to the business meeting.
  5. The Nominating Committee shall not consider nominating individuals with close family members already serving on the Board. i.e. spouse, parent, child or sibling.

## **Sec. 2. Vacancies**

- a) *The Pastor*
1. When a vacancy in the office of the pastor shall occur, a temporary replacement shall be arranged for by the church board until a pastor shall be chosen and a report shall be made to the District Office. The counsel of the district superintendent will be sought.
  2. When a pastor's credentials are withdrawn by the District or General Council, the pastor's term of office shall be automatically terminated.
  3. In the event a special business meeting is called by petition as provided in the Constitution, Article X, Section 3, for the purpose of considering the status of the pastor, a majority vote of all voting members present and voting shall be required to remove a pastor from office.

b) *Other Officers*

1. Any office or position of leadership in the church (other than that of the pastor) may be declared vacant by a majority vote of the Official Board at any regular or special business meeting.
2. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a fair and impartial hearing of his case before the assembly if he so desires.

## **ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

### **Sec. 1. The Standards of Membership**

The standards of membership in this assembly shall be:

- a) Evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (the New Birth) (John 1:12-13, 3:3-8, I Peter 1:18-25).
- b) Having been baptized in water by immersion.
- c) Evidence of a consistent Christian life. (Romans 6:4, 8:1-4, 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1,2,15, I John 1:6-7)
- d) To fully subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in the constitutional rules of order adopted by the assembly.
- e) Willingness to contribute regularly to the support of the assembly according to the scriptures. (Genesis 14:20; Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:10, Matt. 23:23)

### **Sec. 2. Reception of Members.**

Those individuals eligible for membership who shall desire to become members of this church shall make written application to the pastor or church board. The church board shall have the right and authority to determine the eligibility and acceptability of all applicants for membership by majority vote. Those approved for membership by the church board shall be received into the church publicly at any of its regular services, and their names thereupon added to the church membership roll. No applicant for membership shall be accepted as a member within 30 days before an annual business meeting or within 10 days before a special business meeting.

### **Sec. 3. Discipline**

a) *Grounds*

Discipline is an exercise of scriptural authority for which the church is responsible (Matthew 16:19; 18:15-20; Luke 17:3; John 20:23; Acts 16:4; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 13:17). The purpose of discipline is to promote repentance and restoration through exposing sinful behavior. It is to be redemptive in nature as well as corrective. Any member of the assembly is subject to discipline on the basis of unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the Tenets of Faith of this assembly, as determined in the sole discretion of the church board. The discipline of ministers who hold credentials with the Assemblies of God is administered by the District Council and General Council of the Assemblies of God.

b) *Procedure*

1. Should any differences arise between members, the aggrieved shall follow, in a tender spirit, the rules given by our Lord, as recorded in Matt. 18:15-17
2. If this does not lead to restoration of fellowship a complaint shall be written, signed and filed with the Pastor or Secretary. The Pastor, with the help of the Official Board will seek to settle the matter according to the scriptures. (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1; I Cor. 5:11-13)
3. If further action is required, the official Board shall proceed to officially hear the matter. The accused person shall be notified of the charges

against him and shall be instructed to meet with the Official Board on a date within 2 weeks. If the accused does not appear at the time and place set for the hearing or furnish a satisfactory reason for his failure to do so, the Official Board may proceed in his absence to hear and to determine the matter. All such proceedings shall be conducted in the spirit of Christian kindness and forbearance and shall afford the alleged delinquent member the right to face his accusers. Having heard the witnesses and having considered the facts the Official Board shall render a verdict and shall issue whatever disciplinary measures are indicted, which may include termination of the accused's membership in the church, if necessary. Notice of the action taken by the Official Board shall be made known to the individuals involved within 7 days after the action has been taken.

4. If, after the above procedure, the accused is unwilling to accept the verdict of the Official Board, he shall have the right to appeal his case to the membership of the assembly in a special business meeting called at his request. Having heard the case, the membership of the assembly shall make a final decision in the matter by secret ballot.

#### **Sec. 4. Substance Abuse**

- a) Due to a constantly declining morality in the world around us, we the leadership of New Life Assembly of God, in East Berlin, Pennsylvania felt it necessary to state our position concerning the substances of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs.
- b) We agree with the historical position of the Assemblies of God and the Pentecostal Church in general, that the only acceptable stand for a believer concerning these items is one of total abstinence.
- c) These substances have been key weapons in the hands of Satan whose purpose is to steal, kill and destroy. Who can tell of all the abuse, broken homes, financial crisis, automobile accidents, diseases, etc. that these drugs are responsible for?
- d) The Bible tells us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and that, "if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple." (I Corinthians 3:16 -17)
- e) Those who consider themselves free to partake of these items should take their responsibility not to be a stumbling block to others very seriously. Our children, as well as weak believers are very impressionable. Jesus warns us in Matthew 18:6-7, "If anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. Woe to the world because of the things that cause people to sin! Such things must come, but woe to the man through they come!"
- f) We do not intend to make smoking an issue for membership recognizing that new believers in particular may need time for the convicting power of the Holy Spirit to free them from such an addiction. However, we do expect our members to agree that such a habit is something to be fought with all diligence.
- g) We pledge our understanding and support to any who seek to be freed from such compulsions.
- h) Individual members availability to minister within this body may be affected by how that person's habit may impress our children.
- i) We would ask that all adherents refrain from any of the aforementioned substances on any church property or during any fellowship activities.



## **ARTICLE IV. PROPERTY RIGHTS**

**Sec. 1.** All property, real or chattel, shall be taken, held, sold, transferred, or conveyed in the corporate name of the assembly, or if the assembly is not incorporated, by trustees and their successors in office.

**Sec. 2.** No real or chattel property of the assembly shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise alienated of without the same shall have first been authorized by at least a two-thirds majority vote of the membership.

**Sec. 3.** The Pastor and Secretary of the assembly shall certify in such conveyance, lease, or mortgage, that the same shall have been authorized by at least two-thirds majority vote of the membership.

**Sec. 4.** In the event that this assembly ceases to function as a church body, then the said property, real or chattel shall revert to the Pennsylvania Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God, whose headquarters are located at Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God shall have full authority to use or dispose of the property at its discretion. In the event of sale of the property by the Pennsylvania Delaware District Council of the Assemblies of God the proceeds derived therefrom shall be used by the District Council in furtherance of the gospel of Christ.

## **ARTICLE V. ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The regular order of business for the annual business meeting of the assembly shall be as follows:

- a) Devotional
- b) Reading of previous minutes by Secretary
- c) Report of Treasurer
- d) Report of Committees
- e) Unfinished business
- f) Election of officers
- g) New business
- h) Adjournment

## **ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

The By-Laws may be amended at any regular or special business meeting of the assembly by a majority vote of the membership present.