

Minutes for Governing Board Bylaws Review Meeting March 14, 6:30 PM New Life Methodist Church

Governing Board Members in Attendance:

*Absent members

Church Leaders	Trustees	Finance Committee	Nominating Committee
Milanda Taylor (Lay Leader)	Apryl Emmons (Chair)	Regina Filmore (Chair)	Kathy Giles (Chair)
Joey Croft (Pastor)	Rod Eddleman (Co/SPRC)	Scott Chandler	Sherry Newton
	Robert Godsey (GB Chair)	Keith Hamby (Sec)	Lana Bruno

Others in attendance:

Opening Prayer: Robert Godsey

The Governing Board (GB) convened with the sole purpose of reviewing the church bylaws.

The GB reviewed each of the 21 items listed on the email from Barbara Weller, Ministry Consultant and Attorney with National Center for Life and Liberty and the applicable bylaws section. Only the items in the list that sparked discussion or changes to bylaws are noted below:

#1. With regard to why we include a specific statement of faith on the LGBT issues—1) this is one of the primary reasons you are leaving the UMC, 2) as Francis Shaeffer once said, the most important issues for a church to deal with are the key cultural (or doctrinal) issues of the day, which in our day are the LGBT and life issues, and 3) courts will recognize a church's beliefs in this area (i.e., not marrying same sex couples, not allowing a biological male with gender dysphoria to use the ladies bathrooms or sleep with female teens on a youth group trip, etc.); however, the church must clearly state those beliefs. I have attached alternate marriage policies that the church GB could enact. Article 12, D refers back to this type of Statement of Faith or policy.

>>Article 3.D.8: Change **Affiliated Co-Laborer to Affiliated Adherent**. Discussion centered around the term "laborer" implying a paid position, but language of bylaws includes volunteers.

Commented [RG1]: This was in 3 location in the bylaws as Affiliated Co-Laborers and changed to Affiliated Adherents

#2. People interpret the Bible in different ways—generally to suit what they already believe. So the UMC church will still say that the Bible supports same sex marriage and ordaining same sex or transgender clergy. Again, this is one of their reasons you are leaving the UMC. Therefore, it is important to state how your church interprets the Bible in these matters. The same would be true of abortion and euthanasia. Different churches interpret the Bible differently in these areas.

>> Article 2.b.2.ii: Sample Church Marriage Policy Provision below will be added to Article 2.b.2 as ii. Current ii & iii will move down to iii & iv, respectively. The policy was added to protect the church. The suggested policy was updated from "participate in" to "perform" as noted below in bold.

Because God has ordained marriage and defined it as the covenant relationship between a man and a woman, New Life Methodist Church will only recognize marriages between one man and one woman, as biologically determined. Further, the ministers and staff of New Life Methodist Church shall only **perform** weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman, as biologically determined, and the facilities and property of New Life Methodist Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman, as biologically determined.

#3. With regard to euthanasia, there is both active and passive euthanasia. A patient can just refuse additional treatment and die naturally—that is passive euthanasia (or not euthanasia at all). Active euthanasia involves a doctor removing food and water or injecting morphine or other drug to actually cause the death of a person who otherwise would not die—and that is active euthanasia and is what we are addressing here.

>> Article 2.2.b.i & i: GB agreed these statements are appropriate for abortion and euthanasia.

#4. You can decide for yourselves what you want to do about a church membership class or other membership requirements. Churches do different things in this regard.

Minutes for Governing Board Bylaws Review Meeting March 14, 6:30 PM New Life Methodist Church

>>Article 3.A.2: GB agreed the statement is good as is, as using the word “state” includes the situation when a person joins the church by profession of faith during a worship service.

#6. Your voting age or age of membership can also be whatever you want to make it, but 16 is probably the lowest you should go.

>>The Pastor will inquire with parents about membership of their children. Parents will decide if children are members when transferring.

#7. I have attached a church Trespasser Policy for you. In these days when you never know whether some nut job will enter the church to cause a disruption, you need to have some way to deal with that. However, since the church building is your church’s private property, and the law permits anyone to ban someone from their private property for any reason, this does not need to be included in the Bylaws in order for the church to legally take this action when/if necessary.

>>Article 5.G.3: The GB agreed to add the recommended Trespasser Policy at Article 5.G.3, with changes as noted in bold, listed below. GB members were concerned about the Daycare not having a trespassers policy listed in their bylaws.

Although the general public is invited to all the church’s worship services, the church property remains private property. The pastor, **Governing Board members, or Governing Board designees**, have the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on church property, the person may, in the discretion of the pastor, **Governing Board members, or Governing Board designees**, be treated as a trespasser.

#8: Your reasons for dismissing someone from membership can be whatever you want them to be. Generally, they include disruption or no longer identifying as a Christian—perhaps saying bad things about the church on Facebook or other social media.

>>Article 3.C.2: This section has a typo and should read: “Transfer or Resignation of Membership: Members not under the disciplinary process of Article 3 section **D** may request a letter of transfer be sent to another church.”

#15. Generally only an ordained pastor administers the sacraments. And only an ordained pastor can marry. But some churches allow lay members to assist with communion.

>>The bylaws currently do not use the word “ordained,” and the GB agreed that “ordained” did not need to be added.

#19. We recommend no motions from the floor to avoid controversy and give the GB and pastor time to consider any motions ahead of the meeting to make recommendations. However, some churches do allow motions at the end of the meeting from the floor or even during the meeting. Again—your choice.

>>Article 6.D: Rod had input on striking motions from the floor. Rod’s suggestions were discussed. GB agreed to update the last sentence in this section to the following:

No motions will be made from the floor, unless approved by GB Chairperson and/or Pastor.

The numbered items that are not included above did not require changes to the bylaws and therefore, are not included in the minutes.

Closing Prayer: Milanda Taylor