

# Consuming Fire Fellowship

## *Church Government Statement*

We acknowledge that *Jesus Christ* is the Head of His church, the body of Christ (*Col 1:18*). Christ directs His church through the Scriptures. Nevertheless, we recognize He uses human vessels to accomplish this end (*1 Tim 5:17; Titus 1:5*). Therefore, *Consuming Fire Fellowship*, as an independent Pentecostal church, reserves the right to govern itself internally by the by-laws and constitution originally ratified at the inception and incorporation of this local church. These by-laws and constitution, we believe, are in accordance with the principles communicated in the New Testament. Though we strongly believe in the autonomy of the local church (*Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5*), it is determined by the pastor and elders of *Consuming Fire Fellowship*, that a presbytery or external governing body, should be established for the sake of accountability and/or spiritual intervention. Therefore, the leadership of *Consuming Fire Fellowship*, namely, *Pastor Britt Williams, Associate Pastor Charlie Kennon, and Elder Bob Brumfield*, have chosen three men to serve in this capacity: *Pastor Victor Persinger, Pastor Perry Bonin, and Evangelist Matt Bourgault (Pastor Persinger is designated the senior presbyter)*. Moreover, the leadership of *Consuming Fire Fellowship* may dismiss and replace presbyters at their own discretion as they deem it in the best interest of the church. The nature of this governmental policy is "covenant," therefore, its effectiveness is directly contingent upon the moral integrity of the leadership involved. Furthermore, we acknowledge, every attempt to provide "checks and balances" in the delegated authority structure of the local church should never negate or otherwise supersede the balance of power that God has invested in the pastoral ministry. Again, we believe this is consistent with the New Testament model.

## *Purpose and Responsibilities of the Presbytery*

The primary purpose of the presbytery is to offer accountability and/or, in extreme cases, spiritual intervention for the pastoral ministry of *Consuming Fire Fellowship*. The presbyters agree to the following responsibilities in oversight: [1] Should the pastor, God forbid, fall into moral failure, the presbytery will be asked to offer a spiritual plan for restoration (*Gal 6:1*). [2] Likewise, if the pastor were to stray into doctrinal error, teaching and/or practicing damnable heresy, the presbytery would have a responsibility to confront the pastor (*Matt 18:15-18; Gal 2:11; 1 Tim 5:19-20*). Should there be no repentance and resolution the presbytery would then be obligated to formally warn the congregation of *Consuming Fire Fellowship* (*1 Tim 5:20*). [3] In extreme cases of crippling internal strife or division the presbytery could be asked by the leadership of *Consuming Fire Fellowship* to intervene and offer judgment and direction. [4] In the unlikely case that both *Pastor Williams* and *Associate Pastor Kennon* were to resign, be incapacitated, or simultaneously expire, the presbytery would be asked to prayerfully consider establishing suitable pastoral authority. *Pastor Williams* has covenanted to submit to the presbytery in cases of *moral failure* and *doctrinal purity* (above statements 1 and 2). He also willingly delegates the spiritual responsibilities communicated in the

above points 3 and 4 to the presbytery. Should he, in light of the following stated commitment, refuse the presbyters' authority in such cases, great caution and discernment would be in order for those under his spiritual care.

### *Spiritual Steps for Individual Christians*

As we recognize the autonomy of the local church we likewise recognize that the family is autonomous. Simply meaning: [1] In the local church, no one has more delegated authority regarding the policies, discipline, direction, and doctrine of the church than the local pastor. [2] But, concerning the family, no one is more equipped to lead the home than the father, parent, etc. Given the incredible responsibility and authority God has invested in the pastoral ministry, He has also provided spiritual safety for the individual and individual families through the Scriptures and the personal teaching of the Holy Ghost (*1 John 2:26-27*). Thus, every member of the body is encouraged to "*search the Scriptures daily*" as well as exercise discernment. Should individual members of *Consuming Fire Fellowship* suspect the pastor guilty of sin, they should take appropriate steps of confrontation according to the New Testament (*Lev 19:17; Matt 18:15-18; 1 Tim 5:1,19-20*). Never should a member of *Consuming Fire Fellowship* contact a presbyter without first confronting the pastor regarding the behavior in question (*Prov 25:9*). Likewise should the member think the doctrines taught and preached are heretical, direct confrontation, communication, and resolution should be sought. In cases where sin and damnable heresy are evident and provable, the elders, as well as the members of *Consuming Fire Fellowship*, would be justified in contacting the presbytery (*Matt 18:15-18*).

