

Constitution and Bylaws of Kehilat HaMashiach

A Non-Profit Organization

Kehilat HaMashiach
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Article 1 General Organization Description and Rights

Section 1.1 Name

- 1.1.1 The name of the organization shall be Kehilat HaMashiach hereafter referred to as the “congregation”.

Section 1.2 Right of Government

- 1.2.1 Subject to these bylaws, the congregation shall have the right to govern itself according to the standards of the Bible (Old and New Testament).
- (a) The congregation shall have the right to establish and define the policy by which it shall be governed in accordance with these bylaws.
- (b) The congregation shall have the right to designate its own officers, appoint its own committees, arrange its own meetings, and govern itself in accordance with these bylaws.
- 1.2.2 In accordance with its vision (as stated in Section 1.5) and these bylaws, the congregation may:
- (a) establish and maintain departments, institutions, and services within the congregation for the purpose of spreading the Good News of Messiah and its work embraced by the purposes of this organization.
- (b) establish other congregations and related works both at home and abroad.
- (c) establish funds for helping the poor, both at home and abroad.
- (d) provide financial support to aid people in moving to Israel.
- (e) use newspapers, radio, the Internet, or any other media.
- 1.2.3 The congregation may use, sell, purchase, rent, lease, or otherwise acquire real estate for the furtherance of its vision (as stated in Section 1.5) in accordance with these bylaws.

Section 1.3 Congregational Government

- 1.3.1 The congregation shall have a Board of Elders, full members, associate members, and any officers or ministry leaders that are needed to the furtherance of the congregation’s purposes such as financial officers, worship leaders, prayer coordinators, and shamashim (deacons).
- 1.3.2 A Board of Elders shall lead the congregation in accordance with the congregational vision (as stated in Section 1.5) and the rest of these bylaws. The Board of Elders may not make changes to the congregation’s structure (as defined in Section 1.7) without approval by a simple majority of the members (full and associate) of the congregation. Article 6 defines procedures by which elders, officers, and ministry leaders may disburse congregational funds.
- 1.3.3 For issues that are not specifically addressed in these bylaws as requiring congregational input, the Board of Elders shall make decisions by a simple majority vote of the elders on the board.
- 1.3.4 If the Board of Elders cannot reach a simple majority vote on a particular issue, then they may bring the matter to a vote by the congregation if all elders agree to let the congregation decide the matter. If the matter pertains to

congregational finances, then only full members may vote; otherwise all members (full and associate) may vote. If one or more elders do not want to bring the matter before the congregation, then the congregation shall choose a tie-breaking elder through the casting of votes for existing elders.

- (a) Only full members who have been members (full or associate) for the 3-month period preceding the election may vote for the tie-breaking elder. Elders may vote as any other full member.
- (b) If an elder receives more than 50% of the vote, then that elder shall become tie-breaking elder; otherwise, the elder receiving the least number of votes shall be removed from the ballot and voting redone. This procedure shall be done until one elder receives more than 50% of the vote. If two elders receive 50% of the vote, then all full and associate members (regardless of time within the congregation) may vote to break the tie.
- (c) The position of tie-breaking elder shall then be occupied by the same person until one of the following conditions is satisfied:
 - (i) elder elections are held
 - (ii) there is any change in the composition of the Board of Elders
 - (iii) 6 months have passed since appointment of an elder to the position of tie-breaking elder
- (d) The tie-breaking elder has authority to break ties in voting on the Board of Elders. This is the only additional authority accorded to the tie-breaking elder.

1.3.5 These bylaws must be available to members and potential members. If a member requests a copy of these bylaws from the Board of Elders, then the Board of Elders must provide an electronic copy with 24 hours of receipt of request. If the member has no access to e-mail or the Internet, then a paper copy must be provided within 7 days of receipt of request in lieu of the electronic copy.

Section 1.4 Members' Meetings and Elections

- 1.4.1 The congregation shall hold an annual members' meeting. between September 1 and October 31.
- 1.4.2 The date for the annual members' meeting described in 1.4.1 shall be chosen by the Board of Elders and announced to the congregation at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
- 1.4.3 In addition to the annual meeting described in 1.4.1, the Board of Elders may call members' meetings as necessary at any time during the year. Such meetings must be announced to the congregation at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 1.4.4 Elections of elders and other officers shall take place during a members' meeting.
- 1.4.5 Congregational members shall be informed of meeting agendas at least 1 week prior to, but no more than 2 weeks prior to a scheduled members' meeting.

