

Bylaws
of
Tapestry Community Church

Revised December 22, 2022

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Bylaws of Tapestry Community Church

Article I. Benevolence

Section 1. Purpose. The vision of Tapestry Community Church (hereinafter TCC) is to live for the glory of Christ that the world may see our joyous hope as we love God, love people, and reach the world with the gospel. In accordance with this vision the TCC Benevolence Ministry seeks to bring glory to Christ by loving our neighbor who is in financial distress. The Benevolence Policy provides guidance for this important ministry.

In Luke 10:25-37 Jesus had an important conversation with an “expert in the law” concerning who should be considered a neighbor:

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” He answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.” “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So, too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him” he said, “and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.”

“Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”

Our desire is not to be like the priest or Levite who “passed by on the other side”. In Jesus’ story, the Samaritan “put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. “Look after him” he said,

“and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.” At the end of this passage, Jesus said, “Go and do likewise.” This Scripture implies a personal and monetary investment of time and care, as well as an ongoing plan of action. We have developed our benevolence policy with this teaching and example of Jesus in mind.

Section 2. Scriptures. Proverbs 3:27; Matthew 5:7; Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:37-40; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 6:35; Luke 10:35-37; Acts 2:44-45; Galatians 2:10; Galatians 6:9,10; Hebrews 13:1,2; James 2:14-17; 1 John 3:16-18;

Section 3. Source for Benevolence Expenditures. The Benevolence Expenditures (hereinafter Expenditures) will be funded from the tithes and offerings given to TCC as a part of the annual budget process. The church leadership will determine the amount to be expended on an annual basis.

Section 4. Administration. The Benevolence Team (hereinafter Team) is responsible for the administration of the Expenditures. One member of the Team will be appointed as the representative to the church family concerning Expenditures. Individual recipients will not be identified.

Section 5. Administration Procedure. Generally, prior to any Expenditure to a requesting party a Benevolence Evaluation Form (hereinafter Form) should be completed (by the requesting individual or with the help of a Team member). The Form is to be completed at an initial meeting with the person requesting assistance.

5.1. ONE-TIME GIFT: A one-time Expenditure, with a value of \$250 or less, may be approved by the majority of the Benevolence Team.

5.2. GIFT GREATER THAN \$250 or SECOND GIFT: A second gift or a one-time gift of \$250 requires a Plan of Action and Accountability developed by the Team and the recipient(s) of the benevolence gift. The final approval of an amount given requires a majority of the TCC Church Council.

Section 6. Disbursement Guidelines.

6.1. It is not TCC’s intent or practice to be a source of income for monthly and routine expenses. Any monetary gifts are simply to bridge the gap of legitimate, pressing need, while directing the individual to other financial resources in public and private sector*.

6.2. TCC seeks to discern the difference between helping someone during difficult times and underwriting their irresponsibility or particular lifestyle**.

6.3. TCC seeks to discern the difference between “need” and “convenience”, e.g. if someone requests money for housing while they are currently housed with no threat of being homeless, ask the question, “Is this really a need or is this for convenience?”***

6.4. IMPORTANT: The monetary gift is not a loan and it is not necessary to repay in either money or labor. At the time of disbursement it will be made clear to the recipient(s) that the monetary gift does not require reimbursement in any way, shape or form. TCC believes that this approach is in accordance with Luke 6:35,36.

- 6.5. Checks for disbursements will only be made out to third part agencies such a utility companies, landlords, etc.
- 6.6. Disbursements will typically be given in the form of a coupon to a specific store (i.e., HEB, Walmart, McDonalds, etc.)
- 6.7. Generally, before an Expenditure is approved, a Form should be completed. Some of the questions may seem personal; however, the information provided would likely be helpful in ministering to the recipient(s).
- 6.8. At its sole discretion, TCC reserves the right not to approve Expenditures to requesting parties.

