

# **St. James Church**

**Established June 7, 1914**

**3535 Taylor Boulevard**

**Louisville, KY 40215**

## **Constitution and Bylaws**

**Revised June 24, 2012**

Belief statements and statements on the Sacraments included in the Appendix

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I - The Congregation**

#### **NAME**

Section 1. The name of this church shall be St. James Church, Louisville, Kentucky.

#### **PURPOSE**

Section 2. The avowed purpose of this organization shall be the worship of the triune God, the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the teaching of the Faith and its practical significance, the practice of loving service toward the needy, the building of the kingdom of righteousness, the furtherance of Christian unity, the fulfillment of the gospel in our daily lives, and the promotion of Christian fellowship.

#### **GOVERNANCE**

Section 3. This congregation shall be governed by the articles of incorporation, and this Constitution and Bylaws.

#### **DOCTRINE**

Section 4. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are recognized as the Word of God and the ultimate rule of Christian Faith and practice.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Membership in this congregation shall be open to all baptized persons who desire to lead a Christian life and have either been confirmed at St. James Church, received by a letter of transfer from another Christian church or by profession of faith; and shall acknowledge agreement with the doctrines of this church and the obligations to attend divine worship, participate in Holy Communion and contribute to the support of the church through their service, tithes and offerings.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **MEETINGS**

Section 1. The congregation shall hold an annual meeting and such other meetings as are provided for in the bylaws.

#### **QUORUM**

Section 2. Thirty-five members in good standing shall constitute a quorum.

## ARTICLE IV

### ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Congregational Meeting. The supreme legislation and administrative power of the congregation is vested in the congregation itself assembled in meeting, duly and legally called, as provided in the bylaws.

Section 2. Congregational Prerogative. It shall be the prerogative of the congregational meeting to decide such questions as the buying and selling of real property, building projects, extensive repairs of church property, the call of the pastor, the direction of the work of the congregation, and such other powers and prerogatives as may be here in set forth. For the transaction of all other business the administration of the church is entrusted to the Church Council chosen and composed as provided for in the bylaws.

Section 3. Upon the dissolution of the Church its assets and all property and interest of which it shall then possess, including any devise, bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument, in trust or otherwise made before or after such dissolution shall be transferred to a body or entity determined by a 2/3 majority vote of the members of the congregation present.

## ARTICLE V

### AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments to the Constitution shall be presented in writing at any regularly called meeting of the congregation or to the Church Council. By a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present at a subsequent regular or special meeting, ten days notice thereof having been given from the pulpit and/or by mail, such proposed amendments may be changed, adopted or rejected.

End of Constitution document

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I**

#### **GOVERNMENT**

Section 1. The governing body (voting members), of this congregation shall consist of all members in good standing.

### **ARTICLE II**

#### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

Section 1. The Church Council shall be the executive body of this organization. It shall be composed of the Pastor, or Pastors, and ten Council Members. Majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

Section 2. The Church Council shall organize itself. A president, vice-president, secretary, financial secretary and treasurer shall be elected for a term of one year. The duties of said officers shall be stipulated by the Church Council and the financial officers shall be bonded.

Section 3. Beginning in December, 1992, Church Council members shall be elected at the December Congregational meeting and shall be ex-officio members of the Council until their term becomes effective. These ex-officio members shall have the right to vote for purposes of Section Two of this Article only. Retiring Council members will not have the privilege of vote for the purpose of organizing the new Council. Church Council terms shall become effective at the close of the January meeting.

Section 4. The election shall be in such manner that the terms of all the members do not expire at one and the same time. One third of its members to be elected annually for a three year term. No council member is eligible for more than one three year term until one year has elapsed between terms.

Section 5. Only members who are eighteen years of age, or over, and have been members of the church for at least one year, can be elected as members of the Church Council.

Section 6. Nominations shall be made for the Church Council by a committee appointed by the President. Public notice of such nominations shall be given from the pulpit, by bulletin or letter at least one week before the election. Nominations may also be made by members of the congregation at the December meeting provided that the floor nominee is a member in good standing and has been approached by the nominator and has agreed to serve if elected.