- 1.4.6 Any required elder elections should take place prior to any other voting at all members' meetings. The newly elected Board of Elders shall then preside over the remainder of the meeting agenda items and all subsequent voting.

Section 1.5 Congregational Vision

- 1.5.1 The vision of the congregation is the following: "To exist as a Messianic Jewish community that testifies to the truth and power of the Good News of Yeshua, to mature in righteousness, and to promote Messianic revival amongst the Jewish people."
- 1.5.2 The elders and other members of the congregation shall conduct congregational affairs in accordance with the vision stated in 1.5.1.
- 1.5.3 To change the vision statement of the congregation as stated in 1.5.1 requires agreement by a 75% majority of the elders and a 75% majority of the other members (full and associate) of the congregation.

Section 1.6 Statement of Faith

- 1.6.1 The Statement of Faith of the congregation is the following:
- (a) We believe that the Bible [both the Tanakh (Old Testament) and the Brit Chadasha (New Covenant)] is the only inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God. (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 - (b) We believe in one God, as He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One." Deuteronomy 6:4 We believe that the intended meaning of this word "one" as found in Hebrew (echad), means a "composite unity" manifested in the persons of the Father, Son (Yeshua) and Ruach haKodesh (the Holy Spirit).
 - (c) We believe that Yeshua is the Son of God, the Messiah, the Eternal One in Whom all the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form, and who is the Word who became flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory we beheld, the glory of the uniquely begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth. (Jn 1:1-14; Col 2:9)
 - (d) We believe that the Spirit of God comforts, teaches, leads, indwells and empowers all believers in Messiah Yeshua. (Jn 14-17)
 - (e) We believe that all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:23)
 - (f) We believe that Yeshua's death accomplished the atonement for all who would place their faith in Him, and that because of Yeshua's death and resurrection, whoever trusts in God, in His work alone, is made a new creation in Messiah, indwelt by the Spirit of God, and is transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His own Son. (Eph 2:8-9, Rom 5, 6)
 - (g) We believe salvation cannot be earned through human effort, but that it can be obtained only by God's grace through faith in Yeshua. (Eph 2:8-9)
 - (h) We believe in the spiritual unity and equality of all believers in Messiah Yeshua. (Gal 3:26-28)
 - (i) We believe in the continuity of God's covenants with the physical

people of Israel according to Jeremiah 31:35-37 and parallel passages. Part of the fulfillment of these covenants is the physical return of the people of Israel to their Promised Land. (Deut 30, Eze 36)

- (j) We believe that Jewish followers of Yeshua are called to maintain their Jewish biblical heritage, and remain a part of their people Israel and the universal body of believers. This is part of their identity and a witness to the faithfulness of God. (Jer 31:35-37, Acts 21:18-26, Rom 11:1-5, 1 Cor 7:18, 1 Cor 9:19-20, Rev 7:9)
- (k) We believe in the resurrection of both the wicked and the righteous. Those who have trusted in Yeshua will be resurrected unto eternal life and those who died without having believed in Yeshua will experience the eternal wrath of God. (Rom 1:18; 1 Cor 15; Rev 20-21)

1.6.2 To change the Statement of Faith of the congregation requires agreement by a 75% majority of the elders and a 75% majority of the other members (full and associate) of the congregation.

