



St. James Church, Inc.

BYLAWS

Approved: August 14, 2025

**111 West Lake Drive
Athens, GA 30606
(706) 548-1680
www.sjathens.org
office@sjathens.org**

*"Let everything be done decently and in order."
1 Corinthians 14:40*

Article 1

Statement of Faith

1.1 Purpose. St. James Church is called to live out a vibrant, contagious, orthodox Christian faith in the Wesleyan tradition to the end that people from all walks of life will come to saving faith in Jesus Christ and grow in His love. We do so primarily through the means of religious services and education and charitable gifts and service. In living into this calling, we are guided by the following:

1.2 Our Vision: To see an unmistakable move of God transforming our communities through redemption, restoration, reconciliation, and revival.

1.3 Our Mission: To Engage our community with the good news of Jesus and Equip believers to become devoted followers of Christ.

1.4 Our Core Values:

1.4.1 Jesus: While each Person of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is God, and are one in essence, majesty, glory, and will, the Bible testifies, and we believe, it is Jesus who is the perfect sacrifice for sin. Reconciliation with Father God is possible only by placing our faith in Jesus. Therefore, it is Jesus we preach, teach, and offer to those that have not yet come to know Him as Savior and Lord. (John 3:16, Acts 4:11-12)

1.4.2 God's Word: Jesus said that people cannot live by food alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. We believe that the Bible contains the sacred, unchangeable, undeniable words of God that are to be the foundation of everything we do. (2 Peter 1:20-21, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

1.4.3 Prayer: God desires intimate relationship with those created in His image and, by His grace, has provided access to Himself through prayer. We will seek the Lord and His will in all that we purpose, committing our way to Him, and trusting that He will act on our behalf. We believe in the power of God to transform lives as we pray for others. (Jeremiah 29:13. Psalm 37:5)

1.4.4 Discipleship: A primary commission given by Christ to His Church is to make disciples. Ultimately, the character of a disciple of Jesus is one who has wholeheartedly submitted his/her will under Christ. As the church and as believers, ours is the responsibility to teach, train, and equip others to know the Word and be bold in proclaiming the Word. We also teach and train so that others' lives are more and more conformed to the image of the Son of God. (Matthew 28:19-20)

1.4.5 Community: Communities can be geographical (towns, neighborhoods, areas where people live or work) or they can be relational (entities of people having a common interest). As a church, our calling is to both. First, we seek to proclaim the good news to the geographical communities in which we live or interact. Second, recognizing that we live out our faith best in fellowship with one another, we seek to form, promote, and support relational communities that at their core are Christ-centered and offer a place of belonging, caring, learning, worship, and accountability. (John 20:21, Hebrews 10:24-25)

Article 2

Church Membership

2.1 ELIGIBILITY: Persons eligible for membership in St. James Church, are those who have completed a Membership Application, attended the St. James membership class, and met with the Pastor or those youth who have completed confirmation.

2.2 DEFINITION OF MEMBERSHIP: The membership of St. James Church shall include all people who have been baptized and all people who have professed their faith in Jesus.

2.2.1The membership of St. James Church shall include all baptized people who have received Christian baptism in our local congregation or elsewhere, or whose membership has been transferred to St. James Church subsequent to baptism in some other congregation.

2.2.1 For statistical purposes, church membership is equated to the number of people listed on the roll of professing members.

2.2.3 All baptized or professing members of St. James Church are members of the Global Methodist Church and members of the church universal.

2.4 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY: Each baptized member is called to fulfill their vows of baptism and membership, being faithful by participating in the spiritual formation, worship, stewardship, and service opportunities our church provides.

2.4.1 It is the responsibility of each congregation to establish and communicate clear expectations of their members who share in the partnership (koinonia) of the gospel (Philippians 1:5), and the responsibility of each member or partner to strive to meet those expectations.

2.4.2 The pastor is responsible for ensuring that members are cared for by implementing a discipleship process focused on helping members to “go on to perfection” by loving God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, and by loving their neighbor as themselves. The pastor is charged with equipping all the members of a congregation to be in ministry by meeting people at their point of need and offering them Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-13).

2.4.3 All members of the church are called into loving accountability with one another. If a member neglects the membership vows, the congregation shall use every means of encouraging that member to return to an active faith and to lovingly restore them to the fellowship of the church (Matthew 18:15-17).