Section 7. Priority for Disbursement. Since funds are limited, priority for disbursement will be as follows:

- 7.1. Members of TCC
- 7.2. Regular attendees of Tapestry Community Church
- 7.3. The broader community that have a connection with TCC
- 7.4. Others

Section 8. Needs to be Met. The Benevolence Fund exists to help meet an individual's or family's basic needs. Examples include:

- 8.1. Housing/lodging
- 8.2. Food
- 8.3. Clothing
- 8.4. Medical treatment including medicine
- 8.5. Transportation (i.e., bus ticket)

Section 9. Needs to be Excluded. Disbursements that will not be considered include, but are not limited to:

- 9.1. School expenses (not some supplies)
- 9.2. Credit card expenses
- 9.3. Legal costs, fines or penalties
- 9.4. Housing for unmarried couples
- 9.5. Late fees or irresponsible actions
- 9.6. Business debts
- 9.7. Business investments
- 9.8. School tuition or fees

Section 10. General. It is our general policy to:

- 10.1. Never give out cash.
- 10.2. Conduct an evaluation of the requesting party by using the TCC Form.
- 10.3. Request a phone number of someone we can contact to verify the requestor's situation.
- 10.4. Provide a list of recommended resources for ongoing, longer term needs such as food, lodging or employment*.

10.5. In some cases TCC may provide food or gas coupons as appropriate. Any meeting with those requesting assistance, that are not members or regular attendees of TCC, requires at least two Team members.

Section 11. Additional Assistance. Since TCC has limited resources for benevolence it is likely that the requestor(s) of financial assistance will be advised of other organizations that may be able to provide additional assistance. Below is a list of organizations that offer assistance to those in need:

11.1. Salvation Army -- Phone: 774-9996 2604 West Avenue M Temple, TX Help with utilities, food and prescriptions

11.2. The Love of Christ – Phone: 774-8411 2000 Airport Road Temple, TX Food Pantry

11.3. Texas Department of Health and Human Services – Phone: 778-6751 4501 General Bruce Drive Temple, TX 76501 Income based food stamp program that requires an application process.

11.4. Option House Youth Emergency Shelter – Phone 1-800-421-8336 Belton, TX 76513 Provides a licensed Emergency Shelter and Assessment Center available to any child 3 - 17 years old. Services include immediate protection, food, shelter, and clothing; counseling and independent living skills; school-based education; access to transitional living.

11.5. Reaching Out Crisis Ministries – Phone: 716-5728 Temple, TX 76504 Reaching Out Crisis Ministries (ROCM) is a Christ centered non-profit six-month residential program designed to help women that are struggling with substance abuse and/or lifecentered problems. We offer women a faith-based supportive and structured environment that focuses on accountability and successful re-entry into the community.

11.6. Family Promise East Bell County – Phone: 773-9980 1018 E Avenue A, Temple, TX 76501 EMAIL: director@familypromisebellcounty.com Family Promise of East Bell County is an interfaith, non-profit organization that exists to help homeless and lowincome families achieve sustainable independence through a community-based response.

11.7. HOPE FOR THE HUNGRY – Phone 939-0124 MAILING: P.O. BOX 786, BELTON, TX 76513 PHYSICAL: 627 HOPE FOR THE HUNGRY ST., BELTON, TX 76513 INFO@HOPEFORTHEHUNGRY.ORG

Section 12. Possible Questions to Ask People Seeking Assistance.

12.1. Do you attend a church locally? If so, did your church offer you assistance?

12.2. Where is your church and what is your minister's name?

12.3. Have you sought assistance from any other churches or organizations in this area? Which churches or organizations were they?

12.4. Do you have relatives who can assist you with your needs?

12.5. How were you referred to us?

12.6. What is your immediate need? (Please be specific.)

- 12.7.** Are you receiving any aid from the government (unemployment, Social Security, food stamps, worker’s comp)?
- 12.8.** Have you worked a job or looked for work locally? When and where?
- 12.9.** Are there any obstacles that hinder you from taking a job (child care, disability)?
- 12.10.** If we are unable to help you, what other options do you have?
- 12.11.** If we are able to help you, how many people are involved?
- 12.12.** Do you have some form of identification?
- 12.13.** Do you have documentation that supports the need (eviction notice past due amount, medical bill, etc.)?

