

**FINAL DRAFT  
LONE ROCK BIBLE CHURCH  
BY LAWS**

**ARTICLE 1. Leadership**

**Section 1. Overview**

**A. The Elder Board**

The spiritual affairs of Lone Rock Bible Church shall be managed by its Board of Elders (I Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 14:23). This Board of Elders may hereinafter be referred to as the "Elders". The Elders shall consist of not less than three (3) Elders, and shall function as the trustees of the corporation. In the event of having less than three elders, the Rocky Mountain Bible Mission executive board will be asked to provide an interim elder until a sufficient number of elders is available from the congregation. The number of elder positions may be modified, but not to less than the above-specified minimum, as determined by unanimous consent of the Elders. The Elders shall meet as a corporate body on a monthly basis (unless otherwise mutually agreed upon) for the expeditious conduct of church business. Church members are encouraged to attend board meetings to provide input, other than in matters requiring confidentiality. The Elders will achieve unanimous consent prior to implementation of proposals. Plans and decisions deemed to be of special significance by the Elders may be brought before the congregation for discussion.

**1. Officers**

The officers of the Elder Board shall consist of a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary and a treasurer; and such other officers as the Elder Board may from time to time determine. Officers shall be elected for a one-year term by the Elder Board. Each officer shall hold office until a successor is elected, unless his resignation, removal or death ends the term of the officer. Any two (2) offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of chairman and secretary. Any officer elected or appointed by the Elders may be removed by a unanimous vote of the Elders, with the person in question abstaining, whenever in its judgment the best interest of the church would be served thereby.

**2. Chairman**

The chairman shall exercise a general supervision and direction of the spiritual affairs of the Elder Board. He shall preside at all meetings. He shall be ultimately responsible for the oversight of whatever actions are approved by the Elders. He shall sign or countersign all instruments that require his signature, and shall make such reports and perform such other duties incidental to his office as required of him by the Elder Board

**3. Vice-chairman**

In the absence or disability of the chairman, the vice-chairman shall exercise all his functions. He shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the chairman of the board.

#### 4. Secretary

The secretary shall issue notices of all meetings of the Elders, keep the minutes thereof, and of the meetings of the members, in books provided for that purpose, keep a register of the post office address of each member which shall be furnished to the secretary by such member, and in general perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and other such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the chairman of the Elder board.

#### 5. Treasurer

The treasurer shall prepare and review reports relating to the fiscal matters of LRBC as may be required of him by the Elders and Deacons. Specific duties of the treasurer may be delegated to a designated member serving as an accountant/bookkeeper under the direction of the Deacon and Elder Boards. Significant fiscal decisions shall be discussed and reconciled between the Deacons and Elders.

### B. The Deacon Board

The financial and logistical affairs of Lone Rock Bible Church shall be managed by its Board of Deacons. (Acts 6:1-3; Phil 1:1). This Board of Deacons may hereinafter be referred to as the "Deacons". The Deacon Board shall consist of not less than three (3) Deacons, and shall function as the trustees of the corporation. The number of Deacon positions may be modified, but not to less than the above-specified minimum, as determined by unanimous consent of the Elder Board. The Deacons must meet as a corporate body on a monthly basis (unless otherwise mutually agreed upon) for the expeditious conduct of church business, including care of the buildings and grounds, use of the facilities, and funding of church staff and programs. Church members are encouraged to attend Deacons meetings to provide input, other than in matters requiring confidentiality. The Deacons will achieve unanimous consent prior to implementation of proposals. Plans and decisions deemed to be of special significance by the Deacons should be brought before the Elders for discussion.

#### 1. Officers

The officers of the Deacons shall consist of a chairman, a vice-chairman, a secretary and a treasurer; and such other officers as the Deacons may from time to time determine. Officers shall be elected for a one-year term by the Deacon Board. Each officer shall hold office until a successor is elected, unless his resignation, removal or death ends the term of the officer. Any two (2) offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of chairman and secretary. Any officer elected or appointed by the Deacons may be removed by a unanimous vote of the Deacons, with the person in question abstaining, whenever in its judgment the best interest of the church would be served thereby.

