These are the bylaws, statement of faith, and ordinances of The Refuge Community.

Mission Statement

The mission of **The Refuge Community** is to be a place of refuge for individuals at every stage of the Gospel journey, including new believers, mature congregants, and those who are challenged, questioning, or wounded in their belief system. The church/ministry exists to establish a tangible, realistic, and spiritually safe environment where all people may encounter the love, grace, and truth of God.

The Refuge Community affirms that God is near to those who are brokenhearted and that His presence is a place of safety and restoration for all who seek Him (Psalm 34:18). We believe that the Church is called to bear one another's burdens in love, reflecting the compassion of Christ and fulfilling the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2). In welcoming all without partiality, the church seeks to mirror the heart of God, who desires that none should perish but that all should come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9).

Vision Statement

The vision of **The Refuge Community** is to function as an active, mobile, and missional congregation that extends beyond traditional church/ministry structures. While recognizing the value of gathered worship spaces, the church/ministry does not limit its identity to a single physical location. Instead, it embraces a model of "church expressed in everyday life," through small gatherings, home-based fellowships, neighborhood outreach, and practical service within local communities.

This vision is rooted in the example of the early Church, which gathered both in the temple courts and from house to house, devoting themselves to teaching, fellowship, prayer, and the breaking of bread (Acts 2:46). The Refuge Community seeks to cultivate communities of real faith practice, where believers live out the Gospel through service, hospitality, and love in daily life (James 1:27).

The church/ministry desires to be a biblical reflection of the Church of Christ, faithfully bearing the image of God through intercession, compassion, and service to those in need (2 Corinthians

5:20; Colossians 3:12). Through listening, loving, and guiding others, the Refuge Community seeks to direct individuals toward a genuine and growing relationship with God, restoring hope to the broken and welcoming the hurting back into spiritual family (Luke 15:20–24).

This vision will be carried out through the establishment of accessible worship gatherings and ministry expressions throughout cities and neighborhoods, ensuring that opportunities for worship, prayer, and community are available to people wherever they are (Matthew 18:20).

Theological Foundation of “Refuge”

The Refuge Community understands the concept of “refuge” as both spiritual and relational. A refuge may serve as a temporary dwelling for some, and a long-term place of restoration for others. Scripture affirms that God Himself is our ultimate refuge and strength, a present help in times of trouble (Psalm 46:1). Those who abide in Him find a permanent dwelling place that is not shaken by the chaos of the world (Psalm 91:1-2).

Having found refuge in God, the Church/ministry believes it is entrusted with the responsibility to embody that same refuge for others, creating spaces where people are safe, welcomed, and embraced with grace and truth (Romans 15:7). The Refuge Community holds that the cross of Jesus Christ is the ultimate place of refuge, where humanity’s insufficiency is met with God’s redemptive power (Romans 3:23-24).

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, believers are reconciled to the Father and restored into right relationship with Him (2 Corinthians 5:18-19). This gift of salvation is extended to all people and is received by faith, confessing with the mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in the heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9-10). It is by grace, through faith, that individuals are saved, not by works, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE & GOVERNANCE

Biblical Foundation of Leadership

The Refuge Community affirms that Scripture establishes the structure and governance of the Church/Ministry and is necessary for the faithful stewardship, unity, and health of the Body of Christ. The Church/Ministry recognizes that spiritual growth, doctrinal integrity, and missional expansion require both spiritual authority and operational accountability.

The early Church demonstrated a model of structured leadership as believers increased in number, while maintaining accuracy in doctrine, teaching, and practice (Acts 2:42; Acts 6:1–7). As the Church expanded across regions and households, the apostles and appointed leaders preserved unity of faith and clarity of Gospel teaching (Acts 15:1–29).

The Refuge Community affirms this biblical precedent and seeks to operate under a unified mission, vision, and practice, particularly in light of its call to establish multiple "mini churches" throughout cities and neighborhoods.

Leadership Offices Recognized

The Refuge Community affirms the leadership gifts given by Christ to His Church for its equipping, maturity, and mission, as outlined in Scripture:

> "He also gave apostles, prophets, missionaries, as well as pastors and teachers as gifts ⌞to his church⌟. Their purpose is to prepare God's people to serve and to build up the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-12 GW).

