

CONSTITUTION

1. The name of the Society shall be: “Living Word Episcopal Church,” herein after called “the Church.”
2. The purposes of the Society are:
 - 2.1. To develop and maintain a church body of believers in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, dedicated to doing the will of God on earth;
 - 2.2. To promote the spiritual, emotional, physical, and social welfare of its members and adherents, individually and collectively, equipping the saints to maturity and assisting them to find their place of ministry in The Body;
 - 2.3. To assist in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28: 18-20), making disciples of Jesus Christ at home and abroad.

BYLAWS

Part 1 — Definitions and Interpretation

1. In these bylaws, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - 1.1. **“Bylaws”** means the bylaws of the Church;
 - 1.2. **“Church”** means the society known as Living Word Episcopal Church;
 - 1.3. **“Diocese”** means the geographical diocese to which the Church has been assigned by the Reformed Episcopal Church;
 - 1.4. **“Directors”** means the members of the Vestry of the Church;
 - 1.5. **“Members Meetings”** means any general meeting of the members of the Church called by the Vestry of the Church or by requisition;
 - 1.6. **“Vestry”** means the board of directors of the Church and **“vestry member”** means a member of the Vestry;
 - 1.7. **“Societies Act”** means the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia from time to time in force and all amendments to it;
 - 1.8. **“Special Resolution”** means a resolution as defined in the Societies Act of the Province of British Columbia from time to time in force and all amendments to it, as being a special resolution;
 - 1.9. **“The Reformed Episcopal Church”** means the ecclesiastical jurisdiction known in the United States and Canada as The Reformed Episcopal Church with offices at 25 West Second Street, Media, Pennsylvania.
2. The definitions in the Societies Act on the date these bylaws become effective shall apply to these bylaws.
3. Words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa, and words importing a male person include a female person, but no reference to a person includes a corporation.

Part 2 — Affiliation

1. The Church is a parish of the Reformed Episcopal Church. The policies and regulations of the Church shall be consistent with, and the Church shall operate in accordance with, the current Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and the canons of the local Diocese and as amended from time to time.

Part 3 — Membership

1. Requirements and Reception

- 1.1 A person who has been baptized with water in the Name of the Holy Trinity and who has been confirmed in his or her baptism by declaration of faith and by the laying on of hands by a

Bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church or a bishop in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church, and who is regular in the attendance of public worship, and who exhibits support of the work of the Church by the offering of time, treasure, and talent, is an active member of the Church and entitled to vote and hold elective or appointed office in the Church.

- 1.2 A person, already baptized in the name of the Trinity, and seeking admission into the membership of the Church, who has been confirmed by a Bishop in the Historic Episcopate, said Bishop not being in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church, may be received into the same upon approval of the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese, provided he is persuaded as to the validity of such previous confirmation.
- 1.3 Persons already baptized in the name of the Trinity, but who have not been confirmed, shall be received into full membership of the Church through the laying on of hands by a bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or by a bishop who is in communion with the Reformed Episcopal Church.

2. Membership Register

- 2.1. The Parish Council shall maintain a membership register of the Church.
- 2.2 The Parish Council shall annually revise the membership register, and by notation, never by erasure, remove the name of everyone who has died, or has been expelled, or has resigned. The Parish Council shall also remove from the active list the names of such members as have for at least one year disappeared, ceased to attend Divine Services, or to contribute to the support of the Church and its beneficences; provided, that all reasonable efforts to reclaim such members have been made. Exceptions may be made of nonresident members who continue to contribute and wish to retain their active standing, and of aged persons, invalids, and persons who are financially unable to contribute, and in military defence service which requires a change of residence. All who are noted to be inactive shall be so notified if their addresses are known.
- 2.3 Active status shall be restored to an inactive member when that person has resumed regular attendance at Divine Services, has renewed support, and has partaken of the Lord's Supper.

