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BY-LAWS
January 2023

**BY-LAWS OF COUNTRYSIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE OZARKS
NIXA, MISSOURI
May 2014**

PREAMBLE

We the members of Countryside Christian Church of the Ozarks, Nixa, Missouri, a nondenominational body of Christians congregationally governed by the Word of God, in order to promote the work of the church in the Spirit of Christ and thus advance His kingdom, do hereby adopt these By-Laws.

These By-Laws are designed to aid the congregation in managing her affairs with decency and order (1 Corinthians 14:40), and they presuppose that the Bible, rightly divided, constitutes the sole and all-sufficient guide for directing the actions and interactions of the local congregation (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

ARTICLE I - NAME

For business and legal purposes the name of this congregation shall be:
Countryside Christian Church of the Ozarks

1.1 Registered Office and Agent. The registered office in Missouri and the registered agent at such office upon whom any process, notice or demand required or permitted by law to be served upon the Church shall be as determined by resolution of the Board of Elders.

1.2 Registered Office. The registered office may be, but need not be, the same as the Church's principal office in the state of Missouri.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE AND BELIEFS

“The Mission of Countryside Christian Church is to introduce people to Jesus and to help them become fully devoted followers of Christ.” (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16)

2.1 The purposes of this corporation shall be to establish and maintain a church patterned after the plan set forth in the New Testament, to provide a place of worship for the same, to establish and conduct schools of religious instruction to carry out the program of evangelism as found in the New Testament, and to do benevolent work.

2.2 This congregation is locally autonomous and independent of any and all other churches, and of religious organizations which carry the same or similar names that might be registered. It shall govern its own internal affairs in accordance with the New Testament, and in accordance with the laws of the state of Missouri

2.3 The Countryside Christian Church of Nixa, Missouri, acknowledging the Deity and absolute authority of Jesus Christ and the Holy Scriptures, is committed to preach the Word and advance the general growth of Christians at home and away from home.

2.4 This congregation adheres to and recognizes the writings of the Old and New Testaments as that inspired Word of God, and as such, the only unerring guide and standard of Christian faith and practice.

2.5 The right to take, manage, hold, and dispose of property, real or personal, shall be held by the corporation as allowed by the non-profit corporation laws of the state of Missouri. Upon liquidation or dissolution of this corporation, or the abandonment of its corporate purposes, none of the corporate property shall insure the inure any private person, but shall be irrevocably dedicated to religious or charitable purposes of some other non-profit organization or organizations that have the same New Testament doctrinal position as this corporation. Exact recipient of such liquidated property shall be

determined by the Board of Trustees (see Article VII, Section 7) at a duly authorized meeting called for said purpose.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1 – SALVATION PLAN

Qualifications as laid down in the New Testament

1. Hearing about Christ (Romans 10:17, Acts 16:32)
2. Believing in Christ (Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9-10)
3. Repenting of Sin (Acts 2:38)
4. Confessing faith in Christ (Romans 10:9-10)
5. Being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38, Galatians 3:27, Romans 6:3-5)
This baptism is by immersion only.
6. Being faithful to Christ unto death (Rev. 2:10)

SECTION 2 – MEMBER DEFINITION

Any person who complies with the plan of salvation through the ministry of Countryside Christian Church of the Ozarks is considered a member. Any person who has previously complied with the plan of salvation may unite with this congregation by transfer of membership through verbal commitment to the Congregation or in written form to the Board of Overseers (hereafter referred to as Board of Elders). An active member shall be defined as one who regularly participates in scheduled worship services. In the event a member fails to attend these regularly scheduled worship services without stated cause or reason over a period of six months, he or she shall be placed in an inactive status. A permanent record of the membership of the congregation shall be kept (both active and inactive).

SECTION 4 – CONGREGATIONAL VOTING

Members eligible to vote shall be those who have complied with the aforesaid terms of membership, who are eighteen (18) years of age or older, who have been active members for at least six (6) months, and who are present at any congregational meeting.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 1 – MEETING LOCATIONS

The congregation shall meet at any location that the Elder Board may designate.

SECTION 2 – FISCAL YEAR

The church's fiscal year shall run from January 1st through December 31st, and the annual congregational meeting shall be held no later than the second full weekend in January of the following fiscal year.

SECTION 3 – ANNUAL MEETINGS

The purpose of these meetings shall be the transaction of relevant business matters.

SECTION 4 – SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special congregational meeting may be called by the Elder Board or by 25% of the voting members. No business other than that specified in the notice of the meeting shall be transacted at any special meeting.

SECTION 5 – MEETING NOTICE

Two Sundays notice from the pulpit at regularly scheduled worship services or ten (10) days written notice to each voting member shall be required for a congregational meeting.

