

The
CONSTITUTION
Of
BURKE COMMUNITY CHURCH



9900 Old Keene Mill Rd. Burke, VA 22015
703-425-0205
www.burkecommunity.com

Adopted January 20, 2019

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BURKE COMMUNITY CHURCH STATEMENT OF FAITH

Adopted January 20, 2019

PREAMBLE: The teaching of Burke Community Church is based on the Holy Scriptures. This statement of faith reflects those doctrines that the elders and congregation consider essential to understanding, teaching, and practicing God's Word.

1. GOD

God has revealed Himself to be the living and true God. There is one God who is the Creator and Preserver of all things. He is one, existing eternally in the three Persons of the Trinity--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--who are of one essence and co-equal (Deut. 6:4-5; Matt. 28:19-20; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-5).

A) GOD THE FATHER

God the Father works all things according to His own purpose (Acts 17:24-28). He is sovereign over all (Ex. 15:18; Ps. 97:1-5; Is. 6:1). His creative purpose and redemptive plan cannot be thwarted (Gen. 50:20; Prov. 19:21; Jn. 6:44; Acts 2:23).

B) GOD THE SON

Jesus Christ is God (Jn. 8:58, 20:28), the eternally pre-existent Son and living Word (John 1:1), who became incarnate through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth (Matt. 1:18-24; Lk. 2:26-38). He is perfect Deity and true humanity united in one person (Phil. 2:5-11). Both natures are whole, perfect and distinct. He was tempted in all ways yet lived a sinless life (Heb. 4:15). He was obedient to God the Father, even unto death (Phil. 2:8). He voluntarily atoned for sinners by dying on the Cross as their substitute and shedding His blood for the forgiveness of their sins (Rom. 3:22-26). He thus revealed the divine love and upheld divine justice, removing our guilt and reconciling us to God (Rom. 8:1-4). On the third day in the tomb, He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died (Lk. 24:31, 36; Phil. 3:21; Heb. 7:16, 24). He ascended bodily into heaven (Acts 1:6-11) and sits at the right hand of God the Father (Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3), where He, the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5), continually makes intercession for believers (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). He will come again to complete His saving work and to complete God's redemptive purpose (Jn. 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:16-18; Phil. 1:6).

C) GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit reveals and glorifies Christ (Jn. 16:7-15) and applies the saving work of Christ to men (Eph. 1:17-18; Jn. 3:5-8; Rom. 8:14; 2 Cor. 3:18). He convicts the world of sin, truth, righteousness, and judgment (Jn. 16:8). He draws sinners to Christ (Jn. 6:44), imparts new life to them (Jn. 3:5-8), continually indwells them (Gal. 4:6-7) from the

moment of spiritual birth in order to conform them ultimately to the image and likeness of Christ (2 Cor. 3:17-18), and seals them until the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13-14). His fullness, power, and control are appropriated in the believer's life by faith (Eph. 2:8, 9). The Holy Spirit alone administers spiritual gifts to the Church for the common good of all believers (1 Cor. 12:7).

2. THE BIBLE

The basis of our beliefs is the Bible, God's written Word, which includes and is limited to the 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament. It was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and it was written free from error in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks. It is the only infallible rule in faith and practice. All doctrinal statements must be measured against the full counsel of God in Holy Scripture (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 119; Jn. 17:17; 2 Tim. 3:15-17).

3. MANKIND

People were created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27) to know, glorify, worship, and enjoy Him forever. Tempted by Satan, mankind willfully disobeyed God and sinned (2 Cor. 11:3, 14). Thus, people were alienated from their perfect Creator and plunged into a state of sin and separation from God (Rom. 3:9-20; 5:12-19). That historic fall brought all people under the sentence of eternal condemnation and death (Rom. 5:16, 18). Man's nature is corrupt (Titus 1:15), and he is thus, apart from the grace of God through faith, totally unable to please God (Rom. 8:8), have fellowship with Him, or even enter into His presence (Ps. 5:4; Prov. 28:9; Is. 1:15). Everyone is in need of salvation (Rom. 6:23) through the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ as full payment for his sin and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

4. SIN

Sin is disobeying God and attempting to live and to meet our needs independently of Him (Rom. 3:10-26, 5:12-19; 1 Jn. 1:8-10).

5. REDEMPTION/SALVATION

Human salvation is wholly a work of God's free grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human merit or goodness or religious ceremony (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7). We believe Jesus died upon the cross as a sinless substitute for sinners of all ages and times (Rom. 3:21-28, 5:17-19; Jn. 3:16). Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin (Heb. 9:22). Therefore, His death perfectly satisfies the demands of God's holy justice and appeases His holy wrath (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:20-22).

All who receive, by faith, the resurrected Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are spiritually born into permanent relationship with God by the indwelling Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13-14). Thus, God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith solely in the substitutionary death of Christ for their salvation (Rom. 4:11, 22-24). As a result of this faith, the redeemed sinner receives eternal life and is now freed from the penalty (Rom. 8:1) and power (1 Cor. 15:50; 1

Pet. 4:11) of sin and, in heaven, from the very presence of sin (Rev. 21:1-4). Redemption does not, however, promise that we will escape the earthly consequences of past, present, or future sinful acts (Heb. 12:6, 10; Deut. 8:5; Ps. 94:10). Neither is one's station in life, physical circumstances, financial status, etc., necessarily indicative of the state of one's heart before or after salvation. God may grant physical health and material prosperity to some, but this is because of His specific grace alone in accordance with His sovereign purpose and plan (Phil. 4:10-13).

6. ETERNAL LIFE

Eternal life is a relationship that begins at the moment of salvation and continues forever. Eternal life is knowing the one true and living God and Jesus Christ whom He sent (Jn. 17:3; 1 Jn. 5:11-13).

The great end, which Christianity sets before us, is the joy of eternal life in the knowledge and presence of the eternal God (1 Cor. 2:9; Phil. 3:30-21). Whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him (Jn. 3:36; Rom. 8:6-8).