#### 2. Chairman

The chairman shall exercise a general supervision and direction by the Deacon Board over the financial affairs and building operation, maintenance, and use of LRBC. He shall preside at all meetings. He shall be ultimately responsible for the oversight of whatever actions are approved by the Deacons. He shall sign or countersign all instruments that require his signature, and shall make such reports and perform such other duties incidental to his office as required of him by the Deacon.

### 3. Vice-chairman

In the absence or disability of the chairman, the vice-chairman shall exercise all his functions. He shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the chairman of the Deacon.

### 4. Secretary

The secretary shall issue notices of all meetings of the Deacons, keep the minutes thereof, in books provided for that purpose, and in general perform all duties incident to the office of secretary and other such duties as from time to time may be assigned by the chairman of the Deacon Board.

### 5. Treasurer

The treasurer shall prepare and review reports relating to the fiscal matters of LRBC as may be required of him by the Elders and Deacons. Specific duties of the treasurer may be delegated to a designated member serving as an accountant/bookkeeper under the direction of the Deacon and Elder Boards. Significant fiscal decisions shall be discussed and reconciled between the Deacons and Elders.

### C. Advisory Boards

Certain individuals may be invited to serve on Advisory Boards for each of the respective Elder and Deacon Boards. The purpose of this service is for the individual to evaluate potential future service on the Elder or Deacon Board, and for the respective Elder or Deacon Board to evaluate the individual for future service on these respective Boards. Advisory board members do not vote on motions before the board nor are they necessarily included in matters requiring confidentiality. Those serving on Advisory Boards for the Elder or Deacon Boards will be selected by the Elders. Permanent selection from these Advisory Boards to the Elder or Deacon Boards will be made by the respective Board.

## Section 2. Selection and Removal

### A. Elder and Deacon Selection and Removal

Any member under consideration for Lone Rock Bible Church Elder or Deacon Board shall be drawn from the appropriate advisory board and must display the following (Titus 1:5-9; I Tim. 3:1-7, 8-13): he must have a Christian testimony that honors the Lord Jesus Christ, the ability to serve in the office for which he is under consideration, a commitment to the teachings of the Word of God, a sense of God's calling to serve, and satisfaction of any Scriptural requirements the office might require. It will be the unanimous decision of the Elder Board that a call be made to a member of either the Deacon or Elder advisory board to join that respective Board. Length of terms shall be indefinite. An Elder or Deacon Board member's tenure shall be terminated by his personal desire, debilitating circumstances of life, serious breach of Christian character as determined biblically by the Elders (re Bylaws, Article 4, "Church Discipline"), or death of the board member. Should an elder or deacon be charged with serious breach of Christian character, that individual's voting privileges will be suspended pending resolution of the issue (I Tim. 5:19-20).

## B. Preaching Elder Selection and Removal

Selection of a preaching elder shall follow the death, resignation or dismissal of the predecessor. The Elder Board shall oversee the process of candidate search, screening, reviewing and interviewing. The Elder Board may select an individual from among the Elder Board if an individual with suitable qualifications exists, or may seek candidates from outside the Elder Board. Candidates approved by the Rocky Mountain Bible Mission shall receive first consideration. Removal of a preaching elder shall be by death, resignation or dismissal. Either party shall finalize resignation or dismissal following a ninety (90) day notice, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon.

## Section 3. Job Descriptions

### A. Elders

The elders must conscientiously and unreservedly endorse the church's doctrinal statement. They shall have oversight of the spiritual and moral needs and direction of the church. As such, they shall be men who are zealous to cultivate their own spiritual lives as disciples of Jesus Christ, being men of the Word and prayer. They shall plan and make decisions with regard to all matters of pulpit supply, outreach events, ministry strategy, special services, spiritual discipline and education. They shall assist those who need spiritual guidance and counseling. They shall visit the members and friends of the congregation, particularly the sick, destitute and new believers, in order to offer encouragement and discipleship. As examples to the church, elders shall demonstrate leadership in ministry involvement, hospitality and benevolence. They shall be growing in character as New Testament elders as outlined in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

