

**By-Laws Of
Wildwood Church Of God**

VISION STATEMENT

Wildwood exists to love and lead people into a life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ.

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

--Matthew 28:18-20

Article I—TITLE AND INCORPORATION

- A. The name and title of this ministry shall be Wildwood Church of God of Ashland, Kentucky, Inc. d/b/a Wildwood Church of God and is located at 3500 South 29th Street, Ashland, Kentucky 41102.
- B. This ministry is incorporated as a non-profit organization.

Article II—AUTHORITY AND INTENT

Wildwood Church of God is in fellowship and harmony with the doctrines and practices held by the General Assembly of the Church of God, general headquarters in Anderson, Indiana. All properties and assets are held locally and are not conditionally deeded to the general headquarters of the Church of God in Anderson, Indiana.

The Word of God is the final authority in all matters of governance and will not be preempted in any way. As such, it is superior to the content and meaning of these By-Laws under which this ministry shall be administered.

Article III—MEMBERSHIP

“The day of sects and creeds for us forevermore is past. God’s unity joins all the saints upon the world so vast. We reach our hands in fellowship to every blood-washed one, while love entwines about each heart in which God’s will is done,”

--Andrew Byers
“The Church’s Jubilee”

We believe that salvation in Jesus Christ makes one a member of the Church of God.

A. Qualifications for voting membership

1. Eligibility—A person eligible to vote:
 - a. shall be at least sixteen years of age,
 - b. shall have been a Christian and living in harmony with the doctrines and practices of the leadership and congregation,
 - c. shall have been in regular attendance for at least six months immediately preceding any meeting in which they intend to exercise the right to vote, and
 - d. shall consistently support the ministry of the church in such ways as giving of tithes and offerings, participation in the ministry areas of the church through active involvement on a ministry team, intercessory prayer, etc.

Provided however, that the “six months” shall not apply to members of the Pastoral Staff and applicable members of their immediate family. Further, eligible individuals shall be in agreement with these By-Laws.

Article IV—CHURCH BUSINESS MEETINGS

A. Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting vote will take place on the first weekend of November in each of the regular services. No discussion from the floor will be entertained at this time. The Elders and Pastoral Staff will be available for questions and answers within seven days prior to the meeting. Notice of the meeting time will be given to the congregation during the month of October. The annual budget and the ratification ballot will be made available one week prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

B. Special Called Business Meeting

Other business meetings may be called at any time as authorized by a majority of the Elders’ Council. A meeting may also be called by written request, stating the specific purpose for the meeting, to the Elders’ Council first, and then signed by a majority of the membership according to the last month’s attendance average. Notice shall be given to the congregation at least one week prior to the approved meeting, or as approved by a majority of the Elders’ Council.

- C. Ballots—All ballots shall be secret ballot.
1. Absentee Ballots—Absentee ballots shall be provided upon request and are to be signed and sealed in the presence of at least one member of the Office Ministry Team, who will seal and file the ballot. These ballots will be given to the Parliamentarian prior to the meeting and counted in the vote, however not in the quorum.
 2. Results—Results will be determined by Tellers appointed by the Parliamentarian.
- D. Presiding Officers—The presiding officers for each meeting will be the Pastoral Staff, The Elders’ Council, the Recording Secretary, and the Parliamentarian.
- E. Ratification—All congregations ratifications shall require a majority, consisting of 50% + 1 of the votes cast.
- F. Quorum—A quorum shall consist of a minimum of 150 eligible voting members present at a meeting during which the vote is being taken.
- G. Parliamentary Procedure—“Robert’s Rules of Order, Revised” shall be the parliamentary authority for all meetings.