2.5 TRANSFER FROM OTHER DENOMINATIONS: A member in good standing in any Christian denomination who has been baptized and who desires to unite with St. James Church shall be received as either a baptized or a professing member. Such a person may be received as a baptized member by notification of transfer from that person’s former

church or some certification of Christian baptism, and as a professing member upon taking vows declaring the Christian faith. In valid Christian baptism, water is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit by an authorized person. The pastor will report to the sending church the date of reception of such a member. It is recommended that instruction in the faith, work, and polity of the Church be provided for all such members. Members received from churches that do not issue letters of transfer or recommendation shall be listed as “Received from Other Denominations.”

2.6 AFFILIATE AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP: A professing member of the St. James Church who resides for an extended period in a city or community at a distance from St. James, may upon request be enrolled as an affiliate member of a Global Methodist church located in the vicinity of the member’s temporary residence. The home pastor shall be notified of the affiliate membership.

2.6.1 Such membership shall entitle the person to the fellowship of that church, to its pastoral care and oversight, and to participation in its activities. Local churches may decide whether affiliate members may serve in local church leadership, including the holding of offices. Affiliate members may not serve as a lay member to the annual conference. Affiliate members shall be counted and reported as a professing member of the home church only.

2.6.2 A member of another denomination may become an associate member under the same conditions. This relationship may be terminated at the discretion of the church in which the affiliate or associate membership is held whenever the affiliate or associate member shall move from the vicinity of the church in which the affiliate or associate membership is held.

2.7 CONSTITUENCY ROLL: A constituency roll shall be maintained in St. James Church, comprising four categories of persons: (1) Unbaptized infants; (2) Individuals over the age of eighteen who have not indicated a desire to become professing members, including the spouses and adult children of professing members, but who are those for whom St. James has a pastoral responsibility; (3) Persons who have attended worship more than twice, or participated more than twice in the ministries of the church, during the previous twelve calendar months (“Potential Members”); (4) Persons who, though unlikely to join the church due to distance or other faith commitments, nevertheless come under the pastoral care of the congregation and are recognized as part of its wider community (“Friends of the Church”). The constituency roll shall be reviewed and audited annually.

2.8 MEMBERSHIP RECORDS: St. James Church shall actively maintain the following records:

2.8.1 Active Membership Roll. Each local church shall accurately maintain a permanent membership record for each baptized or professing member including:

a) the person's name, date of birth, address, place of birth, date of baptism, officiating pastor, and sponsors;

b) date of confirmation or profession of faith, officiating pastor, and sponsors;

c) if transferred from another church, date of reception, sending church, and receiving pastor;

d) if transferred to another church, date of transfer, receiving church, and address of receiving church; e) date of removal or withdrawal and reason;

f) date of restoration of professing membership and officiating pastor;

g) date of death, date and place of funeral/memorial, place of burial, and officiating pastor.

2.8.2 Inactive Membership Roll

2.8.3 Constituency Roll

2.8.4 Affiliate Membership Roll

2.8.5 Associate Membership Roll

2.8.6 All baptism, membership, marriage, and funeral records are the property of the St. James Church and cannot be sold. If St. James Church is discontinued, these records are placed in the care of the annual conference.

2.9 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REPORT AND AUDIT: The pastor shall report to the Charge Conference annually the names of persons received into the membership of St. James Church and the names of persons removed since the last Charge Conference, indicating how each was received or removed. Membership records will be audited annually.

2.10 ANNUAL REPORT OF MEMBERS ATTENDING COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES: The pastor is encouraged to report annually the names and contact information for professing and baptized members attending colleges and universities to the chaplain or campus minister of such institutions where the church's ministries exist.

2.11 MEMBERS WHO MOVE: If a member of St. James Church moves to another community so far removed from St. James that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, this member shall be encouraged to transfer membership to a Global Methodist church in the community of the newly established residence. As soon as the pastor is reliably informed of this change of residence, actual or contemplated, it shall be the pastor's duty and obligation to assist the member to become established in the fellowship of a

church in the community of the future home and to send to a Global Methodist pastor in such community, or to the presiding elder, a letter of notification, giving the latest known address of the person or persons concerned and requesting local pastoral oversight. When a pastor discovers a member of the denomination residing in the community whose membership is in a church so far removed from the place of residence that the member cannot participate regularly in its worship and activity, it shall be the duty and obligation of the pastor to give pastoral oversight to such person, adding the name to the constituency roll and to encourage transfer of membership to a Global Methodist church in the community where the member resides.

2.12 TRANSFER TO OTHER GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCHES: When a pastor receives a request for transfer of membership to another Global Methodist congregation that pastor shall send the proper notification directly to the pastor of the congregation to which the member is transferring, or if there is no pastor, to the presiding elder. On receipt of such notification, the pastor or presiding elder shall enroll the name of the person so transferring after public reception in a regular service of worship, or if circumstances demand, public announcement in such a service. The pastor of the sending church shall then be notified to remove the member from its roll.