In accordance with biblical teaching, the church/ministry recognizes and affirms the following leadership roles:

Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor serves as the primary spiritual leader, shepherd, and teacher of The Refuge Community. This role is entrusted with guarding doctrine, faithfully teaching Scripture, and providing spiritual oversight for the church body (1 Timothy 4:16; Titus 1:9).

The Lead Pastor holds final authority and responsibility regarding doctrinal teaching, theological interpretation, and ministry implementation, ensuring alignment with the teachings of Jesus Christ and the historic Christian faith (2 Timothy 2:15).

Elders

Elders shall be appointed in accordance with biblical qualifications to provide spiritual oversight, accountability, and care for the congregation (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Elders serve as shepherds of the flock, assisting in teaching, discernment, prayer, and leadership support (1 Peter 5:1-3).

Deacons (Leaders)

Deacons shall be appointed to serve the practical and operational needs of the church/ministry, enabling the ministry of the Word and prayer to remain central (Acts 6:2–4). Deacons are called to serve with dignity, integrity, and faithfulness (1 Timothy 3:8-13), functioning as servant-leaders within the church/ministry community.

Board of Directors

The Refuge Community shall operate under a **Board of Directors**, composed of a mixture of Elders, Deacons, and pastoral partners from aligned sister churches. This structure is intended to ensure accountability, plurality of wisdom, and ethical oversight in all matters affecting the church (Proverbs 11:14; Proverbs 15:22).

The Board of Directors is responsible for oversight in the following areas:

- Financial stewardship and transparency
- Hiring and removal of leadership or staff
- Ethical review and discipline in cases of moral failure or misconduct
- Long-term organizational integrity and compliance

The Board shall conduct quarterly reviews, and financial and operational reports shall be made publicly visible to the congregation to promote transparency and trust (2 Corinthians 8:20-21).

Authority & Accountability Flow

The Refuge Community affirms a biblical model of leadership authority balanced by accountability:

- The **Lead Pastor** provides doctrinal leadership and ministry direction.
- **Elders and Deacons** serve as extensions of pastoral leadership, ensuring faithful execution of teaching and ministry in the absence or presence of the Lead Pastor (Hebrews 13:17).
- All doctrine, teaching, and practice are evaluated for faithfulness to Scripture and Christian orthodoxy (Acts 17:11).

Elders and Deacons are appointed to uphold doctrinal ethics and the teachings of Jesus Christ as communicated by the Lead Pastor, serving the church/ministry body with humility and faithfulness (Philippians 2:3–4).

Financial & Ethical Oversight

The Refuge Community affirms that stewardship of resources is a sacred trust. All financial matters, including budget oversight, leadership appointments, and disciplinary actions related to ethical or moral failure, are overseen by the Board of Directors (Luke 16:10-11).

All financial resources remain in circulation for ministry advancement, community assistance, outreach, and benevolence, ensuring that funds are used exclusively for the mission of the church (Matthew 10:8; Acts 20:35).

The Refuge Community affirms that all financial resources entrusted to the Church/ministry are a sacred stewardship before God and must be handled with integrity, wisdom, and transparency (1 Corinthians 4:2). Scripture commands faithful management of resources, honesty in accounting, and accountability before both God and people (Luke 16:10–11; 2 Corinthians 8:20–21).

The Refuge Community maintains a policy of **full financial transparency** regarding all income, donations, and expenditures. Oversight of all financial matters rests with the **Board of Directors**, who are responsible for ensuring that funds are distributed ethically, responsibly, and in alignment with the mission of the church/ministry (Proverbs 11:14).

All administrative, operational, facility, and program-related expenses shall be reviewed to ensure they are necessary, reasonable, and mission-aligned. Itemized records and receipts shall be maintained for **all expenditures** and may be presented to the congregation upon request at the congregation's discretion, fostering trust and accountability (Romans 12:17).

Financial Documentation & Recordkeeping

The Refuge Community shall utilize formal bookkeeping and recordkeeping practices to ensure accuracy, compliance, and transparency. Donors shall receive appropriate annual documentation reflecting their financial contributions in accordance with applicable tax regulations (2 Corinthians 9:7).

