

**Abundant Life  
Assembly of God**

**Brooklyn, Michigan**

**Constitution and  
By-Laws**

## **PREAMBLE**

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for the building up of the saints, those of like precious faith, where the Holy Spirit may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means of evangelism, both at home and in foreign lands; we, whose names appear upon the Church membership roster, do hereby recognize ourselves as a local church, and adopt the following articles of church order and submit ourselves to be governed by them.

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**Constitution:**

1 ARTICLE I: NAME:

2 The name of the church shall be **ABUNDANT LIFE ASSEMBLY**,  
3 hereinafter called the Church.

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5 ARTICLE II: PREROGATIVES:

6 1. AUTONOMY. This Church shall have the right to govern itself  
7 according to the standards of Scripture recorded in the Holy Bible.

8 2. PROPERTY. In connection therewith, or incidental thereto, it shall have  
9 the right to purchase or acquire by gift, bequest or otherwise, either  
10 directly or as trustee, and to own, hold in trust, use, sell, convey,  
11 mortgage, lease or otherwise dispose of any real, personal, intellectual,  
12 tangible, or property of whatever kind, as may be necessary for the  
13 furtherance of its purposes; all in accordance with its Constitution and By-  
14 Laws or as the same may be hereafter modified or amended.

15  
16 ARTICLE III: AFFILIATION:

17 While maintaining its inherent rights to sovereignty on the conduct of its  
18 own affairs, this Church shall voluntarily enter into cooperative fellowship  
19 with churches of like precious faith associated in the Assemblies of God,  
20 Michigan District and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, with  
21 headquarters at Springfield, Missouri; and shall share in the privileges  
22 and assume the responsibilities enjoined by that affiliation.

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24 ARTICLE IV: TENETS OF FAITH:

25 This Church shall accept the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God,  
26 the all sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of  
27 maintaining general unity, adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths  
28 approved and published by the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

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30 ARTICLE V. ORDINANCES:

31 1. WATER BAPTISM. The Ordinance of Baptism by Immersion in  
32 water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have  
33 repented of their sins and who have believed on the Lord Jesus  
34 Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence as  
35 their salvation (Romans 6:3-5 and Colossians 2:12).

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1 2. HOLY COMMUNION. The Ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be  
2 observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures (Luke 22:19-20 and I  
3 Corinthians 11:23-26).

4  
5 ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP:

6 1. STANDARDS. Membership in this Church shall be eligible to all those  
7 who (a) show evidence of a genuine born-again experience, (b) show  
8 evidence of a consistent Christian life, (c) fully subscribe to the tenets of  
9 faith set forth herein, (d) are willing to contribute regularly to the support  
10 of the Church according to ability, (e) agree to be governed by its  
11 Constitution and By-Laws, and (f) are 18 years of age or older.

12 2. RECEPTION OF MEMBERS. Persons desiring to become members of  
13 the Church shall submit a Membership Application to be examined  
14 according to the standards for membership. The pastor shall present the  
15 names of those who apply for membership with his recommendation to  
16 the official board, who shall act upon said recommendation and render a  
17 final decision. All persons who meet the membership standards and have  
18 been favorably accepted shall be received into the Church and their  
19 names inscribed on its roster.

20 3. VOTING MEMBERS. All those who meet the scriptural standards for  
21 membership, whose names appear on the membership roster of the  
22 Church, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the Church  
23 provided they (a) regularly attend services, (b) are living consistent  
24 Christian lives, and (c) are in agreement with our distinctive testimony.

25 4. MEMBERSHIP TERMINATION. Members in good standing who may  
26 wish to sever their relationship with the Church or who may desire their  
27 membership transferred to some other congregation may apply to the  
28 church office for a letter which shall be granted on approval of the pastor,  
29 and said letter signed by the pastor and the secretary of the Church.

