

# Divine New Life Fellowship

## Church Bylaws

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## Document Summary

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## Document Revision History

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# DIVINE NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP

## Church Bylaws

### Preamble

It is the purpose of God, our Heavenly Father, to call out of the world a people who shall constitute the Body, the Church of Jesus Christ, built and established upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Himself being the Chief Cornerstone;

And the members of the Body, the Church, are enjoined to assemble themselves together for worship, fellowship and instruction in the Word of God, the work of the ministry, and for the exercise of those spiritual gifts and offices provided for in the New Testament;

And to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands, we adopt the following articles of the church order and submit ourselves to be governed by the Bylaws.

### Article 1. The Church

#### 1.1 The Name

The name of the Church shall be Divine New Life Fellowship (DNLF), a Church under Divine New Life Ministries. Divine New Life Ministries is a Christian mission organization established in the year 2005, and registered in India as per the Indian Trusts Act 1882.

#### 1.2 Vision and Mission

Our Vision is based on the Great Commission of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:16-20). Our mission focuses on saving souls by spreading the love of Jesus Christ. We as a congregation of believers reach out to the lost by preaching the Gospel and making disciples of our Lord and saviour Jesus Christ.

To fulfil this vision we have several branches actively working in many parts of India & abroad with the following missions:

- 1) A Congregation committed to be House of prayer, worship, discipleship and evangelism
- 2) Mission field work
- 3) Planting churches and developing weak churches.
- 4) Caring the under-privileged through education & support.

## Article 2. Statement of Faith

### 2.1 The Holy Bible

- 1) The Holy Bible consists of the sixty-six Canonical books from Genesis to Revelation and it is divided into two parts namely, the Old and the New Testaments.
- 2) The entire Bible is God breathed. (2 Timothy 3:16)
- 3) The Scriptures written in the original languages (Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic) are infallible and without contradictions. (Rev.21:5)
- 4) The Bible is the Word of God which stands firm in heaven forever. (Psalm 119:89; Hebrews 4:12)
- 5) The Bible is written by holy men of God moved by the Holy Spirit and every word in it is inspired by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20, 21)
- 6) The Bible gives truthful, authoritative and trustworthy revelations of God. (Heb.1:1, 2)
- 7) It provides a clear understanding of God and also the way of salvation for the mankind. (2 Tim 3:15-17)
- 8) It is strictly prohibited to add, to reduce or to bring any changes in the Bible by any human beings, angels, councils, churches, leaders or on the basis of any cultures, rites, rituals, customs, traditions, miracles, signs, revelations or visions. (Pro. 30:5, 6; Rev. 22:18, 19; Deu. 4:5; Gal. 1:8)
- 9) The Church has no right to preach, to teach, to convince, to follow or to command anything that is contradictory to the written Word of God (Matthew 15:3, 6, 9), but has to discern whether it is as per the Word of God. (Acts 17:11)
- 10) All the scriptures both in the Old and the New Testaments are Christ centred. The theme of the Bible centers around the works of Christ during His first and second coming and thus it is God's counsel to lead the mankind to Christ. (John 5:39, 46, 47; Luke 24:27)
- 11) The purpose behind the writing of the Scriptures is to provide all the necessary doctrines for the spiritual and practical upliftment of the human beings. (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

### 2.2 God

- 1) There is only one true God. (Deuteronomy 6:4).
- 2) God remains as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in His personality. (Matthew 28:19, Mark 12:29)
- 3) All the attributes of Deity and the characteristics of personality are equal in His Trinity.
- 4) God is eternal, immutable, creator of all, self-existent, unique, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, holy, mighty in everything, righteous and separated from all the creations. (1Tim 1:17; 6:15-16)
- 5) God is Spirit (John 4:24). God is invisible and complete. (Col.1:15)
- 6) God is perfect in His moral attributes such as love, truth, righteousness, peace, holiness, goodness, mercy, graciousness, gentleness, faithfulness, grace and so on. (1 Jn.4:8; Lev.11:44; Gen.18:25; 1 Thes.5:24; Eph.1:6,7; 2Pet.8:14; Nah.1:7)

### 2.3 Jesus Christ

- 1) Jesus Christ is God who took the form of a man to save the mankind from their sins. (John 15:18; 10:30)
- 2) Jesus Christ, the Word, who was with God, and who was God, came to the world in the form of man, by the work of the Holy Spirit through Virgin birth and lived on the earth filled with grace and truth. (John 1:1, 14)
- 3) Jesus Christ was born sinless and was without sin (Matthew 1:18, Hebrews 4:15).
- 4) Jesus Christ took a sacrificial death for the mankind and died on the cross, bearing the condemnation of sin and gave His life as a ransom for the remission of sins. Thus, He fulfilled the righteousness of God in Him and gives the gift of salvation to whoever believes in Him. (Rom 5:8)
- 5) Jesus Christ resurrected from the death on the third day. (1 Cor. 15:14).
- 6) Jesus Christ ascended to heaven in glorified body, seated on the right hand of God the Father and He is "the one and only mediator between God and mankind". (1Tim 2:5)
- 7) Jesus Christ was perfectly divine while He was perfectly human. (Philippians 2:5-8)

### 2.4 The Holy Spirit

- 1) The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3, 4).
- 2) The Holy Spirit is a person (Rom 8:27).
- 3) The Holy Spirit glorifies Lord Jesus in all His works (John 16:8).
- 4) The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness and of judgment (John 16:8).
- 5) The Holy Spirit regenerates the sinners by the Word of God and abides in them. (John 3:3-6; John 14:16, 17).
- 6) The Holy Spirit prepares believers to become like Christ by guiding them, teaching them, enlightening them with the Gifts of the Spirit and by enabling them to bear the Fruit of the Spirit (John 16:13; John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 12:8-11; Galatians 5:22, 23).