Article V—LEADERSHIP

- A. Congregational—Under the headship of the Lord Jesus Christ the government of the church is vested in the body of believers who compose its membership. Any action or decision made by the Pastoral Staff, Elders’ Council, or other ministry entity may be reviewed by the Elders’ Council and/or as requested in writing to the same by a majority of the congregation. Further, and subsequent action or decision may be called into review in an Open Forum of the congregation by written request to the Elders’ Council and then signed by a majority of the congregation.
- B. Spiritual—Spiritual authority in all ministry matters shall be exercised by the Lead Pastor and the Pastoral Staff. The same shall be held accountable by the Elders’ Council.
- C. Laity—Lay leadership authority in all ministry matters shall be exercised by the Elders’ Council. All ministry boards, committees, teams, etc. will report to the Pastoral Staff.

Article VI—LEADERSHIP COVENANTS AND DUTIES

A. Lead Pastor

1. Qualifications—The Lead Pastor will submit to and fulfill the duties set and approved by the Elder's Council.
2. Duties
 - a. The Lead Pastor shall facilitate the firing of all other pastoral staff positions. He/she shall select and pursue an appropriate candidate. Upon the Lead Pastor's approval, the candidate shall meet with appropriate ministry entities as approved by and including the Elders' Council. Upon approval of the candidate by the Elders' Council, the candidate will come before the congregation for a ratification vote of the majority of the voting members. The Lead Pastor shall cause for the arrangements necessary for the transition of the pastor.
 - b. The Lead Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of any and all ministry entities.
 - c. The Lead Pastor shall serve as Chair of all congregational and Elders' Council meetings.
 - d. The Lead Pastor shall cause the preparation of an annual report, which shall contain reports from the various ministry entities, as well as the annual church budget.
3. Resignation or Removal—The Lead Pastor may voluntarily resign to the Pastoral Staff and the Elders' Council providing for thirty days notice unless other arrangements are mutually agreed upon by the same. The Lead Pastor should take all steps possible in consultation with the Pastoral Staff and Elders' Council to encourage and guard the congregation during the time of transition. Concerning removal, instructions contained in Matthew 18 should be followed as the guiding principle until such time as the pastoral staff member has been in counsel with one member or Elder, another member of the Elders' Council, and no satisfactory agreement has been reached. Then, the Lead Pastor may be called into question in writing to the Elders' Council, signed by a majority of the congregation, or in writing by a majority of the Elders' Council. The Lead Pastor shall then meet with the Elders' Council, as well as other concerned parties of their approval, for discussion of the issue. Removal shall be within thirty days of the vote with all salaries and benefits afforded. Should the Lead Pastor be found guilty for reasons of moral failure, termination shall be immediate and no salaries or benefits afforded unless otherwise approved by the Elders' Council. Care will be taken to protect the congregation and the minister's family during this process, with

emphasis given to a process of spiritual restoration and healing (see Galatians 6:1-5). Notification of all removals shall be made in writing by the elders' council to the Kentucky State Minister and the Congregational Ministries Director of the Church of God. All removals will be conducted with the spiritual health and restoration of the congregation and the Lead Pastor as a priority.

B. Pastoral Staff

1. Qualifications—All pastoral staff members will submit to and fulfill their roles as created by the Lead Pastor and approved by the Elders' Council.
2. Duties—The specific duties of pastoral staff members shall be assigned and agreed upon by the Lead Pastor in consultation with the pastoral staff member, the Elders' Council, and appropriate ministry entities. However, the Lead Pastor may assign daily duties without prior approval of the Elders' Council. Pastor staff will be under no obligation to fulfill other duties requested or expected by members of the congregation.

Pastoral staff members may serve as ex-officio members of any and all ministry entities as agreed upon/assigned by the Lead Pastor.