2.13 TRANSFER TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS. A pastor, upon receiving a request from a member to transfer to a church of another denomination, or upon receiving such request from a pastor or duly authorized official of another denomination, shall (with the approval of the member) issue notification of transfer and, upon receiving confirmation of the member's reception into another congregation, shall properly record the transfer of such person on the membership record of the local church. If a pastor is informed that a member has without notice united with a church of another denomination, the pastor shall make diligent inquiry and, if the report is confirmed, shall enter "Transferred to a Church of Another Denomination" after the person's name on the membership roll and shall report the same to the next Charge Conference.

2.14 RESTORATION OF PROFESSING MEMBERSHIP. A person whose name has been removed from professing membership by withdrawal, or action by Charge Conference may ask to be restored to membership in the local church.

2.14.1 A person whose membership was recorded as having been withdrawn after becoming a member of another denomination may, when that denomination will not transfer membership, be restored to professing membership by reaffirmation of the membership vows.

2.14.2 A person who has withdrawn at his or her own written request may return to the church and, upon reaffirmation of the membership vows, become a professing member.

2.14.3 A person whose name was removed by Charge Conference action may return to the church and, at his or her request, be restored to professing membership in the local church through reaffirmation of the membership vows.

2.14.4 A person who withdrew under charges may ask to return to the church. Upon evidence of a renewed life, approval of the Charge Conference, and reaffirmation of the membership vows, the person may be restored to professing membership.

ARTICLE 3

Organization and Administration

3.1 Organize for Mission. Each local church of the Global Methodist Church shall be organized so that it can pursue its primary task and mission in the context of its own community—reaching out and receiving with joy all who will respond to the invitation to follow Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives, encouraging people in developing their relationship with God, providing opportunities for them to strengthen and grow that relationship in spiritual formation, and supporting them to live lovingly and justly in the power of the Holy Spirit as faithful disciples. In carrying out its mission, adequate provision should be made to evangelize and spread scriptural holiness by:

- a) planning and implementing a program of nurture, outreach, and witness for individuals and families within and without the congregation
- b) providing effective pastoral and lay leadership
- c) providing financial support, physical facilities, and the legal obligations of the church
- d) utilizing the appropriate relationships and resources of the district and annual conference
- e) providing for the proper creation, maintenance, and disposition of documentary record material of the local church
- f) seeking inclusiveness in all aspects of its life.

3.2 Plan. To that end the basic organizational plan for the local church must provide a comprehensive program of nurture, outreach, and witness to all. The plan must also include a Charge Conference, and the congregation must have a Leadership Council or similar governing board. The Charge Conference shall determine how to allocate the other responsibilities outlined in the Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Global Methodist Church.

3.3 Character. Members of the local church's governing board or council shall be persons of genuine Christian character who love the church, are morally disciplined, are committed to the mandate of inclusiveness in the life of the church, are loyal to the ethical standards of the Global Methodist Church and are competent to administer its affairs. It should include confirmed youth and young adult members chosen according to the same standards as adults. All persons with vote must be professing members of the Global Methodist Church in relationship to the local church where they would be serving. The pastor shall be the administrative officer of the church and, as such, shall be an ex officio

member of all conferences, boards, councils, commissions, committees, and task forces, unless otherwise restricted by the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

3.4 Open Meetings. All meetings of official administrative bodies of the local church shall be open to all professing church members. The only exception to this rule is if the committee is dealing with personnel, legal, or contractual issues and a majority of the body votes to close the meeting only for the portion of time that deals with those specific issues.

ARTICLE 4

THE CHARGE CONFERENCE

4.1 Basic Unit. Within St. James Church, the basic unit in the connectional system of the Global Methodist Church is the Charge Conference which shall meet annually.

4.2 Membership. The membership of the Charge Conference shall be all members of the Leadership Council who are professing members of the Global Methodist Church, together with any retired ordained ministers and retired diaconal ministers who elect to hold their membership in that Charge Conference and any others as may be designated in the Book of Doctrines and Discipline.

4.3 Time and Place of Meeting. The presiding elder shall fix the time and place of the meetings of the charge conference and shall preside at the meetings of the Charge Conference or may designate an elder to preside.

4.4 Quorum. The members present and voting at any duly announced meeting shall constitute a quorum.

4.5 Special Sessions. Special sessions may be called by the Presiding Elder after consultation with the pastor of the charge, or by the pastor with the written consent of the presiding elder. The purpose of such a special session shall be stated in the call, and only such business shall be transacted as it is in harmony with the purposes stated in the call. Any such special session may be convened as a church conference.