### B. Preaching Elder

The primary teaching/preaching elder of Lone Rock Bible Church must conscientiously and unreservedly endorse the church's doctrinal statement. He is to be a man dedicated to the study and proclamation of the Bible as the Word of God. He shall demonstrate a personable love toward both believers and unbelievers and shall maintain a consistent and meaningful devotional life. As the primary preaching elder, he will be expected to equip this body of believers toward spiritual growth and development of ministry potential. He is to be devoted to his family and considerate of their needs. He shall willingly submit to accountability of the other Elders. He shall conscientiously minister to the needs of the sick and hurting, and shall have oversight, along with the other Elders, of corporate worship. He and his family shall aptly represent this body before the community. He shall be prepared to administer and oversee outreach ministries and shall be sensitive to opportunities for evangelism. He shall be willing to broaden and refresh himself through participation in conferences and ongoing educational opportunities, and shall exhibit an attitude, which is teachable and sensitive to the will and leading of God with respect both to his personal and professional life.

### C. Deacons

The deacons must conscientiously and unreservedly endorse the church's doctrinal statement. As such, they shall be men who are zealous to cultivate their own spiritual lives as disciples of Jesus Christ being given to the service of the church. Deacons shall supervise the physical dimension of the organization, including oversight of the budget and maintenance and use of the building and church property (Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Deacons shall be responsible for benevolence spending.

#### Section 4. Auxiliary Personnel

The Elder and Deacon Boards may establish auxiliary positions to support the mission of the church. Such positions may include, but are not limited to: associate pastor, Christian education director, vacation Bible school director, foreign missions coordinator, church secretary, and administrative assistant. Auxiliary personnel shall be church members.

### **ARTICLE 2. Membership**

#### Section 1. Responsibilities of Members

With the understanding that membership in Lone Rock Bible Church signifies a mutual covenant to minister to one another's spiritual needs (Heb. 3:12-14; Gal. 6:1-2; Col. 3:12-17), and that this covenant may be dissolved only by mutual consent, all members are expected and encouraged to participate in the life of Lone Rock Bible Church (Acts 2:42-45). Members are expected to support the work of the church faithfully through prayers (Acts 2:42), financial contribution (Gen. 14:20; I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:6-15), exercise of spiritual giftedness in gospel ministry (Eph. 4:1-16), honest communication with one another (Ephesians 4:25), and performance of benevolent works in the name of Jesus Christ (Titus 2:14; Ephesians 2:10); Members are encouraged to communicate to the Elder or Deacon Board matters the member considers important. In the event of conflict, members agree to avoid litigation with one another, rather, to pursue biblical principles of resolution under the auspices of the church. (Matt. 18:15-20; I Cor. 6:1-7)

#### Section 2. Reception of Members

Persons sixteen (16) years or older who desire to unite with Lone Rock Bible Church, who have been baptized since conversion, who have demonstrated evidence of regeneration and a commitment to the ministry of this church, and who embrace the doctrine of this church as outlined in the constitution, shall be visited by at least two elders regarding their experience of salvation and understanding of the fundamental doctrines of the constitution. Upon recommendation by the Elder Board, new members shall be received upon confession of faith and endorsement of the Lone Rock Bible Church covenant, at any regular or special meeting of the church. (Heb. 10:24-25)

#### Section 3. Status of Members

All members who regularly participate in Lone Rock Bible Church life (as per Section 1) shall be considered active members. The Elder Board shall decide cases in question.

#### Section 4. Departure of Members

##### A. By letter of transfer

Any active member who desires a letter of transfer and recommendation to any other church is entitled to receive it upon request. The name of the church to which membership is to be transferred must be indicated in the request; a letter of transfer shall be sent to said church. All letters of transfer shall include a request for acknowledgment of the receipt of the letter by the church to whom it is sent, such acknowledgment to terminate membership in Lone Rock Bible Church.