### 2.5 Salvation

- 1) God created the first man and the woman in His own image and likeness (Gen 1:26, 27).
- 2) Man sinned and fell short of the glory of God and was condemned because of his disobedience to God (Romans 3:23; Romans 5:2).
- 3) To be redeemed from the condemnation of God, all human beings should be born-again (John 3:3).
- 4) Salvation cannot be attained by any good works, religious rites or rituals. (Galatians 2:16)
- 5) A person is being justified freely by the Grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ and becomes eligible for salvation (Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8; Romans 10:9; Acts 16:31).

### 2.6 The Church

- 1) The Church is the assembly of people who are saved through faith in Christ Jesus and separated themselves from the world. (Acts 2:47)
- 2) Christ is the Head of the Church and Church is the Body of Christ (Colossians 1:18).
- 3) The believers should gather together frequently for fellowship (Acts 2:42; Hebrews

10:24, 25).

- 4) The only ordinances of the New Testament church are the baptism and the Lord's Table (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24, 25).
- 5) Each believer who repents and accepts Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour should receive water baptism by immersion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:18-20)
- 6) All believers, baptised and leading a holy life should partake in the Lord's Table of "bread and cup" observed in remembrance of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, until He returns (1 Corinthians 11:23-32).
- 7) All believers should desire for the baptism in the Holy Spirit which is the promise of God the Father. Speaking in tongues as Holy Spirit gives utterance is the visible sign of this baptism. (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4)
- 8) Elders and ministers are appointed in the church of Christ as overseers (1 Corinthians 2:28; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 5:2, 3).

## 2.7 Resurrection and Judgement

- 1) A saved person who leads a holy life will enter into the eternal fellowship with Christ, at his death. He will receive a glorious celestial body at the second coming of Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 15:52).
- 2) An unsaved person, at his death, will be separated from all the possibilities of the fellowship with God forever and will be suffering in a place of torment until the final resurrection for the White Throne Judgment and will be thrown into the eternal hell forever and ever along with all whose names are not found in the Book of Life. (Luke 16:23; Rev. 20:11-15)

## 2.8 Eschatology

- 1) Jesus Christ will descend from heaven and come in the clouds for the salvation of the saints who wait for Him. The dead in Christ will be resurrected first, and then those saints who are alive will be transformed and be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and to be with Him forever. (Hebrews 9:28, 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17).
- 2) The righteous shall appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ and shall receive the rewards according to their works (2 Corinthians 5:10).
- 3) At the end of the Great Tribulation period Christ will come down to the earth with His bride – His church, and along with all His saints, will bind the Satan and shall reign on the earth for thousand years as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. (Rev. 6-18, 2 Thess. 1:6, Rev. 19:6; 11-16; 20:1-4)
- 4) At the end of the millennial reign, there will be the final White Throne Judgment where God Himself will be the judge. The angles who sinned and all men whose names are not found in the Book of Life shall be cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:7, 10, 11-15; Jude 6)
- 5) The saints of God shall abide in the new heaven and earth with God forever and ever (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21-22).

## Article 3. Membership

### 3.1 Membership qualifications

A person is qualified to be a member if:

- 1) the person, being not less than 20 years of age:
  - (a) has applied for membership in accordance with Article 3.5, and
  - (b) has been attending Church meetings for a period of not less than 6 months except for existing DNLF members of other DNLF local Church, and
  - (c) is not a member of another Church.
- 2) professed his or her faith in, and submission toward, Jesus Christ as Lord, Saviour and God
- 3) acceptance of the "Statement of Faith", as in article 2.
- 4) baptized in the water as declared in the "Statement of Faith" as in article 2.6.5
- 5) baptized in the Holy Spirit or longing for it as written in Acts 2:4
- 6) subdued and abide by the Bylaws of the Church
- 7) leading a faithful Christian life.
- 8) professing to agree to promote the mission of the Church as in article 1.2
- 9) part-taking in the spiritual and other activities of the Church.

### 3.2 Member – Rights, Duties and Responsibilities

Duties and responsibilities of a member may include:

- 1) keep himself or herself away from all kinds of beliefs, rituals, practices, Church gathering or meetings that are contradictory to the "Statement of Faith"
- 2) shall not forsake the assembling of the Church as written in Hebrews 10:24-25
- 3) prior approval from the Church committee is necessary if he or she:
  - (a) participate in other gospel ministry
  - (b) conduct a private prayer meeting or invite any guest minister
  - (c) if he or she wants to publish any print or electronic gospel literature, or to appear in medias or in social sites etc..
- 4) shall not involve in any type of fundraising activities
- 5) shall attend General Body Meetings of the Church and have right to vote

### 3.3 Transfer of a member

A member may request for a transfer letter from the local Church committee in the event of transferring to another area and to join other DNLF church.

### 3.4 Associate Member

Associate members are those who have applied for the membership but waiting for the approval after the primary review of the Church Minister.

They shall participate in all activities of the Church as members except for attending Church general body meeting, voting, holding any office charges or commenting on any Church matters.

### 3.5 Application for membership

- 1) An applicant who meets the criteria as per Article 3.1 may apply for membership of the Church in the prescribed form to the Secretary of the Church.
- 2) After receiving an application for membership, the Church committee shall determine whether to approve or, reject or review later the application in their next scheduled meeting.
- 3) The secretary shall notify the applicant of the decision of the committee.
- 4) The secretary shall enter the applicant's name in the register of members if the application is approved.
- 5) The applicant becomes a member once his or her name is entered in the register.
- 6) If the application is to be reviewed later, the committee may review the application after three (3) months.
- 7) Membership entitlements are not transferable and terminates on cessation of the person's membership.
- 8) No membership fee is payable to the Church.

### 3.6 Dual Membership

- 1) A person of other church practicing the same doctrine as that of DNLf may apply for membership if he or she is away from the home church.
- 2) A DNLf member may apply for membership of another church that practices the same doctrine, if a DNLf church is not existing in that area.
- 3) The normal membership procedures will apply.

