

I. GENERAL

The church believes the Bible has adequate and correct teaching concerning the principles of organization of the church. We have listed the following to help members in understanding and applying these teachings so that everything may be done "in a fitting and orderly way" (I Cor. 14:40).

II. MEMBERS

A. ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

1. Requirements:

- a. Anyone who has accepted Christ as Savior and has been baptized by the church.
- b. Anyone who has accepted Christ as Savior and has been baptized before he/she came to the church, and who has participated in the church's activities for over three months.
- c. All members must be willing to abide by the church constitution and by-laws.

2. Admission Procedures:

The applicant should fill in the application form and submit to the Deacon in charge of church membership. After review procedures, the Church Council (See Section III .c) will approve and announce the new members to the congregation.

3. Privileges:

- a. To participate in the General Assembly.
- b. All members above age eighteen have the right to elect, to be elected and to vote.
- c. To be ministered to by the Church.
- d. To use the church facilities in accordance to the rules and enjoy the benefits.
- e. To bring issues to the Church Council discussion agenda.

4. Responsibilities:

Abide by the teaching of the Bible concerning Christian faith and living such as congregational worship, evangelism, love for each other, financial giving and participation in various ministries in the church.

- a. Abide by the constitution and by-laws of the church.

B. INACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

Under the following circumstances, the Church Council will change a member's membership into inactive status. Inactive members do not have the privileges and responsibilities of active members. However, upon the removal of those circumstances, the member can request Church Council to have his (her) active status resumed.

1. Moved away from Austin area.
2. Joined another church.
3. Stopped coming to the church for an extended period of time.
4. For special reasons, members can request to terminate their memberships or change to inactive by written notification to the Church Council

C. CANCELLATION OF MEMBERSHIP

1. Disciplinary cancellation of membership should be done according to Matthew 18:15-35. Any member who has evidence of forsaking the truth or has committed major transgression, and who does not repent upon consultation by members, Deacons, Elders, and Pastors can have their memberships revoked by the Church Council
2. The church shall announce publicly the cancellation of the membership.

III. ORGANIZATION

A. GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Assembly:

To be held at least once a year. Under special circumstances and by the resolution of the Church Council, the Church Council chairman may call a special assembly. The congregation will be notified of the date for the assembly in writing three weeks in advance.

2. Function:

- a. Elect new Deacons and Elders. Review and vote on new year budget.
- b. Vote on the revision of constitution or by-laws.
- c. Vote on hiring of Pastors and Ministers/Ministry Directors
- d. Vote on other issues submitted by the Church Council.

3. Proceedings:

- a. The assembly should only be held with the attendance of over half of the total active members.
- b. Absent members can arrange for absentee voting before the assembly is held.
- c. Voting shall be done by signed ballots to show responsibility.
- d. All voting requires over two-thirds majority approval.

B. NOMINATION COMMITTEE

1. Responsibility:

To nominate new Deacons and Lay Elders.

2. Deacon Nomination Formation:

Formed by Pastor(s) and five church members appointed by the Church Council . The coordinator is to be elected among and by the nomination committee members.

3. Elder Nomination Formation:

Formed by Ordained Pastors and Lay Elders. The coordinator is to be elected among and by the nomination committee members.

C. Church Council

1. Responsibility:

The Church Council, as spiritual model for members of the church and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has the responsibilities of decision making and execution of all matters concerning the church. The chairman of the Church Council represents the church with regards to legal and external affairs.

2. Formation:

The Church Council is formed by all the Deacons and Elders (Ordained Pastors and Lay Elders, see Section III E)

3. Organization

- 4. The Church Council Chairman is elected among and by the Church Council members each year. The Church Council may organize its structure to serve the ministries of the church more efficiently and effectively. The organization and job descriptions are listed in the Church Council Manual. The number of the Church Council members should not be less than six. (General guideline)

4. Small Group Leaders and Section Leaders

Small group leaders and Section Leaders are appointed by the Church Council.

5. Boards/Committees:

According to needs of the church, boards/committees may be appointed by the Church Council which report directly to the Church Council and last until the conclusion of the tasks.

6. Decision Making:

Although the church seeks the spirit of unanimous decisions, general issues will be passed by simple majority of all Council members. Important issues (see IIIA.2(a-c)) require two-thirds majority approval of all Council members. Election of pastoral staffs and Elders and disposition of real properties require three quarters majority approval of all Council members.

D. Deacons

1. Responsibilities

- a. Lead through example (I Tim 3:7-13)
- b. Be a Servant (Matt 23:11; John 12:26)
- c. Administration of church ministry (Acts 6:1-6)

2. Formation:

- a. Nominees must be active members of the church, and meet the qualifications described in I Timothy 3:8-13.
- b. Nominees must be approved by the Church Council by two-thirds majority and confirmed by the General Assembly.