When the Holy Spirit indwells the new believer at the moment of salvation, He imparts this eternal life to the believer (1 Cor. 1:21-22).

Although all die physically, God will ultimately resurrect all believers in glorified bodies that are incorruptible, without sin, decay, illness, pain, or death—finally perfected for eternal life (1 Cor. 15:35-57; Rev. 21:3-4).

7. ASSURANCE OF SALVATION

Since human salvation is wholly a work of God's grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human merit or goodness or religious ceremony, salvation rests securely with God.

All who are born again of the Spirit can be assured of their salvation from the very moment at which they trust Christ as their Savior and Lord. Nothing can separate us from the love of God (Rom. 8:38-39). This assurance is not based upon any kind of human merit or feelings, but on the promise of God and the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the believer through His Word. Further, when a person is born of the Spirit of God, he is a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). He now desires to please God. This new inclination, the intent of the heart, is called repentance and is evidence of a changed life (Jn. 10:25-30; Rom. 5:1-5, 8:1, 28-39; 1 Jn. 2:19, 5:13). Therefore, the three-fold witness of salvation—the witness of Scripture, the witness of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the witness of a changed life—is God's assurance that the believer is a child of God.

8. SANCTIFICATION

From the moment of salvation, every believer is being conformed to the likeness of Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17). This process is called sanctification. God's promise is that He is faithful to complete this process that He began in us (Phil. 1:6).

God created us in Christ Jesus to do good works which He prepared in advance for us to do so that people will see our good works and praise our Father in Heaven (Eph. 2:10). The

Holy Spirit is the active agent in fulfilling these good works (John 15:5); the responsibility of the believer is to obey (1 Sam. 15:22).

Unrighteousness, such as sexual immorality, greed, adultery, homosexuality, or drunkenness is not acceptable in the holy life God desires for His followers. However, through repentance, obedience to the Word of God, and empowering of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to grow in holiness and actively participate in the life of the church, becoming more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

9. CHRIST'S RETURN

Jesus Christ will come again to the earth—personally, visibly, and bodily—to consummate history and fulfill the eternal plan of God the Father. No man knows the day and time of Jesus' return, but the fact of His return is certain. The Scriptures declare that when Jesus returns to the earth in glory, every eye will behold Him, every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Christians are to be about the Father's business and are to maintain an attitude of expectancy (Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28; Mk. 8:38; 2 Thess. 1:10; Rev. 1:7; Jn. 5:28-29; Rom. 8:17-21).

10. JUDGMENT

There will be a day when everyone who has lived must stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10; Heb. 9:27).

Christians—all who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord—have already been judged at the Cross and have passed from death to life, from condemnation to salvation (Rom. 8:1). Their names will be in the Lamb's Book of Life (Rev. 3:5, 13:8, 20:12, 21:27), and they will be ushered into God's presence forever. Their works, however, will be judged and each Christian will receive what is due him for the things done while in the body (Matt. 5:12, 10:41-42, 16:27; Eph. 6:8; Col. 3:24).

Non-believers—anyone whose name is not found written in the Book of Life—will be thrown into the lake of fire, which is the second death, being punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and the majesty of His power (Heb. 10:27; 2 Pet. 2:4, 9, 3:7).

11. THE CHURCH

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His Body (Eph. 2:19-22, 4:11-13). The Church is not a building or an institution; rather it is composed of all people who have received salvation. Christ's people are to assemble together regularly to devote themselves to worship, teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). The Lord Jesus Christ commanded His Church to proclaim the Gospel throughout the world and to disciple men of every nation, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all He has commanded. The church is to reflect the love of Christ through its service to others (Matt. 28:16-20).

Two ordinances have been entrusted to the Church: baptism and communion. They are not, however, to be regarded as means of salvation.

12. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

We believe that marriage unites one man and one woman in a lifetime commitment to each other (Gen. 2:23-24; Matt. 19:4-6). Marriage provides for intimate companionship, pure sexual expression (Gen. 2:25; Eph. 5:31-33), procreation, and reflects the relationship of Christ and the Church (Gen. 1:28; Prov. 5:15-19; 1 Cor. 7:1-5).

We believe that God has commanded that sexual activity be engaged exclusively inside the marriage covenant between one man and one woman. We believe that any other sexual activity that deviates from God's purpose for a man and a woman is sin (Gen. 1:27, 2:24, 19:5-13, 26:8-9; Deut. 22:5; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:9; 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4).

We believe that sexuality and gender are fixed by God at birth and are not fluid, resulting in each person being a unique creation by God's perfect intention (Ps 139:13-16). In addition, we believe all are welcome in the body of believers, recognizing that we all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). Further, grace, mercy, and victory are available to all who struggle in these and other areas of sin, when they choose to repent of their sin and walk in obedience with Christ.

BURKE COMMUNITY CHURCH BYLAWS

Revised January 20, 2019

A. ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization is Burke Community Church (hereinafter also referred to as “BCC” or the “church”).

B. ARTICLE II: PURPOSE AND POWERS

This church is organized for the purpose of conducting the ecclesiastical and corporate affairs of a local church in accordance with the “Constitution of Burke Community Church,” hereinafter referred to as the Constitution. Corporately, the powers of the church shall include the right to acquire personal and real property by purchase, gift, bequest, or device and to hold, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, or otherwise encumber same.

C. ARTICLE III: THE CONGREGATION

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION

The congregation is composed of members who have united on profession of faith, together with their children, and friends and agreed to live together with a common faith and purpose.

SECTION 2: MEMBERS

Members shall be received by the Council of Elders after reaching the age of eighteen upon giving assurance of their faith in Jesus Christ and their willingness to abide by the governing documents (signed member’s covenant) and serve Him through this church. Members express their faith by participating in the life of the church; by exercising their spiritual gifts; by attending church services regularly; by giving of their time, talents, and treasure; by yielding honor, encouragement, and obedience to elders; and by participating in congregational meetings.

