

# **By-Laws of the Honolulu Slavic Church**

## **Honolulu, Hawaii**

*Adopted on October 15, 2015*

### Article 1 – *Name*

The name of this church is **Honolulu Slavic Church**

### Article 2 – *Purpose*

This church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities.

This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

Worshipping Him;

Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;

Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;

Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;

Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;

Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;

Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and

Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement about the nature of the local church.

### Article 3 – *Membership*

#### Section 1 – *Qualifications*

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

#### Section 2 – *Admission of Members*

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular meeting of the members, and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

### Section 3 – *Duties and Privileges of Membership*

In accord with the duties listed in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, in line with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

### Section 4 – *On Church Discipline*

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonoured, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline will only be considered after individual private admonition has failed.

Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19–20 20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be:

1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5; Hebrews 12: 1–11; Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5; Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5; Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1: 22);
2. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33; Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Hebrews 10: 24–25);
3. For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians 13: 10; Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);
4. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; Matthew 5: 13–16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3:7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and
5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1; Ephesians 1:4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

## Section 5 – *Termination of Membership*

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death, or after he or she has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other biblical reason.

## Article 4 - *Meetings*

### Section 1 – *Worship Meetings*

Worship services shall be held each first day of the week, the Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

### Section 2 – *Members' Meetings*

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There shall be a regular members' meeting, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership.

An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, *a quorum* shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

*A budget* shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

At any regular or special members' meeting, *officers may be elected* so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met.

## Article 5 – *Officers*

### Summary

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve the church in accordance with the Word of God. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart.

The Biblical offices in the church are elders and deacons. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

## Section 1 – *Elders and Deacons*

The elders shall be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3: 1–7 and Titus 1: 6–9. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6: 1–6 and I Peter 5: 1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock.

An elder's office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and I Timothy 5: 17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members’ meeting of the church.

The elders and deacons shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders and deacons are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

Each year, elders and deacons shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members’ meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

Elders and deacons shall elect a chairman of elders’ meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members’ meetings. For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Hawaii, elders and deacons shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.

## Section 2 – *Clerk*

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members’ meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the elders and deacons, or the church.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the State of Hawaii, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of By-Laws are available for all church members.

### Section 3– *Treasurer*

The treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

### Article 6 – *Elections*

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

- Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process;

- Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders;

- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;

- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### Article 7 – *Dispute Resolution*

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18: 15–20, I Corinthians 6: 1–8), the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically-based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically-based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.