

THE CONSTITUTION OF CENTRAL CHURCH

(AS AMENDED, FEBRUARY 19, 2023)

JESUS CHRIST IS THE SOVEREIGN HEAD OF THE CHURCH

1. Jesus Christ, who is now exalted far above all principalities and powers, is the head of the church (Ephesians 1 :22-23; 4:12,15; 5:23-32; Colossians 1:18,24; 2:19; Revelation 2-3). He is the One who established and continues to build His Church (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:6). He is the true source of all the church is and does, and His glory is to be the objective of every act, function, and motive of the body, both individually and corporately. And to the extent that Christ functions as the head, there will be unity in the church (1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 2:2; Acts 15). The aim of the leadership of Central Church is to discern the mind of Christ and obey Him.

CHURCH MEMBERS

2. Central Church members are entitled to the rights and privileges of the church.

3. Requirements for Church membership:

- a. Request for membership shall be made to a member of the Elder Board or Pastoral Staff.
- b. Evidence of a genuine experience of salvation (John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:18-25).
- c. Agreement with Central Church's Constitution, Confession of Faith, and church policies.

4. Expectations of Membership:

- a. Complete the membership process offered by the Elder Board and Pastoral Staff to learn more about the policies, ministries, and structure of Central Church.
- b. Strive to live a consistent Christian life free of any immorality condemned in Scripture (Romans 6:4; 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-2, 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5; 1 John 1:6-7).
- c. Supporting the work of the church through regular giving in accordance with Scripture (Malachi 3:10; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-9).
- d. Commit to strive for the peace, unity, purity, and edification of the church.
- e. Willing to serve the church and its ministries where possible in accordance with their talents and spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:11-12; Romans 12:3-8).

5. Termination of Membership

- a. Membership may be terminated and the member's name removed from the membership roll at the death of the member, transfer of membership to another church, at the written request of the member, or as a result of church discipline.

- b. The Elder Board in collaboration with the Pastoral Staff may authorize a process to remove members from the membership roll who have left the church without notice.

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

6. Meetings of the members of this church are held at the call of the Elder Board. The Elder Board must call a meeting upon the written request of a majority of the Pastoral Staff or 30% of the membership. These membership meetings shall be held in accordance with the Rules of Order at such times and places as the Elder Board may determine as designated in the notice of said meeting. Notice for each meeting must be given by announcement and other reasonable means beginning at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

7. If a membership meeting will involve a vote by the membership on any issue, there must be a quorum of members.

- a. A minimum attendance of at least 50% of all currently active members shall be considered sufficient to constitute a quorum, OR;
- b. If a meeting is announced with at least two weeks' notice, and is announced for two successive weeks on Sunday mornings prior to the meeting, and in the third week is held as announced, then all of the members who are present at this meeting shall be considered sufficient to constitute a quorum.

LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH

8. Central Church is led by a plurality of leadership because the New Testament clearly teaches that the church is to be led by a plurality of godly men (elders). Elders are given both the responsibility and authority to skillfully and lovingly lead the flock, to feed the flock through the accurate and insightful teaching of the Scripture, to care for the flock through prayer and ministry, and to protect the flock from harmful influences and beliefs. These leaders are known by three titles all seen in 1 Peter 5:1-2, each of which reveals a separate aspect of their function. They are first called "elders," indicating they are to be godly leaders whose wisdom and maturity are respected by God's people. They are also called "overseers," indicating their responsibility for the oversight of the church's resources and the guardian of its people. They are also called "shepherds," which is translated as "pastors," indicating their role of caring for and leading the flock. We see that within the New Testament model of church organization, authority for leadership is not granted to just one individual pastor, nor is it given as democratic rule by the congregation. Instead, the Scripture states that authority for leadership is conducted by a plurality of leaders who are appointed by the church and accountable to God. Some of these elders fill church vocational roles and are therefore commonly referred to by the title of "pastor." Other elders fill non-vocational roles and are therefore commonly referred to by the title of "elder." But they all seek to lead the church collaboratively under the headship of Jesus Christ. (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17-18; Titus 1:9; 1 Peter 5:2-3).

9. All elders and pastors shall be selected and held accountable to the standards of 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 20:27-32, and 1 Peter 5:1-3. All elders and pastors shall be in full accord with Central Church's Constitution, Confession of Faith, and policies, as well as Central Church's current Mission, Core Values, and Vision. Pastors shall qualify for their positions according to giftedness and experience in the ministry position to be filled.