Records shall also be maintained to provide transparency and accountability to sponsors, ministry partners, and external stakeholders (if applicable), ensuring responsible stewardship of all entrusted resources (Proverbs 27:23–24).

Approval & Authorization of Expenditures

To safeguard financial integrity, the following authorization structure shall be observed:

- **Expenditures exceeding $1,000** require full review and approval by the Board of Directors.

- **Expenditures under $1,000** may be consulted with and approved by the Lead Pastor, with subsequent documentation submitted to the Board for recordkeeping.

This structure ensures timely ministry operation while maintaining appropriate oversight and accountability (Ecclesiastes 4:9–12).

Funding Priorities

After administrative and operational obligations are met, funding priorities shall be established by the Board of Directors in alignment with the mission of the church/ministry.

The Refuge Community affirms that **children's and youth ministries** are a primary funding priority, recognizing the biblical mandate to instruct and nurture the next generation in the ways of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6-7; Matthew 19:14).

Additional ministry funding shall be allocated in order of mission impact, urgency, and sustainability, as determined by the Board through prayerful discernment and stewardship (James 1:5).

Compensation & Conflict of Interest

The Refuge Community affirms that **no leadership member, staff member, or Board member shall receive compensation from the ministry** under ordinary operations. All financial resources are to remain in circulation for ministry advancement, outreach, and community aid (Matthew 10:8; Acts 20:35).

Any consideration of staff or pastoral compensation must:

- Be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors
- Be evaluated by a licensed tax professional or accountant.
- Meet all legal, ethical, and regulatory standards

If such standards are not met, no compensation shall be approved. This policy exists to prevent conflicts of interest and to preserve the integrity and witness of the Church/ministry (1 Peter 5:2-3).

DOCTRINE & BELIEFS

Interdenominational Identity

The Refuge Community is an **interdenominational Christian church/ministry**. While we honor, respect, and acknowledge the historical contributions and theological labor of denominational traditions within the Christian faith, we do not formally affiliate with or submit to any denominational structure or governing body.

We maintain unity with fellow believers through shared faith in Jesus Christ and agreement on essential doctrines, while recognizing that faithful Christians may differ in methods of execution, ministry expression, and secondary theological interpretations (Romans 14:1–5; Ephesians 4:3–6). Our authority in faith and practice is derived from Scripture alone, under the lordship of Jesus Christ.

I. The Authority and Inerrancy of Scripture

The Refuge Community affirms that the Holy Bible, comprised of the sixty-six (66) canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired, authoritative, and inerrant Word of God.

We believe in **biblical inerrancy**, meaning that Scripture, in its original manuscripts, is wholly true and without error in all that it affirms. This doctrine is foundational, as it reflects the nature and character of God Himself, who is perfect, truthful, and unchanging (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2).

Scripture testifies to its own purity and perfection:

- “The words of the LORD are pure words” (Psalm 12:6)
- “The law of the LORD is perfect” (Psalm 19:7)
- “Every word of God is pure” (Proverbs 30:5)

Because Scripture is **God-breathed**, it carries divine authority and reliability (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20–21). To deny the trustworthiness of Scripture would be to call into question the omniscience, truthfulness, and faithfulness of God Himself (John 17:17).

The Bible stands as a unified and trustworthy revelation. If Scripture were unreliable in one area, it would undermine its authority in all areas (Matthew 5:18). Therefore, the Word of God stands as the judge over humanity, not a subject to human revision or selective acceptance (Hebrews 4:12; Romans 9:20).

Scripture is our **sole and sufficient rule for faith and practice** (Psalm 119:105; John 6:68-69). While we affirm diligent study, scholarship, and reverent inquiry (2 Timothy 2:15; Acts 17:11), we approach Scripture with humility, prayer, and submission, acknowledging human limitation before the perfect Word of God (Psalm 119:89).

II. The Trinity

The Refuge Community affirms the historic Christian doctrine of the **Trinity**: that there is **one true God**, eternally existing in **three distinct Persons**, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, equal in essence, power, glory, and authority.