### 3.7 Cessation of membership

A person ceases to be a member of the Church (apart from death) if the person:

- 1) resigns from membership of the Church, or
- 2) is removed from membership of the Church by the General Body with the recommendation of Church committee.

### 3.8 Resignation and removal of membership

- 1) A member may resign from membership of the Church by giving one (1) month notice in writing to the Church committee of the member's intention to resign and, on the expiration of the period of notice, the member ceases to be a member.
- 2) A member if not able to attend the Church services continuously for three (3) weeks for genuine reasons shall notify the Church committee.
- 3) The Church committee may remove a person from membership of the Church if a person is continually not attending Church meetings for a period of three (3) months, unless the Church committee determines that extenuating circumstances apply.
- 4) The membership of a person may be cancelled by the Church committee immediately if he or she leaves the location permanently and cannot attend the services anymore in the local Church.
- 5) The Church committee may remove a person from membership if the person professes that he or she no longer adheres to any of the declaration(s) of the "Statement of Faith".

- 6) If a person ceases to be a member, the secretary shall make an appropriate entry in the register of members recording the date on which the member ceased to be a member, and shall notify or seek to notify the person of the action taken.

### 3.9 Register of members

- 1) The secretary shall establish and maintain a register of members of the Church specifying the name, address and other relevant information of each person who is a member of the Church together with the date on which the person became a member.
- 2) The register of members shall be kept at the principal place of administration of the Church, open for inspection, free of charge, by any member of the Church on written request & approval from the Church committee.

### 3.10 Members' liabilities

A member of the Church is not liable to contribute towards the payment of debts and liabilities of the Church.





## Article 4. Ministers

### 4.1 Ministers

The Church shall have the following Ministers:

- 1) Overseer (s)
  - (a) *Central overseer* – A minister appointed to oversee the churches of all the defined states.
  - (b) *State Overseer* – A minister appointed to oversee the churches within a defined state.
  - (c) *District Overseer* – A minister appointed to oversee the churches within a defined district of a state.
- 2) Pastor
- 3) Evangelist
- 4) Associate Pastor

### 4.2 Qualifications:

- 1) qualifies as a Minister according to 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and known for his maturity of faith and Christian character,
- 2) demonstrated by his life and teaching that he is well qualified to lead and teach the Church in accordance with the mission of the Church and statement of faith,
- 3) agree to teach and uphold the statement of faith,
- 4) agree to promote the mission of the Church.

### 4.3 Responsibilities

The Minister's responsibilities include:

- 1) lead and teach the Church in accordance with the mission of the Church and the statement of faith,
- 2) oversee of all such matters as are vital to the spiritual welfare of the Church, including the ministries and sub-organisations of the Church,
- 3) take decisions on spiritual matters related to the church.

### 4.4 Authorities

- 1) The Minister is a member of the local Church during his tenure and by virtue of his office, is the President of:
  - (a) the Church committee (may delegate the right to preside at meetings of the Church committee to another member of the Church committee in his absence),
  - (b) any general body meetings (delegate the right to preside at general body meetings to another member of the Church Committee in his absence),
  - (c) any sub-committee appointed by the Church committee (delegate the right to preside at meetings of the sub-committee to another member of the sub-committee in his absence),
- 2) An ordained minister can conduct Lord's table, baptism, wedding and funeral services etc. if he is authorised by the board.



#### 4.5 Vacancy and appointment of Minister

- 1) For the purposes of these rules, a vacancy in the office of the Minister occurs (apart from death), if the Minister:
  - (a) resigns from office
  - (b) completes the appointed period
  - (c) removed from the office pursuant to Article 4.7
  - (d) declared insolvent under administration within the meaning of the Government Law.
- 2) Eligibility requirements to apply for a position of Minister
  - (a) qualified in accordance with Article 4.2,
  - (b) bears a theological academic certificate.
  - (c) submit an application in prescribed form to join DNLF.
  - (d) undergo formal written test & personal interview conducted by a council of three members appointed by the board.
- 3) Appointments for new positions
  - (a) A person who has successfully completed as per Article 4.5 (2) may be designated as “Evangelist”
  - (b) An evangelist may apply to the board for the position of a Pastor, with the recommendation of the District Overseer if he has successfully completed three (3) years of Church ministry.
  - (c) The board may approve a person as an evangelist with recommendation of the local Church Pastor on special circumstances. (for example – a person who is doing any ministry without any theological academic qualification)
  - (d) The evangelist who has applied for the position of Pastor has to undergo a written test & a personal interview as referred in 4.5.2) (d)
  - (e) The Board may appoint a pastor without the condition of tenure stated in 4.3) (b) with the recommendation of an overseer.
- 4) Appointments for existing positions

A person, qualified in accordance with Article 4.2, may be appointed as acting Pastor by the board

  - (a) during the temporary absence or incapacity of the Minister, or
  - (b) when the position of Minister is vacant because of:
    - i) Transfer
    - ii) Death
    - iii) a circumstance referred to in Article 4.5 (1) or
    - iv) Inability or illness to discharge his duty as a Minister.
- 5) An acting Pastor, during the period in which he acts as Minister, has all the powers provided by these rules to the Minister (except the powers described Article 4.4).
- 6) The position of the Minister may be temporarily filled, for a period not exceeding twelve (12) months, by any person qualified in accordance with Article 4.2.
- 7) The acting Pastor shall complete the procedures as described in Article 4.5(2) to qualify for a Minister within the temporary period.

- 8) The term of the Minister shall be for a period of three (3) years & the board has the power to extend or reduce the tenure of service.
- 9) The terms of remuneration of a Minister shall be set by the local Church with the approval of the board.
- 10) The transfer of a Minister shall be decided or approved by the board

#### 4.6 Commissioning of Minister

The Minister will be commissioned as Pastor / Evangelist / Associate Pastor within two (2) weeks from the date of appointment in a meeting of the Church.