##### B. By termination of membership

Any member who conducts himself or herself in a manner, which is deemed contrary to purpose

of Lone Rock Bible Church, may be removed from membership by a unanimous vote of the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall investigate questionable behavior following the biblical guidelines of Matthew 18:15-17. The Elders shall document the alleged offenses and the investigative procedure, with a view toward objective and fair treatment of the problem and a desire for direction, reconciliation and restoration of the member in question to the fellowship of the church body. Complete guidelines for addressing such problems are in the Bylaws, Article 4. Church Discipline.

### **ARTICLE 3. Finances**

#### **Section 1. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of Lone Rock Bible Church shall be from January 1 to December 31, inclusive. The Deacon Board shall, prior to the end of the fiscal year, prepare an annual budget and operate under the guidelines of the budget.

#### **Section 2. Purpose**

Lone Rock Bible Church is religious, charitable and educational in character; therefore, monetary profit is not its purpose.

#### **Section 3. Provision**

The necessary expenses of Lone Rock Bible Church shall be met primarily through voluntary gifts and contributions from individuals interested in the promotion of the purpose of Lone Rock Bible Church

#### **Section 4. Use of Finances**

All earnings from the use of any of the Lone Rock Bible Church property shall be used for the religious, missionary and benevolent purposes of Lone Rock Bible Church. No part of any net earnings from the property of Lone Rock Bible Church shall accrue to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

#### **Section 5. Property**

The title to all real estate and personal property acquired by purchase, deed transfer, inheritance or other conveyance shall be held in the name of Lone Rock Bible Church.

#### **Section 6. Dissolution**

In the event of dissolution, all assets remaining after payment of debts will be distributed to the Rocky Mountain Bible Mission, and should that organization no longer exist, to any organization in sympathy with the aim and doctrinal statement of Lone Rock Bible Church as determined by unanimous agreement of the Elder Board.

#### **Section 7. Audit**

Lone Rock Bible Church financial records shall be audited as deemed appropriate by the Deacon Board. Any audit committee shall consist of at least three (3) members and shall not include those actively involved in maintaining the current books. Lone Rock Bible Church financial records shall be open for review.

## **ARTICLE 4. Church Discipline**

### **Section 1. Purpose**

Because Lone Rock Bible Church exists to promote the spiritual growth and well being of its membership, biblical principles affecting the discipline of its constituents shall be applied whenever a member's behavior seriously compromises biblical standards. This practice of church discipline is believed to be in the best interest both of the individual member and the corporate body in that it encourages accountability to one another toward an optimum expression of biblical Christianity. Relevant Scripture addressing such discipline includes Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 6:1-25; Thessalonians 3:1-15 and 1 Timothy 5:19-21. All church disciplinary action shall be conscientiously directed toward the restoration of the offender to the fellowship and his or her reconciliation with the offended person(s).

### **Section 2. Procedure**

Under the oversight of the elders, Lone Rock Bible Church shall strive to follow Biblical guidelines in every case that leads to discipline. An observed transgression of biblical behavior shall first be lovingly confronted by the person(s) who witnessed the transgression. The confrontation shall include any clear evidence of wrong behavior as well as relevant biblical principles that have been violated. An invitation to repentance and parameters of accountability shall be proposed. If the invitation is rejected or accountability lapses, the intervention shall be repeated with the inclusion of the elders. If this does not bring about the necessary change(s), the congregation shall be informed of the problem and, if repentance and restoration do not occur, the offender shall be removed officially from the fellowship. Should such an unfortunate measure be necessary, both the church and the offender shall be informed that repentance and restoration remain the desired option. Further, should the removed member seek the sanction of another church, Lone Rock Bible Church must in all good conscience notify that church of the actions taken. (Matt. 18:15-20; Rom. 16:17-20; II Thess. 3:14-15)

### **Section 3. Litigation**

In obedience to 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, the members of Lone Rock Bible Church agree not to pursue legal action against or sue any pastor, elder, deacon or church staff person.

### **Section 4. Mediation and Arbitration**

In the event of unresolved differences involving an elder or a deacon, either the church board, the congregation or any member thereof shall have the right to seek mediation and/or arbitration from the Rocky Mountain Bible Mission.