30 5. CAUSES FOR MEMBERSHIP DISMISSAL. Membership in the Church  
31 may be dismissed for any member who (a) shall without good cause  
32 absent themselves from the services of the Church for a period of three  
33 consecutive months or more, (b) cease to contribute of their means to its  
34 support, (c) may be out of harmony with its teachings or its ministries, (d)  
35 are under charges for misconduct, or (e) may have fallen under

1 condemnation through sinful or worldly practices. These shall no longer  
2 be considered as members and shall lose their voting privileges until they  
3 are restored to the fellowship by the definite action of the official board.

4 6. ROSTER REVISION. The pastor and the official board shall be  
5 authorized to revise the membership roster of the Church annually, and to  
6 remove from the roster all names of those who (a) have become  
7 deceased during the year, (b) have withdrawn or transferred their  
8 membership, or (c) have been dismissed from membership according to  
9 the causes set forth herein. If a name is removed, the one whose name is  
10 removed shall be notified of the action by the secretary of the church.

11

12 ARTICLE VII: CHURCH OFFICIALS

13 1. The pastor and deacons shall constitute the OFFICIAL BOARD of the  
14 church and shall serve as its trustees.

15 2. PASTOR. The pastor shall be the overseer of the Church and shall  
16 serve as president of the corporation and chairman of the official board.

17 3. PASTORAL ASSOCIATES. Pastoral associates shall be chosen by the  
18 pastor to aid him in the work of the Church as needed. The official board  
19 shall ratify his choice(s).

20 4. ELDERS. The pastor may appoint elders, qualified according to  
21 scriptural standards (I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9), who shall assist the  
22 pastor in the spiritual oversight of the Church under his authority. The  
23 official board shall ratify his choice(s).

24 5. DEACONS. There shall be four deacons, qualified according to  
25 scriptural standards (I Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13), who shall assist the pastor  
26 in practical or business matters of the Church under his authority, and  
27 serve as members of the official board. A deacon may not be a  
28 credentialed minister with the Assemblies of God.

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1 ARTICLE VIII: MEETINGS

2 1. SERVICES. Meetings for public worship shall be held weekly as may  
3 be provided for under the direction of the pastor.

4 2. ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETINGS. There shall be an annual business  
5 meeting during the first quarter at which time the ratification of board  
6 members shall take place and the reports of departments shall be given.  
7 This meeting shall be announced two Sundays prior to the date of the  
8 meeting, or notice may be given to all active members by first class mail  
9 postmarked not less than seven days prior to the meeting.

10 3. SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETINGS. Special business meetings may be  
11 called by (a) the pastor, (b) the official board by majority vote, or (c)  
12 petition signed by not less than one-fourth of the membership of the  
13 Church. Adequate announcement, including purpose of the special  
14 meeting, shall be made at all services on two Sundays prior to the date of  
15 the meeting, or four days' notice of same by mail to  
16 all active members.

17 4. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE. All business meetings of the Church  
18 shall be conducted according to accepted rules of parliamentary  
19 procedure in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and fellowship. The  
20 order of business in the annual business meetings shall be:

- 21 1) devotional
- 22 2) reading of previous minutes
- 23 3) treasurer's report
- 24 4) departmental reports
- 25 5) unfinished business
- 26 6) election of board members
- 27 7) new business, and
- 28 8) adjournment.

29 5. QUORUM. Those in attendance at business meetings of the Church,  
30 whose names appear on the membership roster, shall constitute a  
31 quorum at said meetings.

32 6. BOARD MEETINGS. Meetings of the official board shall be called  
33 regularly by the pastor. In his absence, the pastor may appoint a member  
34 of the official board or a pastoral associate to chair a meeting of the official  
35 board, if said meeting is deemed necessary by the pastor.

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1 ARTICLE IX: DEPARTMENTS AND COMMISSIONS

2 The Church shall provide for the establishment of ministry departments as  
3 the need of the work may require. All such departments shall be  
4 subordinate to the Church and shall contribute to the harmony and  
5 development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of  
6 the pastor. Leaders of these departments shall be subject to prior approval  
7 by the pastor. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all departments  
8 and commissions.