SECTION 3: FRIENDS

The church, being primarily a fellowship of the saints with Christ the Head, welcomes the fellowship and service of non-members in all areas with the exception that non-members shall not lead a BCC-sponsored ministry; hold elected office; or vote at congregational meetings. While serving in a temporary teaching role at BCC, friends agree to conform to the BCC Statement of Faith.

SECTION 4: ROLL OF MEMBERS

A roll of members’ names shall be maintained by the Council of Elders through the church office. The roll shall indicate active or inactive status as determined by the Council of Elders.

A member shall be considered inactive by the Council of Elders if he or she has been absent from all services for one year (provided he or she is not hindered by sickness or disability), showing no interest and giving no response to contacts from the Council of Elders. Names shall be added to the roll when persons have been accepted into membership by the Council of Elders. Names shall remain on the roll until death, removal at the member's request, or removal by the Council of Elders.

SECTION 5: VOTING IN CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Voting is limited to active members. Membership rolls shall be reviewed at least ten (10) days prior to a congregational meeting at which elections are scheduled to determine those eligible to vote in said elections. Absentee ballots may be requested and are acceptable if they have been completed, signed, and delivered to the Clerk of the Council of Elders prior to the meeting. Proxy ballots will not be acceptable in any case. Simple majority vote shall decide all congregational questions except as specified in these Bylaws.

SECTION 6: GENERAL POWERS

The general powers of the congregation shall be:

- a) To authorize the buying, selling, receiving or giving real or other property and any related indebtedness – two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- b) To elect its elders and the nominating and search committees.
- c) To call its senior pastor – three-fourths (3/4) majority.
- d) To approve the annual ministry plan (including its associated budget) and any ten (10%) percent or greater redistribution of ministry funds during the fiscal year.
- e) To make changes to the church Statement of Faith – three-fourths (3/4) majority.
- f) To make changes to the Bylaws – two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- g) To merge or dissolve the church – two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- h) To sell all or substantially all of the church's assets – two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- i) To approve any other major event or decision as proposed by the Council of Elders – simple majority unless otherwise stated.

Majorities required to exercise these general powers of the congregation will be majorities of members both present and voting at properly called congregational meetings, as set forth in these Bylaws.

D. ARTICLE IV: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

SECTION 1: AGREEMENT

Members upon joining the church agree to work and worship together in harmony, settling conflicts within the fellowship according to Scripture. In accordance with Article XIV of these Bylaws, members agree not to pursue legal action against or sue in civil court, the pastors, officers, church staff or other members in connection with the performance of their official duties.

SECTION 2: PROCEDURE

Christians are admonished not to "continue to sin" but to confess and forsake sinful acts and attitudes. In the event of persistent, unrepented sin, it may become necessary to correct sinning church members. The ultimate goal of any disciplinary action is to restore the Christian to full fellowship with God and the church.

- a) All church discipline shall be conducted with love, in privacy. Only after unsuccessful private attempts, according to the Scriptures, shall offenses be referred to the Council of Elders and exclusion from church office or membership be considered.
- b) In the event of unrepented sin or unresolved differences between individual members, reconciliation and repentance shall be sought in private. Should such attempts fail, the matter shall be referred to the Council of Elders who shall carefully investigate the allegations. If necessary, after efforts to promote restoration and reconciliation, the Council of Elders shall effect final disposition of the case, which may include dismissal from any leadership position, role, office, and/or membership, if required.
- c) Elders as leaders are subject to stricter standards of discipline. In the event of unrepented sin and the failure of attempts to resolve the matter in private or within the Council of Elders, the Council shall consider public correction as an example, according to the Scriptures. (1 Tim. 5:17-20)
- d) If a member is disciplined by the Council of Elders, it may be announced to the congregation to carry out the Biblical admonitions to bring about repentance and restoration.

SECTION 3: REINSTATEMENT

If the dismissed member repents, and if possible, makes restitution, he will be restored to the body by the Council of Elders.

E. ARTICLE V: VOCATIONAL PASTORS

SECTION 1: QUALIFICATIONS

- a) Pastors, by virtue of their office, shall be voting members of Burke Community Church. They shall be men totally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit, with a burden for world evangelism, and be committed to the discipleship of Christians to maturity in Jesus Christ. They shall be personally active in winning the lost, binding up the broken-hearted, able to teach the Word accurately and effectively and to counsel believers spiritually. Most of all, they must be men of God, aspiring to holiness of attitude and life, who can lead Burke Community Church to fulfill its calling and to maintain its unity in the bond of peace.
- b) Associate pastors called to functional areas of ministry, by virtue of their offices, shall be members of Burke Community Church. They shall be totally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord, filled with the Holy Spirit, with a burden for evangelism, and be committed to the discipleship of Christians to maturity in Jesus Christ. They shall be people of God aspiring to holiness of attitude and life. Gifts, training, and experience, appropriate to the functional areas to which they are called shall qualify them.
- c) The Senior Pastor is an elder and serves on the Council of Elders.

SECTION 2: DUTIES

- a) The Senior Pastor, in concert with the Council of Elders and other vocational pastors, shall teach the congregation biblical truths, exercise watchful and responsible care over the total ministry, shepherd the flock, provide spiritual leadership, train the elders and other pastoral staff to share pastoral and support duties, and disciple, direct, and monitor the ministries of the other pastors.
- b) The Senior Pastor shall report directly to the Council of Elders; all other pastors and associate pastors shall report to the Senior Pastor or his pastoral designee.
- c) The Senior Pastor shall lead the church staff (see Article IX) in developing an annual ministry plan that addresses ministry objectives, an integrated calendar of major events for the year, and an integrated budget to support the plan. The Senior Pastor shall ensure ministry teams are invited to submit their recommendations for the ministry plan. After receiving approval from the Council of Elders, the Senior Pastor shall present the ministry plan to the members for approval.
- d) Major sections of the ministry plan shall address equipping the saints for ministry, the multiplication of the ministry, and the current nerves of need in the community.
- e) Once annually, but not later than the first Sunday in February, the Senior Pastor shall devote his sermon to “The State of Burke Community Church.”
- f) Associate pastors called to functional areas of ministry shall have those areas of ministry defined by the Council of Elders. Their ministries shall be reviewed annually by the Senior Pastor or his designee with a view toward adjusting assignments in light of their needs and gifts and the needs of the ministries of Burke Community Church. The Senior Pastor or his designee shall report the results of his annual review to the Council of Elders.