## **ARTICLE 5. Counseling**

### **Section 1. Philosophy**

Lone Rock Bible Church has the privilege and responsibility of providing its members and friends with biblically-based counseling to help them meet the challenges of the Christian life in a way that will bring honor to the Lord Jesus Christ and advance His kingdom. Trusting that the Bible provides complete instruction for Christian faith and practice, counseling will be based upon scriptural principles rather than on those of secular psychology or psychiatry.

## Section 2. Confidentiality

Based on our understanding of Scripture, including the importance of being able to confess our sins freely, the official policy of Lone Rock Bible Church holds that all communications offered to the pastor and/or lay counselors will be of a confidential nature and will not be divulged to others except; (1) when there is a clear indication that a party might otherwise be harmed; or (2) when unrepentant sin necessitates seeking the assistance of others in the church to carry out the instructions of the Bible for church discipline, especially as set forth in Matthew 18:15-20 and 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15.

## **ARTICLE 6. Church Ministry**

### Section 1. Meetings

#### A. Devotional meetings

Devotional meetings of Lone Rock Bible Church shall minimally include Sunday worship, prayer and Sunday school. In addition, devotional meetings may include Bible study, special musical, missionary, youth, evangelistic, discipleship or prayer groups, which are sanctioned by Lone Rock Bible Church.

#### B. Annual meeting

The annual meeting of the members and friends of Lone Rock Bible Church shall be held the third Sunday of January of each year, or as near this date as possible. At least two (2) weeks' notice shall be given by announcements made in the church bulletin and/or from the pulpit on the two Sundays preceding the annual meeting.

#### C. Business meetings

In addition to the annual meeting, special congregational meetings of the church may be held as determined by the board for the discussion of financial or personnel business of an urgent nature and shall be held prior to amending the constitution or by-laws.

#### D. Service meetings

Lone Rock Bible Church shall seek to accommodate weddings, funerals and varied receptions for members and non-members, based on the discretion and approval of the Deacon and Elder Boards. Use of the church building and property as a community service is also subject to approval of the Deacon Board on a case-by-case-basis.

#### E. Ministry philosophy

Because the Bible teaches that each believer is gifted by God for service in His kingdom, and that each also is answerable to God to heed the prompting of the indwelling Holy Spirit, Lone Rock Bible Church expects each believer to become involved in some facet of ministry. Every member is urged either to join an existing avenue of outreach or, in sensitivity to God's leading, to explore possibilities for new methods of reaching people with the gospel. The church shall seek to help believers learn their strengths and deploy them appropriately. (Romans 12:4-8; Cor. 12:1-11; 1 Peter 4:10)



## **ARTICLE 7. Ordinances**

### **Section 1. The Lord's Supper**

The Lord's Supper shall be observed with regularity, and as frequently as the elders shall direct. Elders deacons or designated others shall assist the pastor in the administration of this ordinance. (I Cor. 11:23-26; Matt. 26:26-30)

### **Section 2. Water Baptism**

The mode of baptism practiced by this church is immersion in water. The Elders shall provide instruction to persons interested in baptism, and shall interview candidates in order to ascertain their readiness to be baptized. A public baptism service will be conducted at a time and place determined by the elders and the candidate(s) (Acts 8:36-39).

## **ARTICLE 8.**

Facility Usage Policy  
Lone Rock Bible Church  
1142 Three Mile Creek Road  
Stevensville, MT 59870  
(406) 777 2592

### **Introduction**

Lone Rock Bible Church (LRBC) makes its facility available to its members and to outside groups whose aims and practices are not in conflict with the Doctrinal Statement and approved by the Deacons. Any use of the facilities must be in keeping with this policy and we ask that you treat the building with proper respect as visitors and guests.

### **Priorities of Use**

Church-sponsored events take precedence over outside groups. Active LRBC members' personal events (such as weddings, parties, anniversaries, etc.) have second priority. Community use will be third.

Should a conflict arise after a schedule for an event has been set, the Deacons may reschedule a lower priority event only in the case of an emergency. Solutions acceptable to all parties will be sought in all cases.