Section 7. The Council members shall be publicly installed in their respective offices.

Section 8. Vacancies on the Church Council shall be filled, for the unexpired term, by appointment of the President and with the approval of the Council.

Section 9. The Church Council shall transact the business of the Church, make provision for the determining and raising of the current expense budget for the congregation as well as for the apportionment of the Church and other benevolent projects, the auditing of financial accounts, and the adequate support of the staff of workers. It shall keep a complete and accurate record of its proceedings, be the custodian of all congregational records and report to the congregation at its regular and special meetings. It shall submit any required documents to the State or any governing body as occasion may require.

Section 10. All expenditures and vouchers may be approved by the President and Financial Secretary (bearing both signatures) as necessary to function without delay for payment; but these must be reviewed by the Church Council once each month.

Section 11. The Church Council may authorize any extraordinary expense not provided for in the budget, but if that expense exceeds \$3,000.00 it must receive the approval of the congregation. The highest amount of indebtedness which the congregation may incur is \$100,000 as provided for in the Articles of Incorporation.

Section 12. The Church Council, through its president, and in consultation with the Pastor, shall appoint such special committees as it may deem necessary for the accomplishment of its work. The President is an ex-officio member of all such appointed committees.

Section 13. There shall be such standing committees as the Church Council deems necessary for the accomplishment of the goals and ministry of the church. Election to these committees shall be in such manner that the terms of all members do not expire at one and the same time. Beginning in December 1994, one third of each committee membership will be elected at the Congregational meeting for one three year term. Committee members may succeed themselves and be elected for unlimited numbers of terms. Each Committee shall organize itself, and with Church Council approval, fill unexpired terms, the Church Council president, in consultation with the Pastor shall appoint a member of the Church Council to serve as a liaison between each committee member of each committee. This section shall have no effect on Article VI concerning the Pastoral Relations Committee.

Section 14. The Church Council normally shall meet once every month for the transaction of such business as may properly come before it. Special meetings subject to the call of the President or Pastor may be held.

Section 15. The Church Council shall supervise the activities of the various organizations affiliated with the Church. No organization shall be effected without the approval of the said Council. Each organization affiliated with this Church, at the request of the Church Council, shall render an annual report in writing of its work and finances.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### **THE PASTOR**

Section 1. It shall be the responsibility of a Pastoral Committee of the Church appointed by the Church Council to seek a candidate for a vacancy in the office of Pastor.

Section 2. The Congregation shall elect as a Pastor only a minister who has been seminary trained and deemed to be fit for ministry.

Section 3. The Pastoral Committee shall nominate one candidate for the pastorate to be voted upon by the congregation. The congregation shall consider only one candidate at a time and shall vote by ballot for or against the candidate's election. If elected the Church Council shall tender the candidate a letter of call.

Section 4. In the call the terms of the pastoral relationship are stated, including the agreement of the Church to participate in a pension fund on the Pastor's behalf. The minister and the Church shall each receive a copy of the call.

Section 5. When a minister accepts the call, a Service of Installation shall be arranged.

Section 6. The Pastor shall be elected for an indefinite period. In order to terminate this relationship, three months notice shall be given either by the Pastor or the congregation

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the Pastor to set a good example to the congregation, to conduct services on Sunday, Holy Days and such other days as the congregation may desire, to direct the work of religious education, administer the Holy Sacraments, visit the sick, comfort the distressed and perform all such duties as belong to the Pastoral office. The Pastor shall make an annual report in writing to the congregation.

Section 8. The Pastor or Pastors are ex-officio members of all organizations within the congregation.

### **ARTICLE IV**

#### **CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

Section 1. A special meeting of the congregation shall be held the in the month of December to adopt the budget for the upcoming year and to elect new Church Council members. The regular annual meeting of the congregation usually shall be held in the month of January of each year. At this meeting, the officers of the Church Council and the Pastor shall submit their reports. Other organizations also may be requested to report. At this meeting, business pertinent to the welfare of the congregation may be considered.