#### 4.7 Removal and retirement of Minister

- 1) The grounds for removal of a Minister may be:
  - (a) gross misconduct that brings the Christian faith and the Church into disrepute,
  - (b) persistent and wilful teaching of that which is contrary to the statement of faith,
  - (c) persistent unwillingness to promote the mission of the Church,
  - (d) irreversible mental or physical incapacity leaving him incapable of fulfilling his responsibilities,
  - (e) Loss of confidence in the Minister by the Church for any other reason.
- 2) The Minister shall not be removed except upon a 70% majority vote of the members present and voting at a general body meeting subject to the approval from the board.
- 3) The chairman of the General Body meeting at which a motion for the removal of the Minister shall be a member appointed by the members present at the meeting.
- 4) If a decision has been reached to remove the Minister, the chairman shall send the resolution to the board for final decision within 48 hours.
- 5) If the decision by the board is to remove the Minister,
  - (a) the board may appoint an acting Pastor, and
  - (b) the Church shall:
    - i) provide payment of any outstanding dues, and
    - ii) honour any relevant conditions prescribed in the Minister's appointment letter.
- 6) The retirement of a Minister shall be at the age of 65 years. The board may decide to extend his term.

## Article 5. The Church Committee

### 5.1 The Church committee

The Church committee is the committee appointed by the Church.

- 1) The Church committee is compulsory for a church having 50 baptised members, however exception may be made of local church based on their need with the permission of the board.
- 2) Strength of Church committee including church Minister shall be as follows:
  - (a) Up to 50 members – minimum of 3 nos. and maximum of 5 nos.
  - (b) 51 to 100 members – minimum of 5 nos. and maximum of 7 nos.
  - (c) Above 100 members – minimum of 7 nos. and maximum of 9 nos.
- 3) Church Minister shall be the President of the Committee.
- 4) Selection of members shall be conducted during the AGM as per procedure below:
  - (a) Office bearers (Secretary and Treasurer) who form part of the Committee will be nominated and appointed during the AGM.
  - (b) In the event of proposal of more than one name for the position of an Office Bearer, appointment will be based on casting of lot.
  - (c) Appointment of the remaining positions will be made by casting lot amongst the proposed names, in case the number of proposed names are more than the required positions.
- 5) After the selection of the Church committee members, Minister of the church shall notify the board within seven (7) days, and obtain approval.
- 6) Committee may be dissolved only upon recommendation from either the Minister or the representative of GB to the board.
- 7) Tenure of the Church Committee shall be for two (2) years except for the Minister.

### 5.2 Responsibilities of the Church committee

The Church committee is authorised and has responsibility to

- 1) determine and administer the financial affairs of the Church, including the setting of an annual budget, and
- 2) manage the property of the Church, and
- 3) to perform all such acts not elsewhere regulated by these rules as appear to the Church committee to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of the Church, and
- 4) support the Church Minister in all ministerial affairs for proper functioning.

### 5.3 Constitution and committee membership

- 1) A candidate must have a minimum of two years full membership in the local church.
- 2) Minimum age for a committee member shall be 25 years, however two-third of the committee members shall be above the age of 30 years.

## 5.4 Office-bearers of the Church

The office-bearers of the Church are:

- 1) the Minister (who is to hold the office of president) as detailed in Article 4.1
- 2) the Secretary,
- 3) the Treasurer
- 4) the Auditor (compulsory for a church with membership of 100 or above)

## 5.5 Secretary

- 1) The Church committee shall select a member of the Committee to the office of secretary of the Church.
- 2) The secretary shall keep minutes of:
  - (a) all elections and appointments of members of the Church committee and minister, and
  - (b) the names of:
    - i) the persons present at meetings of the Church committee, and
    - ii) the members present at a general body meeting
  - (c) all proceedings at meetings of the committee and general body meetings.
- 3) Minutes of proceedings at a meeting shall be approved and signed by the person presiding at the same meeting.
- 4) The secretary shall maintain registers of:
  - (a) Membership
  - (b) Baptism
  - (c) Marriage
  - (d) Death
  - (e) Any other relevant records
- 5) The secretary shall send notices of meetings (General Body Meetings, Committee meetings & others) to be held to concerned members.
- 6) The secretary shall receive any requisition from the members of the church for any special meetings.

## 5.6 Treasurer

- 1) The Church committee shall select a member of the Committee to the office of treasurer of the Church.
- 2) The treasurer shall:
  - (a) collect and receive all money due to the Church and make payments authorised by the Church, and
  - (b) maintain accounts and books showing the financial affairs of the Church with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the Church, and
  - (c) prepare the annual audited accounts and annual budget of the Church and present to the church committee for approval
  - (d) get approval of all financial transactions by the Minister.
- 3) The treasurer shall present the audited accounts and budget, as approved by the

Church committee, to the members at a general body meeting for the purpose of enabling the budget.

#### 5.7 Auditor

- 1) The auditor shall periodically audit the books of accounts and financial records maintained by the treasurer.
- 2) Any irregularities found during the audit shall be reported to the Church Committee.
- 3) Auditor will be appointed during AGM

#### 5.8 Vacancies

For the purposes of these rules, a vacancy in the Church committee occurs (apart from death) if the member:

- 1) ceases to be a member of the Church, or
- 2) resigns from office, or
- 3) in the case of a member of the Church committee, other than a Minister, is removed from office under Article 5.9, or
- 4) declared insolvent under administration within the meaning of the Government Law.

#### 5.9 Removal of members of the Church committee

- 1) The Church in general body meeting may remove a Church committee member from office before the expiration of the tenure on a majority votes
- 2) The removal shall be informed to the board through proper channel within seven (7) days.