Section 1.7 Congregational Meeting Structure

- 1.7.1 The primary meetings of the congregation shall take place in homes. The meeting in the homes shall hereinafter be referred to as a *housegroup meeting*, and the constituency of the attendees at a single home shall be referred to as a *housegroup*.
- 1.7.2 If the size and location of member's dictates it, the congregation shall have more than one distinct housegroup. Each housegroup may have its own worship service; however, the message (i.e., sermon) at each housegroup shall be identical, accomplished for example through teleconferencing, videoconferencing, or sharing of a teaching tape.
- 1.7.3 The housegroup meetings shall generally take place on Saturday evenings.
- 1.7.4 The congregation shall also regularly meet in small dinner groups on Friday evenings. These meetings shall hereinafter be referred to as *Shabat Dinner Groups*.
- 1.7.5 On consecutive weeks, the congregation shall primarily alternate between housegroup meetings and Shabat Dinner Groups.
- 1.7.6 As stated in Section 1.4, the congregation shall have members' meetings. Members' meetings may be held in place of one of the congregation's other regular meetings.
- 1.7.7 Drashot (sermons) or teachings given at any of the meetings shall be given by an elder of the congregation, an elder-designated member of the congregation, or an outside speaker from one of the congregation's affiliations. Any other speakers must receive consent from the congregation by receiving a two-thirds majority vote from the Board of Elders and a simple majority of non-elder members.

Section 1.8 Changing Affiliations or Legal Status

- 1.8.1 Adding or changing an affiliation requires consent by a two-thirds majority vote from the Board of Elders and a two-thirds majority vote from non-elder members.
- 1.8.2 Adding or changing organization legal status requires consent by a two-thirds majority vote from the Board of Elders and a two-thirds majority vote from non-elder members.

Article 2 Membership

Section 2.1 Types of Membership

- 2.1.1 There shall be two types of membership in the congregation:
 - (a) Full membership – for people who have made Kehilat HaMashiach their primary congregation
 - (b) Associate membership – for people who are members of another congregation but also desire to participate regularly in Kehilat HaMashiach’s worship and congregational life.

Section 2.2 Requirements for Full and Associate Membership

- 2.2.1 All members must agree to participate and contribute to building the congregation as stated in our vision statement in Section 1.5, and demonstrate this agreement through both word and action.
 - (a) If a potential member disagrees with any points of the vision statement, then he or she must submit his or her points of difference in writing or by e-mail to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will then decide whether or not the points of difference are significant enough to prevent the person from becoming a member of the congregation.
- 2.2.2 Members must demonstrate an agreement with the congregation’s Statement of Faith, outlined in Section 1.6, through both word and action.
 - (a) If a potential member disagrees with any points of the Statement of Faith, then he or she must submit his or her points of difference in writing or by e-mail to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will then decide whether or not the points of difference are significant enough to prevent the person from becoming a member of the congregation.
- 2.2.3 Members must be at least 13 years of age.
- 2.2.4 The Board of Elders must approve membership for any potential member.

Section 2.3 Rights of Members

- 2.3.1 Members may vote for officers in congregational elections and vote in various other matters pertaining to the congregation. Ability to vote in elections or other congregational matters is affected by type of membership (full or associate) and duration of membership or involvement in the congregation. These limitations are discussed in other sections of these bylaws.

- 2.3.2 Members may be elected to various offices and ministerial positions within the congregation. Ability to run for various offices is affected by type of membership (full or associate) and duration of membership or involvement in the congregation. These limitations are discussed in other sections of these bylaws.

Section 2.4 *Withdrawal or Change of Membership Type*

- 2.4.1 All members may voluntarily request a removal of their membership status at any time.
- 2.4.2 If any member (full or associate) desires to change their type of membership (i.e., – full or associate) they should present their request to the Board of Elders.

Article 3 Elders

Section 3.1 *Term of Office*

- 3.1.1 Each elder shall be elected for a term of 2 years. The founding elders shall remain on the Board of Elders for 1 year following the date of installment of the constitution, after which they must be re-elected to remain on the Board of Elders.
- 3.1.2 There is no limit to the number of terms a member may serve as elder.

Section 3.2 *Responsibilities of Elders*

- 3.2.1 For issues that are not specifically addressed in these bylaws as requiring congregational input, the board of elders shall lead the congregation in its day-to-day activities.
- 3.2.2 The board of elders shall be responsible for teaching and giving drashot (sermons) at congregational meetings or to arrange for other member speakers or speakers from affiliated organizations within the constraints of 1.8.
- 3.2.3 If the doctrine of any speaker at the congregation is found to be in error by the board of elders, then the elders are responsible for addressing the incorrect doctrine for all of the congregational members who have been exposed to incorrect doctrine. The board of elders shall also evaluate all material that anyone desires to make available to the congregation for both doctrine and appropriateness.
- 3.2.4 Elders shall be involved in congregational discipline according to the guidelines in Article 5.
- 3.2.5 Elders shall be responsible for evaluating, censuring, and, if necessary, excluding from fellowship any non-member attendee who interferes with the congregation's ability to fulfill its vision.
- 3.2.6 The board of elders shall be responsible for evaluating anyone who desires aid from a benevolence fund, unless a specific office or committee has been created by the congregation to perform this function.