LEAD TEACHING PASTOR

10. While elders and pastors seek to lead the church collaboratively under the headship of Jesus Christ, the church recognizes the strategic need for a teaching pastor whose primary responsibility is to teach and preach of the Word of God and to provide strategic leadership to the church enabling it to grow and fulfill its purposes. He is called to teach and preach the saving knowledge of the gospel to unbelievers and believers, and to help believers mature in their faith through insightful and accurate presentation of biblical truths that equip them to be disciples of Jesus Christ who make disciples, as well as the true "ministers" of the body. He is also called to identify, raise up, and equip leaders of the church, and to do all he can to foster the healthy collaborative leadership of the church by his fellow elders and pastors.

PASTORAL STAFF

11. The Pastoral Staff shall partner with the Council of Elders to lead the shepherding ministry of the church.

12. Members of the Pastoral Staff are to be selected by the Lead Teaching Pastor, in collaboration with the Elder Board, and meet the qualifications prescribed in 1 Timothy 3:2-7.

- a. The Lead Teaching Pastor and members of the Executive Leadership Team who are Ordained to the Gospel Ministry shall serve on the Pastoral Staff.
- b. The Lead Teaching Pastor, in collaboration with the Elder Board, may add other staff members to the Pastoral Staff who are Ordained to the Gospel Ministry and serve in significant pastoral leadership positions.
- c. The Lead Teaching Pastor, in collaboration with the Elder Board, may install members of the Pastoral Staff to a specific area of pastoral ministry.

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

13. The Executive Leadership Team consists of the Lead Teaching Pastor and one or more members from the Pastoral Staff serving as the Executive Level Leadership, selected by the Lead Teaching Pastor in collaboration with the Elder Board. The Executive Leadership Team shall serve at the direction of the Lead Teaching Pastor. The Executive Leadership Team will collaborate with the Elder Board Chairman to keep the Elder Board well informed and to ensure day-to-day operations are in alignment with the will of the Elder Board. The Elder Board will assign a committee of lay elders to assess the effectiveness of the Executive Leadership Team. The committee may request input from the Lead Teaching Pastor pertaining to other members of the Executive Leadership Team. Members serving on the Executive Leadership Team will serve as perpetual members of the Elder Board, subject to the provisions in Section 24 Part B, and be responsible for overseeing the staff and the day-to-day ministry operations of the church.

OTHER MINISTRY STAFF AND SUPPORT STAFF

14. As the church grows, additional staff will be required to lead and support the ministries of the church. The Elder Board shall recognize this need and authorize the Executive Leadership Team to employ these additional personnel. The person responsible for oversight of the staff shall screen and hire the person in accordance with church personnel policies and with the approval of the Elder Board.

DEACONS

15. In order to focus their time and energy on their responsibilities as shepherds and overseers of the church, the elders delegate areas of ministry to the deacons. The practical ministry of the deacons in the church is vital, freeing elders to focus on prayer, studying God's Word, and pastoral care. The elders may delegate to the deacons duties including, but not limited to, caring for the physical needs of the people and property of the church; managing the church's finances; overseeing the church's schools; and ministering to the sick, the needy, the jobless, the widowed, the orphaned, the elderly, the shut-in, the disabled, the imprisoned, the homeless, the poor, and in general for the relief of distress within the church body. The deacons shall carry out any duties delegated to them under the direction of the Elder Board, in collaboration with the Pastoral Staff.

16. Deacons should be selected from the church membership in accordance with the qualifications for deacons laid out in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

17. Men and women serving as deacons are official servants of the church who are empowered to assist the elders and/or pastors in protecting the unity of the body while carrying out the

mission and vision of the church. A deacon does not serve on a decision-making board, but is empowered to lead certain areas of ministry under the oversight and leadership of the elders and/or pastors. Women serving as deacons shall do so in a manner consistent with 1 Timothy 2:11-15.

18. Central Church shall not establish a Deacon Board or any deliberative or governance body utilizing the service of deacons. While Deacons are commissioned to serve the church body, they shall not be commissioned to rule the church body, govern the church body, serve as primary teachers to the church body, or serve in authoritative pastoral positions within the church body.

19. Deacons at Central are to be placed in narrowly defined service-, task-, or process-oriented roles. Whereas elders and pastors serve as leaders in the church with broad oversight of the church ministry, the ministry focus of deacons is narrow. Scenarios may arise where deacons are granted limited authority by the elders and pastors, but that authority is limited in scope and directly overseen by the elders and pastors.