#### 5.10 Church committee meetings and quorum

- 1) The Church committee shall meet at least once in every three (3) months.
- 2) Verbal or written notice of a meeting of the Church committee shall be given by the secretary to each member of the Church committee at least 24 hours (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the Church committee) and invite suggestions of matters to be included in the agenda before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.
- 3) Notice of a meeting given under Article 5.10 (2) shall specify the agenda of the meeting to be discussed at the meeting, except urgent matters permitted by the chairman.
- 4) A majority of the members of the church committee, which shall include the Minister, or the person nominated by the Minister, constitute a quorum for a meeting of the Church committee.

#### 5.11 Filling of the vacancy

In the event that a member of the Church committee vacates office before completion of his tenure, the Church committee based on majority decision may appoint a member of the Church to fill the vacancy.

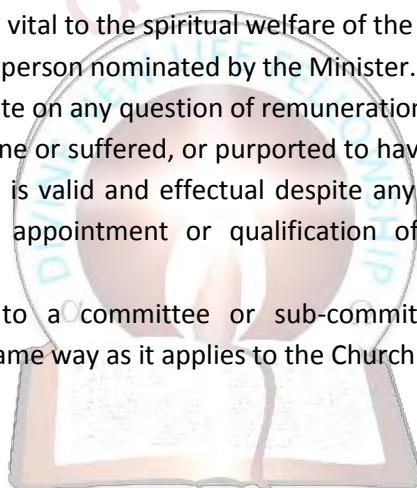
### 5.12 Delegation by Church committee to sub-committee

The Church committee may delegate the exercise of its functions to such person or persons as it thinks fit, other than:

- 1) this power of delegation, and
- 2) a function that is imposed on the committee of a Church by the board as per Article 5.2.

### 5.13 Voting and decisions

- 1) Every effort shall be made by the church committee to reach significant consensus when making decisions.
- 2) When the Church committee is satisfied that such consensus cannot be reached, questions arising at the meeting of the Church committee shall be determined by a majority of the votes of members of the Church committee present and voting at the meeting.
- 3) Each member present at a meeting of the Church committee (including the person presiding at the meeting) is entitled to one vote.
- 4) Despite Article 5.12(3), a decision cannot be made by the Church committee concerning such matters as are vital to the spiritual welfare of the Church, without the approval of the Minister or the person nominated by the Minister.
- 5) No minister may vote on any question of remuneration of minister.
- 6) Any act or thing done or suffered, or purported to have been done or suffered, by the Church committee, is valid and effectual despite any defect that may afterwards be discovered in the appointment or qualification of any member of the Church committee.
- 7) The rule applies to a committee or sub-committee appointed by the Church committee in the same way as it applies to the Church committee.



## Article 6. General Body Meetings

### 6.1 Annual General Body Meetings (AGM)

The Church shall convene an annual general body meeting of its members within 45 days after the closure of each financial year.

### 6.2 Agenda and conduct of AGM

- 1) The annual general body meeting of the Church is to be convened on such date and at such place and time as the Church committee thinks fit.
- 2) In addition to any other matters that may be discussed at an Annual general body meeting, the agenda of an AGM include:
  - (a) Presenting the minutes of the preceding AGM and of any general body meeting held since AGM
  - (b) Presentation of reports on the activities of the Church during the preceding financial year
  - (c) selection of the Church committee, as required
  - (d) approval of the financial statement of the preceding financial year
  - (e) approval of the budget of the Church for the current financial year
- 3) General body meeting shall be specified as such in the notice convening it in accordance with Article 6.6.
- 4) Meeting shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this part.

### 6.3 General Body Meetings

- 1) The Church committee may, convene a general body meeting of the Church, as it deems required.
- 2) The Church committee shall, on the requisition in writing of not less than 51% of the total number of members, call for a general body meeting of the Church within One (1) month.
- 3) A requisition of members for a general body meeting shall:
  - (a) state the purpose or purposes of the meeting, and
  - (b) be signed by the members making the requisition, and
  - (c) be lodged with the secretary, and
  - (d) may consist of several documents in a similar form, each signed by one or more of the members making the requisition.

### 6.4 Notice

- 1) The requirement of date, place, time and agenda.
- 2) If the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a general body meeting requires a special resolution of the Church, the secretary shall, at least twenty one (21) days before the date fixed for the holding of the general body meeting, notify the members of the matters in addition, the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.
- 3) Except where the matters proposed to be discussed at a general body meeting requires a special resolution of the Church, the secretary shall, at least fourteen (14) days before



the date fixed for the holding of the general body meeting notify the members of the place, date and time of the meeting and the nature of the business proposed to be transacted.

- 4) No matter other than that specified in the notice convening a general body meeting is to be discussed at the meeting except, in the case of an annual general body meeting, business that may be transacted pursuant to Article 6.2.(2).
- 5) A member who wishes to bring any matter before a general body meeting shall give its details in writing to the Church committee who may include it in the next notice calling a general body meeting given after receipt of the notice from the member.
- 6) Any items to be added to the announced agenda that may be notified before 10 days.

## 6.5 General Body Meetings -procedure and quorum

- 1) No item of agenda is to be discussed at a general body meeting unless a quorum of members is present during the time the meeting is considering that subject
- 2) Except where the matters proposed to be dealt-with at a general body meeting requires a special resolution of the Church, 1/3 (one-third) of the current members on the register, present in person, constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a general body meeting.
- 3) If within half an hour after the scheduled time for the commencement of a general body meeting a quorum is not present, the meeting stands adjourned to the same day in the following week at the same time and (unless another place is specified at the time of the adjournment by the person presiding at the meeting or communicated by written notice to members given before the day to which the meeting is adjourned) at the same place.
- 4) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour after the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the matters to be dealt with at the meeting, except matters requiring a special resolution, will be dealt with by the next Church committee meeting.

## 6.6 Presiding member

- 1) The Minister shall preside over the general body meetings.
- 2) In the absence of the Minister a committee member delegated by the Minister other than the Secretary shall preside over the meeting.
- 3) If the conditions in Article 6.6 (1 & 2) cannot be met, the meeting is adjourned as described in Article 6.7.