3. Discipline

- 3.1 The care of members of the Church shall be the particular concern of the Rector and any other pastoral staff. It should be understood that for this reason the lives and testimony of the Church shall be of continuous interest to the Rector and other pastors. They may, therefore, from time to time elect to counsel members personally to more active service, to remind members of their responsibilities within the Church, or to encourage members in areas of self-discipline which will strengthen their testimony and that of the Church. This being done in the spirit of love and concern, it is meant to be received in a spirit of appreciation and self-examination.
- 3.2 When further discipline of members of the Church is necessary its object shall be the correction and repentance of members with a clear view to the members' full restoration and

fellowship within the Church and the protection of the spiritual life and testimony of the Church.

4. Termination

4.1 A person shall cease to be a member of the Church:

4.1.1 By requesting in writing that his or her name be removed from the Church's membership;

4.1.2 On being expelled;

4.1.3 On having been a member not in good standing for twelve consecutive months; or

4.1.4 On death.

4.2 The Parish Council, with the approval of the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese, may expel any member of the Church who in their opinion is guilty of conduct improper or unbecoming for a member of the Church or is likely to endanger the interests or reputation of the Church or is in breach of these bylaws, but the Parish Council shall first notify the member and give the member an opportunity to be heard.

4.3 Any person who ceases to be a member of the Church forfeits all rights, claims, privileges or interests arising from membership in the Church.

4.4 The Parish Council shall issue to any member in good standing, at his own request, a certificate of transfer to any other parish of the Reformed Episcopal Church, or a letter dimissory to any congregation of any other evangelical church.

4.5 The Parish Council shall issue to any member of the Church on the inactive list, at his own request, a certificate of transfer or a letter dimissory, which shall specify his status as recorded in the membership register of the Church.

Part 4 — The Vestry

1. Composition and Election of the Vestry

1.1 The Vestry of the Church shall total six, nine, or twelve persons who are members of the Church, elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Church, and shall include a Rector's Warden, a People's Warden, and four, seven, or ten other members, all of whom shall continue in office until their successors have been chosen.

1.2 Initially, one-third the number of the members of the Vestry determined upon shall be elected for a one-year term, one-third shall be elected for a two-year term, and one-third shall be elected for a three-year term. Thereafter, Vestry members shall be elected for a three-year term, and the members of the Church shall elect one-third of the total Vestry annually.

- 1.3 Candidates for membership of the Vestry shall be nominated by a Nominating Committee appointed by the Rector, and consisting of three members: two Vestry members, one member of the Parish Council, and the Rector *ex-officio*. This election will be by secret ballot, and the nominees gaining the highest votes above a simple majority shall be elected.
- 1.4 The members of the Church shall also, at the Annual General Meeting, elect a Rector's Warden and a People's Warden from among the members.
- 1.5 Whenever practicable, no Warden or other Vestry member shall be elected for more than two consecutive terms.

2. **Vacancies**

- 2.1 If for any reason, after being elected to office, a member of the Vestry shall no longer be able to fulfil the functions of office, that member may resign and vacate the position of Vestry member. This position may be filled by the Vestry to complete the year.

3. **Meetings**

- 3.1 The stated meetings of the Vestry shall be as follows: the Vestry shall organise at the first regular meeting following the Annual General Meeting, and shall meet regularly or monthly thereafter on a day agreed to by the Vestry.
- 3.2 The Rector, or either of the Wardens, or any three members of the Vestry, may call a special meeting at any time, due notice being given to all members of the Vestry. The object of the meeting shall be specified in the call, and no other business may be transacted at the meeting.
- 3.3 Two-thirds of the total number of members of the Vestry shall constitute a quorum for any meeting.
- 3.4 In the absence of the Rector or the Rector's Warden, or if he be absent, the People's Warden, shall preside at meetings of the Vestry.