3. Resignation or Removal—A pastoral staff member may voluntarily resign to the Lead Pastor and the Elders' Council providing for thirty days notice unless other arrangements are mutually agreed upon by the same. The Lead Pastor should take all steps possible in consultation with the Pastoral Staff and Elders' Council to encourage and guard the congregation during the time of transition. Concerning removal, instructions contained in Matthew 18 should be followed as the guiding principle until such time as the pastoral staff member has been in counsel with one member or Elder, another member of the Elders' Council, and no satisfactory agreement has been reached. Then, the pastoral staff member may be called into question in writing to the Elders' Council, signed by a majority of the congregation, or in writing by a majority of the Elders' Council. The pastoral staff member shall then meet with the Elders' Council, as well as other concerned parties of their approval, for discussion of the issue. Removal shall be within thirty days of the vote with all salaries and benefits afforded. Should the pastoral staff member be found guilty for reasons of moral failure, termination shall be immediate and no salaries or benefits afforded unless otherwise approved by the Elders' Council. Care will be taken to protect the congregation and the minister's family during this process, with emphasis given to a process of spiritual restoration and healing (see Galatians 6:1-5). Notification of all removals shall be made in writing by the Elders' Council to the Kentucky State Minister and the Congregational Ministries Director of the Church of God. All removals will be conducted with the spiritual health and restoration of the congregation and the pastoral staff member as a priority.

C. Elders' Council

Elders are selected by the majority approval of the existing Elders' Council in consultation with the pastoral staff. The Elders' Council shall consist of one appointed and ratified member of the congregation for every 100 members of the attendance average of the previous six months. A minimum of ten Elders shall represent the congregation at any attendance average, with a maximum of fifteen total Elders.

1. Qualifications—All Elders will submit to and fulfill their duties as agreed upon by the Elders' Council.
2. Duties—The Elders' Council shall:
 - a. Vision for, cause the exercise of, and hold accountable all ministry entities, and shall meet regularly for reports and ministry needs. Other meetings may be set as approved by a majority of the Elders' Council.
 - b. Serve as the council for conflict resolution between staff, employees, or members of the congregation or appoint an advisory committee for the same purpose using, but not limited to, the *Kentucky State Conflict/Grievance Resolution Plan for the Local Church* guidelines (attached) as approved by the Kentucky State General Assembly of the Church of God, Federal Wage Guidelines, and Kentucky State Guidelines.
 - c. Set staff/employee salaries, benefits, honorariums, and remunerations of any kind.
 - d. Shall be responsible for approving the annual operating budget for congregational ratification.
 - e. Purchase and sale of properties not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the current year's budget per consideration without majority ratification of the congregation, and the purchase or repair of items or equipment necessary for ministry not to exceed ten percent (10%) of the current year's budget per consideration without majority ratification of the congregation.
 - f. Appoint and oversee and Church Treasurer whose duties shall be to: open and keep current all accounts with approved financial institutions; count, record, and deposit all income; prepare and present a monthly report and/or as requested; disperse funds as approved; collect and file all receipts for funds dispersed; prepare and mail annual giving statements. The Church Treasurer shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Elders' Council.
 - g. Conduct an annual review of all finances.

- h. Serve as pulpit committee in the absence of a Lead Pastor. The elders shall be responsible for the search, interview, candidacy, and presentation to the congregation for ratification after majority approval of the Elders' Council.
3. Tenure—An Elder will serve for a term of four years, not to exceed two consecutive terms without a minimum of one year of inactive status. Elders are appointed by the Pastoral Staff and Elders' Council for congregational ratification.
4. Resignation/Removal—An Elder may resign at any time in writing to the Lead Pastor and Elders' Council providing for thirty days notice. An Elder will be appointed as designated above to fill the remaining term of the resigning Elder. Concerning removal, instructions contained in Matthew 18 should be followed as the guiding principle until such time as the Elder has been in counsel with one member or Elder and the Lead Pastor, and no satisfactory agreement has been reached. Then, an Elder may be called into question, via a letter of concern presented to the Elders' Council, signed by a majority of the congregation, or via a letter of concern signed by a majority of the Elders' Council to the same. The Elder shall then meet with the Lead Pastor and the Elders' Council as well as other concerned parties of their approval for discussion of the issue. The Elders' Council will rule on the matter. Should the Elder be removed for reasons of moral failure, termination shall be immediate. Care will be taken to protect the congregation and the Elder's family during this process, with emphasis given to a process of spiritual restoration and healing (see Galatians 6:1-5). All removals will be conducted with the spiritual health and restoration of the congregation and the Elder as a priority.