20. A complete account of all collections and distributions of church funds handled by the deacons in the course of their duties, and a full record of their activities, shall be submitted to the Elder Board at least once a year for examination and approval in accordance with the policy put in place by the Elder Board.

COMMITMENT TO PEACEMAKING

21. In their ministry of shepherding and oversight of the church body, the elders shall seek to be peacemakers, teaching and leading the church body through the biblical resolution of all disagreements, disputes, and conflicts. The Elder Board shall be the ultimate forum for the resolution of conflict in accordance with Matthew 18:16-17 and the Rules of Church Discipline.

22. All Elder Board Meetings and Membership Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer.

COUNCIL OF ELDERS

23. The Council of Elders shall consist of all elders of the church.

a. Elders serving on the Council of Elders fall into several broad categories:

- Lay Elders
 - These elders are selected from the laity to serve in non-staff elder leadership roles.
 - All men serving as lay elders shall serve on the Council of Elders.
 - The Council of Elders shall select some of these men for terms of service on the Elder Board.

- Staff Elders
 - Pastoral Staff on the Executive Leadership Team are considered Staff Elders.
 - These elders serve in staff roles to lead the day-to-day ministry operations of the church.
 - All men serving as staff elders serve on the Council of Elders and the Elder Board.
- b. The primary responsibilities of the Council of Elders is the shepherding ministry of the church, delegated to them by Christ (1 Peter 5:1-4), to select new elders to join the Council, to select elders to serve for terms on the Elder Board, to advise and support the Elder Board, and to promote the spiritual interests and unity of the church (Acts 6:1-6; Ephesians 4:1-3; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- c. Any member of the Council of Elders may be selected by the Elder Board to serve on any governing committee or ministry team of the church, unless specifically prohibited by Section 24, and/or Section 33, and/or Section 37.

ELDER BOARD

24. The Elder Board consists of at least seven elders. The members include elders selected from the Council of Elders, the Lead Teaching Pastor, and the other members of the Executive Leadership Team. In order to maintain a healthy congregational representation on the Elder Board, lay elders shall always exceed the number of elders from the Executive Leadership Team.

- a. In addition to their responsibilities as members of the Council of Elders as stated in Section 23a, the Elder Board is ultimately responsible for the “oversight” of the church’s ministries and resources as prescribed in the New Testament (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). The Elder Board shall take particular responsibility to inquire into the doctrine and conduct of the church members, pastoral staff, and other staff members under their care; to receive new members into the church; to admonish and carry out church discipline when necessary; to ordain and install pastors, elders, and deacons; to oversee the service of the deacons; to oversee the Christian education of all age groups in the church; to approve offerings for special uses and church purposes; and to oversee the public worship of God.
- b. The Lead Teaching Pastor and the other members of the Executive Leadership Team may serve as members of the Elder Board. Serving in staff leadership roles, members of the Executive Leadership Team are expected to serve on the Elder Board as a job function; therefore, these individuals are not subject to term limits. A member of the Executive Leadership Team leaves service on the Elder Board when they are no longer part of the Executive Leadership Team.
- c. Elder interns serve an internship of up to one year as non-voting members of the Elder Board.

- d. Newly-ordained elders serve for an initial three-year term as voting members of the Elder Board.
- e. Other elders are selected by a three-quarters (75%) vote by the Council of Elders to serve for three-year terms as voting members of the Elder Board.
- f. At the conclusion of their three-year term, all elders, other than the members of the Executive Leadership Team, must go off the board for at least one year before being eligible to be selected again for service by the Council of Elders.
- g. The Chairman of the Elder Board must ensure that periodic elections are held among the Council of Elders in a manner that best maintains a balance of experienced elders and new elders serving on the board.
- h. The Lead Teaching Pastor will serve as the Moderator of the Elder Board. The Moderator will lead the meetings of the Elder Board and the meetings of the Council of Elders. Additionally, the Moderator of the Elder Board will ensure that the Elder Board selects an Elder Board Chairman and Elder Board Secretary in accordance with such rules as the Elder Board may establish. If the Lead Teaching Pastor is unable to serve as the Moderator of the Elder Board, the Chairman of the Elder Board will serve in that capacity. If the Lead Teaching Pastor and the Elder Board Chairman are unable to serve as the Moderator of the Elder Board, the Secretary of the Elder Board will serve in that capacity. If the Lead Teaching Pastor, and the Elder Board Chairman, and the Elder Board Secretary are unable to serve as the Moderator of the Elder Board, the remaining members of the Elder Board will select a member to serve in that capacity. The Lead Teaching Pastor, Elder Board Chairman, and Elder Board Secretary must be present in order to select a new Elder Board Chairman or Elder Board Secretary, unless the position in question is unfilled due to the resignation or removal of that individual.
- i. The Secretary of the Elder Board must maintain proper records of meetings of the Elder Board and the Council of Elders.
- j. All elders of the church are entitled to attend all Elder Board meetings. Only the elders currently elected to serve on the Elder Board can vote on decisions made by the Elder Board at those meetings.
- k. The Elder Board may be convened at any time by the Moderator, by the Elder Board Chairman, or at the request of five or more of the elders currently elected to serve on the Elder Board.
- l. A majority of the Elder Board shall be necessary to constitute a quorum. Additionally, to constitute a quorum a majority of the elders present must be lay elders unless, operating under the temporary provisions in Section 27 Part 4.
- m. Subject to Section 37, any elder with a conflict of interest on a specific issue shall recuse himself from the issue and not be present for, or participate in, the deliberation or decision-making process for that issue.