SECTION 6 – VOTING QUORUM

A quorum shall be present to conduct business at all congregational meetings. The number of members

attending a meeting shall constitute a quorum. A majority vote of those present and voting at a duly called meeting may transact business.

SECTION 7 – ABSENTEE VOTING

All decisions and selections made by the congregation shall be by written ballot. Absentee voting will be allowed only if an eligible voting member is physically unable to be present at a congregational meeting. Ballots must be turned in before the time of the scheduled meeting. After votes have been cast and ballots collected during a meeting, absentee ballots shall be counted with the regular ballots by whoever has been selected to do so. This process will be directed by the secretary, and he shall record the names of those members whose ballots were included in the count.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – BOARD OF ELDERS

There shall be at least two Elders (i.e. a plurality – Titus 1:5), and each Elder shall serve up to a three (3) year term before taking a one (1) year break from the office before becoming eligible for re-nomination. If the number of Elders drops below the number of two, the Board of Trustees shall assume the role of the Elder Board. Terms of office shall be on a fiscal year basis, with Elders taking office the first Sunday of the fiscal year.

Once Elders have served actively and then later become inactive, the active Elders may call upon such inactive Elders for reappointment or consultation when it is deemed necessary or the size of the Elder-board has become too small through attrition (e.g. failure of Elders to complete three (3) year terms for whatever reasons). Elders reappointed to active status in this manner will not require a re-ordination. The tenure of such service shall be determined by agreement between the active Elders and the appointed Elder(s), but terms of service shall be limited to no more than three (3) years.

SECTION 2 – ELDER APPROVAL

At each annual congregational meeting the congregation shall have the opportunity to express by written ballot its approval of any Elder(s), including past Elders, presented to fill any vacancy created by outgoing Elder(s) and/ or to approve additional Elder(s), as needed.

SECTION 3 – ELDER BOARD OFFICERS

There shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Elders appointed by the active Elders at the beginning of each fiscal year following the congregational meeting.

SECTION 4 - TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elder Board. The term of service shall be as long as approved by the Elder Board and as long as the Treasurer is willing and able to serve.

SECTION 5 - DEACONS

The Elders may appoint Deacons for specific ministry oversight for a term of one year, or until such time as the ministry need has been met (i.e. if less than one year). Deacons must be qualified (according to criteria in 1st Timothy 3:8-12). Deacons and their oversight will be reviewed annually by the Elders, and they may be re-appointed if their performance warrants, and if the ministry need continues.

SECTION 6 – MINISTRY SERVANTS

The Elders may appoint (or delegate to the Senior Minister or Deacons the power to appoint) specific individuals (male or female) to positions of service as Ministry Servants for specific ministry needs. These will be unpaid positions. Paid-positions, or unpaid-positions that evolve into paid-positions, will need review and approval by the Elders and Senior Minister according to the evolving needs of the church. Additionally, Ministry Servants and their ministry will be reviewed annually by the Elders (or review delegated to the Senior Minister and/or Deacons), and they may be re-appointed if their performance warrants, and if the ministry need continues.

SECTION 7 – TRUSTEES

Trustees shall be defined as the Chairman of the Elder Board **and** all legal agents appointed by the Elder Board. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall also serve as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Under the direction of the Elder Board the Trustees shall act as the legal agents of the church in all business matters, including the right to convey legal title to all church property and shall handle all business transactions related thereto; and perform such duties as are required by the laws of the state of the Missouri. Trustees shall serve as long as approved by the Elder Board and as long as the Trustee is willing and able to serve.

ARTICLE VI - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

SECTION 1 – ELDER CHAIRMAN

The Chairman of the Elders shall call and preside over all regular or special business meetings of the Elder Board and serve as Chairman of the congregation. The Chairman shall be an ex-officio member of all departments and committees. The Chairman of the Elder Board shall also be the presiding officer of the congregational business meeting. The Chairman of the Elders will lead and set the agenda for meetings. The frequency of meetings and retreats will be determined by the active Elders.

SECTION 2 – VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE ELDERS

The Vice Chairman shall preside in the absence of the Chairman, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to him. The Vice Chairman may act as a Trustee in the absence to the Chairman.

SECTION 3 - SECRETARY

The Secretary of the Elder Board shall keep minutes of all regular or special business meetings of the Elder Board and the congregation, serve as tally clerk for the Elder Board and congregational meetings, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to them. A copy of all minutes shall be kept on file. Requests to review/inspect the meeting minutes will be directed to the Chairman of the Elder Board. Release of the meeting minutes to those outside of the Elder Board will require approval of the Elder Board.