D. Ministry Team Leaders/Chairpersons

Ministry Team Leaders/Chairpersons may be appointed and/or terminated by the pastoral staff. All Ministry Team Leaders/Chairpersons or officers of such will submit to and fulfill the duties approved by the Lead Pastor.

Article VII—Amendments

These By-Laws may be amended by the majority vote of the Elders' Council and ratification of the congregation.

Ratified November 1, 2020

KENTUCKY STATE CONFLICT/GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION PLAN FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

An Advisory Committee shall be appointed for the purpose of assisting in conflict/grievance resolution. The advisory Committee members shall be recommended by the pastor and appointed by the officers of the church.

The Advisory Committee shall be made up of three to seven members, depending on the size of the congregation. These persons must be in good standing with the congregation. The Advisory Committee must consist of persons who are:

- A. Deeply concerned, dedicated and mature Christians.
- B. Possess a loving spirit and have the ability to work harmoniously with others.
- C. Possess the ability to make decisions in a fair, impartial manner.
 - 1. When a member of the local church has a significant conflict or grievance with another member(s) he/she is expected to seek the counsel of the Lead Pastor. Many issues can be resolved here through the sharing of additional information and insight.

If the problem is not resolved, the one with the complaint must:

- 2. Go to the person, in the spirit of Christ, whom they believe caused the offense and sincerely communicate with that person(s) to resolve the issue. (Matt. 18:15-17)
- 3. If the Issue is not resolved at this level of communication, then the person with the complaint must take one or two members, in good standing with the church, and who have the ability to be objective, to meet with the one whom the complaint is against for the purpose of reaching a positive resolution. (Matt. 18:15-17)
- 4. If the issue is not resolved at the first three levels of communication, the aggrieved person(s) must submit, in writing, all concerns relative to the problem, to the Advisory Committee. Upon reading and prayerfully considering the issues involved, the Advisory Committee will then meet with the persons directly involved in the conflict. The Advisory Committee will make every effort to provide a fair and spiritual solution to the conflict. It will be the Advisory Committee's responsibility to keep the Church Council/Official Board updated, and informed, with appropriate information at the appropriate time, pertaining to resolving the conflict. After due consideration the Advisory Committee will provide written recommendations to all persons directly involved in the conflict/grievance.

This is the final appeal involving the congregation. All parties will be encouraged and expected to comply with the written recommendations.

5. If at anytime after the written concerns from the aggrieved persons(s) have been received by the pastor or the Advisory Committee, either the pastor or the Advisory Committee, by majority vote, may ask for outside intervention from the State Minister and the Congregations and Ministers Service Committee of the Church of God in Kentucky. (There may need to be an adjustment to number five to fully comply with the manual of operations).
6. When the pastor is involved in a serious conflict with person(s) of the congregation he/she must follow the conflict resolution plan in section two through five of the guidelines under the Conflict/Grievance Resolution Plan.

DISCIPLINE PLAN

- A. If the Advisory Committee in its best judgment determines that a member is involved in unethical, deceptive practices, dishonesty, antagonistic behavior, immoral, sinful behavior, they may by two-thirds majority vote administer discipline. The purpose of discipline is not to punish the offender(s), but for vindication of the truth, and as servants of Christ, help to provide spiritual wholeness to the congregation, including the offender.
- B. The discipline of a lay member may take the form of a verbal and written reprimand. Further action may be taken by dismissing the person or persons involved from any or all leadership responsibilities in the church for at least one year.
- C. The discipline of a pastor is the responsibility of the Credentials Board and the General Assembly of the Church of God in Kentucky.