Section 2. Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Church Council or by petition to the Council signed by not less than twenty-five (25) percent of the communicant members. It shall be incumbent upon the Council to call said special meeting within two weeks from receipt of said petition, and timely notice of such meeting shall be sent to the membership by the secretary of the church.

## ARTICLE V

### MEMBERS

Section 1. Baptized persons may be received as communicant members of St. James Church by confirmation, profession of faith or letter of transfer from another Christian church. Prior to their reception as communicant members, they shall be instructed in the Christian way of life, its standards of faith and doctrine and the privileges and responsibilities of membership. Children received through confirmation shall be at least in the eight grade of school, exceptions to this requirement may be made at the discretion of the Pastor.

Section 2. A person seeking to be baptized shall meet with the Pastor and after giving testimony of faith in Christ as personal savior and a desire to follow Him as His disciple; his or her name shall be presented to the Church Council for its endorsement. The mode, time and place of baptism shall be determined by the candidate and the Pastor, and announced to the congregation prior to the event.

Section 3. Candidates for membership at St. James Church shall be recommended to the Church Council by the Pastor after completing appropriate pre-membership instruction. Following a favorable vote of the council, they shall become communicant members of the church, and be presented to the church during a Sunday morning worship service.

Section 4. Members of the Church should strive to live sober, righteous and godly lives and labor faithfully to bring others to Christ. They should take an active part in the life and work of the Church. This should include regular attendance at divine worship; devout use of the Holy Sacraments; diligent observance of private devotions; liberal financial and moral support toward the maintenance of the Church and its benevolent undertakings; regard for its established law and authority; untiring zeal in bringing the un-churched under its influence and sincere endeavor to apply the teachings of Jesus to all human relationships.

Section 5. All communicant members in good and regular standing are entitled to voice, vote and office, unless otherwise stated in the constitution or bylaws.

Section 6. All members are entitled to a full share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of the Church, and to the services of its Pastor, officials and other workers, as well as to the Christian sympathy and support all members.

## OBLIGATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

Section 7. The congregation shall make such reports to the authorities as may be required of it.

Section 8. The fiscal year of the congregation shall be January 1 through December 31.

## FORFEITURE OF MEMBERSHIP

Section 9. If a member of the congregation has not partaken of Holy Communion, has not contributed to the financial support of the church, or has not participated in the worship experience of the gathered congregation for a period of one year, it shall become the responsibility of the Church Council to be in contact with that person. At that time the Church Council, in consultation with that member, shall determine whether that member shall be continued on the active rolls, placed on an inactive roll, or be removed from membership.

## ARTICLE VI

### COMMITTEE ON CHURCH AND MINISTRY

Section 1. The Committee on Church and Ministry shall normally consist of not less than three (and no) more than five members.

Section 2. They shall be appointed annually by the Church Council President.

Section 3. The Committee on Church and Ministry shall:

- a. Cultivate and maintain a wholesome and effective relationship between Pastor and people.
- b. Recommend and urge the Pastor to (pursue) in-service training opportunities, such as professional conferences, graduate study, seminars, retreats and study visits to other parishes.
- c. Give attention and directions to young people who show special promise for and interest in possible full-time Christian service.
- d. Seek, in cooperation with the Pastor, the development of special lay ministries in evangelism, fellowship and community action.
- e. Act as a committee on pastoral vacancy and supply when the need arises, with the provision that, for this purpose, its membership may be augmented by additional appointments made by the Church Council.



**ARTICLE VII**

**PROPERTY**

Section 1. The property of the congregation, whether real or personal, and all monies and legacies, shall be under the responsibility of the Church Council. They shall hold the property as a sacred trust for the congregation and keep the church edifice and other property in good repair and adapted for such uses as it approves.

**ARTICLE VIII**

**DISCIPLINE**

Section 1. Discipline in cases of conduct deemed un-Christian lies in the hands of the Church Council.

**ARTICLE IX**

**RULES OF ORDER**

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the parliamentary authority for all matters of procedure not specifically covered by these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE X**

**AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. Amendments to these By-Laws may be made at any meeting of the congregation by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members present, provided the proposed amendment has been presented to the Church Council in writing and the congregation notified prior to the congregational meeting.