4.6 Meeting Notices. Notice of time and place of a regular or special session of the Charge Conference shall be given at least ten days in advance by three or more of the following (except as local laws may otherwise provide): from the pulpit of the church, in its weekly bulletin, in a local church publication, by email, or by mail.

4.7 Joint Conferences. There may be occasions when the Presiding Elder may call a joint Charge Conference for two or more pastoral charges to be held at the same time and place, as the presiding elder may determine.

4.7.1 Preference of St. James. It is the preference of St. James Leadership Council to hold a Church Conference as a single entity to encourage broader participation by members of the church and provide greater transparency to the congregation on the workings of the church.

ARTICLE 5

THE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

5.1 Role. The Leadership Council shall function as the governing body of the local church. In this capacity it will ensure for planning and implementing a ministry of evangelizing and spreading scriptural holiness. The Leadership Council Chairperson, the Finance Committee Chairperson, and the Church Treasurer shall be the officers of the corporation and shall serve on the Leadership Council. It shall provide for the administration of its organization and temporal life. It shall envision, plan, implement, and annually evaluate the mission and ministry of the church. The Leadership Council shall be amenable to and function as the administrative agency of the Charge Conference.

5.2 Chairperson. The Leadership Council Chairperson shall be elected by the Charge Conference annually. The chairperson shall be a professing member of the Global Methodist Church in the local church where he or she would be serving, and shall have the following responsibilities:

- a) Leading the council in fulfilling its responsibilities
- b) Preparing and communicating the agenda of the council meetings in consultation with the pastor(s), lay leader, and other appropriate persons
- c) Reviewing and assigning responsibility for the implementation of actions taken by the council
- d) Communicating with members of the council and others as appropriate to permit informed action at council meetings
- e) Coordinating the various activities of the council
- f) Providing initiative and leadership for the council as it engages in planning, establishing objectives and goals, and evaluating ministry
- g) Participating in leadership training programs as offered by the annual conference and/or district.
- h) Entitled but not required to attend the meetings of all boards and committees of the church unless specifically limited.

5.3 Interaction with other councils and committees. The Leadership Council will review and approve recommendations of the Ministry Council, Trustees, Staff Parish Relations Committee, Nomination Committee, and Finance Committee. Boards, councils, and

committees other than the Leadership Council have no authority to act on behalf of the corporation—their primary function is to research and recommend.

5.4 Meetings. The Leadership Council shall meet at least quarterly. The chairperson may call special meetings. All votes of the Leadership Council will be decided by a simple majority; however, every effort should be made to reach a consensus.

5.5 Other Responsibilities. Other responsibilities of the Leadership Council include:

- a) Review of the membership of the local church
- b) Fill interim vacancies occurring among the lay officers of the church between sessions of the annual Charge Conference
- c) Establish the budget on recommendation of the Finance Committee and ensure adequate provision for the financial needs of the church
- d) Recommend to the Charge Conference the salary and other remuneration of the pastor(s) and staff members after receiving recommendations from the Staff-Parish Relations Committee
- e) Review the recommendation of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee regarding provision of adequate housing for the pastor and report the same to the Charge Conference for approval. Housing provisions shall comply with the annual conference housing policy. Housing shall not be considered as part of compensation or remuneration except to the extent provided for in denominational pension and benefit plans.

5.6 Membership of the Leadership Council. The Charge Conference will determine the size of the Leadership Council.

- a) Members of the Leadership Council shall be involved in the mission and ministry of the congregation.
- b) The membership of the council may consist of as few as eight persons or as many as the Charge Conference deems necessary.
- c) The membership shall include but not be limited to the chairs of the committees responsible for pastor-parish relations, the finances of the church, trustees, the lay leader, at-large members, and all appointed clergy.

5.7. Quorum. A quorum should be established when greater than 50% of the members are present.

ARTICLE 6

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE (SPR)

6.1 Members. The Charge Conference shall annually elect a Staff-Parish Relations Committee composed of professing members of the local church. Individuals serving on this committee must be engaged in and attentive to their Christian spiritual development to give proper leadership in the committee's responsibilities. It shall engage in biblical and theological reflection on the mission of the church, the primary task and ministries of the local church, and on the role and work of the pastor and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities.

6.2 Kinship. No staff member or immediate family member of a pastor or staff member may serve on the SPR committee. Only one person from an immediate family residing in the same household shall serve on the committee.

6.3 Terms. To ensure experience and stability, the membership should be divided into three classes, one of which shall be elected each year for a three-year term. The lay leader is exempt from the three-year term on this committee. Members of the committee may succeed themselves for a second three-year term. When vacancies occur during the year, the Leadership Council shall elect successors.