4. **Organisation and Duties**

- 4.1 The Vestry shall be organised in the following manner:
 - Chairman (*ex-officio*): Rector
 - Rector's Warden (Senior Warden)
 - People's Warden (Junior, or Accounting Warden)
 - Secretary

Committees: The following are minimum requirements:

- Finance Committee - (2 members)
 - Chairperson: Vestry member
 - People's Warden
 - Treasurer (*ex-officio*)

Property Committee - (2 members)

Chairperson: Vestry member

Non-vestry member

The Rector shall prepare a list of committees and shall distribute vestry members equally over these committees, adding such committees as are deemed necessary. This list shall be presented to the Vestry at its organizational meeting each year. Changes as may be mutually agreeable may be made. The list of committees shall be distributed to the congregation.

- 4.2 Non-vestry members of committees shall participate in activities of the committees, but may not be required to meet with the Vestry. They will not participate in Vestry action. Committee chairpersons shall be members of the Vestry, and each is responsible to report to the Vestry at each meeting, or to send a report in the event of absence.
- 4.3 The Secretary of the Vestry of the Church shall be elected by the Vestry at the organizational meeting following the Annual General Meeting.
- 4.4 A Treasurer shall be appointed by the Vestry at the organizational meeting of the Vestry following the Annual General Meeting, and need not be a member of the Church or of the Vestry.
- 4.5 The Vestry shall have power to authorise expenditures on behalf of the Church and shall have the power to enter into a trust arrangement with a trust company for the purpose of creating a trust fund in which the capital and interest may be made available for the benefit of promoting the interest of the Church in accordance with such terms as the Vestry may prescribe.
- 4.6 The Vestry shall have the power to borrow up to ten per cent (10%) of the annual budget by means of personal loans, bank overdraft, promissory notes, or mortgage, provided such action is approved unanimously at a meeting of the Vestry.
- 4.7 On the recommendation of the Vestry, borrowing greater than ten per cent (10%) of the annual budget may be approved by simple majority at a meeting of the members of the Church.
- 4.8 In the event of an emergency arising between meetings of the Vestry, the People's Warden may authorise expenditures up to \$2000.00 and shall report such expenditures at the next meeting of the Vestry.
- 4.9 A special resolution is required to raise money by issuing debentures.
- 4.10 The Vestry shall not sell, mortgage, lease, or otherwise alienate any real property of the Church without the authorization by vote of the Vestry at a meeting duly called and held, at which time a quorum is present, and at which time two-thirds of the Vestry members present and voting shall vote in favour thereof; which action must be ratified by Special Resolution at a Members' Meeting duly called and held in accordance with the bylaws.

5. Criteria for Vestry Membership

- 5.1 Members of the Vestry shall have given consistent demonstration of a consistent Christian life for a period of one year, including faithful attendance at services of Divine Worship of the Church, and faithful stewardship of God's gifts both temporal and spiritual.
- 5.2 Members of the Vestry shall serve willingly in any capacity needed, as God-given ability permits.
- 5.3 Members of the Vestry shall attend meetings regularly, or shall provide to the Secretary an acceptable excuse for absence prior to a scheduled meeting of the Vestry.

Part 5 — Officers

1. Chairman

- 1.1 The Rector of the Church shall be Chairman *ex-officio* and shall preside over the Vestry and Member's Meetings. The Rector shall be an *ex-officio* member of every committee except a committee whose primary function is the review of the Rector's performance or compensation and benefits.

2. Rector's Warden

- 2.1 The Rector's Warden shall be nominated by the Rector and elected by the members of the Church at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2.2 The Rector's Warden shall function as the Chief Executive Officer of the Parish for purposes of its temporal affairs, and in such capacity shall regularly consult with the Rector regarding the state of the Church. He shall represent the Rector before the Vestry, keeping the Vestry apprised concerning the Rector's welfare and needs, and shall present an annual review of the Rector's salary to the Finance Committee. When authorized to do so by resolution of the Vestry, the Rector's Warden shall execute contracts and other legal obligations on behalf of the Parish in this capacity, and not in his individual capacity.
- 2.3 The Rector's Warden shall have charge of the Parish Register if the pastorate be vacant, and shall see that all entries be made promptly.
- 2.4 If the pastorate be vacant, the Rector's Warden shall consult with the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese, and shall make due provision for the maintenance of Divine services in the Church.
- 2.5 The Rector's Warden shall be an *ex-officio* member of any committee of which he is not appointed the chairman or a voting member.