ELDER COUNT PROVISIONS

25. The Elder Board may encounter a scenario where it is out of compliance with the required number of elders.

26. If the Elder Board should fall below the seven-member requirement, the Council of Elders shall convene to appoint additional elder(s) from the Council of Elders to serve on the Elder Board, per the established Elder Reselection Policy.

27. In the event the Council of Elders determines no board-eligible elders are able to serve, the Council of Elders, on a temporary basis, may appoint individuals not currently or normally eligible for service to the Elder Board under the following parameters and in the following order:

1. An elder intern, having participated for an appropriate amount of time, may be selected to serve as a voting member of the Elder Board. If an elder intern is selected earlier than they would otherwise be in the normal course, the start of the three-year period of time an elder is permitted to serve before taking a sabbatical is frozen, up to six months, until the point where the man would be appointed to the Elder Board in the normal course.
2. An elder from the Council of Elders who has not yet served a full year on sabbatical, may be selected to serve on the Elder Board on a temporary basis, not to exceed six months. If an elder is brought onto the Elder Board on a temporary basis, before serving a full year on sabbatical, an additional sabbatical period must be served after the temporary service so that at least one year of non-contiguous sabbatical has been served before the elder is eligible for any additional service on the Elder Board.
3. An Elder at Large, who previously served on the Elder Board of Central Church or who served as an ordained member of the Pastoral Staff, may be selected to serve on the Elder Board on a temporary basis, for a term not to exceed three months.
4. An ordained pastor can be selected to serve on the Elder Board on a temporary basis, for a term not to exceed three months.

28. The Council of Elders may allow the Elder Board to operate with less than seven members, but not fewer than five members, if within three months, in the normal course, an elder intern could be brought onto the Elder Board or an eligible member of the Council of Elders could join the Elder Board.

29. If the Elder Board is operating with fewer than the required number of members, and/or with fewer lay members of the Elder Board than members serving on the Executive Leadership Team, and/or with an Elder at Large serving as a temporary member, and/or with an ordained pastor serving as a temporary member, no changes can be made to the compensation of any member of the Pastoral Staff until the Elder Board returns to full compliance.

30. The Elder Board shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings, and will ensure that an accurate record of marriages, of baptisms, of memberships, and of the deaths and dismissals of church members is maintained.

SELECTION, ORDINATION, COMMISSIONING, INSTALLATION AND REMOVAL OF ELDERS AND DEACONS

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

31. The Council of Elders shall select new elders when in its judgment the interests of the church so require. The Council of Elders shall accept nominations from the membership and shall consider and select new elders from these nominees according to the biblical qualifications for elders prescribed by the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:6-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28). The Council of Elders shall seek recommendations and involvement from the Pastoral Staff and the general membership during the selection process and before the final selection is made. The Council of Elders shall provide the general membership with an opportunity to meet with and question the nominated candidates. The general membership will also have an opportunity to express to the elders any concerns about a nominated candidate's qualifications and fitness to serve as an elder.

The Council of Elders shall present men selected to become elders to the membership for a vote of affirmation by the membership. Elders must be selected by a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders and Pastoral Staff and a three-quarter vote of affirmation by the members voting in a duly constituted membership meeting in accordance with Sections 6 and 7.