### **Application and Scheduling**

Before the facility may be used, a thorough understanding of responsibilities of all parties involved shall be determined and acknowledged by signatures on the *Facility Usage Application* form.

All applications shall be received by the Church office and will be approved as soon as it can be reviewed by the Deacons. Applications may also be reviewed by the Elders as needed. The decisions of the Elders regarding all facility use shall be final.

### **Rules:**

Failure to follow the rules will cause you to forfeit your rental privileges.

1. Permission to use the facilities does not constitute endorsement of a group's policies or beliefs by LRBC.
2. LRBC has a no smoking, no alcohol, no gambling policy.
3. There must be a supervising adult 21 years or older from the user group present at all times.
4. Use of the kitchen facility requires a complete clean-up. All food items must be removed and the trash taken out to the trash area.
5. The facility must be left in an orderly condition. This includes cleaning up the restrooms and removing the trash.

6. Upon leaving, all tables and chairs must be returned to their previous location, all lights must be turned off, and all the doors secured and checked.
7. All groups must vacate the building by 10:00 p.m. unless prior approval has been applied for and granted.
8. All incidents of damage must be reported to the Chairman of the Deacon Board. The group using the facility is responsible and will be charged for damage to any property or furnishings. Payment is expected within 30 days. A \$250.00 security deposit may be required and if so will be held pending a inspection of the facility following the event and returned upon a clean inspection.
9. If using the piano, or keyboard, you must have prior approval. In NO CASE shall the sound and lighting system be operated by anyone other than AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL.
10. Use of the facilities for a wedding is covered in the Wedding Policy.
11. No profit making businesses or enterprises are allowed.
12. At least one church representative must sponsor non-LRBC Users use of the church building. Requests for political meetings, broad community events, sanctioned school activities, and other church or denominational activities will be considered by us on a case-by-case basis.
13. For any event please refrain from using glitter, rice, bird seed, confetti or anything consisting of small particles.

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**By signing this request, I hereby agree to the terms and conditions as stated in the attached LRBC Facility Usage Policy.**

Requestor: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor (if requestor is not a member): \_\_\_\_\_

Approved: YES NO

LRBC Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Lone Rock Bible Church**  
**Facility Usage Application**

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Requester's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

LRBC Member? YES NO

LRBC Member/Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of Meeting/Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this organization non-profit? YES NO

Will a fee be charged to attend? YES NO

Date requested: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Finish Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of attendees expected: Adult: \_\_\_\_\_ Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilities/Rooms requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Is use of Kitchen requested? YES NO

Will food and/or beverages be served? YES NO

Is MPC Audio/Visual Equipment requested? YES NO

A/V Equipment requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Security deposit of \$250.00 received, date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Responsible Party)

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## **ARTICLE 9. WEDDING POLICY**

As a church, we believe that marriage is a God-ordained institution, and as such it should be governed by what God has said about marriage in the Bible. In an age when marriage is often looked upon as a temporary state, we stand for the permanence of marriage. To this end, we have adopted the following policies. The purpose of these policies are to uphold: the sacredness of marriage as demonstrated in the Bible and the vows made before God and man during the marriage ceremony.

We shall endeavor to keep the spirit of love in our dealings in these matters as we follow the commands of our Savior.

**THOSE QUALIFYING FOR MARRIAGE** in the use of the church facilities are limited to:

- Those who meet the scriptural standards of God's Word.
- Special permission may be granted to another church of like faith to use the facilities.
- Because the Bible forbids an unequal yoke (I Corinthians 6:14), the services of our pastors are not available to a believer marrying a non-believer.
- Requests from community members will be guided by the Facility Usage and Wedding Policy.
- Same-sex marriages will not be performed by our pastors nor will our building be made available for a same sex marriage ceremony.

### **REQUIREMENTS OF THE BRIDE AND GROOM**

- Both must agree to one or more counseling sessions as required by the pastor.
- Both must meet all legal requirements for marriage.
- Alcoholic beverages will not be served at the reception on the premises of those who are married in the Church facilities.