SECTION 3: CALL OF VOCATIONAL PASTORS AND ASSOCIATE PASTORS

- a) For Senior Pastor, the Council of Elders shall announce the need for a search committee and the date for a meeting to be held in three weeks to address this issue. During the next two weeks the Council of Elders shall receive names in nomination for this search committee. One week before the meeting, the Council of Elders shall prayerfully choose a list of members to be on this search committee. The membership shall ratify or reject the list by their vote at the meeting.
- b) The Search Committee shall prayerfully investigate prospects for Senior Pastor, using the guidelines stated in Article V, Section 1, and direction from the Council of Elders. They shall submit the names of one or more qualified persons to the Council of Elders.
- c) The Council of Elders shall consider the committee’s recommendation, and in coordination with the search committee, shall conduct any additional investigation or interviews deemed necessary, and shall recommend a single candidate to the congregation.
- d) At a duly called congregational meeting, an affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of those members present and voting shall constitute a call for the Senior Pastor. The Search Committee shall inform the candidate of the voting results as soon as possible.
- e) For pastors other than the Senior Pastor, the Council of Elders shall be the final hiring authority and set, conduct or delegate any investigation or interviews deemed necessary in support of the hiring process.

SECTION 4: TERMINATION

- a) Vocational pastors or associate pastors may resign from Burke Community Church by giving written notice of intent to resign to the Clerk of the Council of Elders at least sixty (60) days in advance.
- b) If any two (2) members have a grievance against a pastor, those members must present their grievances to the Council of Elders. Any vocational pastor or associate pastor may be dismissed for immoral or egregiously improper behavior after appropriate investigation by a unanimous vote of the Council of Elders, at a duly called meeting of the Council wherein the purpose of the meeting is stated and after opportunity is given to the vocational pastor/associate pastor to explain his position in relation to the cause for dismissal. In the case of termination of a pastor who is also an elder, a unanimous vote of the other elders is sufficient.

F. ARTICLE VI: THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS (SERVING AS BOARD OF DIRECTORS)

SECTION 1: GENERAL POWERS

The corporate powers of the church shall be exercised by or under the authority of the Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to in these Bylaws as the “Council of Elders” or “elders.” The Council of Elders shall exercise government and discipline and take the oversight of the spiritual interest of the church by feeding, shepherding, and leading the flock, as described in the Holy Scriptures. The powers, business and property of the church shall be exercised, conducted and controlled by the Council of Elders for the purposes of overseeing the legal, business, financial and administrative affairs of the church with consensus agreement. If, in the course of the decision-making processes, the Council of Elders cannot unanimously agree, then the decisions will be made by majority vote of the elders present and voting at that meeting. The Senior Pastor, who shall be recognized as the authority to oversee the spiritual affairs of the church, shall be the tie breaking vote if that case ever arises.

SECTION 2: COMPOSITION

The Council of Elders of the church is constituted by the Senior Pastor and a minimum of six (6) elected serving elders. The authorized number of serving elders shall be such number as may from time to time be authorized by the Council of Elders, provided that such number shall not be less than six (6). No less than fifty (50%) percent of the Council of Elders shall be laymen from the congregation and not related to paid staff. All elders serve on the Council of Elders as co-equals. The Council of Elders may recommend a staff pastor to be approved by the congregation as an elder. The Elder Nominating Committee shall review the recommended pastor as it does all other elder candidates.

SECTION 3: OFFICERS

The officers of the Council of Elders shall be the Chairman, the Clerk and such other officers as the Council of Elders may from time to time appoint or elect. The Senior Pastor shall serve as the Chairman and facilitate the meeting, unless he delegates to the Board to appoint a Chairman from among the lay Board members. The Clerk shall be selected annually from among the lay members of the Council by the Council of Elders.

SECTION 4: MEETINGS

- a) Regular meetings of the Council of Elders will be held at least once each month. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Council of Elders attending any meeting will be sufficient to postpone the next scheduled meeting of the Council of Elders, but an alternative date for the meeting must also be approved.
- b) Special meetings of the Council of Elders may be called by the Senior Pastor, or in his absence, by the Clerk of the Council of Elders, or upon request of any two elders.
- c) A quorum of half of the serving elders shall be required for the transaction of business in any meeting of the Council of Elders. A majority vote of the elders attending a meeting shall decide all questions unless otherwise stated in these Bylaws or the Council of Elders agrees to require unanimity.
- d) All meetings of the Council of Elders shall be open to observation by any active member of the church; the only exception being executive meetings specifically closed by two-thirds (2/3) vote of Elders attending to discuss sensitive matters.
- e) Any active member or designated representative of any organization of the church can petition the Council of Elders for the purpose of appearing before the Council of Elders on any matter by scheduling such an appearance through the Clerk.
- f) Any action required or permitted to be taken by the Council of Elders may be taken without a meeting, if all of the elders, individually or collectively, consent in writing to the action. Such action by written consent shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the elders. Such written consent or consents shall be filed with the minutes of the proceedings of the Council of Elders.
- g) Members of the Council of Elders or of any ministry team thereof may participate in a meeting of the Council or ministry team by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment whereby all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such meeting. When such a meeting is conducted by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment, a written record shall be made of the action taken at such meeting, noting participation of those who were present by means of such communications equipment.
- h) The Clerk shall duly record any actions taken by the Council of Elders in the minutes. Except for Executive Sessions, the minutes of Council of Elders' meetings shall be available to any member of the congregation at a time and location announced to the congregation. The Senior Pastor will hold minutes of Executive Sessions. In addition, the Clerk shall notify all persons specifically affected by Council of Elders action in a timely manner.