3. People's Warden

- 3.1 The People's Warden shall represent the congregation of the Church before the Vestry and

Parish Council, keeping them apprised of the needs, desires, and concerns of the members of the Church.

- 3.2 The People's Warden shall be informed about the total ministry of the Church, and shall communicate a rationale at the request of the members of the Church, individual or corporate.
- 3.3 As the representative of the members of the Church, the People's Warden shall see that the books of the Treasurer are reviewed or audited by a qualified person or persons when necessary.
- 3.4 The People's Warden shall apprise the Vestry of the needs for maintenance and repair of the property of the Church, and the obtaining of insurance coverage of the buildings and other property of the Church.

4. Secretary

- 4.1 The Secretary shall keep regular minutes of the proceedings of the Vestry; shall notify the members of the Church of all meetings; and shall generally perform such duties as appertain to the office of Secretary. Furthermore, all such minutes shall be recorded in a book and be preserved as part of the official church records. The Secretary shall also record the minutes of the Annual General Meeting in that same book.

5. Treasurer

- 5.1 The Treasurer shall function as the Chief Financial Officer of the Church and keep a record of all monies received by subscription, donation, and/or any other manner, and shall pay all expenses under the direction of the Vestry.
- 5.2 The Treasurer shall keep a regular account of receipts and expenditures in a book to be provided for that purpose, which shall be open at all times to the inspection of the members of the Vestry; and shall submit to the Vestry a monthly summary of receipts and expenditures. An annual report, approved by the Vestry, shall be submitted at the Annual General Meeting.
- 5.3 An annual statement to the members of the Church shall be provided by the Treasurer upon request. The Treasurer shall provide receipts to all contributors to the Church in accordance with the regulations of the Canada Revenue Agency.
- 5.4 All monies or other material gifts given to the Church as memorials will be received with thanksgiving to God, and to the glory of Christ Jesus our Lord, and will be the responsibility of the Vestry of the Church to designate in accordance with the requirements of these bylaws, and with due consideration given to the interests of the contributor; with the understanding that the ultimate responsibility for faithful stewardship shall be with the Vestry.

Part 6 — Committees

1. Finance Committee

- 1.1 The Finance Committee shall prepare and present to the Vestry of the Church at their regular meeting next before the Annual General Meeting a budget for a year, which shall in turn be presented for approval by the members of the Church.
- 1.2 The Finance Committee shall prepare quarterly reports to the Vestry of the Church about the financial condition of the Church.
- 1.3 The Finance Committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Vestry of the Church concerning investment of the monies of the Church.

2. Property Committee

- 1.1 The Property Committee shall be chaired by the People's Warden, and shall have general superintendence over the real and other tangible property of the Church.
- 1.2 The Property Committee shall, in general, oversee the purchase of all articles necessary for the use of the Church.
- 1.3 The Property Committee shall provide for and oversee custodial work necessary to keep in order all properties of the Church.
- 1.4 The Property Committee shall maintain a calendar for the use of the properties of the Church for such activities as are consistent with the principles and laws of the Church.

3. Special Committees

- 1.1 Special committees for any purpose may be appointed by the Rector, or in his absence, by the Rector's Warden, as need may occur, and shall be dismissed when the purpose for their existence has been consummated.

Part 7 — Auxiliary Bodies

1. The formation of any auxiliary body within the Church is subject to the approval of the Rector, on advice of the Vestry of the Church.
2. No funds shall be raised in or by the Church for any cause without the express approval of the Rector and Vestry of the Church.
3. All programs of the Church shall be presented to the Rector for approval who, at his discretion, may seek the advice of the Parish Council.
4. Treasurers of authorised auxiliary bodies shall present a written itemised report annually to the

Finance Committee. No debts may be incurred without the knowledge and approval of the Vestry of the Church. All assets and monies are to be considered property of the Church, and final disposition of said assets and monies rests with the Vestry.