- 3.2.7 The board of elders shall represent the congregation before other organizations in accordance with the congregation's vision stated in Section 1.5.
- 3.2.8 Elders shall provide ministerial counseling to full members of the congregation.

Section 3.3 Nominations

- 3.3.1 4 months prior to an election, the congregation must be reminded of the need to nominate any potential elders if they wish to nominate someone who is not already functioning in the office of elder.
- 3.3.2 Any full member may nominate someone for the eldership.
- 3.3.3 Nominations may be withdrawn by the nominee at any time preceding the election.
- 3.3.4 If a nominee is married, the nominee's spouse must also be a full member of the congregation and must also approve the nomination.

Section 3.4 Pre-evaluation of Potential Elders

- 3.4.1 Potential elders (if not already in office) must be nominated and accept the nomination at least 3 months prior to an election. The nominations shall be made public to the entire congregation so that the congregation has the opportunity to evaluate potential elders who are not already functioning in the position of elder.
- 3.4.2 Small exceptions to the 3-month period may be made to decrease this length of time up to 2 weeks in the case of extenuating circumstances that require the nominee's attention or prevent the nominee from immediately learning of the nomination.

Section 3.5 Requirements to be Elected to the Office of Elder

- 3.5.1 All potential elders must be full members in good standing with the congregation.
- 3.5.2 All potential elders must have been full members during the 1-year period preceding the nomination.
- 3.5.3 All potential elders must satisfy the description of godly leaders given by Yeshua in Luke 22:26¹.
- 3.5.4 Potential elders must not be new believers in Yeshua (1 Tim 3:6).

Section 3.6 Number of Elders

- 3.6.1 The number of elders shall be kept to a minimum of two whenever at least two candidates can satisfy the requirements of elder and be elected to the Board of Elders.
- 3.6.2 The number of elders should never exceed the following number at the time of an elder election (unless the following quantity drops below 2):

¹ Luke 22:25-26 – But Yeshua said to them, “The kings of the Goyim lord it over them; and those in authority over them are given the title, ‘Benefactor.’ But not so with you! On the contrary, let the greater among you become like the younger, and one who rules like one who serves.

max # elders = 1 + [10% × (# members + ½ × # non-member regular attendees)]

- (a) For the purposes of calculating the maximum number of elders, a regular attendee can be defined at the time of an election as someone who has attended at least 5 of the preceding 10 primary congregational meetings or 5 of the preceding 10 congregational gatherings (both primary and secondary meetings).

Section 3.7 Voting Procedure

- 3.7.1 Requirements for voting for the office of elder:
 - (a) Full membership
 - (b) Continuous membership (full or associate) during the 3-month period preceding the election
- 3.7.2 Voting shall be done through blind ballot at a congregational members' meeting. If a full member is unable to attend the meeting, they may only vote by proxy through their full-member spouse, provided they appropriately inform one of the current elders prior to the election.
- 3.7.3 Two neutral members (full or associate members who are people other than the nominees or their immediate family members) shall be appointed to count the votes. At the election, the elders shall request volunteers to be the neutral vote-counters. The congregation must approve neutral vote-counters (nominees may not vote for the vote-counters) with a simple majority as determined by a hand-count.
- 3.7.4 Paper slips (or an equivalent media) that are not identifiably different from each other shall be distributed to each full member who is present at the meeting. The paper slips shall contain the names of the nominees.
- 3.7.5 Each voter shall cast a "yes" or "no" vote for each nominee.
- 3.7.6 All ballots shall be given to the appointed neutral vote-counters. The vote-counters shall tally the votes for each candidate.
- 3.7.7 A two-thirds majority of votes by full members shall be required to elect anyone to the office of elder, whether or not the nominee has previously occupied the office of elder.
 - (a) Abstentions and absentees shall not count toward the calculation of the two-thirds majority.
 - (b) Elders currently in office may vote as any other full members of the congregation.
- 3.7.8 If the number of nominees receiving an adequate number of votes as specified in 3.7.7 is greater than the maximum number of allowable elders as specified in Section 3.6, then the number of nominees elected to the office of elder shall be reduced to the maximum specified in Section 3.6 by including only those with the greatest number of affirmative votes. If the number of elders is thus reduced to a number less than the maximum allowable due to a tie, then the full members of the congregation shall vote to break the tie (all elders and nominees may vote as other full members of the congregation). If the congregation's vote is exactly split, then the new Board of Elders (those already voted onto the board) shall break the remaining tie.