SECTION 5: SPECIFIC DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Without prejudice to the general powers outlined above, and subject to the same limitations, the Council of Elders shall have the following responsibilities and authorities:

- a) To maintain oversight over all areas of ministry. It is responsible for approving the spiritual direction of the church. The church staff shall submit annually a ministry plan to the Council of Elders who is accountable to the membership and before God to seek and to provide the direction for the ministries of BCC. The Council of Elders shall recommend a final ministry plan to the congregation for their approval at the fall

congregational meeting.

- b) To shepherd the congregation, maintaining an active counseling role, participating in laying on of hands for prayer, and providing spiritual assistance to the members of BCC.
- c) To establish governing principles, policies and determining practices for the church, including the creation and maintenance of policies and procedure manuals, which shall contain all controlling policies and procedures governing any and all aspects of the church's affairs, including, but not limited to, ministry team descriptions and policies regarding the handling of funds, use of facilities, and employment policies and practices.
- d) To recommend the borrowing of money and incurring indebtedness on behalf of the church and the cause to be executed and delivered for the church's purpose and in the church's name, promissory notes, and other evidence of debt and securities.
- e) To oversee legal, business, financial and administrative affairs of the church.
- f) To act as a counsel for the Senior Pastor.
- g) To review the state of ministries of BCC and annually evaluate the performance of the Senior Pastor.
- h) To anoint with oil for healing (James 5:14).
- i) To exercise other powers and duties as needed for orderly administration of the church.

The Council of Elders may delegate some of its authorities and duties to individual elders, pastors, church staff, deacons, ministry teams and others as long as the delegation does not breach its fiduciary duties to the church. The Council of Elders may also invite ministry team leaders to be non-voting attendees to Council meetings whenever projects or programs in which their ministry team may be involved are to be considered.

SECTION 6: CRITICAL MINISTRY FUNCTIONS

To be a church, certain ministry functions are necessary. Without them, we would not be a church. The Council of Elders will ensure that the following ministry functions are always operational at Burke Community Church:

- a) Worshipping God.
- b) Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry.
- c) Outreach to Burke, Fairfax County, and the uttermost parts of the earth.
- d) Caring for the internal needs of our church body.

SECTION 7: TRANSACTIONS WITH INTERESTED PARTIES

A contract or other transaction between the church and one or more of its elders, pastors, officers, deacons, or family members thereof (hereinafter "Interested Party"), or between the church and any other entity, of which one or more of the church or its elders, pastors, officers, or deacons are also Interested Parties, or in which entity is an Interested Party has a financial interest – shall be voidable at the sole election of the church unless all of the following provisions are satisfied:

- a) The church entered into the transaction for its own benefit;
- b) The transaction was fair and reasonable as to the church, or was in furtherance of its exempt purposes at the time the church entered into the transaction;
- c) Prior to consummating the transaction, or any part, the Council of Elders authorized or approved the transaction, in good faith, by a vote of a majority of the elders then in

office, without counting the vote of the interested elders, and with knowledge of the material facts concerning the transaction and the Interested Parties' interest in the transaction; and

- d) Prior to authorizing or approving the transaction, the Council of Elders, in good faith, determined after reasonable investigation and consideration, that either the church could not have obtained a more advantageous arrangement, with reasonable effort under the circumstances, or the transaction was in furtherance of the church's tax-exempt purposes.

Common or interested elders shall not be counted in determining the presence of a quorum at a meeting of the Council of Elders (or a ministry team thereof) which authorizes, approves, or ratifies such contract or transaction. The Council of Elders may adopt additional conflicts of interest policies, in addition to the above, that shall provide for full disclosure of material conflicting interests by elders, officers, deacons, or employees. These policies shall permit the Council of Elders to determine whether the contemplated transaction may be authorized as just, fair and reasonable to the church. Notwithstanding the above, no loan shall be made by the church to any of its elders, officers, pastors, deacons, or members.

SECTION 8: NO COMPENSATION

No salary or compensation shall be paid to any member of the Council of Elders in his capacity as an elder, but nothing herein shall be construed to preclude any elder from serving the church in any other capacity and receiving reasonable compensation. Moreover, an elder may receive reasonable reimbursement for travel and other approved expenses upon request and written documentation.

G. ARTICLE VII: ELECTIONS OF ELDERS

SECTION 1: ELIGIBILITY

All elders shall be mature, active, male members, of proven faith in Jesus Christ, and both desirous and apt to teach, shepherd, lead, and oversee the flock (1Tim. 3:2-7).

SECTION 2: TERMS

- a) Terms of elected elders shall be three years.
- b) To establish continuity and a smooth transition within the Council of Elders, approximately one-third (1/3) of the elders shall be up for election or re-election each year.
- c) Elected elders shall be installed on the first Sunday of the month following their election.
- d) No elder shall serve more than two consecutive terms without a one-year break in service.

SECTION 3: NOMINATIONS

A nominating committee, consisting of active members, shall be elected annually by the congregation at the regular November meeting. No member of this committee shall be an elected officer of the church. The committee shall convene quickly to organize and elect a chairman, consider written advice from the Council of Elders, and begin prayerfully to

consider the current and future leadership needs of the Body. The committee shall submit, after informing the Council of Elders, a slate of nominees to the congregation not less than two Sundays prior to an election. Recommendations from the congregation with the approval of the individual may be made by notification to the Nominating Committee, or directly to the Clerk of the Council of Elders at least eight weeks prior to the election.

SECTION 4: ELECTIONS

Elections of elders shall be determined by secret ballot and a majority of the votes cast in favor shall elect unless otherwise ordered by the congregation.