Although the term *Trinity* is not found in Scripture, it accurately describes the biblical revelation of God's nature. From the opening chapters of Genesis, God is revealed with both unity and plurality (Genesis 1:1–2; 2:4). The plural name *Elohim* is used of the one God, while distinctions are made between God, the Spirit of God, and the Word or Representative of God interacting with humanity (Genesis 3:8; 16:7–13).

God declares His singularity and plurality together:

> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

Scripture consistently affirms this triunity:

- The Father sends the Son (John 5:23)
- The Son is fully God and Creator (John 1:1–3; Revelation 1:17)
- The Spirit proceeds from God and empowers believers (John 14:-–17)

III. Salvation

The Refuge Community affirms that **salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone**.

All humanity has sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Romans 3:23), resulting in separation from God and spiritual death (Romans 6:23). Out of love, God took on human flesh in Jesus Christ and bore the penalty for sin on the cross (John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Jesus lived a sinless life (1 John 3:5), offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice (Hebrews

10:12-14), and rose bodily from the dead (Matthew 28:5-6). Salvation is granted to all who believe in Him by faith, confessing Him as Lord and trusting in His finished work (John 1:12; Romans 10:9-10).

Salvation cannot be earned through works, rituals, or obedience. Good works, baptism, confession, and obedience are **results of salvation**, not requirements for it (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

Jesus Himself defined the work required for salvation:

> "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent" (John 6:29).

IV. Baptism and Communion (The Ordinances)

The Refuge Community affirms **two ordinances instituted by Jesus Christ**: Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism

Christian baptism is an act of obedience following salvation, commanded by Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). It is performed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and serves as a public confession of faith and identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12).

Baptism does not save; rather, it outwardly represents the inward transformation already accomplished by faith (Acts 2:41; Acts 16:14-15).

The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper (Communion) was instituted by Jesus as a remembrance of His sacrificial death and the establishment of the New Covenant (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). It is a sacred act of worship and remembrance for believers in Christ, proclaiming His death until He returns.

V. The Gifts and Manifestation of the Holy Spirit

The Refuge Community affirms the ongoing work and manifestation of the Holy Spirit in accordance with Scripture. We believe that Christ continues to give gifts to the Church for its edification, maturity, and unity (Ephesians 4:11-13).

We affirm the presence and operation of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, not to introduce new doctrine or supersede Scripture, but to equip the saints and build upon Christ as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20; Jude 1:3).

We believe in the biblical operation of spiritual gifts, including healing, miracles, and signs and wonders, as described in Scripture (1 Corinthians 12; Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-16). These gifts are exercised under discernment, accountability, and examination to ensure alignment with Scripture and the character of God (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21).

Any claimed manifestation must:

- Align with Scripture
- Reflect the nature and character of God.
- Withstand proper examination and verification.

The Refuge Community affirms wisdom, integrity, and humility in the exercise of spiritual gifts, encouraging professional verification when appropriate to maintain honesty, accountability, and credibility (Proverbs 11:3; 1 Corinthians 14:40).

VI. DISCIPLINE & ACCOUNTABILITY

The Refuge Community affirms that all people are fallen and imperfect, having sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). We recognize that spiritual maturity does not render individuals immune to failure, and Scripture itself acknowledges that even the righteous may fall (Proverbs 24:16).

However, the distinguishing mark of a righteous person is not the absence of failure, but the willingness to repent, receive correction, and pursue restoration (Psalm 51:17; 1 John 1:7-9). Therefore, discipline within the church is not intended for condemnation, but for correction, healing, and growth toward holiness (Hebrews 12:11).

Discipline of Leadership

If any member of leadership, including the Lead Pastor, Elders, Deacons, or Board members, is subject to **moral, ethical, or doctrinal failure or deviation**, the matter shall be addressed promptly and in accordance with biblical instruction.

The process shall proceed as follows:

1. **Direct Confrontation -** The concern shall first be addressed privately and directly, following the instruction of Christ (Matthew 18:15).