Article II. Bible Conferences for Heads of Ministries

Section 1. Purpose. In our desire to fulfill the mission of Tapestry Community Church, which is “to glorify God by establishing a body of believers who find their greatest delight in Him, have a palpable love for their neighbor, have a passion for reaching the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have an unwavering faith in the trustworthiness of God’s word, and an unyielding belief in the sovereignty of God over all things”, we believe it is necessary for key ministry positions within the church to be given financial assistance to attend a Bible conference once per year in order to sharpen their skills, deepen their scripture knowledge, be exposed to new and innovative ideas, and be encouraged by those who are in similar ministries.

Section 2. Guidelines. The following guidelines will be adhered to with regards to Elder(s), Worship Director, Women’s Ministry Director, and Children’s Ministry Director:

- 2.1.** The ministry directors will be encouraged to attend one conference per calendar year which falls within the purview of their respective ministries.
- 2.2.** Conferences must be pre-approved by the elders
- 2.3.** Amount to be reimbursed will be decided and pre-approved on a case by case basis.
- 2.4.** Categories to be reimbursed for will be (1) conference fees, (2) lodging, (3) travel
- 2.5.** Printed conference fees, printed quotes for lodging expenses, and printed quotes for travel expenses must be submitted to the elders before approval for reimbursement can take place.
- 2.6.** Upon returning from the Bible conference, all original receipts pertaining to conference fees, lodging expenses, and travel expenses must be submitted to the elders.
- 2.7.** Based on the submitted receipts, a check will be written directly to the director(s) up to, and not exceeding, the amount pre-approved by the elders.

Article III. Church Council

Section 1. Purpose. In order to promote the church’s vision to live for the glory of Christ that the world may see our joyous hope as we love God, love people, and reach the world with the

gospel, it is imperative that the leadership of Tapestry Community Church continue to generate and be exposed to fresh and new ideas for ministry and the advancement of God's kingdom. For this reason the following guidelines are to be followed with respect to serving as a church Council Member.

Section 2. Constitutional Requirements. Per the church constitution (Article IV, Section 2):

- 2.1. Elder(s) shall appoint no less than three council members to serve as an advisory board and as assistants to the Elder(s)
- 2.2. Council members shall be appointed annually with no term limits
- 2.3. Council members shall serve at the discretion of the Elder(s)
- 2.4. Council members must receive a 50% approval vote by the congregation

Section 3. Elder Requirements. In addition to the aforementioned constitutional requirements, the following guidelines shall also be adhered to:

- 3.1. Council members may not serve for more than twelve (12) calendar months.
- 3.2. Council members will be voted on by the members of the church at a quarterly or special church meeting.
- 3.3. Church members may not have served as a Church Council Member within the past twelve (12) months before serving as a Council Member.

Article IV. Financial Management

Section 1. Internal Controls.

- 1.1. Treasurer shall account for all church income and expenses.
- 1.2. Treasurer shall not have authority to write checks from church checking account nor have access to church debit cards.
- 1.3. Only persons approved by the Elder(s) shall have authority to write checks and have access to church debit cards.

Section 2. Collections and Deposits.

- 1.1. Tithes and offerings received on Sunday shall be counted by the Treasurer (a Church Council member when the Treasurer is not present) and a member of the church on the same day they are received.
- 1.2. The member of the church assisting the Treasurer (or Church Council member) shall not be biologically nor legally related to the Treasurer or Church Council member.
- 1.3. Tithes and offerings received on Sunday shall be recorded on a log form and signed by the Treasurer (or Church Council member when Treasurer is not present) and a member of the church who is not biologically nor legally related to the Treasurer (or Church Council member).
- 1.4. Tithes and offerings received on Sunday shall be deposited into the bank account of TCC within three (3) business days.

Section 3. Accountability.

- 1.1 Treasurer shall present a monthly financial report to the Church Council.
- 1.2 Treasurer shall maintain a record of individual giving.
- 1.3 All expenditures must be immediately reported to the Treasurer via electronic communication or in person.
- 1.4 All expense receipts must be furnished to the Treasurer.
- 1.5 Treasurer must sign-off on all expenditures requiring reimbursement.
- 1.6 Reimbursements for the Treasurer must be endorsed by an elder of the church.
- 1.7 Any expenditure which will exceed \$250 must be pre-approved by all Church Council members.