SECTION 5: VACANCIES

Vacancies shall be filled by congregational election in May and November. The Council of Elders may, at its discretion, fill by appointment one vacancy by a former elder of the church for a period not to exceed six months.

SECTION 6: RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

Any elder may at any time deliver a written notice of intent to resign to the Senior Pastor, which shall be effective upon acceptance by the Council of Elders. Other than the Senior Pastor, whose removal is provided above, any elder may be removed at any time with or without cause when, in the sole judgment and discretion of the Council of Elders, by a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the elders that such individual should no longer serve on the Council of Elders. In the event any elder is so removed, a new elder may be selected in accordance with this Article for the remainder of the term.

H. ARTICLE VIII: DEACONS

SECTION 1: DEACON COMMISSION

A Deacon Commission is established for the express purpose of meeting practical needs in the body and to free up elders for teaching and shepherding the flock (Acts 6) and will have duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Council or Elders.

SECTION 2: APPOINTMENT OF DEACONS

Members of the Deacon Commission are appointed by the Council of Elders, after being tested by the Council in accordance with I Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

SECTION 3: TERMS OF OFFICE

The Council of Elders shall designate terms for the office of Deacon and provide oversight to the Deacon Commission.

SECTION 4: RESIGNATION AND REMOVAL

Any Deacon may at any time deliver a written notice to the Senior Pastor of intent to resign which will be effective upon acceptance by the Council of Elders. Any Deacon may be removed at any time with or without cause when, in the sole judgment and discretion of the Council of Elders, it is determined by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the elders that such individual should no longer serve as a Deacon. In the event any Deacon is so removed, a new Deacon may be selected by the Council of Elders for the remainder of that term.

I. ARTICLE IX: MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

SECTION 1: STANDING AND SPECIAL MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

The Council of Elders may establish ministry teams (Standing and Special) and other church committees as needed to assist them in the performance of their responsibilities. These ministry teams shall function under the oversight of the Council of Elders but shall continue to pursue their delegated responsibilities as defined by the church and those tasks specifically delegated to them by the Council of Elders. A special ministry team may not exist beyond the duration of one year without reauthorization by the Council of Elders.

SECTION 2: LEADERSHIP OF MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

- a) A member of Burke Community Church who has a passion and a gift to conduct the specific ministry shall lead ministry teams.
- b) Ministry team leaders are expected to support the church vision and statement of faith.
- c) Ministry team leaders will be evaluated by pastoral staff before being commissioned by the Council of Elders as responsible for their area of ministry.

SECTION 3: COMPOSITION OF MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

Unless otherwise stated in the BCC Policy and Operations Manual, ministry teams are composed of the members and friends of Burke Community Church who together assume responsibility for a ministry area. Membership is open and encouraged to any member or friend of the church who shall actively participate. The minimum size of a ministry team is two.

SECTION 4: OPERATION OF MINISTRY TEAMS AND COMMITTEES

Ministry teams shall address all substantive matters as an entity in convened meetings. Executive actions of a ministry team leader may be made only in extreme emergency when no other ministry team action is possible.

SECTION 5: MINISTRY TEAM AND COMMITTEE COORDINATION

Unless otherwise stated in the BCC Policy and Operations Manual:

- a) Each ministry activity of the church will be under the purview of a ministry team. Assignment of any activity to a ministry team is the responsibility of a pastor or his

- designated representative.
- b) A pastor or his designee, to integrate the efforts of all ministry teams, shall coordinate ministry team activities.
 - c) Any church member may forward ministry team reports without modification to the Council of Elders with the optional comments or recommendation of any member of the church staff or with comments.

J. ARTICLE X: THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH STAFF

SECTION 1: COMPOSITION AND GENERAL POWERS

The church staff shall consist of all vocational pastors and associate pastors, and other church office personnel. The church staff, under the jurisdiction of the Council of Elders, shall have the responsibility for planning and coordinating the ministries of the church. The church staff shall prepare and recommend the annual ministry plan (including its associated budget); oversee the care of church facilities, property, and equipment; and monitor the financial performance of the church. The Senior Pastor is responsible for equipping the congregation to conduct ministries of the church.

SECTION 2: LEADERSHIP OF THE CHURCH STAFF

The Senior Pastor shall lead the church staff.

SECTION 3: OPERATION OF THE CHURCH OFFICE

The Senior Pastor, or his designee, shall establish standard operating procedures to ensure that the church staff operates in an efficient and effective manner. The church office will serve as the central point for all matters concerning the operation of Burke Community Church. Issues or concerns should be submitted to the church staff for resolution. The office staff will either take action to remedy the situation or pass the situation on to a ministry team with instructions to either 1) act to resolve the situation, or 2) study the issue and make a recommendation to the church staff or Council of Elders, as deemed appropriate by the Senior Pastor.

- a) Issues involving the Senior Pastor will be addressed to him first and if his resolution is not acceptable to the member raising the issue, the issue may then be referred to the Council of Elders for action.
- b) The church staff is responsible for the planning and formulation of the Burke Community Church Ministry Plan, which shall include the church budget. The ministry plan shall be submitted to the Council of Elders for review six (6) weeks prior to the annual church business meeting. The Council of Elders shall provide planning and formulation guidance for preparation of the plan. Once the congregation approves the plan the church staff is responsible to oversee and execute the annual program within the constraint of the approved plan. Funds may be reprogrammed within the ministry areas defined in the ministry plan as necessary to meet changing needs of the congregation. Reprogramming of funds between ministry budget areas as identified in the ministry plan shall be subject to the restriction that no ministry area may be either decreased or increased by more than ten percent (10%) during the church's fiscal year without the express approval of the

congregation. Employees' salaries, allowances, and other paid benefits may not be reprogrammed for any reason. Under no circumstances shall funds be reprogrammed to retroactively cover an unauthorized expense without the express consent of the Council of Elders.