SECTION 4 - TREASURER

The Treasurer shall keep appropriate financial records, disburse funds for the church according to the authority designated to him by the Elder Board, make regular reports at each regular meeting of the Elder Board, and make a yearly report to the congregation and shall, at all reasonable times, exhibit the books to any member of the congregation (if so requested).

SECTION 5 - ELDERS

The Elders shall perform their duties as contained in the scriptures and serve as the pulpit committee. The Elders make an annual review of the "membership audit" presented by the Senior Minister to determine where members come from and where they go (to help in determining our strengths and weakness in seeking the lost - Matthew 28:19-20).

SECTION 6 – DEACONS AND MINISTRY SERVANTS

The Deacons, Ministry Servants, and Minister(s) shall perform their duties as assigned by the Elders.

ARTICLE VII - SELECTION OF ELDERS

SECTION 1

A part of the business at the annual meeting of the congregation shall be election of Elders.

SECTION 2

At least two Sundays before approval of Elders, a nomination ballot including information concerning the present Elders and their tenure of office shall be distributed to the voting members of the congregation with an invitation to submit the names of any additional candidates the congregation feels are the best qualified. The date of the annual meeting for this vote of approval shall also be announced at this time.

SECTION 3

The nomination ballots shall also include a listing of the qualifications of Elders as given in 1st Timothy 3, Titus 1, and Acts 6 with spaces for the nominator to check qualifications after prayerful consideration.

SECTION 4

The Senior Minister with the active Elders shall investigate carefully each candidate nominated to consider the qualifications of those nominated, and, although they shall follow the wishes of the congregation as to the nominations, they shall retain the privilege of removing the name of any candidate who is determined to be unqualified for office. If there is no Senior Minister, the Elders may choose to exercise this duty.

SECTION 5

Each candidate shall be contacted before his name is placed on the election ballot to ascertain if he desires the office to which he was nominated. The names of those who will be presented for congregation approval shall be published at least two Sundays prior to the vote.

SECTION 6

No individual shall be considered for election who has not been an active member of the local congregation for a minimum of one year.

SECTION 7

A printed ballot listing the names of Elder candidates shall be presented for a written ballot at the congregational meeting. Each candidate shall have "Yes", "No", or "Abstain" printed beside his name.

SECTION 8

Those nominees receiving a two-thirds majority of "YES" votes cast by those present and voting shall be declared as approved.

SECTION 9

The new Elders shall be ordained the first Sunday following their election.

ARTICLE VIII - THE SENIOR MINISTER(S)

SECTION 1

The Senior Minister shall perform the duties which traditionally pertain to that office, and as spiritual administrator of the church he shall be an ex-officio member of the Elder Board and of all organized groups, ministries, and departments within the congregation.

SECTION 2

The Elder Board of the church shall serve as pulpit committee and be responsible for recommending a prospective Senior Minister to the congregation.

SECTION 3

It shall be the policy of the church to present only one prospective Senior Minister at a time. The approval vote shall be held in harmony with the relevant rules covering congregational meetings as set forth in these By-Laws (Article IV, Section 4-6). A two-thirds "yes" vote shall be necessary before a call is extended to the Senior Minister.

SECTION 4

At the time of the call, a written statement shall be made setting forth the salary to be paid, and other conditions deemed advisable, and shall be made in duplicate: one copy for the Senior Minister and one for the church records.

SECTION 5

The term of the Senior Minister's ministry shall be for an indefinite period. Termination may be requested by either the Senior Minister or the Elders. Written notice will be required at least thirty (30) days before date of termination. The time between the notice and the termination of service may be shortened or lengthened by mutual agreement.

ARTICLE IX - MINISTRIES

SECTION 1

All Deacons and Ministry Servants who oversee standing or special ministries (except the pulpit committee) shall be reviewed annually by the Elders.

SECTION 2

The duties of the respective functional ministries shall be set forth in writing before the appointment of Deacons and Ministry Servants.

SECTION 3

There shall be a committee of two people appointed by the Elder Board to make an annual audit of the financial records of the congregation in time for the annual congregational meeting. The Treasurer is not to be a member of this committee.

SECTION 4 - MISSIONS

Missions: This congregation wishes to be a giving church as we are instructed in 2 Corinthians 9:7 and Proverbs 3:9. A Missions Committee will be formed by the Elder Board. A minimum of 10% of the annual budgeted spending done by the church will be allocated to Missions. Missions has the right at their discretion to spend those funds as they seem fit.

ARTICLE X - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

SECTION 1

The rules contained in Roberts Rules of Order (revised) shall be used as a guide for conducting the business meetings of the congregation and the Elder Board in all cases to which they are not inconsistent with the By-Laws or special rules of order of this congregation.

SECTION 2

Special rules of order may be supplemented as need requires.