Article V. Life Groups

Section 1. Purpose. In keeping with the vision of Tapestry Community Church to seek to live for the glory of Christ that the world may see our joyous hope as we love God, love people, and reach the world with the gospel, we encourage all members to actively participate in weekly Bible studies (aka Life Groups) for the purpose of studying God's Word, encouraging one another, praying for one another, and mutual accountability.

Section 2. Assimilation and Multiplication. To encourage fellowship throughout the church among all ages, genders, races, and social status, and to facilitate multiplication of Life Groups, the following procedures will be followed:

- 2.1 All Life Groups will begin at the same time on a set semester schedule.
- 2.2 Life Group leaders will choose the next semester topic in consultation with the elders of the church.
- 2.3 Life Group leaders will not consult their current members regarding future Bible study topics or material.
- 2.4 Semester topics must be submitted to the elders for approval not less than four weeks (28 days) prior to the end of the current Life Group semester.

Section 3. Semester Schedule. The following semester schedule will be followed for all Life Groups.

- 3.1 Spring semester: 16 weeks, beginning with first full week in January
- 3.2 Two-week break between Spring and Summer semesters.
- 3.3 Summer semester: 14 weeks
- 3.4 Two-week break between Summer and Fall semesters
- 3.5 Fall semester: 16 weeks.

Article VI. Nursery Ministry

Section 1. Vision. The vision of Tapestry Community Church (TCC) is to live for the glory of Christ that the world may see our joyous hope as we love God, love people, and reach the world

with the gospel. As a result, the goal for the TCC children's ministry is to strive to offer a God glorifying, Bible saturated nursery for children up to 48 months old. Our desire is that the children's ministry will be a launching pad for nurturing the faith of the next generation.

Section 2. Purpose. Our nursery is a place for children to learn simple truth statements as they form language skills, as well as a place where they hear foundational Bible stories. Our desire is to minister to the youngest in our church and to partner with parents as they train up their children in the Lord. The Nursery ministry is using the Children Desiring God curriculum called A Sure Foundation. The following guidelines are to be followed

Section 3. Procedures.

- 1.1 Nursery workers should arrive in the nursery at least 10 minutes before the service begins.
- 1.2 Wipe down any table that will be used with sanitized wipes that are provided.
- 1.3 Be friendly and greet each child and parent when they arrive and leave!
- 1.4 Have praise music playing in the background as children arrive.
- 1.5 Each parent and child are to be given matching number tags. The person picking up the child must present their number tag that corresponds to their child's tag.
- 1.6 Keep the gate/door closed.
- 1.7 Wipe off changing table before and after changing a child's diaper.
- 1.8 Change each child's diaper (if needed) before parent pick-up.
- 1.9 Only women are allowed to change diapers.
- 1.10 Hold and pray with each child at some point.
- 1.11 Have a Bible open and be sure to tell the children that the story is from "God's book".
- 1.12 Two workers are required to be with children at all times.
- 1.13 If a child is being potty trained, parents are responsible to take the child before the service begins and if needed during the service.
- 1.14 Youth helpers must be at least 12 years old to volunteer in the nursery. The exception is if a child is helping his/her parent.
- 1.15 If a child needs to use the potty and needs assistance, the adult should accompany the child into the restroom and keep the door open. The helper can remain in the room with the other children.
- 1.16 When the worship service is over, please pick up all toys and return room to the original condition. Place garbage bag (of soiled diapers) in the front garbage by the coffee.
- 1.17 Make sure room is returned to original condition.
- 1.18 If people are visiting, first impressions are important so remember to smile and say something positive about their child!

Article VII. Children's Church Ministry

Section 1. Vision. The vision of Tapestry Community Church (TCC) is to live for the glory of Christ that the world may see our joyous hope as we love God, love people, and reach the world with the gospel. As a result, the goal for the TCC children's ministry is to strive to offer a God glorifying, Bible saturated nursery for children up to 48 months old. Our desire is that the children's ministry will be a launching pad for nurturing the faith of the next generation.

Section 2. Purpose. Our Children's Church is designed to purposefully present God as the main character in each lesson, rather than dwelling on man and man's needs. Each lesson focuses on the magnificent character of the One who can satisfy all our longings. Showing children the greatness of God gives them a basis to respond to Him. The Children's Church ministry uses the Children Desiring God curriculum call Jesus, What a Savior!