2. **Confirmation with Witnesses -** If the issue persists or is of significant concern, witnesses shall be brought forward, including appointed Board members, Elders, and/or Deacons, to verify and attest to the matter (Matthew 18:16; 1 Timothy 5:19).

3. **Board Review and Action**
   Upon verification, the Board of Directors shall assume oversight and determine appropriate action. This may include temporary or permanent removal from function, reassignment of responsibilities, or formal corrective measures (1 Timothy 5:20).

4. **Accountability and Restoration Plan**
   When restoration is appropriate, the Board shall establish an accountability plan focused on repentance, instruction, counseling, and measurable growth. The goal of such a plan is not merely correction, but spiritual healing and long-term faithfulness (2 Corinthians 2:-8).

All disciplinary actions involving leadership shall be handled internally with discretion, unless the matter directly affects the congregation at large.

If a failure or offense significantly impacts the church/ministry body, compromises public trust, or affects doctrinal or moral integrity at a congregational level, the Board of Directors shall communicate the matter to the congregation in a truthful, measured, and pastoral manner.

Such communication shall be intended to:

- Invite the congregation into prayer, fasting, and discernment (Joel 2:12–17; Acts 13:2–3)

- Guide the church toward unity, correction, and healing.

- Maintain transparency without unnecessary harm or speculation

Discipline of Members and Attendees

Disciplinary matters involving members or attendees shall be addressed with pastoral care and discretion. Oversight shall typically be carried out by Deacons and Elders, with the Lead Pastor informed before any confrontation or formal action.

The process shall include:

- Assessment of the situation and its spiritual implications
- Development of a pastoral response plan
- Direct, compassionate engagement aimed at restoration (Galatians 6:1)

The Refuge Community does not seek to intervene in every personal matter. Church/Ministry leadership will provide counsel and intervention when continued isolation, spiritual harm, or moral decline is evident, or when guidance is requested (Proverbs 11:14).

When and if matters exceed the church's capacity or expertise, leadership may direct individuals to appropriate professional, medical, or legal resources while continuing to offer spiritual care and support (Proverbs 15:22).

VII. Ministries & Missions

The Refuge Community affirms that the Word of God is living and active and is intended to be expressed not only through proclamation, but through **embodied service and faithful action** (Hebrews 4:12; James 1:22). As such, the church/ministry does not confine its ministry or identity to a single building, gathering, or location. Instead, it operates as a living expression of our faith, actively present within communities, neighborhoods, and everyday life.

We believe that the Church/Ministry is called to serve people holistically, spiritually, physically, and relationally, reflecting the ministry of Jesus Christ, who went among the people teaching, healing, and serving (Matthew 9:35). The Refuge Community, therefore, engages in ministry that extends beyond formal worship settings into tangible acts of compassion and service.

Worship & Congregational Gatherings

The Refuge Community conducts worship services that encourage reverent, expressive, and Spirit-led worship. These gatherings may include live music, full band accompaniment, dance, artistic expression, prayer, teaching, and corporate participation, all conducted in a manner that glorifies God and edifies the congregation (Psalm 150:3–6; 2 Samuel 6:14; John 4:23–24).

Corporate worship gatherings serve as spaces for teaching the Word, fostering fellowship, celebrating the ordinances, and equipping believers for ministry and daily life (Acts 2:42).

Community Outreach & Compassion Ministries

In obedience to Christ's command to love and serve those in need, The Refuge Community actively engages in charitable outreach, including but not limited to:

- Feeding the hungry (Matthew 25:35)
- Clothing those in need (Isaiah 58:7; James 2:15–16)
- Visiting the imprisoned (Matthew 25:36)
- Providing care and support for individuals experiencing homelessness (Proverbs 19:17)
- Assisting with employment readiness and job placement (Proverbs 14:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:10)
- Offering educational support and instruction for those seeking knowledge and growth (Hosea 4:6; Proverbs 4:7)

These ministries are conducted as acts of service unto Christ Himself and as expressions of God's justice, mercy, and love within the community (Micah 6:8).

Discipleship & Leadership Development

The Refuge Community is committed to making disciples and equipping believers to grow in faith, maturity, and service (Matthew 28:19-20). Discipleship initiatives include biblical teaching, mentoring, small-group fellowship, and leadership development for those called to teach, lead, and serve within the church/ministry.

