

Summary of By-Law Changes

2009 Version vs. Previous

General

- In general the new 2009 Version of the By-Laws is intended to be more complete, more readable, and more in compliance with Maryland laws
- The Articles that had Roman Numerals now have Arabic Numerals
- All Articles have the same topic, none have been added or deleted
- The document Title which was originally “Constitution & By-Laws” is changed to “By-Laws & Plan” to conform to current State requirements
- The new 2009 Version, when approved will carry a footnoted document name and date for future reference

Article 1 - NAME

- This Article states the full corporate name of the church with “Inc.”
- The Article includes language to allow shortened forms of this church’s full name, from Westminster Bible Church, Inc. to “Church” in the following portions of the document

Article 2 - PURPOSE

- The purpose statement was updated, yet clearly states what the “Word” is and who our God is, with reference to Jesus being the Christ, should unbelievers read this statement

Article 3 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

- This new version of the By-Laws includes the currently used Statement of Faith re-written by the Elders in 2005. It has not changed the intent of the statement of faith, but has made it significantly clearer and includes text from the scripture references rather than just showing the references.
- Subsection 12B of the new Statement of Faith – the Nature of the Church - has been further enhanced to affirm the importance of the unity of the local Body of Christ
- To conform to Article 1, “Church” (capitalized) refers only to Westminster Bible Church, “church” (lowercase) refers to the universal church or local bodies of believers. This convention or definition applies to the entire document.

Article 4 - MEMBERSHIP

- The language for this Article includes the original plus *italicized* sections that were “under consideration” in the original, but has been substantially re-written
- Admission to membership shall NOW include public acknowledgment to uphold and preserve the Unity of the Body
- Language for Discipline of Members and Non-members has been significantly enhanced

Article 5 - LEADERSHIP

- This Article has been completely re-written to be up to date as well as to conform to Maryland law
- President, Vice-President, and Secretary positions have been added which are required by Law, but will be non-functioning positions at WBC
- The Trustee position has been re-defined significantly to be four specific Elders or Deacons rather than “All” Elders and Deacons. They shall be selected by the Elders, but confirmed by an actual vote (as required) by the members at a congregational meeting. They act only on behalf of the Elders and Deacons
- The Treasurer position is fully defined for the first time

Article 6 - CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

- This Article has been significantly re-written to include all information regarding congregational meetings within this Article
- Includes Quorum language for the first time

Article 7 - LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

- This Article has been updated to reflect current procedure
- Now includes Ministry Leader meetings and Offsite meetings

Article 8 - CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- The Sunday School Superintendent position has been removed from the By-Laws.
- The Teacher Policy is not part of these By-Laws but required for all teachers

Article 9 - MISSIONS

- This Article has been significantly enhanced to show the importance of Missions
- The Missions Policy is mentioned but is not part of these By-Laws

Article 10 - FINANCES

- The Article name has been shortened
- The Article has been completely re-written to conform to current procedure and Financial Policy
- The Financial Policy is not part of these By-Laws but is referred to here

Article 11 - CHURCH PROPERTY

- With Trustee language moved to Article 5, the remaining property title language remains the same as the original

Article 12 - PASTOR(S)

- The Article title has been shortened since it covers more than just selection
- The Selection / Search Committee process has been enhanced
- Duties and responsibilities have been clarified
- Needed resignation and termination language have been added

Article 13 - ORDINATION

- No change

Article 14 - DISSOLUTION

- No change

Article 15 - FEDERATION

- No change

Article 16 - AMENDMENTS

- Only minor changes made after congregational meeting information moved to Article 6