5. Approved auxiliary bodies of the Church shall be allocated necessary operational monies as deemed appropriate by the Finance Committee.

Part 8 — Parish Council

1. The Parish Council shall consist of the Rector, the Rector's Warden, the People's Warden, and if approved by the Church at a Members' Meeting, up to three additional members of the age of twenty-five (25) years or over, nominated by the Rector and elected by the congregation.
2. The Parish Council shall meet at the discretion of the Rector or the Wardens.
3. Together with the Rector, the Parish Council shall exercise general supervision over the membership register and other records of the Church.
4. The lay members of the Parish Council shall provide such advice and counsel to the Rector, as he shall deem important in matters of spiritual oversight and discipline in the reception and dismissal of members.

Part 9 — The Rector

1. Selection and Appointment of the Rector

- 1.1 In the filling of a pastoral vacancy in the Church, a search committee comprised of a representative cross-section of the congregation, including up to three members of the Vestry, shall be appointed by the Rector's Warden in consultation with the Bishop of the Diocese.
- 1.2 The Vestry shall take initial and final action in the exercise of authority in the calling of a Rector or Minister-in-charge, having sought the advice and consent of the President of the Council and the Standing Committee of the Diocese.
- 1.3 The Secretary of the Vestry shall extend an official call, in writing, using the form following, stating in detail the terms of the call, to be signed by the officers of the Vestry, and by the candidate, signed copies being held by both parties.

Living Word Reformed Episcopal Church of Courtenay, British Columbia, being fully satisfied with your ministerial qualifications, and confident that we have been led to you by the Holy Spirit as one whose ministry will be profitable to the spiritual life of our Church and fruitful to the Kingdom of the Lord, solemnly calls you _____ to undertake the work as _____ of this Parish, promising you in the discharge of your duty all proper support, encouragement and obedience in the Lord. That you may devote yourself to the Ministry of the Word among us, we obligate ourselves to pay you the sum of \$ _____ a year in regular (weekly) (monthly) payments, and will pay the church's portion into a

pension fund on the basis determined by the General Council, during the time of your being and continuing in the pastoral relationship set forth in this Call to this Parish.

(NOTE: Insert below other terms, including such matters as rectory, utilities, annual and other leave for recreation and rest, expense allowances, moving costs, car allowance, etc. It is suggested that where there is a cash allowance made for the rectory that the rectory allowance be designated in a cash amount. Other such cash amounts such as car allowance, etc., should be designated separately so as to not be confused with salary.)

The following should also appear at the end of the document: *We agree that the Vestry of this Parish will annually review the above remuneration with a view to adjustments as may be deemed appropriate.*

2. Duties

- 2.1 The Rector shall regularly report to the Parish Council such matters relating to the discharge of his ministerial responsibilities as shall enable them to fulfil their functions as defined in Title IV, Canon 50 of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and as amended from time to time.
- 2.2 The Rector may appoint the Sunday School Superintendent with the advice of the Parish Council, and he shall also direct the selection of the Sunday School teachers in cooperation with the Superintendent.
- 2.3 The Rector shall comply with Title I, Canon 19 of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and relevant canons of the local Diocese and as amended from time to time.

3. Termination or Dismissal

- 3.1 The termination of a pastoral connection, or the dismissal of a Rector, shall follow the procedure defined in Title II, Canon 33 of the Constitution and Canons of the Reformed Episcopal Church and as amended from time to time.

Part 10 — Members' Meetings

1. **Annual General Meeting** – The Annual General Meeting of the Church shall be held within sixty days of the fiscal year end of the Church for the purpose of conducting the following business:
 - 1.1 Reporting on the ministry of the Church;
 - 1.2 Acceptance of financial statements;
 - 1.3 Approval of the budget for the ensuing year;
 - 1.4 Election of wardens and vestry members;

- 1.5 Election of delegate(s) and alternate(s) to Diocesan Synod (and General Council, if necessary);
- 1.6 Such other business as may be deemed appropriate.