**The above requirements are justified and demanded in a building dedicated to the glory of God. If you feel that you do not meet the standards or wish to comply with the requirements, we ask that you understand and respect our reasons.**

## **ARTICLE 10. Benevolence Policy**

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Lone Rock Bible Church (LRBC) Benevolence Fund is to help our neighbors who are experiencing financial stress and are in need of short-term emergency assistance. Those who attend Lone Rock Bible Church will be our first priority.

**Funding:** Funding is provided by LRBC and community members. Distribution is at the discretion of the Deacon Board. Reports will be given at least annually to the LRBC congregation, so there's transparency about how these funds are used. Names and situation will remain confidential.

**Other Resources:** We encourage neighbors who are in distress to make use of Pantry Partners (food) and the Free Store (clothing). In emergencies, we have members who can assist in getting an emergency food box, or opening up the Clothes Closet at non-business hours. Carpenters for Christ are often able to help with small home repair projects, outfitting bathrooms for handicap accessible features and building access ramps.

**Community Referrals:** Persons soliciting help from the LRBC Benevolence Fund are generally first referred to the Salvation Army staff person (Hamilton). She/he then checks names against a list of persons who have already received help and can ascertain what public resources may be available. The Ravalli County Ministerial Association each quarter emails us a list of those they have served. The Salvation Army Staff person will then either refer the person back to us, or direct them where they can receive the most appropriate assistance. The Salvation Army helps us pool resources with other charitable organization to allow us to offer a greater level of assistance than any one small organization can provide on our own. Households should generally not receive financial assistance more than once per quarter.

### **Typical Amounts**

Rent: \$100.00

Car Repair: \$100.00

Utilities: \$100 (making sure they have checked into the LIEAP PROGRAM)

Prescriptions: up to \$50.00

Gas: The administrative assistant keeps gas cards in the office in the amount of \$25.00.

(Information must be received from the person receiving the card—drivers license, insurance card preferable.) This can be a bottomless pit in terms of helping people, so we try to limit the gas cards to true emergencies.

All amounts must be approved by the Deacon Board.

Paying for motel rooms is not recommended unless the weather is bad, since that reduces our funds rapidly, and does not solve the problem of what they are going to do the next day.

However there are times when it is the best option. There are two alternatives: The motel on the highway, St Mary's, will sometimes allow transients to stay. Gene and Robbie Mim Mack of the Stevi Hotel have a boarding house and off-site housing available. Arrangements can be made to have them bill us when the Deacon Board approves it. If they are in need of a meal, the Stevi Café will provide a meal if pre-authorization by the Deacon Board.

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**Proactive Gifts to Members of the Congregation:** There are times when an elder or deacon becomes aware of a need within the congregation. In certain circumstances, we have found it helpful to offer help proactively by asking a person in the church who is struggling if there is a bill that it would be helpful for them to receive help with for a particular month. This is not intended to be a permanent solution for financial difficulty, but can be a hand up in a time of need.

**Capacity/Referrals:** Persons in need of emergency assistance will first be directed to check in with other agencies like the Salvation Army, LIEAP (energy) or other larger organizations to insure we are not duplicating services. We have developed a good relationship with the Salvation Army coordinator, and she/he contacts us when they become aware of a need in the community we can meet together.

**Recommended Allocation of Resources:** First preference is given to those living in the Stevensville/Lone Rock community.

**Policy for Assistance:** No money goes directly to the person needing assistance, but is designated to a second party payee—e.g. for electricity, groceries, gas, etc.

Generally not more than once a quarter for any one family or individual. Ravalli County Ministerial Association and Salvation Army both keep records that we can access to check on anyone who may be abusing the system by requesting help more than once a quarter.

Members of the church are encouraged to suggest persons or families who may need a little help. Individuals seeking assistance are referred to the Salvation Army first, where their needs will be assessed. If there are other organizations that can offer more appropriate help, they will be referred by the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army coordinator then contacts us, and, where the need is greater than any of the area benevolence funds can cover, the coordinates various organizations to help with a portion of the need.