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10 ARTICLE X: FINANCES

11 The voluntary contributions of the tithes and offerings of the members and  
12 friends of the Church shall be the primary source of funds for the  
13 maintenance of the Church. The Church shall receive offerings at such  
14 times and in such ways as determined by the pastor. They shall be  
15 secured and accounted for by the treasurer of the Church under the  
16 official board's general supervision.

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18 ARTICLE XI: PROPERTY:

19 The church shall be incorporated under the laws of the State of Michigan.  
20 All property of the Church shall be deeded to the Church and held in its  
21 corporate name.

22 1. PROPERTY THAT IS LESS THAN FIFTEEN PERCENT (15%) OF THE  
23 CHURCH ASSETS.

24 Real, personal, intellectual, tangible, or property of whatever kind, whose  
25 value is less than fifteen percent (15%) of the Church total assets per  
26 most recent annual business report may be purchased, sold, leased,  
27 mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of or acquired by the church board. The  
28 pastor and the secretary of the Church shall certify that such  
29 conveyance, lease, or mortgage has been duly authorized and  
30 recommended by a vote of the board. Such certification shall be held to  
31 be conclusive evidence thereof.

32 2. PROPERTY THAT EXCEEDS/EQUALS FIFTEEN PERCENT (15%) OF  
33 CHURCH ASSETS.

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1 Real, personal, intellectual, tangible, or property of whatever kind, whose  
2 value exceeds/equals fifteen percent (15%) of the Church total assets per  
3 most recent annual business report may be purchased, sold, leased,  
4 mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of or acquired by a vote of at least two  
5 thirds of those voting at a regular or special business meeting of the  
6 Church. The pastor and the secretary of the Church shall certify such  
7 conveyance, lease, or mortgage has been duly authorized and  
8 recommended by a vote of the Church. Such certificate shall be held to be  
9 conclusive evidence thereof.

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## 11 ARTICLE XII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION:

12 This constitution may be amended or changed by a two-thirds vote of the  
13 membership of the Church who are in attendance at any business  
14 meeting called for that purpose, provided due notice of such proposed  
15 change shall have been made at all the services on at least two Sundays  
16 preceding the date of said meeting, or notice may be given to all active  
17 members by first class mail postmarked not less than seven days prior to  
18 the meeting by the pastor or secretary of the Church.

19 Articles IV and V of this constitution are not subject to amendment, except  
20 to conform to any amendments made to the Statement of Fundamental  
21 Truths of the Assemblies of God by The General Council. All  
22 amendments must be consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of both  
23 The General Council of the Assemblies of God and those of the  
24 Assemblies of God, Michigan District.

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## **By-Laws**

1 ARTICLE I: DUTIES OF CHURCH OFFICIALS

2 1. PASTOR. The Pastor shall be considered as the overseer of the Church  
3 and shall direct all its activities. He shall be the president of the  
4 corporation and shall act as chairman of the official board and all  
5 business meetings of the Church. He shall be an ex-officio member of all  
6 departments and commissions. He shall provide for all the services of the  
7 church and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions,  
8 or revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to speak, preach or  
9 minister in the Church without his approval.

10 2. PASTORAL ASSOCIATES. The associate pastors shall assist the  
11 pastor in areas of business and/or ministry, or in such areas as assigned,  
12 and provide ministry in the absence of the pastor. Such associates shall  
13 oversee the day-to-day operations of their assigned department, and  
14 thereby carry out and fulfill the pastor's vision in such areas.

15 3. ELDERS. As spiritual leaders in the Church, the elders shall:

16 a) give themselves to prayer and to direct involvement in the spiritual  
17 functions of the Church, b) relieve some of the ministerial pressures on  
18 the pastor by being available to minister to the people, c) be available  
19 to counsel with the pastor in decisions in spiritual matters, d) be  
20 available to assist in the administering of the ordinances, g) assume  
21 other duties as assigned by the pastor.