Those who desire to instruct others in the Christian faith are provided structured discipleship, accountability, and training to ensure faithfulness to Scripture and sound doctrine (2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:1).

Children & Youth Ministry

The Refuge Community affirms the biblical mandate to intentionally disciple children and youth, recognizing them as vital members of the church and future leaders of the faith (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Proverbs 22:6).

Children's and youth ministries are designed to provide age-appropriate teaching, discipleship, and spiritual formation in a safe and nurturing environment. Instruction is grounded in Scripture and tailored to foster spiritual growth, moral development, and a foundational understanding of the Gospel (Matthew 19:14).

Local & Global Missions

The Refuge Community holds a dual commitment to both local and global mission work. While we seek to participate in international outreach and mission efforts in obedience to Christ's command to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19), we affirm that faithfulness begins within our immediate communities.

We believe that commitment to global mission must be accompanied by active service to neighboring communities, as Scripture calls believers to love those nearest to them as themselves (Luke 10:-–37). Accordingly, The Refuge Community prioritizes local outreach while prayerfully pursuing broader mission opportunities as resources and partnerships allow (Acts 1:8).

Community Engagement & Events

The Refuge Community hosts and participates in a variety of community-focused events designed to foster connection, support, and outreach. These events may include educational workshops, service projects, faith-based gatherings, and community celebrations. "

Through these efforts, the church/ministry seeks to cultivate relationships, build trust, and create accessible points of engagement for individuals and families within the community (Romans 12:13).

Miscellaneous Provisions

Membership

Any person presenting themselves for membership in The Refuge Community must profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Church/Ministry practices are governed by these Bylaws and additional documents of practice approved by the church/ministry, as listed above.

Individuals considering membership shall be invited and are strongly encouraged to attend a Welcome Class, where they will learn about the mission, doctrine, and practices of The Refuge Community and meet with the Lead Pastoral Family.

Membership may be received under the following categories:
A. New Believer - Upon receiving an invitation or participating in a service, someone decides

to commit their life to Christ Jesus. They would be welcomed and considered as a member of The Refuge Community.

B. Letter of Transfer - An individual who is a member of another church, has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and has been baptized may be received as a member after a meeting with the Lead Pastor.

C. Other Applicants - Individuals who profess prior acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who have been baptized may be received as members after a meeting with the Lead Pastor.

TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Transfer of Membership - A letter of transfer may be granted to any member seeking to unite with another church/ministry and shall be issued to the designated church/ministry upon request.

Removal from Membership Roll - When evidence is presented that a member has joined another church/ministry or no longer desires affiliation with The Refuge Community, their name shall be removed from the membership roll. A statement of Christian standing may be provided to the receiving church/ministry upon request.

ACCESS TO BYLAWS

The church/ministry office shall maintain a current copy of these Bylaws. A copy shall be made available to any church/ministry member upon request and shall also be accessible through the church/ministry's official website.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Lead Pastor, Board members, Personnel Team members, and any church/ministry member serving in a leadership or hiring capacity shall recuse themselves from any discussion or decision-making involving the hiring, retention, or compensation of an immediate family member, related business entity, or close relative.

AUTONOMY OF THE CHURCH/MINISTRY

The Refuge Community is a free, autonomous, and independent church/ministry body, congregational in nature, possessing full authority to govern itself according to these Bylaws and the Word of God.

CHURCH PROPERTY

The membership of the church/ministry holds ultimate responsibility over the acquisition and

disposition of church/ministry property. At least four (4) weeks' written notice must be given to the congregation prior to any action involving the sale, transfer, or disposal of real church/ministry property.

Such action shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of church/ministry members present and voting, with board, elders, deacons, and lead pastor present.

GOVERNANCE & MEMBER PARTICIPATION

The governance of the church/ministry rests with its membership. Each member has the right to express their opinion in matters of church/ministry business, provided such expression demonstrates Christian decorum. Members are expected to respect the decision of the majority.

FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of The Refuge Community shall begin on January 1 and conclude on December 31 of each calendar year.