32. When any person has been elected to the office of elder and declares his willingness to accept the office, the Elder Board shall schedule and plan an appropriate public service for his ordination. The Elder Board will appoint a minister to conduct the ordination service. As part of the ordination service, the man shall make public affirmations that affirm the following:

- I. That he believes the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- II. That he accepts the Confession of Faith of Central Church as containing the doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.
- III. That he understands and submits himself to the Constitution and all policies of Central Church.
- IV. That he promises to submit himself to the Lord and to his fellow pastors, elders and deacons as a servant leader.
- V. That he believes the Holy Spirit has given him the aspiration to serve as an elder out of his love for God and his fellow church members, the desire to do His will, and the desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son for the salvation of all people.
- VI. That he promises to be zealous and faithful, as God may enable him, in maintaining the truths of the gospel, and the purity and peace of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto him on that account.
- VII. That he promises to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all his duties as a Christian and a minister of the gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public; and to endeavor, by the grace of God, to carry out the profession of the gospel ministry in his conversation, and to walk with exemplary piety before the church and before the world.

- VIII. That he accepts the office of elder in this church, and promises faithfully to discharge all the duties thereof, as God enables him.
- IX. That he promises to strive for the peace, unity, purity, and edification of the church.

The elder-elect having made these affirmations, the presiding minister shall ask the members of the church a question that affirms the following:

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive this brother as an elder; and do you promise to yield him all the honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the Government of this church, entitles him?

The members of the church having answered this question in the affirmative, the elders, pastoral staff, and deacons of this church present shall then, by prayer led by the appointed minister and with the laying on of hands, solemnly ordain him to the office of elder.

ELDER AT LARGE

33. The Council of Elders, by unanimous consent, may select a man who is a member of Central Church to serve as an Elder at Large to represent the church on an as needed basis at the direction of the Elder Board. Individuals serving in the Elder at Large role are members of the Council of Elders but are not permitted to serve on the Elder Board, except in the event of the temporary provision defined in Section 27 Part 3.

COMMISSIONING OF DEACONS

34. The Council of Elders, in collaboration with the Pastoral Staff, shall select new deacons when in its judgment the interests of the church so require. The Council of Elders, in collaboration with the Pastoral Staff, shall consider and reach consensus, to select new deacons to serve the church body according to the biblical qualifications for deacons prescribed by the New Testament in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons will serve under a term of service to be specified by the Council of Elders in the commissioning process.

35. When any person has been elected to the office of deacon and declares his or her willingness to accept the office, the Elder Board shall schedule and plan an appropriate public service for his or her commissioning. The Elder Board shall appoint a minister to conduct the commissioning service. As part of that service, he or she shall make public affirmations that affirm the following:

- I. That they believe the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- II. That they accept the Central Church Confession of Faith as containing the doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.

- III. That they understand and submit themselves to the Constitution and all policies of Central Church.
- IV. That they promise to submit themselves in the Lord as servant leaders to their fellow pastors, elders, and deacons.
- V. That they believe the Holy Spirit has given them the aspiration to serve as a deacon out of their love for God and their fellow church members, the desire to do His will, and the desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son for the salvation of all people.
- VI. That they promise to be zealous and faithful, as God may enable them, in maintaining the truths of the gospel, and the purity and peace of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto them on that account.
- VII. That they promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all their duties as Christians and as ministers of the gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public; to endeavor, by the grace of God, to carry out the profession of the gospel ministry in their conversation; and to walk with exemplary piety before the church and before the world.
- VIII. That they accept the office of deacon in this church and promise faithfully to discharge all the duties thereof, as God enables.
- IX. That they promise to strive for the peace, unity, purity, and edification of the church.

The deacon-elect having made these affirmations, the elders and pastoral staff of this church present shall then, by prayer led by the appointed minister and with the laying on of hands, solemnly commission the individual in service to the office of deacon.

ELDER AND DEACON SERVICE

36. Once selected, elders and deacons serve the church according to the following provisions:
- a. Once ordained, elders shall serve perpetually as members of the Council of Elders subject to the following provisions:
 - i. An elder who has been serving honorably may resign from active service at the request of that elder if he does not wish to transition to the special status of Elder Emeritus.
 - ii. Because of age, disability, or personal reasons, an elder who has served honorably may request to transition to the special status of Elder Emeritus, subject to the terms and restrictions of the Elder Board's current Elder Emeritus Policy.
 - iii. The active service of an elder who has transferred to another church and/or discontinued regular attendance at Central Church without resigning may be transitioned by the Elder Board to the status of having resigned. The question of whether an elder has transferred to another church or discontinued regular attendance shall be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.
 - iv. An elder who is unable to effectively function due to illness or other disability may be put on a Health Sabbatical by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board. An

elder may return from a Health Sabbatical to active service when he is determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board to effectively resume his active service.