## 6.7 Adjournment

The person presiding at a general body meeting at which a quorum is present may, with the consent of the majority of members present at the meeting, adjourn the meeting from time to time and place to place, but no matters is to be discussed at an adjourned meeting other than the matters left unfinished at the meeting at which the adjournment took place.



## 6.8 Voting and making of decisions

- 1) A member of the Church is entitled to vote on matters calls for a majority vote by the presiding member at a general body meeting of the Church.
- 2) Subject to Article 6.8(3), on any question arising at a general body meeting of the Church a member has one vote only.
- 3) In the case of an equality of votes on a question at a general body meeting, the person presiding is entitled to exercise a casting vote.
- 4) The method of voting shall be by secret ballot, except for the selection of Committee Members which shall be done by casting of lot.



## Article 7. Church Governance

### 7.1 Church Governing Board (board)

Church Governing Board is the body appointed by the Divine New Life Ministries Trust to manage, administer & support the mission of all the Churches under Divine New Life Ministries (DNLM).

### 7.2 Membership of board

- 1) The DNLM trust may at any time appoint duly qualified persons to be members of the board so that the membership is not less than six (6) persons.
- 2) Each member on the board must:
  - (a) have a minimum age of 30 years and possess a Bachelor Degree.
  - (b) be known for his maturity of faith and Christian character, and have demonstrated, in his own context, a commitment to pursuing the mission of the Church
  - (c) agree to uphold the statement of faith of the Church, and
  - (d) have not undergone any disciplinary actions on doctrinal or moral issues,
  - (e) be a member of a local Church.

### 7.3 Chairman of the Board

- 1) The Chairman of board is selected by the existing board members.
- 2) Tenure of the Chairman is for three (3) years.

### 7.4 Vacancies

A vacancy in the office of a member of the board occurs (apart from death) if the member:

- 1) resigns from office,
- 2) is absent without the consent of the board from three (3) consecutive meetings of the board,
- 3) attains the age of 70 years,
- 4) as per Article 7.5.

### 7.5 Removal of a board member

- 1) The grounds for removal of a board member may be:
  - (a) gross misconduct that brings the Christian faith and the Church into disrepute,
  - (b) persistent and wilful teaching which is contrary to the statement of faith,
  - (c) persistent unwillingness to promote the mission of the Church,
  - (d) irreversible mental or physical incapacity leaving him incapable of fulfilling his responsibilities,
  - (e) loss of confidence in the member by the board for any other reason.
- 2) The board member cannot be removed except upon a two-third majority vote of the members.

## 7.6 Consultation or communication with Board

- 1) The Church committee shall consult with the Chairman of board on:
  - (a) appointment of a new Minister,
  - (b) Any dispute regarding continuity of Minister's service,
  - (c) proposal to remove the Minister from the office,
  - (d) extending the term of the Minister,
  - (e) terms of remuneration of a Minister,
  - (f) disputes between Church members & Church committee that requires decision
  - (g) Any conflict of interest in the Church committee that requires a decision.
- 2) All communication to the board shall be in writing. The order for such communications shall be as follows:
  - (a) A Church member to the Church Committee
  - (b) Church Committee to the District Overseer through the Minister of the Church
  - (c) District Overseer to the State Overseer
  - (d) State Overseer to the Central Overseer.
  - (e) Central Overseer to the Board.
  - (f) Exceptional cases may be communicated directly to the Board with the recommendation of two-third majority of church members.
  - (g) Communication from the committee shall reach to board within seven days, maintaining a maximum forwarding period of 24 hours for 7.6.2 (b) and 48 hours each for 7.6.2 (c),(d) and (e).
  - (h) The board shall duly acknowledge the committee within seven days of receipt pending further actions. The board shall intimate the church committee the possible time for the decision according to the nature of the case.

## 7.7 Authority of the board

The board has overall authority on all Church matters that includes:

- 1) appointment of an acting Pastor (Article 4.5) in the event of a vacancy,
- 2) transfer of a Minister,
- 3) appoint a Minister or promote a Minister with recommendation of Regional Overseer
- 4) approval of a person as an evangelist (worker) with recommendation of the local Church Minister on special circumstances.
- 5) inspect the books & documents maintained by the Church at any time.
- 6) dissolve the local Church committee as per article 5.1.6
- 7) summon a local Church committee meeting
- 8) enquire with the Minister or Church committee, on matters relating to the Church, as he sees fit.
- 9) approve / reject printing or publishing of any gospel literature by a Church member, Minister or church.
- 10) board's decision on all church governing matters shall be final.

## 7.8 Right of the board to call a General Body Meeting of the Church

- 1) On the requisition of the board in writing, the Church committee shall convene a general body meeting of the Church within two (2) weeks.
- 2) A requisition of the board for a general body meeting:
  - (a) shall state the purpose or purposes of the meeting, and
  - (b) shall be addressed to the secretary.

## 7.9 Meetings between the board and the Church committee

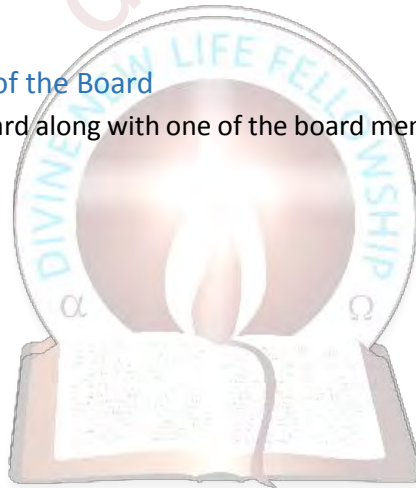
The member(s) of the board, or their designates shall meet with the Church committee or visit the church at least once in a year.

## 7.10 Meetings of the board shall be

- 1) held at such times as are determined by the members of the board,
- 2) presided over by the chairman of the board or his appointee,
- 3) conducted in accordance with such procedures as the members of the board determine.