SECTION 4: DISPOSING OF TANGIBLE GIFTS

The Council of Elders shall designate a senior staff member, other than the Sr. Pastor, to administer the liquidation of tangible gifts donated to the church. These gifts include but are not limited to real estate, automobiles, stocks, coins, etc. The designated staff member is authorized to sign documents on behalf of the church and is responsible for the timely disposal of donated items with consultation from the Council of Elders as deemed necessary.

K. ARTICLE XI: CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

SECTION 1: SEMI-ANNUAL MEETINGS

Unless otherwise ordered by the Council of Elders for cause, the semi-annual meetings of the congregation shall be held during May and November at such time and place as designated by the Council of Elders. At such meetings, the congregation shall be competent, without special provision or notice, to transact any business of the church (whether corporate or ecclesiastical) properly coming before it, including, but not limited to, the election of officers, the adoption of the annual ministry plan with its associated budget in November, and receiving of reports of all committees, ministry teams, staff, and the Council of Elders.

SECTION 2: SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings of the congregation may be called by the Council of Elders at any time, including during the absence of the Senior Pastor, or shall be called when petitioned to do so in writing by not less than one-fourth (1/4) of the members entitled to vote at such meetings. No business shall be transacted at any special meeting except that business clearly stated in the notice calling the meeting.

SECTION 3: QUORUM

A quorum of one-fourth (1/4) of the active members over eighteen years of age shall be required for the transaction of business at all meetings of the congregation, semi-annual or special, except that a lesser number may adjourn the meeting to a specific time. If quorum is not met, then another meeting shall be called with proper notice given. At the second meeting on the same subject(s), quorum is satisfied by the number of active members over eighteen years of age present at the start of the meeting.

SECTION 4: ADJOURNED MEETINGS

A semi-annual or special meeting of the congregation may be adjourned as the circumstances may require and without further notice to a specific time.

SECTION 5: NOTICES

Notices of all the meetings, semi-annual or special, shall be given to the congregation by public notice from the pulpit on two successive Sundays next preceding the day of the meeting; and may be given in such additional manner, if any, as may be ordered by the Council of Elders. The agenda for such meetings shall be publicized at least one week in advance, in like manner.

SECTION 6: CHAIRMAN AND CLERK

An elder shall act as chairman for all congregational meetings. The Clerk of the Council of Elders, or a designee appointed by the Council of Elders, will serve as the recording secretary of the congregational meetings.

SECTION 7: RULES OF ORDER

Other than specified in these Bylaws, the meetings of the congregation shall be conducted in accordance with the most current version of "Robert's Rules of Order." The Clerk of the Council of Elders shall appoint a parliamentarian for each meeting.

L. ARTICLE XII: CORPORATE OFFICERS

SECTION 1: OFFICERS, IN GENERAL

The officers of the church corporation shall be the Senior Pastor/President, the secretary (Clerk), the treasurer, and any other officers as the Council of Elders may deem necessary from time to time. An Officer may hold more than one office at a time, except for that of Senior Pastor/President and Secretary.

SECTION 2: ELECTION AND TERM

Except for the Senior Pastor/President, all officers shall be appointed by the Council of Elders for a one-year term but may be reelected without limitation or until their successor is elected and qualified.

SECTION 3: SENIOR PASTOR/PRESIDENT

The Senior Pastor shall simultaneously serve as the president of the corporation, with all the powers and responsibilities attributed to a chief executive officer and which the Council of Elders sets unless he delegates to another pastor, elder, deacon, or staff member.

SECTION 4: SECRETARY

The Clerk of the Council of Elders shall serve as the corporate secretary. The secretary shall record and preserve the minutes of all meetings of the Council of Elders and the church. The secretary shall be charged with the duty of giving proper notice to the church and elders of the respective Council and congregational meetings. Unless otherwise delegated, the

secretary shall also maintain an up-to-date church roll of members and prepare and forward membership letters.

SECTION 5: TREASURER

The treasurer shall be appointed by the Council of Elders from among the membership and shall be responsible for overseeing the financial operations of the church and shall make financial reports to the Council of Elders. The treasurer shall ensure that a financial report is made available for members at the semi-annual congregational meeting and such other congregational meetings wherein a financial report is deemed necessary. A copy of the financial reports shall likewise be made available to the congregation on a semiannual basis. Proper records and books concerning incoming and outgoing funds shall be kept and such records and books shall be available for auditing or inspection by the Council of Elders and those they designate. The treasurer may be removed at any time with or without cause when, in the sole judgment and discretion of the Council of Elders, it is determined by two-thirds (2/3) vote of the elders that such individual should no longer serve as treasurer. In the event the treasurer is so removed, a new treasurer will be selected by the Council of Elders for the remainder of that term.

M. ARTICLE XIII: CHURCH POLICY AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

SECTION 1: DEVELOPMENT OF THE POLICY AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

The development of a church policy and operation manual shall be overseen by the Council of Elders or its designee with professional consultation and review. This manual shall include all church policies, procedures, job descriptions, and organization charts depicting lines of responsibility in the administration of the church.

SECTION 2: COMPILATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE MANUAL

The Council of Elders or its designees shall be responsible for compiling and maintaining a policies and procedures manual for the day-to-day administrative functions of the church not covered in the Constitution and Bylaws. The Manual shall be kept in the church office and made available for review by any member of the church. Any suggested changes shall be presented to the Council of Elders or its designee for review and consideration.

N. ARTICLE XIV: SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES WITHIN OR AGAINST THE CHURCH

In any dispute arising between or among church members, the dispute may be resolved by the Council of Elders (or a duly appointed ministry team) by mediation following scriptural example. If resolution is not reached, legally binding Christian arbitration will be employed by the elders or individuals selected by the elders using a neutral arbitration service. These principles of mediation and arbitration also apply to any dispute between a member and the church. All employees of the church shall sign policies or contracts with the Christian arbitration service clause in it. All contractors and vendors of the church should be asked to sign policies or contracts with the Christian arbitration service clause in it.