22 4. DEACONS. As caretakers of practical matters in the Church, the  
23 deacons shall:

24 a) advise on business transactions, b) be custodians of the Church  
25 property and provide for maintenance of the same, c) seek to relieve  
26 the administrative and ministerial pressures on the pastor, d) assume  
27 other practical duties as assigned by the pastor, and e) be members of  
28 the Church for at least one year.

29 5. OFFICIAL BOARD. The official board shall approve the pastor's  
30 recommendations for membership, select pastoral candidates, establish  
31 and approve an annual budget, ratify the pastor's selection(s) for pastoral  
32 associates and elders, and serve as an advisory support team for the  
33 pastor.

34 a) Secretary. The board shall annually elect one of its members to  
35 serve as the corporate secretary. The secretary shall keep a true and  
36 accurate record of the minutes of official meetings of the board and

1 membership, in addition to his other responsibilities.

2 b) Treasurer. The board shall also annually elect one of its members to  
3 serve as the corporate treasurer. The treasurer shall be entrusted with  
4 all the finances of the Church, depositing such funds in a responsible  
5 financial institution in the name of the Church, dispersing them as  
6 authorized by the pastor and official board, and providing for an  
7 accurate accounting of such funds with standard reporting and an  
8 annual independent review. He shall be bonded for the amount of ten  
9 thousand dollars (\$10,000.00).

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## 11 ARTICLE II: ELECTIONS AND/OR VACANCIES OF CHURCH OFFICIALS

12 1. PASTOR. The pastor may be elected to serve for one or more years or  
13 for an indefinite period of time as may be determined at the time of  
14 election. He shall be nominated by the official board or by secret ballot.  
15 Election shall be by secret ballot at the annual business meeting or at a  
16 special meeting called for that purpose. A two-thirds majority vote shall  
17 be required to constitute an election.

18 2. PASTORAL ASSOCIATES. The pastor shall select the associate  
19 pastors.

20 3. ELDERS. The pastor shall select the elders.

21 4. DEACONS. The nominating commission shall recommend, by majority  
22 vote, one man per office of deacon to the official board, which shall be  
23 presented to the membership for ratification at the annual business  
24 meeting. A two-thirds majority vote by secret ballot for each name  
25 recommended shall be required for election. In the event that ratification is  
26 not received, the nominating commission shall present names for deacon  
27 at a subsequent business meeting until there is ratification. The deacons'  
28 term in office shall be two years, on a rotating basis. Deacons are eligible  
29 to serve up to three consecutive full terms. A deacon who has served  
30 three consecutive full terms will be eligible to serve again following a one  
31 year absence from office. (1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13)

32 5. PASTORAL VACANCIES. If the pastor has been called for a definite  
33 period of time, the tenure of office shall terminate at the end of his term of  
34 service. A pastor whose term of service has ended may be re-elected by a  
35 two-thirds majority vote. In the event the pastor has serious charges  
36 preferred against him, or his ministry has ceased to be effective, power is  
37 vested on the official board to ask for the resignation of the pastor at any

1 meeting of said board, if such request is by majority vote. If such  
2 resignation is refused, the pastorate shall not be considered vacant until  
3 the action of the official board has been confirmed by a majority vote of  
4 the membership at a meeting called for that purpose, and presided over  
5 by a District official. When a vacancy in the pastorate shall occur, a supply  
6 shall be arranged for by the official board until a pastor shall be chosen as  
7 prescribed in Section 1. In the case of a pastor's removal from office, a  
8 report of such action shall be made to the District officary.