- v. The active service of an elder may be terminated for the following reasons:
 - 1. Continued disagreement with the doctrinal beliefs of Central Church or continued agreement with doctrinal beliefs which violate Central Church's Confession of Faith as determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.
 - 2. Continued behavior which violates the biblical qualifications for the office of elder, as determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.
- vi. An elder may, though chargeable with neither heresy nor immorality under the Rules of Discipline, lose the confidence of a majority of the church. When such a charge is made, it shall be the duty of the Elder Board to provide full opportunity for the parties to be heard, to determine whether there has been such a loss of confidence, and, if so, to encourage that elder to honorably resign. If no resignation is forthcoming, the Elder Board may transition the elder to the status of having resigned by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board. If the Elder Board does not transition the elder to the status of having resigned, the elder may be removed from office by a three-quarters vote of the members voting in a duly constituted membership meeting in accordance with Sections 6 and 7.
- b. Once commissioned, deacons shall serve the church subject to the following provisions:
 - i. Until the expiration of the term or conditions of the commission as defined by the Council of Elders, if applicable.
 - ii. A deacon who has been serving honorably may resign from active service at the request of the deacon.
 - iii. The active service of a deacon who has transferred to another church and/or discontinued regular attendance at Central Church without resigning may be transitioned by the Elder Board to the status of having resigned. The question of whether a deacon has transferred to another church or discontinued regular attendance shall be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.
 - iv. A deacon who is unable to effectively function due to illness or other disability may be put on a Health Sabbatical by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board. A deacon may return from a Health Sabbatical to active service when he is determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board to effectively resume his active service.
 - v. The active service of a deacon may be terminated for the following reasons:
 - 1. Continued disagreement with the doctrinal beliefs of Central Church or continued agreement with doctrinal beliefs which violate Central Church's Confession of Faith as determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.
 - 2. Continued behavior which violates the biblical qualifications for the office of deacon as determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Board.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

37. Any pastor, elder or deacon who has a financial, personal, or official interest with any matter pending before the Elder Board or any matter being handled by the deacons shall inform the Elder Board as to the circumstances of such interest, if it might properly limit such pastor's, elder's or deacon's fair and impartial participation in the deliberations or decisions regarding the matter. A pastor, elder or deacon shall make such disclosure in all cases where there is either an actual conflict of interest or even the appearance of a conflict of interest, and shall voluntarily recuse themselves and remove themselves from discussion and voting on the matter. The Elder Board will by majority vote decide whether such conflict or appearance of conflict should preclude the pastor, elder or deacon from the decision-making process.

All pastors, elders and deacons shall annually be required to present a conflict of interest statement setting forth any known or potential conflicts or appearance of any impropriety for the Elder Board's consideration. Such disclosures shall be noted as a part of the minutes of the Elder Board for the record.

The Elder Board shall draft, enact, and keep updated a Conflict of Interest Policy for the purpose of ensuring the church is in compliance with applicable state and federal laws governing conflicts of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations. The policy shall provide further procedures for handling actual or possible conflicts of interest.

COMMISSIONING, LICENSURE, AND ORDINATION

38. The church, needing to provide capable, competent, and qualified individuals to carry the Gospel Ministry forward, shall set aside some in the church with an official call to the ministry.

39. The Elder Board may set aside qualified men to Gospel Ministry with Licensure and/or Ordination. Men who are licensed and/or ordained are to partner with the elders to lead the shepherding ministry of the church, or in service to a close ministry partner.

40. The Elder Board may Commission qualified men and women to serve in various ministry and support roles within the church, or in service to a close ministry partner.

COMMISSIONING

41. The church, needing to carry out day-to-day ministry operations in service to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, may commission qualified men and women to the Gospel Ministry, to serve in staff roles in various ministry-oriented positions. Church members in service to closely aligned and supported ministries may be eligible for commissioning.

42. Those seeking a staff commission shall submit a written request to a member of the Council of Elders or Pastoral Staff, to be delivered to a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

43. Upon receipt of the request for commission, the Executive Leadership Team will present the candidate for commissioning to the Elder Board.

44. The assigned committee will conduct an examination of the candidate's profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior and a basic examination of the candidate in the areas of biblical knowledge and doctrine, practical ministry, and suitability for commissioning. The assigned committee will interview associates of the candidate for commissioning to determine their suitability for the ministry. A recommendation from the assigned committee will be delivered to the Elder Board to consider the candidate for commissioning.