Section 3.8 Smicha

- 3.8.1 After elder elections, the board of elders that existed prior to the elections shall lay hands on any newly elected elders and pray for them to give them smicha (ordination).

Article 4 Non-Elder Offices and Ministry Position Elections

Section 4.1 Types of Offices and Ministry Positions

- 4.1.1 The congregation shall keep a list of offices and ministry positions separate from these bylaws. The list shall be made readily available to members of the congregation.
- 4.1.2 Offices are defined in these bylaws as those positions requiring primarily administrative tasks to be performed in service to the congregation. Examples of such offices are *Financial Officer*, *Secretary*, and *Shamash*. While it is acknowledged that all offices within the congregation benefit from spiritual gifts and oversight, the tasks required of these offices is primarily administrative.
- 4.1.3 Ministry Positions are defined in these bylaws as those positions requiring particular spiritual strengths. Examples of positions of ministry are *Worship Leader* and *Prayer Ministry Leader*.
- 4.1.4 When a new office or ministry position is created, it shall be added to the congregation's list of offices and ministry positions. The listing shall include the following information:
- (a) Name of office or ministry position
 - (b) Type (i.e. it shall be listed as either an "Office" or a "Ministry Position")
 - (c) Description
 - (d) Budget or non-budget office/ministry position
 - (i) If the position is specified as "budget", then the member in that office or ministry position may be assigned additional authority to disburse funds related to a section of the budget. Any added authority to disburse funds will be defined by the finance committee when it approves the congregation's budget.
 - (e) Term of office or ministry position
- 4.1.5 The finance committee, as defined in Article 6, approves all office and ministry budgets and determines expenditure authorizations.
- 4.1.6 The Board of Elders may create new offices and positions as required with the voting approval of a simple majority of members (full and associate). Voting for the creation of a new office or ministry position can be done via e-mail or any convenient media as determined by the Board of Elders. The vote should be taken only after the office or position is defined according to 4.1.4 and members have seen the proposed listing of the newly defined position. Sufficient time will be allowed for discussion of the merits of new position creation.

Section 4.2 Nominations

- 4.2.1 Nominations to offices require no additional approval by the board of elders. Nominations to ministry positions require approval by a two-thirds majority of the board of elders.
- 4.2.2 All nominees must be full or associate members in good standing with the congregation and they must have either been members or regular attendees of the congregation's housegroup meetings for at least 3 of the 6 months preceding the nomination.
- 4.2.3 Members may occupy more than one office or ministry position simultaneously.

Section 4.3 Voting Time Frame

- 4.3.1 Whenever practical, officer elections should be performed at members' meetings. If several offices need to be filled, then a members' meeting should be called to hold elections with at least one month's notice.
- 4.3.2 If one or two offices must be filled due to a new need, or due to an officer stepping down for any reason, then elections may be held through e-mail or other appropriate media. In this case, the following provisions must be met:
 - (a) One or more elders shall take responsibility for sending messages and tallying votes.
 - (b) The need for the election and the type of media to be used (e.g. e-mail or postal mail) must be announced at a primary congregational meeting in which most members are expected to be present and followed up with an announcement through an appropriate media such as e-mail.
 - (c) All congregational members who can't or don't respond to a call-to-vote via the proposed media must be contacted by an elder so their vote can be obtained and counted.
 - (d) The election may be decided by tallied votes, regardless of how many people respond, provided it has been at least 1 week after a phone message or 2 attempts to call a line with no answer for each member who has not responded to the initial announcements described in 4.3.2(b).