2. Extraordinary Business Meetings

- 2.1 Every Members' Meeting other than the Annual General Meeting of the Church is an Extraordinary Business Meeting.
- 2.2 Extraordinary Business Meetings may be called by the Vestry of the Church as may be deemed appropriate.
- 2.3 The Vestry of the Church shall call an Extraordinary Business Meeting on the written requisition of not fewer than ten per cent (10%) of the voting members of the Church. If the Vestry does not call a meeting within twenty-one (21) days of receiving the requisition, a majority of the requisitionists may call the meeting.
- 2.4 At least two weeks' written notice or an announcement for two successive weeks during the Sunday worship service shall be required for calling an Extraordinary Business Meeting.
- 2.5 The accidental omission to give notice of an Extraordinary Business Meeting to, or the non-receipt of a notice by, any of the members entitled to receive notice does not invalidate proceedings at that meeting.

3. Rules of Order

- 3.1 "The Rules of Order for General Councils and Diocesan Synods of the Reformed Episcopal Church" shall apply for all Members' Meetings and Vestry Meetings.

4. Quorum

- 4.1 Twenty-five per cent (25%) of the total voting membership shall form a quorum at any Members' Meeting of the Church
- 4.2 No business, other than the adjournment or termination of the meeting, shall be conducted at a Members' Meeting at a time when a quorum is not present.
- 4.3 If within thirty minutes from the time appointed for a Members' Meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting, if convened on the requisition of members, shall be terminated; but in any other case, it shall stand adjourned to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place, and if, at the adjourned meeting, a quorum is not present within thirty minutes from the time appointed for the meeting, the members present shall constitute a quorum, providing there are never fewer than three members of the Church present at all times.

7. **Special Resolutions**

7.1 A special resolution shall be required to amend the Constitution or Bylaws of the Church.

7.1 The text of any special resolution to be submitted to a meeting shall be included with the notice of the meeting.

7.2 A special resolution shall pass by two thirds of all votes cast at a meeting called for the purpose of considering a special resolution.

6. **Voting**

6.1 Only members of the Church in good standing and eighteen (18) years of age or older are eligible to vote at any Members' Meeting of the Church.

6.2 Proxy voting is not permitted at any meeting of the Church.

Part 10 — General Regulations

1. **Doctrinal Statement** - The Church holds to the doctrine of the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, the Declaration of Principles of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and the Book of Common Prayer.

2. **Books and Records** – With the exception of the personal giving records of donors, all the books and records of the Church may be inspected by any member of the Church during normal business hours at the place where the records are kept.

3. **Amendments** - No repeal, alteration, or amendment of these Bylaws shall be made unless approved at a meeting of the Vestry of the Church and ratified by a two-thirds majority of the members of the Church present and voting at the next Members' Meeting; provided that notice shall have been given to the members of the Church of the changes proposed in conjunction with the notification required for the Members' Meeting.

4. **Charitable Purposes** – The Church shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members and any profits or other accretions to the Church shall be used for promoting its purposes. The directors shall serve without remuneration, and the directors shall not receive, directly or indirectly, any profits from their positions as directors but may be reimbursed for expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

5. **Organic Division** – In the event of organic division within the membership, the assets will belong to those members of the Church who abide by the Constitution and Doctrinal Statements and Bylaws of the Church. In the case where two or more parties claim to abide by the Constitution and Bylaws, the Vestry of the Church will request that the Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese arbitrate the dispute and his decision shall be final.

6. **Dissolution** – Upon dissolution of the Church the assets remaining after payment of all costs, charges and expenses properly incurred in the dissolution, and after payments to the employees of any arrears of salaries or wages including severances, and after payment of any other debts of the Church, shall be distributed to one or more Christian charitable organisations in Canada recognised by Canada Revenue Agency and holding similar objectives to those of the Church.