A decision shall be reached after prayerful consideration, in a spirit of humility, with each Arbitrator seeking that which most glorifies God and regarding one another before himself.

Judgment upon an arbitration decision may be entered in any court otherwise having jurisdiction. Jurisdiction and venue shall be the county and state where the church is located, and Virginia law shall apply to dispute. Members, pastors, staff or third-party vendors/contractors shall understand that these methods shall be the sole remedy for any controversy or claim arising against the church and expressly waive their right to file a lawsuit in any civil court against one another or the church for such disputes, except to enforce an arbitration decision. In that case, judgment upon an arbitration award may be entered by any court having competent jurisdiction, in conformity with the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Notwithstanding this above provision, to protect the church and its members and under its risk policy procedures, the church is required to maintain liability insurance. Therefore, this conflict provision is conditioned upon agreement by the church's insurers that, in light of the particular facts and circumstances surrounding the disputed matter, this provision, and the process it establishes will not diminish any insurance coverage maintained by the church.

O. ARTICLE XV: FINANCIAL POLICIES

SECTION 1: FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall be the calendar year. However, the Council of Elders, in consultation with the necessary ministry teams, shall have the power to fix, and from time to time to change, the fiscal year of the church. Accurate records shall be kept by all organizations of the church and report made on the fiscal year basis. All funds handled by any and all organizations shall be reported to the Council of Elders.

SECTION 2: REVIEW OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND RECORDS

An outside Certified Public Accounting firm shall be engaged to conduct a compilation, in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services issued by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, annually, for two consecutive years of each three years. In the third year, an outside CPA firm will be engaged to conduct an audit or an internal control consulting engagement. The completed reports shall then be presented to the Council of Elders no later than August 1 of each year.

SECTION 3: ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

All funds received for any and all purposes shall pass through the hands of the church Treasurer, or the treasurer's designee, and be properly recorded on the books of the church. A system of accounting for handling of all funds shall be the responsibility of the Council of Elders, or its designee.

SECTION 4: DEPOSITS

The Council of Elders or its designee shall select banks, trust companies, or other depositories in which all funds of the church not otherwise employed shall, from time to time, be deposited to the credit of the church.

SECTION 5: CHECKS

All checks or demands for money and notes of the church shall be signed by such officer or officers or such other persons as the Council of Elders may from time to time designate. Any check over the amount of five thousand dollars (\$5000.00) shall require two authorized signatures from two disinterested elders or officers.

SECTION 6: CONTRACTS

The Senior Pastor/President can sign contracts to bind the church once approved by the Council of Elders or according to its procedures. However, the Council of Elders may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the church, in addition to those officers so authorized by these Bylaws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of the church, including real estate transactions once proper approval has been sought and obtained. Such authority may be general or confined to specific instances. All contracts for major services or expenditures should be reviewed by a competent attorney.

SECTION 7: ENDOWMENTS

The Council of Elders may establish on behalf of the Church any endowments for the general purposes or for any special purposes of the church.

SECTION 8: DESIGNATED CONTRIBUTIONS

The church may accept any designated contributions, grant, bequest, or devise consistent with its general tax exemption purposes, as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. As so limited, donor designated contributions will be accepted for special funds, purposes, or uses as approved by the Council of Elders, and such designations generally will be honored. However, the church reserves all rights, title, and interest in and to and control of such contributions, as well as full discretion as to the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any funds (including designated contributions) to assure that such funds will be used to carry out the church's tax-exempt purposes.

SECTION 9: BENEVOLENCE FUND

The Council of Elders or its designee shall establish procedures to receive and disburse all funds allocated to them in a Benevolence Fund. It will be the duty of the Council of Elders, or its designee, to determine needs of congregants or others in the community as they arise. The Council of Elders, or its designee, shall examine the need of the recipients of these designated funds.

SECTION 10: PARTNERSHIPS, JOINT VENTURES, LLCs, AND AUXILIARY CORPORATIONS

The Council of Elders may authorize in writing any officer(s) or agent(s) of the church to enter into any partnerships or joint ventures or create auxiliary corporations or limited liability companies (LLCs) that the Council of Elders determines shall advance the religious purposes and goals of the church as described herein and not violate the church's tax-exempt status.

SECTION 11: PURCHASE OR SALE OF REAL PROPERTY AND BORROWING OF MONEY

Neither officers nor agents of the church may purchase or sell real or personal property on behalf of the church unless authorized by the Council of Elders and in cases of real property, the Members according to these Bylaws. Any borrowing of money must be approved by the Council of Elders and the Members according to these Bylaws.

P. ARTICLE XVI: INDEMNIFICATION

Any person made or threatened to be made a party to any action or proceeding, whether civil or criminal by reason of the fact that he or his testator is or was an elder, deacon, officer, employee or agent of the church, may be indemnified by the church, and the church may advance his related expenses, to the full extent permitted by law. The church may purchase and maintain insurance to indemnify: (a) itself for any obligation which it incurs as a result of the indemnification specified above; and (b) its elders, deacons, and officers.

Q. ARTICLE XVII: AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

SECTION 1: STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Statement of Faith may be amended, altered or revised by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called congregational meeting if recommended by the Council of Elders. A month’s notice of such meeting shall briefly describe the substance and purpose of the proposed change.

SECTION 2: BYLAWS

These Bylaws may be amended, altered, revised, or repealed by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the qualified voters present at a congregational meeting, semi-annual or special if recommended by the Council of Elders. A two week notice of such a meeting shall briefly describe the substance and purpose of the proposed change.

R. CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned Clerk of Burke Community Church do hereby certify that the above Constitution (Statement of Faith and Bylaws) were adopted on January 20, 2019 by the members at a duly called meeting and that this Constitution (Statement of Faith and Bylaws) are current and in operation as of that time.

Clerk of Council

Date