9 6. OTHER VACANCIES. When a vacancy occurs in any other elected  
10 office, the pastor shall arrange a replacement that shall be ratified by the  
11 official board. The remaining tenure of office shall be filled at the next  
12 annual business meeting as provided in the By-Laws. Any office may be  
13 declared vacant at the discretion of the official board by a majority vote of  
14 the official board in session.

15 7. NOMINATING COMMISSION. The nominating commission shall be  
16 composed of seven members. Two shall be deacons whose terms are  
17 complete and who will not be candidates for the election, two shall be  
18 elders, (if there are not two deacons or two elders who meet this criteria,  
19 the pastor shall select the additional member(s) from the membership  
20 roster), two shall be selected from the membership roster by the pastor,  
21 and the pastor (or an associate pastor selected by the pastor in his  
22 absence) shall serve as the seventh member. This commission shall notify  
23 its nominees prior to the election, and shall submit such names to the  
24 membership for ratification and election. Recommendations may be  
25 presented in writing by members of the Church to the nominating  
26 commission prior to the business meeting. There shall be no nominations  
27 from the floor during any business meeting.

28  
29 **ARTICLE III: DEPARTMENTAL FINANCES:**

30 All departments of the Church shall operate on a yearly budget prepared  
31 by their leaders and approved by the official board.

1 ARTICLE IV: PROPERTY

2 a) Defection

3 In the event defection shall occur from the Tenets of Faith of this church as  
4 the same are stated in the Statement of Fundamental Truths in the  
5 Constitution of The General Council, any portion of the membership  
6 subscribing to and practicing the aforesaid Tenets of Faith and retaining  
7 membership with Abundant Life Assembly shall retain possession of, and  
8 title to, all properties of said church with full rights thereto as provided in its  
9 Bylaws.

10 The determination of which group of members desires continued affiliation  
11 with the Assemblies of God and adheres to its Statement of Fundamental  
12 Truths shall be determined by the Presbyterian Board of the Assemblies of  
13 God, Michigan District, and its decision shall be final and binding.

14 b) Disaffiliation

15 This church may disaffiliate from the Assemblies of God by a two-thirds vote  
16 of all active members of the church present at a special business meeting  
17 called for that purpose [see Article 7, Section 3 and Section 5], provided that  
18 the District Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee, shall be notified  
19 and given opportunity to actively participate in such meeting.

20 c) Dissolution

21 In the event this church shall cease to function for the purposes as declared  
22 heretofore in its Preamble or its Bylaws or upon its dissolution, none of its  
23 funds or assets shall be distributed to any officer, deacon, trustee, or any  
24 other individual. The Official Board shall, after paying or making provision for  
25 the payment of all of the liabilities of the church, dispose of all of the funds  
26 and assets of the church by conveying the same to the Assemblies of God,  
27 Michigan District within one (1) year, provided that said District Council at  
28 the time qualifies as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the  
29 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provisions of any  
30 future United States Internal Revenue Law); and further provided, that the  
31 District Presbytery, in its sole and unrestricted discretion, decides to receive  
32 such funds and assets. Any such funds or assets not so disposed of shall  
33 be disposed of by the court having jurisdiction in the county in which the  
34 principal office of the corporation is then located, to such organization as  
35 said Court shall determine which is organized and operated exclusively for  
36 religious purposes.

1 ARTICLE V: ABUNDANT LIFE ASSEMBLY ARBITRATION CLAUSE:

2 Whereas the Scriptures encourage brothers and sisters to resolve disputes  
3 in the church and not in the courts (I Corinthians 6:1-6, Acts 18:12-16,  
4 Matthew 18:15-17, Matthew 5:25, Proverbs 25:8), we hereby recommend  
5 adoption of the following resolution for all members involving disputes  
6 among members and the Church.

7 Inasmuch as the Scriptures require Christians to take their disputes to the  
8 saints and not to the civil courts (I Corinthians 6:1-8), all disputes which  
9 may arise between any member of this Church and the Church itself  
10 (including an officer or director thereof ), shall be resolved by binding  
11 arbitration once efforts to mediate or conciliate the dispute have failed.