ARTICLE XI – REVISIONS AND AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1

A proposal to revise or amend these By-Laws may be made at any regular Elder Board meeting by a two-thirds “yes” vote of those present, provided such revision or amendment has been presented in writing at least a month before the vote is taken.

SECTION 2

Proposed revisions or amendments shall be presented to the congregation (in accordance with Article IV, Section 4-6) for their approval by a two-thirds “yes” vote of those present and voting.

ARTICLE XII - ADOPTION

SECTION 1

These By-Laws shall become effective immediately upon their adoption by a two-thirds “yes” vote of the members present and voting at the meeting at which they are presented for approval.

ARTICLE XIII - UNCOVERED SITUATIONS

All situations not covered by or provided for in these By-Laws shall be dealt with by the Elder Board until proper congregational action can be taken.

ARTICLE XIV - OPERATIONAL LIMITATIONS

Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the church shall not carry on any other activity not permitted to a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax and receiving deductible contributions, as described under Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law)

ARTICLE XV - INDEMNIFICATION

The Church agrees to indemnify any elder, officer or employee, or former elder, officer or employee of the Church against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the defense of any civil action, suit or proceeding, in which he or she is made a party by reason of being or having been such Elder, officer or employee, except in relation to matters as to which he or she shall be adjudged in such action, suit or proceeding to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duty to the Church.

Appendix A

Core Belief criteria for appointing Deacons, staff, ministry servants, teachers, etc.

All leaders should be able and willing to agree with all of the following (and lack of agreement may be considered grounds for dismissal from leadership position based upon review by Elder-board):

1. That God exists as a trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) (Matthew 28:19-20).
2. that the miracles and events recorded in the Bible literally happened (2nd Timothy 3:16-17).
3. that God created man as a unique, spiritual being (i.e. man did not evolve from lower life forms). (Genesis 2:7).
4. that sin separates man from God (Romans 3:23).
5. that Jesus was born of a virgin (Luke 1:27).
6. that Jesus was not just a great, moral teacher, but was God, in the flesh (John 1:1-3; 14).
7. that Jesus Christ died for you (Romans 10:9-10).
8. that Jesus was resurrected in bodily form from the dead (Acts 2:29-32).
9. that Jesus is alive and is working in people today through the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).
10. that Jesus is coming again (Acts 1:11; 1st Thessalonians 4:16-17).
11. that all people will be judged by God and assigned to heaven or hell (Revelation 20:12-15).
12. that salvation is dependent on a person repenting of sin, accepting Jesus Christ's sacrificial death, confessing Christ as Lord and Savior, and following through with baptism by immersion to become a part of Christ's church (Romans 10:9-10; Acts 2:38).

Scripture References (NIV):

Genesis 2:7 – ⁷The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Matthew 28: 19-20 – ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Mark 16: 15-16 – “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Luke 1:27 – ⁴“How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” ³⁵The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

John 1:1-3; 14 – ¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.
¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Acts 1:11 – ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.”

Acts 2:29-32 – ²⁹Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. ³²God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

Acts 2:38 – ³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 16:31 – ³¹They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

Acts 16:32 – ³²Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.

Romans 3:23 – ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:3-5 – ³Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. ⁵If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

Romans 10:9-10 – ⁹That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Romans 10:17 – ¹⁷Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

1st Corinthians 14:40 – But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

Galatians 3:27 – ²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

1st Thessalonians 4:16-17 – ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

1st Timothy 3:1-7 - ¹Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer,² he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

1st Timothy 3:8-12 – ⁸Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ¹¹In the same way, their wives⁵ are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. ¹²A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

2nd Timothy 3:16-17 - ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Titus 1:5 – ⁵The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint⁶ Elders in every town, as I directed you.

Titus 1:6-9 – ⁶An Elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. ⁷Since an overseer⁵ is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁸Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Revelation 2:10 - ¹⁰Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution.... Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 20:12-15 – ¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revision Table

Revision Content	Article and Section	Revised By	Revision Date
Added language to detail funding of the Missions Ministry.	Article IX – Ministries	Chris Jenkins, Larry Dyer, Gary Iman, Tom Greek, Matt Stidham, Shawn Styracula	January 2023
Added language to allow congregational meeting to occur after the close of the fiscal year and adjust Elder appointments at same meeting.	Article IV, Section 2 Article V, Section 3	Bob Kirkpatrick, Jason Cox, Wes Clubb, Chris Jenkins, Matt Stidham	December 2021
Re-structured By-laws to reflect Elder (Overseer) Board governance structure.	Various	Keith Webb, Bob Kirkpatrick, Mike Chrestman	June 2014
Added language “up to” to allow for instances where an Elder’s term could be less than 3 years.	Article V, Section 1	Keith Webb	April 2011
Added Revision Table	Revision Table	Keith Webb	April 2011