6.4. Meetings. The committee shall meet at least quarterly. It shall meet additionally at the request of the bishop, the presiding elder, the pastor, any other person accountable to the committee, or the chairperson of the committee. The committee shall meet only with the knowledge of the pastor. The pastor shall be present at each meeting of the committee, except where he or she voluntarily excuses himself or herself. The committee may meet with the presiding elder without the appointed clergy under consideration being present. However, the appointed clergy under consideration shall be notified prior to such meeting with the presiding elder and be brought into consultation immediately thereafter. Portions of SPR meetings where sensitive, confidential, or private matters need to be discussed should be held in closed session and information shared in the committee shall be confidential.

6.5 Duties. The duties of the committee shall include the following:

- a) To promote unity in the church.
- b) To confer with and counsel the pastor and staff on matters pertaining to their effectiveness in ministry; assessing their unique gifts and abilities; priorities in the use of gifts, skills, and time; relationships with the congregation; the person's health and self-care, including conditions that may impede their effectiveness of ministry;

- and to interpret the nature and function of the ministry to the congregation, while interpreting the congregation's needs, values, and traditions to the pastor and staff.
- c) To provide evaluation at least annually for the use of the pastor and staff to enhance their effective ministry and to identify continuing educational needs and plans.
 - d) To develop and approve written job descriptions and titles for associate pastor and other staff members in cooperation with the senior pastor. The term associate pastor is used as a general term to indicate any pastoral appointment in a local church other than the pastor in charge. Committees are encouraged to develop specific titles for associate pastor that reflect the job descriptions and expectations.
 - e) To arrange with the Leadership Council for the necessary time and financial assistance for the attendance of the pastor and/or staff at such continuing education, self-care, and spiritual renewal events as may serve their professional and spiritual growth.
 - f) To enlist, interview, evaluate, review, and recommend annually to the Charge Conference lay ministers and people for candidacy for ordained ministry. Recognizing that the Global Methodist Church affirms the biblical and theological support of persons regardless of gender, race, ethnic or tribal origin, or disabilities for these ministries. Neither the pastor nor any member of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be present during the consideration of a candidacy application or renewal for a member of their immediate family. The committee shall provide to the Charge Conference a list of persons from the charge who are preparing for ordained ministry, lay ministry, and/or missionary service, and shall maintain contact with these persons, supplying the Charge Conference with a progress report on each person.
 - g) To confer with the pastor and/or other appointed members of the staff if it should become evident that the best interests of the charge and/or pastor will be served by a change of pastor. The committee shall cooperate with the pastor, the presiding elder, and the bishop in securing clergy leadership. Its relationship to the presiding elder and the bishop shall be advisory only. The committee shall not recommend to the presiding elder or bishop a pastoral change without first discussing its concerns with the pastor involved.
 - h) To communicate with the Nominations Committee when there is a need for other leaders and the Leadership Council when there is a need for employed staff.
 - i) The committee and the pastor shall recommend to the Leadership Council a written statement of policies and procedures regarding the process for hiring, contracting, evaluating, promoting, retiring, and dismissing staff personnel who are not ordained clergy subject to episcopal appointment

- j) Members of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee shall keep themselves informed of personnel matters related to the denomination's policies, professional standards, liability issues, and civil law. They are responsible for communicating and interpreting such matters to staff. Committee members should make themselves available for educational and training opportunities that will enable them to be effective in their work.
- k) To consult on matters pertaining to proposals for compensation, travel expense, vacation, health and life insurance, pension, housing, continuing education, and other practical matters affecting the work and families of the pastor and staff, and to make annual recommendations regarding such matters to the Leadership Council, reporting budget items to the Finance Committee.

ARTICLE 7

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

7.1 Members. The Board of Trustees, consisting of nine (9) voting members of the church representing the gender, race, and age of the congregation, provided that all members shall be of legal age as determined by the relevant and controlling civil law. The pastor and lay leader of the congregation shall be a member with voice but without vote of the Board of Trustees and may not be counted for the purpose of achieving a quorum or calculating a majority.

7.2 Terms. Election of Trustees. Members of the Board of Trustees of each local congregation may be elected by the charge or church conference to a three-year term, equally divided into three classes, with one-third elected each year. A member of the Board of Trustees may be reelected for no more than one additional term, and no member may serve longer than six consecutive years unless approved by the Leadership Council.

7.3 Vacancies and Removal of Trustees. Should a trustee withdraw from the membership of the local church or be excluded therefrom, such vacancy shall be filled by election for the unexpired term.