Section 4.4 Voting Procedure

- 4.4.1 Requirements for voting for non-elder offices and ministry positions:
 - (a) Full or associate membership
 - (b) Continuous membership (full or associate) during the 3 months preceding the election or regular attendance for at least 3 of the 6 months preceding the election.
- 4.4.2 If the voting is done at a members' meeting, it shall be done according to the following guidelines:
 - (a) It shall be done through blind ballot.
 - (b) If the voting takes place at a members' meeting, then proxy votes shall not be accepted.
 - (c) One of the elders shall count the votes.

- 4.4.3 If the election is held apart from a members' meeting, then it shall be done according to the guidelines in 4.3.2.

Section 4.5 Votes Required for Election

- 4.5.1 For cases where an office may hold more than one person, such as *Shamash*, members shall cast a "yes" or "no" vote for each candidate. A candidate must receive a greater number of "yes" votes than "no" votes to be elected.
- 4.5.2 For cases where only one person may hold an office or ministry position, members shall vote for one candidate. Elders vote as any other member of the congregation. A candidate must receive more than 50% of the votes to be elected to the office or ministry position. If no candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, the candidate receiving the least number of votes will be removed from the ballot and the voting shall be redone. This procedure shall continue until one candidate receives more than 50% of the votes, or two candidates each receive 50% of the votes. If two candidates each receive 50% of the votes, the Board of Elders shall break the tie.
- 4.5.3 In the event that there are no nominees or nobody receives enough votes to occupy an office or ministry position, then the Board of Elders may decide to remove the office or ministry position from the congregation's listing. If they decide not to remove the listing, then the Board of Elders shall function in the office or ministry position role as needed until such a time that someone else is elected to the office or ministry position.

Article 5 Congregational Discipline

Section 5.1 Discipline to Members and Other Attendees

- 5.1.1 If any attendee of the congregation behaves in a manner that is sinful towards another, then the matter should be resolved according to the following procedure (Mt 18:15-17):
- (a) The one who is wronged should show the other his or her fault privately.
 - (b) If the one who has behaved sinfully refuses to listen, then the one who is wronged should bring one or two others with him or her.
 - (c) If the one who has behaved sinfully still refuses to listen, then the matter should be taken to the Board of Elders who will investigate and take appropriate disciplinary action. The level of discipline will depend on the seriousness of the wrong committed, the existence of previous warnings, the willingness of the person to accept the disciplining authority of the Board of Elders, and the level of disruption to the congregation. The discipline may include any of the following, at the discretion of the Board of Elders:
 - (i) Issuance of a warning (verbal, written, or electronic [e.g., e-mail])
 - (ii) Asking the person to address any wrongs he or she has done (e.g., public or private apologies as appropriate, etc.).
 - (iii) Revocation of membership
 - (iv) Temporary or permanent expulsion from the congregation

Section 5.2 Removal of Elders from Office

- 5.2.1 If any elder is found to be involved in serious sin (such as adultery or financial infidelity concerning congregational funds), then the matter shall be brought before the other elders for investigation. The other elders may, based on results of the investigation, ask the elder-under-investigation to step down. If all of the elders in the congregation are believed to be involved in serious sin so that there are no remaining elders who can perform the investigation, then the congregation shall elect amongst themselves a representative to perform the investigation. The elders may not vote in the election of that representative. Based on findings, some or all of the elders may be asked to step down. If all elders are asked to step down, then the congregation shall appoint 1 or more interim leaders to function for a period of 6 months, after which a new Board of Elders shall be elected according to the procedures outlined in Article 3. Interim leaders must obtain a 50% majority of votes by members to become the interim leader. The interim leader may be a full member or associate member.
- 5.2.2 If any elder brings reproach to the congregation or is found to frequently operate the congregation or incite the congregation to act in ways that depart from the congregational vision, the matter shall be brought before one or more of the other elders. The other elders shall investigate and if appropriate, correct the elder-in-question. If the elder-in-question continues to act in an sinful manner and refuses to stop or to step down from office, then the remaining elders may call for a vote to remove the elder-in-question from office. The issue at hand must be communicated clearly to the congregational members at least 2 weeks prior to the vote-for-removal. A two-thirds majority of the elders (not including the elder-in-question) and a two-thirds majority of the other full members of the congregation (not including the elder-in-question) shall be required to remove the elder-in-question from office.
- 5.2.3 If all of the elders are found to operate the congregation in a way that departs from the congregational vision, then the congregation may vote to remove the entire Board of Elders and hold elections for a new board. If the board is removed, then the full members of the congregation shall elect an interim leader to function for up to 6 months while a new board is elected and installed. Voting to remove the entire Board of Elders must be done under the following guidelines².
- (a) Two or more full members must call for a vote for removal of the board.
 - (b) Only full members who have been full members for the 3-month period preceding the vote-for-removal and have also been either full or associate members for the 6-month period preceding the vote-for-removal may vote to remove the entire Board of Elders.
 - (c) People on the Board of Elders may not vote.