45. The Elder Board, being fully satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate for commissioning, shall schedule and plan an appropriate service for commissioning. The Elder Board will appoint a minister to conduct the commissioning service. The service for commissioning can either be conducted publicly or at a meeting of the Council of Elders. If the service is carried out at a meeting of the Council of Elders, the commissioning shall be disclosed to the congregation in a method determined by the Elder Board.

46. At the service for commissioning, the candidate for commissioning shall make public affirmations that affirm the following:

- I. That they believe the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- II. That they accept the Central Church Confession of Faith as containing the doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.
- III. That they understand and submit themselves to the Constitution and all policies of Central Church.
- IV. That they promise to devote themselves to the peace, unity, and purity of this church.
- V. That they promise to submit themselves, in the Lord, to this church.

The candidate for commissioning having made these affirmations, the elders and pastoral staff of this church present shall then, by prayer led by the appointed minister, and with the laying on of hands, solemnly commission the candidate in service to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

47. The Elder Board shall make and keep a proper record of the commissioning.

48. When the services of the commissioned individual (hereafter, "commissionee") do not appear to be edifying to the church, or when the church deems it advisable to do so for any reason, it may recall the commission or drop the name from the list of commissionees without publicly assigning or disclosing the reason thereof. It shall also be the church's duty to do so

whenever the commissionee leaves the employment of this church or, if applicable, the service of a closely aligned and supported ministry.

LICENSURE

49. The church, needing to prepare men for the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, may license men who are suitable to be candidates for Ordination to Gospel Ministry.

50. The Holy Scriptures require that those who are to be ordained shall previously undergo a suitable examination, in order that this office may not be degraded by being committed to weak or unworthy men, and that opportunity may be afforded to form a correct judgment respecting the qualifications of men seeking Ordination to Gospel Ministry. For this purpose, the Elder Board of Central Church shall receive and license ministry candidates to serve the ministry, that, after a competent examination of their qualifications, they may in due time be ordained to Gospel Ministry.

51. Men seeking licensure shall submit a written request to a member of the Council of Elders or Pastoral Staff, to be delivered to a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

52. Upon receipt of the request for licensure, the Executive Leadership Team will present the candidate for licensure to the Elder Board.

53. The assigned committee will conduct an examination of the candidates' profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior and an in-depth examination of the candidate in the areas of biblical knowledge and doctrine, practical ministry, and suitability for licensure. The assigned committee will interview associates of the candidate for licensure to determine his suitability for the ministry. A recommendation from the assigned committee will be delivered to the Elder Board to consider the candidate for Licensure to Gospel Ministry and his general path toward Ordination to Gospel Ministry.

54. The Elder Board, being fully satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, shall schedule and plan an appropriate service for his licensing. The Elder Board will appoint a minister to conduct the licensing service. The service for Licensing to Gospel Ministry can either be conducted publicly or at a meeting of the Council of Elders. If the service is carried out at a meeting of the Council of Elders, the licensing shall be disclosed to the congregation in a method determined by the Elder Board.

55. At the service for licensing, the candidate for licensure shall make public affirmations that affirm the following:

- I. That he believes the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- II. That he accepts the Central Church Confession of Faith as containing the doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.

- III. That he understands and submits himself to the Constitution and all policies of Central Church.
- IV. That he promises to devote himself to the peace, unity, and purity of this church.
- V. That he promises to submit himself, in the Lord, to this church.

The candidate for licensure having made these affirmations, the elders and pastoral staff of this church present shall then, by prayer led by the appointed minister, and with the laying on of hands, solemnly license him to the Gospel Ministry of Jesus Christ.

56. The Elder Board shall make and keep a proper record of the licensing.

57. When the services of the licensed man (hereafter, "licensee") do not appear to be edifying to the church, or when this church may, for any other reason, deem it advisable to do so, it may recall the license or drop the name from the list of licensees without publicly assigning or disclosing the reason thereof. It shall be its duty to do so whenever the licensee leaves the ministry of this church.

ORDINATION

58. The church, needing to provide the body with Ministers of the Gospel, may, after being fully satisfied with their qualifications, set aside men prepared for ministry as Ordained to the Gospel Ministry.

59. Those seeking ordination shall submit a written request to a member of the Council of Elders or Pastoral Staff, to be delivered to a member of the Executive Team for review.

60. Upon receipt of the request for ordination, the Executive Team will present the candidate for licensure to the Elder Board.