7.4 Organization. The Board of Trustees may organize as follows:

- a) Within thirty days after the beginning of the calendar, the Board of Trustees shall convene at a time and place designated by the chairperson or the vice chairperson for the purpose of electing officers of the board for the ensuing year and transacting any other business properly brought before it. The preceding Board of Trustees Chairperson will conduct this meeting until a replacement is elected.
- b) The board shall elect from its members, to hold office for a term of one year or until their successors shall be elected, a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary provided, however, that the chairperson and vice chairperson shall not be members of the same class.

7.5 Meetings. The board shall meet at the call of its chairperson at least three times per year at such times and places as designated in the meeting notice at least one week prior to the appointed time of the meeting. A majority of the members of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.

7.6 Powers and Limitations. The board shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

- a) Oversight, and care of all real property owned by the local church and of all property and equipment acquired directly by the local church or by any group, board, class, omission, or similar organization connected with it. The Board shall not, however, violate the rights of any local church organization elsewhere granted in the bylaws.
- b) The use of church facilities or properties by an outside organization may be granted by the Board of Trustees after consideration of whether the purposes and programs of that organization are consistent with the values of the congregation and the Global Methodist Church.
- c) Subject to the direction of the Charge Conference, the Board of Trustees shall receive and administer all bequests made to the local church and shall receive and administer all trusts and shall invest all trust funds of the local church in conformity with laws of the country, state, or political unit in which the local church is located.
- d) The board shall conduct an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify any existing physical, architectural, or communication barriers that impede the full participation of people with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities for the elimination of all such barriers.
- e) The board shall conduct an annual accessibility audit of their buildings, grounds, and facilities to discover and identify any existing physical, architectural, or communication barriers that impede the full participation of people with disabilities and shall make plans and determine priorities for the elimination of all such barriers.

7.7 Annual Report. The board shall annually make a written report to the Charge Conference, in which the following shall be included:

- a) The legal description and the reasonable valuation of each parcel of real estate owned by the church
- b) The specific name of the grantor in each deed of conveyance of real estate to the local church
- c) An inventory and the reasonable valuation of all personal property owned by the local
- d) The amount of income received from any income-producing property and a detailed list of expenditures in connection therewith
- e) The amount received during the year for building, rebuilding, remodeling, and improving real estate, and an itemized statement of expenditures
- f) Outstanding capital debts, payoff date, and how contracted
- g) A detailed statement of the insurance carried on each parcel of real estate, indicating whether restricted by co-insurance or other limiting conditions and whether adequate Insurance is carried
- h) The name of the custodian of all legal papers of the local church, and where they are kept

- i) A detailed list of all trusts in which the local church is the beneficiary, specifying where and how the funds are invested
- j) An evaluation of all church properties, including the chancel areas, to ensure accessibility to people with disabilities, and when applicable, a plan and timeline for resolving barriers to accessibility.

ARTICLE 8

FINANCE COMMITTEE

8.1 Members. The Finance Committee is elected annually and is composed of the committee chairperson, the pastor, a lay member of the annual conference, the chairperson of the Leadership Council, the chairperson or designee of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, a representative of the Board of Trustees to be selected by that board, the chairperson of the ministry group on stewardship (if any), the lay leader, the treasurer, and other at-large members as the Charge Conference may determine. The chairperson of the Finance Committee, treasurer, chairperson of the Board of Trustees, chairperson of SPR, and at-large members determined by the Charge Conference. The financial secretary (a paid staff member) serves as the Finance Committee secretary without vote. The positions of treasurer and financial secretary may not be combined and held by one person, and the persons holding these two positions should not be immediate family members. No immediate family members of any appointed clergy may serve as treasurer, Finance Committee chair, financial secretary, counter, or serve in any paid or unpaid position under the responsibilities of the Finance Committee

8.2 Responsibility. The Finance Committee shall oversee the stewardship of financial resources as their priority throughout the year, seeking as part of the ministry of discipleship to move members toward fulfilling their membership vows.

8.3 Budgets. All financial requests to be included in the annual budget of the local church shall be submitted to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee shall compile annually a complete budget for the local church and submit it to the Leadership Council for review and adoption. The Finance Committee shall be charged with responsibility for developing and implementing plans that will raise sufficient income to meet the budget adopted by the Leadership Council. It shall administer the funds received according to instructions from the Leadership Council. The committee shall carry out the Leadership Council's directions in guiding the treasurer(s) and financial secretary.

8.4 Counting Team. The committee shall designate a Counting Team of at least two people not of one immediate family residing in the same household to count the offering. They shall work under the supervision of the Treasurer. The Counting Team will be responsible for:

- a) Counting all offerings
- b) Completing a report on offering receipts
- c) Placing all counted checks and cash along with the report in the safe.