Section 3. Procedures.

- 1.1 Children's church workers should prepare the room before Children arrive. Wipe down any table that will be used and fill the water pitcher with water.
- 1.2 Be friendly and greet each child when they arrive and leave!
- 1.3 Have child recite their memory verse before the lesson begins.
- 1.4 Keep the door closed.
- 1.5 Have a Bible open and be sure to tell the children that the story is from "God's word".
- 1.6 Two volunteers will be assigned to work each Sunday in the Children's Church.
- 1.7 Youth helpers must be at least 12 years old to volunteer in the Children's Church.
- 1.8 Adult volunteers should supervise and stay with the children at all times.
- 1.9 If a child needs to use the restroom, the helper must accompany the child to the restroom. First check to make sure that no one is in the restroom, and then remain outside waiting for the child. The classroom door should remain open until the helper and child return.
- 1.10 When the worship service is over, please pick up all toys and return room to the original condition.
- 1.11 Do not allow the children to leave the classroom until parents pick them up.
- 1.12 If people are visiting, first impressions are important so remember to smile and say something positive about their child!

Article VIII. Purchase Receipt and Reimbursement

Section 1. Procedures.

- 1.1 All paper receipts are to be turned in to the offering box or to the treasurer directly.
- 1.2 All receipts must contain the following information:
 - 1.2.1. Name of purchaser
 - 1.2.2. Brief description of purchase (e.g. Sunday donuts, Cleaning Supplies, etc.)
 - 1.2.3. Budget Category (e.g. Food & Events, Misc. Supplies, etc.)
- 1.3 Note: Refer to church website for current approved budget categories.

Section 2. Online Purchases. An emailed receipt with a description message containing the above required information is to be sent to the treasurer upon purchase. It is recommended to also print a paper copy also containing the necessary information to be turned in to the treasurer for paper (or backup) records.

Section 3. Reimbursements. All reimbursement requests must be submitted using the TCC reimbursement form. This form is located on the TCC website by clicking on the Church Government link from the “ABOUT” tab. Click on the reimbursement form link, print the form and fill in the required information completely. In addition to the completed form, all reimbursement requests must then be submitted to the treasurer along with any pertinent receipts. The reimbursement forms must be approved and signed by the treasurer prior to payment.

Article IX. Wedding Ceremonies and Facility Use

Section 1. Beliefs. At Tapestry Community Church we believe marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

Section 2. Purpose. In an effort to give clear direction to prospective bridal couples who seek to be married under the guidance and authority of Tapestry Community Church, the policies and guidelines below are set forth.

Section 3. Wedding Guidelines

1.1 The pastoral staff and facilities will be available only for the wedding ceremonies of couples wherein the groom or the bride is a member of Tapestry Community Church. **1.2** All couples who plan to be married at Tapestry Community Church or by a Tapestry Community Church pastor must complete pre-marital counseling by an elder of our church or by a minister who has been pre-approved by the elders of Tapestry Community Church.

1.3 Any non-Tapestry Community Church pastor who is to be involved in a wedding ceremony being performed on the premises of Tapestry Community Church or being officiated by a minister of Tapestry Community Church must be in agreement with our statement on the “Family” found in our statement of faith and must be in agreement with TCC’s belief that the office of Elder/Pastor is “limited to men as qualified by Scripture” (TCC Confession of Faith, Article XIV).

Section 4. Facilities Guidelines

1.1 The facilities of Tapestry Community Church may be reserved for use only by current members of Tapestry Community Church for events which advance the “Purpose” and “Mission” of our church.

- 1.2** Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building or within 25 feet of any church entrance.
- 1.3** For safety reasons, rice is not to be used anywhere on the premises. No bubbles or silly string are allowed inside the building.
- 1.4** Tapestry Community Church will not be responsible for valuables left during your wedding and/or reception. Clothes, purses, billfolds, etc. are your personal responsibility and should be removed from the building and locked up in your cars.
- 1.5** Any damages to church property should be reported to the officiating pastor.
- 1.6** The church building is expected to be left clean after the wedding ceremony and/or reception.