² Note: the purpose of these guidelines is to safeguard against the possibility that the elders depart from the congregational vision but also bring aboard many new members who follow them in the departure from the vision. Therefore, only members who have been in the congregation for a while may vote to remove the Board of Elders.

- (d) A 75% majority of those who cast a vote will be required to remove the entire Board of Elders.

Section 5.3 Removal of People from Offices or Ministry Positions

- 5.3.1 If any officer or person in a ministry position is found to be involved in serious sin (such as adultery or financial infidelity concerning congregational funds), then the matter shall be brought before the Board of Elders for investigation. The Board of Elders may, based on results of the investigation, ask the person-under-investigation to step down from an office or ministry position.
- 5.3.2 If any officer brings reproach to the congregation or is not found to function adequately in an office or ministry position, then the matter shall be brought before the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall investigate and if appropriate, correct the officer-in-question. If the officer-in-question continues to act sinfully or function inadequately for the office or ministry position, then the elders may decide to remove the person from the congregational position with at least a two-thirds majority vote of the elders.

Section 5.4 Revocation of Membership

- 5.4.1 If any member is found to not believe or agree with the congregation's vision in both word and action, other than outlined in 2.2.1, they may have their membership revoked.
- 5.4.2 If any member is found to not believe or agree with the congregation's Statement of Faith in both word and action, other than outlined in 2.2.2, they may have their membership revoked.
- 5.4.3 If a member does not accept the leadership of the Board of Elders regarding congregational matters, then the Board of Elders may revoke that person's membership and may also ask that person to leave the congregation.

Article 6 Finances

Section 6.1 Fiscal Year

- 6.1.1 The fiscal year of the congregation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each year.

Section 6.2 Finance Committee

- 6.2.1 The congregation shall have a finance committee. This finance committee shall be composed of one elder, the treasurer, and several other full members of the congregation.
- 6.2.2 The number of full members on the finance committee (other than the treasurer and one elder) shall be equal to 10% of the number of full members, rounded up to the nearest integer.
- 6.2.3 The elder to occupy a position on the finance committee shall be chosen by the Board of Elders according to the voting guidelines in Section 1.3.
- 6.2.4 Aside from the treasurer and elder, the members of the finance committee shall be chosen by the congregation according to guidelines in 4.4.2 and

Section 4.5. Requirements to vote for these finance committee members are as follows:

- (a) Full membership
- (b) Elders shall vote as any other full members.

6.2.5 All decisions of the finance committee shall be decided based on a 50% majority vote. If several alternatives exist, and no alternative receives a 50% majority, then the alternative receiving the minimum number of votes shall be dropped and the voting redone. If several alternatives are tied for minimum number, they shall all be dropped. In cases where all remaining alternatives receive exactly the same number of votes, the Board of Elders shall break the tie based on the guidelines in 1.3.4.

6.2.6 The congregation, via a two-thirds majority of full members, shall approve a final budget. When the Board of Elders, officer, or person in position of ministry needs to spend congregational funds in excess of a budget limit, that person shall bring the request before the finance committee in writing. The finance committee shall then vote on the request according to the guidelines in 6.2.5. The vote can be done in person or by e-mail or any media deemed convenient, provided all members of the finance committee are informed of the request for funds and given adequate time to vote.

Section 6.3 The Budget

6.3.1 The finance committee shall approve an annual budget. The annual budget shall cover a calendar year beginning on January 1 and ending on December 31.

6.3.2 The annual budget for the upcoming fiscal year shall be discussed and approved after the yearly membership meeting described in 1.4.1, but before December 10 of the current year.