8.5 Financial Secretary. The function of the Financial Secretary is to be responsible for:

- a) All bookkeeping
- b) Deposits of contributions
- c) Preparation of checks of invoices for signature by the Treasurer
- d) Preparation of all reports of St. James and The Light for the Finance Committee
- e) Attending and preparing minutes for all Finance Committee meetings.

8.6 Deposits. Funds received shall be deposited promptly in accordance with the procedures established by the Finance Committee. The financial secretary shall keep records of the contributions and payments.

8.7 Disbursements. The church treasurer shall disburse all money contributed to the causes represented in the local church budget, and such other funds and contributions as the Leadership Council may determine. The treasurer shall remit each month to the conference treasurer all denominational and conference benevolence funds then on hand. The church treasurer shall make regular and detailed reports on funds received and disbursed to the Finance Committee and the Leadership Council.

8.8 Financial Policy. The Finance Committee shall establish written financial policies to document the internal controls of the local church. The written financial policies should be reviewed for adequacy and effectiveness annually by the Finance Committee and submitted as a report to the Charge Conference annually.

8.9 Annual Review and Audits. The committee shall make provision for an annual review and a formal audit every two (2) to five (5) years of the financial statements of the local church and all its organizations and accounts. The committee shall make a full and complete report to the annual Charge Conference. A local church audit is defined as an independent evaluation of the financial reports and records and the internal controls of the local church by a qualified individual(s). The audit shall be conducted to reasonably verify the accuracy and reliability of financial reporting, determine whether assets are being safeguarded, and determine compliance with local law, local church policies and procedures, and the Book of Doctrines and Discipline. The audit may include:

- a) a review of the cash and investment reconciliations
- b) interviews with the treasurer, financial secretary, pastor, Finance Committee chair, business manager, those who count offerings, church secretary, etc., with inquiries regarding compliance with existing written financial policies and procedures
- c) a review of journal entries and authorized check signers for each checking and investment account other procedures requested by the Finance Committee. The audit shall be performed by an audit committee composed of persons unrelated to

the persons listed in 2 above or by an independent certified public accountant (CPA), accounting firm, or equivalent.

8.10 Depositories. The committee shall recommend to the Leadership Council proper depositories for the church's funds. Funds received shall be deposited promptly in the name of the local church.

8.11 Designated Contributions. Contributions designated for specific causes and objects shall be promptly forwarded according to the intent of the donor and shall not be retained or used for any other purpose, unless released from the obligation by the contributor.

8.12 Budget Amendments. After the budget of the local church has been approved, additional appropriations or changes in the budget must be approved by the Leadership Council.

8.13 Separate Funds. The committee shall prepare at least annually a report to the Leadership Council of all designated funds that are separate from the current expense budget.

ARTICLE 9

MINISTRY COUNCIL

9.1 Responsibilities. The Ministry Council shall provide for the assessment, development, and implementation of the ministry and mission of St. James Church in accordance with the church's vision and mission statements.

9.2 Meetings. The Ministry Council will meet not less than quarterly and may meet as needed in person or by electronic means.

9.3 Chairperson. The chairperson of the Ministry Council shall be the Executive Minister.

9.4 Planning. The ministry Council shall submit its goals and program plans to the Leadership Council for review and approval. Upon adoption of the goals and plans by the Leadership Council, the Ministry Council will implement the goals and plans and evaluate the outcomes.

9.5 Funding. Prior to submission of any program to the Leadership Council and on an annual basis, the Ministry Council shall submit recommendations to the Finance Committee requesting the financial resources needed to implement its program.

9.6 Members and Roles. The Ministry Council will be made up of Ministry Team Leaders (recommended by the Nominating Committee), Church Staff, and ex officio members. Specifically, the Ministry Council will include the following:

- a) **Children's Team Leader** - provides arenas where children learn about and become more like Jesus so that they commit their life to Him. The Children's Minister will lead this team.
- b) **Congregational Care Team Leader** - guides people with the love of Christ through life's ups and downs, crises, and hardships by listening, showing compassion, and providing comfort to support the emotional and spiritual well-being of all in our congregation.
- c) **Connect Team Leader** – made up of ushers, greeters, parking lot attendants who provide front line point of contact with all who come to worship with us. They serve to warmly connect with congregants and visitors, connect visitors to others in the congregation and staff.
- d) **GO Team Leader** – is responsible for outreach in the community, the region and the world. Additionally, they conduct the annual Global Impact Celebration, determine when and how Faith Promise funds are distributed and otherwise direct the missions efforts of the church.