61. The assigned committee will conduct an examination of the candidate's profession of faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior and an advanced examination of the candidate in the areas of biblical knowledge and doctrine, practical ministry, and suitability for ordination. The assigned committee will interview associates of the candidate for ordination to determine his suitability for the ministry. A recommendation from the assigned committee will be delivered to the Elder Board to consider the candidate for Ordination to Gospel Ministry.

62. The Elder Board, being fully satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, shall schedule and plan an appropriate service for his Ordination to Gospel Ministry. The Elder Board shall appoint a minister to conduct the ordination service. The service for ordination shall be conducted publicly.

63. At the service for ordination, the candidate for ordination shall make public affirmations that affirm the following:

- I. That he believes the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice.
- II. That he accepts the Central Church Confession of Faith and the Catechism of Central Church as containing the system of doctrines taught in the Holy Scriptures.
- III. That he understands and submits himself to the Constitution and all policies of Central Church.
- IV. That he promises to submit himself to the Lord as a servant leader to his fellow pastors, elders and deacons.
- V. That he believes the Holy Spirit has given him the desire to serve as a pastor from love for God, the desire to do His will, and the desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son for the salvation of all people.
- VI. That he promises to be zealous and faithful, as God may enable him, in maintaining the truths of the gospel, and the purity and peace of the church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto him on that account.
- VII. That he promises to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all duties as a Christian and a Minister of the Gospel, whether personal or relative, private or public; to endeavor, by the grace of God, to adorn the profession of the gospel ministry in conversation, and to walk with exemplary piety before the church and before the world.

The candidate for ordination having made these affirmations, the elders and pastoral staff of this church present shall then, by prayer led by the appointed minister, and with the laying on of hands, solemnly ordain him to the holy office of the Gospel Ministry of Jesus Christ.

64. The Elder Board shall make and keep a proper record of the ordination.

65. When the ordained man (hereafter, "ordained") does not appear to be edifying to the church, or when this church may, through church discipline or for any other reason, deem it advisable to do so, it may revoke or hold in trust the ordination of the individual provided by this church.

CALLING OF THE LEAD TEACHING PASTOR

66. In the event of a vacancy in the position of the Lead Teaching Pastor, a Search Committee shall be appointed by the Elder Board. The Search Committee shall consist of at least two elders, at least two staff members, and at least four other members from the congregation. The Search Committee's duties shall include:

- i. Developing a pastoral profile to establish criteria for the screening of candidates;
- ii. Developing and implementing the application process;
- iii. Securing the names of prospective applicants;
- iv. Screening, interviewing, and visiting applicants and their churches as deemed necessary;

- v. Reaching a consensus of a candidate to present to the Elder Board for final consideration.

When calling other ordained pastors to become staff members, the Elder Board and Lead Teaching Pastor shall utilize this Search Committee process as much as possible with the freedom to modify it according to the needs of the position and the circumstances of the search.

67. The Elder Board shall consider the Search Committee's final recommendation, conduct any further review and interviewing they consider necessary, and reach a prayerful determination of whether to present the candidate to the membership for a vote of affirmation by the membership. The Lead Teaching Pastor shall be selected by a unanimous vote of the Elder Board voting in a quorum and a three-quarter vote of affirmation by the members voting in a duly constituted membership meeting in accordance with Sections 6 and 7. All other ordained pastoral staff members shall be selected by a unanimous vote of the Elder Board voting in a quorum.

68. The Elder Board shall extend to an affirmed pastoral candidate a regular call for an indefinite time, stating in the call the salary and benefit package proposed.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PASTORS AND CHURCHES

69. The Elder Board may authorize the church's committees, ministries, and staff to cooperate with other pastors, churches, and ministries of like evangelical beliefs.

AMENDMENTS

70. Amendments may be made in the Confession of Faith, Catechism, Constitution, and Rules of Discipline at a duly constituted meeting in accordance with Sections 6 and 7, by three-fourths vote of the members of voting on; but there must be a third reading before the final vote is taken. A first reading and a second reading of the proposed amendments must be made at separate, duly constituted meetings in accordance with Sections 6 and 7 in order to provide members with an opportunity to ask questions, provide input, and pray before voting upon the third reading. The other parts of the Government - the General Regulations, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Order - may be amended or changed at any meeting of the Elder Board by a vote of two-thirds of the entire number of elders present at that meeting, provided such amendment or change shall not conflict, in letter or spirit, with the Confession of Faith, Catechism, or Constitution.