## 7.11 Authorised Signatory of the Board

The Chairman of the board along with one of the board members shall be authorised to sign on behalf of the board.



## Article 8. Mission Activities

- 8.1 The mission movement of DNLF shall function under the leadership of a Mission coordinator appointed by the board with the vision of reaching out to the people and church planting.
- 8.2 The Mission coordinator shall be supported by a team of regional co-ordinators, the regional co-ordinators shall be appointed by the mission co-ordinator with the approval of the board.
- 8.3 The responsibilities of the Mission Coordinator include:
  - 1) Be the contact person for all matters regarding the Church's global mission work
  - 2) Establish, maintain and develop relationships with the Pastors/Ministers/Evangelists and Church's partners in mission and ensure that commitments are honoured and affirmed.
  - 3) Resource churches to increase their capacity for global mission ensuring that individuals, churches and other groups supporting our global mission commitments are assured of the on-going value of their commitments.
  - 4) Make appointments of mission workers, in conjunction with partner churches, and ensure that all agreements with people serving in various places are honoured and upheld.
  - 5) Continually evaluate and review all practices and activities in which the Churches/Missions are engaged under the auspicious of global mission, providing timely advice and information on Global Mission operations to the supporting churches.
  - 6) Manage Global Mission administration, finances and reporting cycles, ensuring all Divine New Life Church requirements are met.
  - 7) Plan and schedule individual camp weeks, collective activities in conjunction with Local church Pastors/Ministers.
  - 8) Train mission trip team leaders in organizing and leading team meetings, gathering supplies, packing supplies, planning curriculum details, and assigning job roles to team members.
  - 9) Develop specific publications to promote mission awareness within the congregation and outside the church.
  - 10) Visit mission fields on periodical basis in coordination with regional team
  - 11) Prepare and assemble the needs for missionaries including prayer subjects and communicate to DNLF and the board
  - 12) Oversee distribution of financial support to various mission fields
  - 13) Keep record of all financial transactions and events on mission activities
  - 14) Organize periodical and annual meeting of missionaries and ministers
  - 15) Coordinate printing and publishing of mission literature and magazines
  - 16) Prepare and submit for approval of the board annual missions budget and mission report

## Article 9. Departments

All sub-organisations that are functioning under the church are listed below and Minister of the local Church will be the President.

### 9.1 Children Bible School (Sunday school)

- 1) Every church should have children bible school on a weekly basis for biblical education.
- 2) The school shall follow the curriculum as recommended by the board.

### 9.2 Walk Along Christ Youth Movement (WAC Youth)

- 1) WAC is a youth movement of the church, where youths are encouraged to be a follower of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Activities of WAC may include evangelism, church programs, prayers, charity, visits etc.
- 3) Age limit for membership to WAC is 35 years.
- 4) The WAC may be divided into two groups, junior WAC (13-21) and senior WAC (22-35) as appropriate.

### 9.3 Women's fellowship

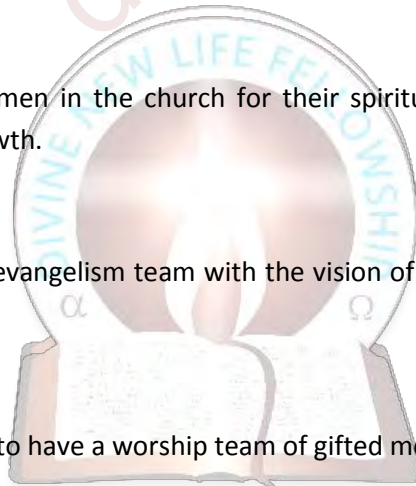
A fellowship of the women in the church for their spiritual edification and contribution towards the church growth.

### 9.4 Evangelism team

A church shall have an evangelism team with the vision of reaching out to the people and church planting.

### 9.5 Worship team

A church is encouraged to have a worship team of gifted members.



## Article 10. Miscellaneous

### 10.1 Resolving of internal disputes

Any differences of opinion between members (in their capacity as members) of the Church, and disputes between members and the Church, shall be referred to the Committee. If any unresolved disputes may be referred to the board through the Minister.

### 10.2 Office Administration Staff

- 1) Office administration staff (if required) means a person appointed as a staff and who is paid remuneration by the Church.
- 2) He/She must:
  - (a) agree to uphold the statement of faith,
  - (b) agree to promote the mission of the Church.
- 3) He/She shall work under the direction of the Minister.
- 4) The terms of remuneration for all office administration staff shall be set by the Church committee.

### 10.3 Funds

- 1) The funds of the Church shall be derived from donations or contributions and, subject to any resolution passed by the Church in general body meeting, such other sources as the Church committee determines.
- 2) All money received at meetings of the Church must be counted and verified by two (2) members, who are unrelated and who are not Ministers, at least one being authorised to do so by the Church committee.
- 3) Any funds received by the Church that exceeds Rs. 10,000/- or equivalent currency without any deduction shall be deposited as soon as practicable to the Church bank account. Approval must be obtained from the board in case of any changes in this procedure.
- 4) All cheques, drafts, bills of exchange, promissory notes and other negotiable instruments shall be signed by any two (2) committee members of the Church, who are not minister, and who have been authorised to do so by the Church committee.
- 5) The funds of the Church shall be used in pursuance of the mission of the Church in such a manner as the Church committee determines.

### 10.4 Contributions to the DNLM Trust

- 1) Each member Church shall contribute a minimum 10% (ten percent) of the total receipts (except special fund collections) to the DNLM Trust on a quarterly basis.
- 2) The treasurer will be responsible for remitting the contribution to the Trust.

### 10.5 Alteration of Bylaws

The bylaws of the Church may be altered, amended, rescinded or added to only by the DNLM Trust with recommendation of a by law review committee, appointed by the board. The board shall inform the local churches about the review committee. The reviewed bylaw shall

be approved by the board and submit to the trust.