3. Term

- a. Each term of Deacon is two years extendable by two more consecutive terms. Afterwards, a lapse of one year is required before renomination. In the event that a Deacon is conducting himself (herself) in a manner warranting of dismissal, the Church Council may decide to discontinue his (her) term.

E. ELDERS

1. Responsibilities:

- a. Shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28, Jas. 5:14, I Pet. 5:1-3).
- b. Lead through example (I Pet. 5:3).
- c. Teach biblical truths (I Tim. 3:5, Tit. 1:9).
- d. Conduct Church Discipline (Mt 18:15-17)
- e. Provide direction for the church (I Tim 5:17)

2. Formation:

- a. Ordained Pastors are Elders
- b. Lay Elder nominees have to be active church members and meet the qualifications in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
- c. Nominees must be approved by the Church Council by three-quarters majority and elected by the General Assembly.

3. Term:

Lay Elders are elected for a 3-year term and may be re-elected for a second 3-year term. Afterwards a lapse of one year is required before renomination. In the event that an Elder is conducting himself in a manner warranting of dismissal, the **Church Council** may decide to discontinue his term.

F. CHURCH STAFF

1. Pastors:

a. Responsibilities:

The Pastors shall consider their main ministry to be the equipping of all members of the church for the work of service so that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph. 4:12). The Pastors have the responsibilities of pastoral care and spiritual leadership over the church, to officiate ordinances and to work with the Elders and Deacons in all areas of ministry in the church.

b. Calling:

After a candidate is nominated by the Pastoral Search Committee(which is formed by five people appointed by the Church Council), he has to be approved by the Church Council with three-quarters majority vote and approved by the General Assembly. Then the Church Council may extend a written offer. The candidate should also have a very clear sense of God's calling to RCCA.

c. Term:

The initial term for a Pastor will be two years. Upon extension, each subsequent terms will be three years. The Church Council will decide on term extensions six months before the conclusion of each term. Upon passing of the extension, the Church Council will submit a written offer of another term of three years. Should the Church Council decide not to extend the term, the decision requires two-thirds majority approval of the Council and the Council will notify the Pastor in writing.

d. Resignation:

If a Pastor cannot continue to serve, the Pastor should submit written notification to the Church Council three months in advance.

e. Dismissal:

In the event that a Pastor is conducting himself in a manner warranting dismissal, the Church Council may decide to discontinue his term.

2. Ministers/Ministry Directors:

a. Responsibilities:

The Ministers/Ministry Directors shall consider their main ministry to be the equipping of all members of the church for the work of service so that the body of Christ may be built up (Eph. 4:12). The Ministers/Ministry Directors have the responsibilities of pastoral care and spiritual leadership over the church and to work with the Pastors, Elders and Deacons in all areas of ministry in the church.

b. Calling:

After a candidate is nominated by the Pastoral Search Committee (which is formed by the Pastors and five people appointed by the Church Council), he has to be approved by the Church Council with three-quarters majority vote and approved by the General Assembly. Then the Church Council may extend a written offer. The candidate should also have a very clear sense of God's calling to RCCA.

c. Term:

The initial term for a Minister/Ministry Director will be two years. Upon extension, each subsequent terms will be three years. The Church Council will decide on term extensions six months before the conclusion of each term. Upon passing of the extension, the Church Council will submit a written offer of another term of three years. Should the Church Council decide not to extend the term, the decision requires two-thirds majority approval of the Council.

d. Resignation:

If the minister cannot continue to serve, the Minister/Ministry Director should submit written notification to the Church Council three months in advance.

e. Dismissal:

In the event that the Minister/Ministry Director is conducting himself in a manner warranting dismissal, the Church Council may decide to discontinue his term.

3. Staff:

To be hired by Church Council according to the need of church ministries. Terms of employment will be determined by Church Council.

IV. PROPERTIES

1. The Church Council should establish policies regarding the proper use of the church properties.
2. All legal and financial decisions concerning the church's properties should be recommended by the Church Council.
3. Any disposition of the church real property, except those donated as offerings and not used for ministry, shall be approved by the Church Council and three-quarters majority by the General Assembly.
4. In the event of discontinuance of the church, the church assets should be processed as stated in V DISSOLUTION section.

V. DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution of the church, its assets shall be donated to other Christian organizations of the same belief and the organization that is qualified as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c)(3), Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

VI. RATIFICATION

These By-Laws establishes the name, the membership, organization and property policy of the church. It has been drafted and reviewed by Church Planting Committee, and reviewing by the Congregation for three weeks, and finally approval by the General Assembly.

Drafted and Approved 2008
First Revision 2009
Second Revision 2012

Revision of the By-Laws requires a written letter to the Church Council with the co-signature of over ten active church members stating the reasons for revision. Upon detailed examination, the Church Council will submit the proposed revision to the By-Laws revisions committee for an initial draft, which will be followed by the approval of the Church Council and final approval of the General Assembly (Details see IIIA.3).

The By-Laws has been translated into Chinese. All interpretations should refer to the original English version in areas where the Chinese version becomes ambiguous.