12 Either party to the dispute may initiate (after failure of normal conciliation  
13 system) the arbitration process by filing with the other party a written  
14 request for arbitration within a reasonable amount of time after the dispute  
15 has arisen and efforts to mediate or conciliate have failed. In such a case,  
16 the member and the Church shall each name an arbitrator, and the two  
17 so selected shall name a third.

18 All arbitrators must be born-again Christian who have received the  
19 baptism in the Holy Spirit (according to Acts 2:4) and who are members in  
20 good standing of an Assemblies of God church. The third arbitrator chosen  
21 by the other two shall disclose, before accepting the appointment, any  
22 financial or personal interest in the outcome of the arbitration, and any  
23 existing or past financial, professional, family or  
24 social relationships which are likely to affect impartiality or which might  
25 reasonably create an appearance of impartiality or bias. Either of the  
26 parties to the arbitration, on the basis of such disclosure, may disqualify  
27 such a candidate from serving as the third arbitrator. A third arbitrator who  
28 serves without objection from either party has a continuing duty to  
29 disclose relationships or interests which may impair his impartiality. Either  
30 party, regardless of the stage of the arbitration process may, on the basis  
31 of such disclosures, disqualify such a person from further participation.  
32 The arbitration process shall not proceed until the third arbitrator is  
33 selected.

34  
35 The arbitrators shall appoint the time and place for the hearing and cause  
36 notification to the parties to be served personally or by registered mail not  
37 less than five days before the hearing. Appearance at the hearing waives  
38 such notice. The arbitrators may adjourn the hearing from time to time as  
39 necessary and, on request of a party and for good cause, or upon their  
40 own motion, may postpone the hearing to a later date. The arbitrators may  
41 hear and determine the controversy upon the evidence produced

1 notwithstanding the failure of a party duly notified to appear. The parties  
2 are entitled to be heard to present evidence material to the controversy  
3 and to cross-examine witnesses at the hearing. All the arbitrators shall  
4 conduct the hearing, but a majority of them may determine any question  
5 and render a final award. If during the course of the hearing, an arbitrator  
6 for any reason ceases to act, he shall be replaced in the same manner in  
7 which he was originally selected.

8 The arbitrators may in their absolute discretion admit as evidence any  
9 affidavit or declaration concerning the matters in dispute, a copy thereof  
10 having been given at least three days previously to the party against  
11 whom the same is offered, but the person whose evidence is so taken  
12 shall be subject to cross-examination by such party. The arbitrators shall  
13 have the power to order and direct what they shall deem necessary to be  
14 done by either of the parties relating to the matters in dispute. Costs of the  
15 arbitration shall be assessed in the discretion of the arbitrators, who may  
16 award by and whom they shall be paid. Any submission of a dispute to  
17 arbitration shall not be revoked by the death of any party to the dispute,  
18 and any award will be binding upon such person's heirs and successors.

19 The decision of the arbitrators shall be binding on both parties, and both  
20 parties submit themselves to the personal jurisdiction of the courts of the  
21 State of Michigan, both state and federal, for the entry of judgment  
22 confirming the arbitrators' award.

23 The arbitration process is not a substitute for the Biblical disciplinary  
24 process, and shall in no way effect the authority of the church to  
25 investigate reports of misconduct, conduct hearings, or administer  
26 discipline.

27 Any matter not provided for herein shall be governed by the provisions of  
28 the Uniform Arbitration Act.

29

### 30 ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS TO THESE BY-LAWS

31 These By-Laws may be amended at any business meeting of the Church  
32 by a majority vote of the members present, provided the proposed  
33 amendment has been announced publicly on the two Sundays prior to the  
34 date of the meeting, or notice may be given to all active members by first  
35 class mail postmarked not less than seven days prior to the meeting, by  
36 the pastor or the secretary of the Church.

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