#### 10.6 Common seal

- 1) The common seal of the Church shall be kept in the custody of the secretary.
- 2) The common seal shall not be affixed to any instrument except by the authority of the Church committee.
- 3) The affixing of the common seal shall be attested by the signatures of Church Minister and Secretary except for financial purposes.
- 4) A church with no appointed committee can approach the regional overseer for affixing the seal.

#### 10.7 Custody of books

- 1) The secretary shall keep in his custody or under his control all records, books and other documents relating to the Church except for sub-article (2).
- 2) All financial records and books of accounts shall be under the custody of the treasurer.
- 3) Records maintained in electronic form is permitted.

#### 10.8 Inspection of books

The financial records, register of members, and minutes of general body meetings of the Church shall be open for inspection for a member of the Church upon written request & approval from the Church committee. Unauthorised copying and distribution is not permitted.

#### 10.9 Service of notices

- 1) Notices for the purpose of these rules may be served by or on behalf of the Church:
  - (a) on all members—by the making of an announcement at least two (2) Sundays (main service days) before the date of the matter to which the notice relates, or
  - (b) on an individual member—either personally or sending it by post or email to the member at the member's address shown in the register of members.
- 2) If a document is sent to a person by properly addressing, prepaying and posting to the person a letter containing the document, the document is, unless the contrary is proved, taken for the purposes of these rules to have been served on the person at the time at which the letter would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post.

#### 10.10 Special resolution

- 1) Any matters not covered within the general scope of the general body meetings of the church and the board meetings requires a special resolution.
- 2) A special resolution requires a minimum of two-third majority of members present during a meeting



### 10.11 Common Activities

- 1) Talent tests – All churches should participate in the annual talent tests for the children & WAC members.
- 2) Worker's meeting – All ministers shall attend in the monthly regional workers meeting.
- 3) Monthly meeting – All members of the church are encouraged to participate in the monthly meeting organised by the churches as appropriate.
- 4) State convention – All churches shall participate in the State convention generally organised once in a year.

### 10.12 Local Church Activities

All local churches are encouraged to conduct the activities aimed to fulfil the Spiritual & Social responsibility. These activities may include:

- 1) Common Fasting Prayer
- 2) Convention
- 3) Public Meetings
- 4) House Visits
- 5) Anniversary (Children Bible School, WAC, Church etc.) Family get-together
- 6) Hospital visit
- 7) Charity

### 10.13 Ownership of the Assets

- 1) All assets of a church are owned by the DNLM Trust.
- 2) The church should maintain a list of the assets and the relevant documents for an asset.
- 3) The secretary will be responsible for maintaining the assets.
- 4) The list of assets are subject to auditing.

### 10.14 Disciplinary Actions

- 1) Grounds for disciplinary actions of a member or a Minister or a board member may include:
  - (a) Deviation from the statement of faith
  - (b) Involvement in Immoral activities or misconduct
  - (c) Actions affecting the unity and testimony of the church
  - (d) Wilful violations of any of the church rules
- 2) Procedure
  - (a) The church will follow the disciplinary procedure set forth in Matthew 18:15-20. This procedure consists generally of the following steps:
    - i) The Minister or a designated member of the church committee discusses the charges with the member in an effort to resolve the matter privately;
    - ii) if the first step does not resolve the matter, then the member shall meet with the Minister and church committee or with a designated committee of the church committee in an effort to resolve the matter privately;

- iii) if the first or second steps do not resolve the matter, then the member or the church committee may submit the matter in a special general body meeting called for that purpose.
- (b) Only active voting members of the church shall be permitted to attend such a special general body meeting. The decision of a majority of the voting members present at such a meeting shall be final. Actions may be taken against a member if found guilty based on the circumstances & severity of the case that may include:
  - i) temporary suspension of membership.
  - ii) suspension from conducting and / or participating in certain spiritual activities.
  - iii) cancellation of the membership.
- 3) Authority to initiate actions
  - (a) Action against a member or a committee member shall be taken by the committee with the approval of the church general body.
  - (b) Action against a minister shall be taken by the board with the recommendation by the church general body.
  - (c) Action against a board member shall be taken by the trust with the recommendation of the board.

#### 10.15 Christian Marriage and Family

##### 1) Christian Marriage

Marriage was established by God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:18, 21-25) and confirmed by Jesus Christ to be a permanent relationship between a man and a woman (Matthew 19:4-6). Because marriage is not only a commitment to a spouse, but also to God (Genesis 2:24; Mark 10:9; Ephesians 5:31), a believer should marry only another believer (2 Corinthians 6:14). Christian marriage is a reflection of the love, purity, and permanence between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:23-33).

##### 2) Children

Children are a heritage from the Lord; therefore, rearing them is to be treated as a sacred trust. God's strength and wisdom are available on a daily basis in order to bring up children to love and obey God (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4).

#### 10.16 Guest Pastor / Speakers

The Minister in his wisdom may invite or give time to a guest pastor / speaker who practices the same faith & belief for a meeting at the local Church.

## Article 11. Glossary

**AGM** means Annual General Body Meeting of the Church

**Associate pastor** means an associate pastor of Church who is appointed to support the Pastor of the church.

**Board** means Church Governing Board who has the authority to govern the church affairs of Divine New Life Ministries.

**DNLM Trust** means a trust constituted under the Indian Trust Act, 1882

**Exercise** a function includes perform a duty.

**Evangelist** means a minister who is appointed for the evangelical ministry.

**Financial year** means the period of twelve (12) months ending on 31 March.

**General body meeting** means a General Body Meeting of the Church.

**Member** means a member of the Church

**Overseer** means a Pastor who is appointed by the board to supervise the churches within a region

**Pastor** means the pastor of Church who is in-charge of the local church

**Secretary** means the secretary of the Church

**Statement of Faith** means the beliefs set out in Article 2.

**the Church committee** means the administration committee of the Church

**The Church** means Divine New Life Fellowship (DNLF).

**Treasurer** means the treasurer of the Church