**ARTICLE XI**

**CHURCH SAFETY**

Section 1. There shall be a standing committee known as The Safe Church Advisory Team, hereafter referred to as "Team."

- a. The Team shall consist of four (4) members, two female and two male.
- b. Team members shall be appointed for an indefinite term by the Church Council President and approved by a majority vote of the Church Council.
- c. Upon recommendation of the Council President and a majority vote of the Church Council a Team member may be removed from the Team for failure to fulfill the duties and obligations of a Team member and or for conduct deemed to be unchristian.

Section 2. The Safe Church Advisory Team shall:

- a. Ensure that all paid and or volunteer staff, Church Council members and members who participate in ministry activities are instructed in Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements and shall provide counsel for and make recommendations to those noted above regarding Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements to ensure organizational compliance.
- b. Ensure that all paid and or volunteer staff and members who participate in ministry activities are properly vetted as pertains to Safe Church policies and that appropriate background checks have been completed.
- c. Ensure that all activities and functions are conducted according to and comply with Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements.
- d. Keep a record of its proceedings and be the steward of all materials pertaining to Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements.
- e. Hear and investigate claims of misconduct that fall under the purview of Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements and inform the President and Vice-President of the Council upon the commencement of said investigation. At the completion of the investigation the Team shall inform the President and Vice-President of the need to convene a joint meeting of the Council and Team. The Team shall render its findings of fact and recommendations at said joint meeting. Upon completion of the report at the joint meeting the Council shall proceed to executive session to determine the final course of action.
- f. Immediately advise the President and Vice-President of the Council of infractions of Safe Church Safe Church policies, procedures and requirements and or allegations of misconduct deemed to be of an urgent nature. Such matters may be handled at the discretion of the Council President and Vice-President until such time as the full Council may hear the matter.

End of Bylaws document

## APPENDIX

### **St. James Church Belief Statements**

We affirm the following as our Statement of Faith:

We believe the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of mankind, and the Divine and final authority for Christian faith and life.

We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross, a sacrifice for our sins. Further, He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, where, at the right hand of the Majesty on High, He is now our High Priest and Advocate.

We believe that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, and during this age to convict mankind, regenerate the believing sinner, and indwell, guide, instruct and empower the believer for godly living for service.

We believe that mankind was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost, and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.

We believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ provide the only grounds for the justification and salvation for sinful mankind. That salvation is a gift of God's grace, received by those who through faith in Christ trust in Him and Him alone for their salvation. In response to their faith, they are born again by means of the Holy Spirit and become children of God.

We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are sacraments to be observed by the Church during the present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means of salvation.

We believe that the true Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and are united together in the body of Christ of which He is the head.

We believe in the personal and bodily second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth and that this "Blessed Hope" has a vital bearing on the manner of life and service of the believer.

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead; of the believer to everlasting blessedness and joy with the Lord, of the unbeliever to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

## **St. James Church Statement on The Sacraments**

### **Baptism**

Baptism is a Sacrament of the Church, instituted by Christ, whereby through the visible sign of water, a public proclamation is made of one's identification with Jesus Christ and His Church.

This church will practice both Believer's Baptism and the rite called infant baptism by which Christian parents dedicate their children to the Lord and identify them with the Christian Church, anticipating the day when the child will come to a personal acceptance of the saving faith in Christ. At the discretion of the parents, a dedication may take place without the application of water.

St. James Church acknowledges Aspersion, i.e. sprinkling with water; Effusion, i.e. pouring of water and Immersion, i.e. submersing in water, as acceptable modes of Baptism and firmly believes that the exercise of this Sacrament is not a necessary prerequisite or an effective means of one's salvation.

### **Holy Communion**

Holy Communion is a Sacrament of the Church instituted by Christ using the visible signs of Bread, representing His body, and The Cup, representing His blood. When partaken, we remember the death of our Lord Jesus. During this service of memorial, we acknowledge His presence with us but not specifically in the elements of Communion which remain unchanged.