6.3.3 The budget shall detail, but not be limited to, the following funds:

- (a) Office supplies
- (b) Convoy Prayer Ministry expenditures
- (c) Expenditures associated with coordinated activities of multiple housegroups as referenced in 1.7.2.
- (d) Congregational Benevolence Fund to provide financial help for financially disadvantaged members of the congregation.
- (e) Israel Benevolence Fund to provide financial help for financially disadvantaged Messianic Jews living in Israel.
- (f) Funds to support missionaries who are directly connected to the congregation.
- (g) Funds to be disbursed to charitable and/or other Messianic ministries both in the US and abroad.
- (h) Other categories as needed and approved by the finance committee

6.3.4 The budget shall include appropriated amounts and the following information:

- (a) a list of spending categories
- (b) a list of officers or people in ministry positions who have authority to

disburse funds in any spending category and spending limits for each office/ministry position.

- (c) An order of priority (if any) on funds if the available finances of the congregation do not support all of the allocated spending³. For example, the finance committee might designate 10% of incoming congregational funds to be disbursed to other ministries prior to any other spending.

6.3.5 The elders shall consult with the people in the offices and ministry positions as appropriate. The elders shall then draft a budget proposal that also includes spending limits for all of the categories defined in 6.3.3. The budget and spending limits for each category may be defined in whatever way is convenient and appropriate given the nature of the spending category and the expected available funds.

6.3.6 The finance committee shall modify the budget and spending limits, as they deem appropriate given expected revenues. Anyone on the finance committee may propose alternatives provided there is at least one other person to second the alternative. Those suggesting an alternative may withdraw their suggestion if they become convinced that a different alternative would be better. When no other alternatives are proposed, the finance committee shall vote according to the guidelines in 6.2.5 above.

Section 6.4 *Balancing the Budget*

6.4.1 The congregation may not go into debt. No officer or person in a ministry position may spend funds beyond the currently available funds of the congregation.

6.4.2 The treasurer shall monitor congregational funds on a quarterly basis. If incoming revenues drop below allocated funds for a given quarter, then the treasurer shall freeze allocation of funds until the budget is adjusted to match budgeted requirements with anticipated revenue amounts.

6.4.3 If incoming funds drop below allocated funds for a given quarter, then the finance committee shall adjust the budget accordingly, operating according to the guidelines in Section 6.3.

Article 7 Amendments to these Bylaws

Section 7.1 *Procedure for making amendments*

7.1.1 The Board of Elders may propose amendments to these bylaws at any time during the year. Furthermore, any member of the congregation may propose amendments to the bylaws at any time during the year, provided there is at least one other member to second the proposal.

7.1.2 If an amendment is proposed at a members' meeting, then voting may commence immediately by a show of hands.

7.1.3 If an amendment is proposed at a time outside of a members' meeting, then all members must be informed through e-mail or other appropriate media. A

³ If the congregation's finances do not support allocated spending, then the finance committee must meet to modify the budget as specified in Section 6.4.

vote-to-amend should be taken at least 1 week after, but not more than 3 weeks after members have been informed of the proposed changes.

- 7.1.4 Most amendments shall be passed with a two-thirds vote of the non-elder full members who vote and a two-thirds vote of the elders. The only exceptions are that amendments to Section 1.5, Section 1.6, Section 5.2, and Article 7 of these bylaws cannot be passed unless they receive affirmative votes from a 75% majority of the non-elder full members and a 75% majority of the elders.

Article 8 Miscellaneous Policies of the Congregation

Section 8.1 Non-Discriminatory Policy

- 8.1.1 The congregation adopts a non-discriminatory policy in regard to membership in that it admits people of any race, color, national, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities of the congregation and does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its programs.

Section 8.2 Books and Records

- 8.2.1 The congregation shall keep correct and complete books and records of all financial transactions performed by the congregation.
- 8.2.2 The congregation shall keep a summary of expenditures for each category in its budget.
- 8.2.3 The congregation shall keep minutes of the proceedings of members' meetings and all issues put to vote.
- 8.2.4 The books and records defined in 8.2.2 shall be available for inspection by any member (full or associate) at any reasonable time. It may also be made available to potential members at the discretion of the Board of Elders.