- e) **Grow Team Leader** – has responsibility for the discipleship ministries of the church including Sunday School, Wesley Groups, Bible studies, and anything that pertains to the teaching ministries of the church.
- f) **Fellowship Team Leader** – initiates and supports all aspects of the church’s fellowship efforts by coordinating set-up, food preparation, and clean-up of scheduled and unscheduled events.
- g) **Media Team Leader** – provides for the in-service sound support, graphic support, livestream, in-house video production, and social media ministry of the church.
- h) **Prayer Team Leader** – ensures that St. James is both a praying church, and a place where people can receive transforming and restorative prayer.
- i) **Worship Team Leader** – ensure that all elements of worship, including music, setting, accoutrements, elements, work together to bring about participation, wonderment, transformation, and praise through the worship experience. The Music Minister will serve in this role.
- j) **Youth Team Leader** – provides ministry to and for youth to reach them, teach them about Jesus so that they commit their life to Him.
- k) **At-Large Members** – three (3) at-large members will be elected to serve a 3-year term
- l) **Ex Officio Members** – will be the Pastor and the Lay Leader.
- m) **Note:** The Bereavement Team and the Altar Committee will be adjunct to the Congregational Care Team and the Worship Team, respectively.

ARTICLE 10 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

10.1 Responsibilities. There shall be elected annually by the Charge Conference a Nominations Committee that is composed of professing members of the local church. The responsibility of this committee is to identify, develop, deploy, evaluate, and monitor Christian spiritual leadership for the congregation. The committee shall engage in biblical and theological reflection on the mission of the church, the primary task, and ministries of the local church. It shall provide a means of identifying the spiritual gifts and abilities of the church's members. The committee shall work with the Leadership Council to determine the diverse ministry tasks of the congregation, and the skills needed for leadership.

10.2 Ongoing Guidance. The Nominations Committee shall serve throughout the year to guide the Leadership Council on matters regarding the leadership of the congregation other than employed staff.

10.3 Annual Recommendation. The committee shall recommend to the Charge Conference, at its annual session, the names of people to serve as officers and leaders of designated ministries of the Leadership Council required for the work of the church and as the Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the church requires or as the Charge Conference deems necessary to its work.

10.4 Chairperson. The pastor shall be the chairperson.

10.5 Classes. To ensure experience and stability, the membership shall be divided into three classes, one of which would be elected each year for a three-year term. Retiring members of the committee may succeed themselves for one additional term. Only one person from an immediate family shall serve on the committee. When vacancies occur during the year, successors shall be elected by the Leadership Council.

10.6 Balance. In the identification and selection process, care shall be given that the leadership of ministries reflects a cross-section of the church and that all voices are given due consideration.

ARTICLE 11 INDIMNIFICATION

11.1 Indemnification. To the fullest extent permitted by the laws of the State of Georgia, the Church shall indemnify any person who serves or has served as a director, officer, employee, or volunteer of the Church (including members of committees or ministry teams), against any and all expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred in connection with any proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, arising out of such person's conduct in their official capacity with the Church, provided that such person acted in good faith and in a manner they reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the Church and, in the case of criminal proceedings, had no reasonable cause to believe their conduct was unlawful.

11.2 Advance of Expenses. Expenses incurred in defending any proceeding may be paid by the Church in advance of the final disposition of such proceeding upon receipt of an undertaking by or on behalf of the person to repay such amount unless it is ultimately determined that they are entitled to indemnification.

11.3 Insurance. The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a director, officer, employee, or volunteer of the Church against any liability asserted against or incurred by such person in any such capacity, or arising out of their status as such, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify them against such liability under the provisions of this Article.

11.4. Limitations. No indemnification shall be provided to any person in relation to matters as to which they are adjudged to be liable for gross negligence, willful misconduct, or criminal acts, unless and only to the extent that a court of competent jurisdiction determines that such person is fairly and reasonably entitled to indemnity.

11.5 Severability. If any provision of this Article shall be found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.

ARTICLE 12

MISCELLANEOUS

12.1 Fiscal Year. The Fiscal year of this corporation will begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December of each year.

12.2 Parliamentary Procedures: The Leadership Council and other committees, councils, and boards of this corporation may use the parliamentary procedure each deem most appropriate.

12.3 Additional Committees: The Leadership Council may recommend such other committees as it deems advisable, whose members are to be elected by the Charge Conference.

12.4 Dissolution Clause: Upon discontinuance of this Church by dissolution or otherwise, any assets lawfully available for distribution are to be transferred to one or more organizations qualifying as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, by a majority of members attending at a duly called business meeting.