

**2017**  
**Congregational Meeting**  
**Information Packet**

The logo for LifeJourney Church features the text "LifeJourney" in a large, sans-serif font, with "Church" in a smaller font below it. The text is surrounded by several overlapping, semi-transparent circles in various shades of gray, creating a sense of movement and depth.

LifeJourney  
Church

# LifeJourney Church

## 2017 Annual Congregational Meeting

Our Annual Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday February 19, 2017, at 12:45 pm in the sanctuary. Only members can vote, but all are welcome. Agenda items are:

1. Adopt a 2017 Budget.
2. Consider a Bylaw Amendment.
3. Elect 4 individuals to the Board of Directors.

This document contains the information you'll need. Please bring it to the meeting.

### 2017 Budget Proposal

This year's budget proposal was prepared in the following steps:

- December 5 – The Board's Budget Team met to review last year's results and draft a 2017 budget proposal.
- December 13 – The Budget Team presented its proposal to the Board for review at its regular monthly meeting and forwarded it to staff for comment.
- January 10 – The Board reviewed the budget once more and approved the proposal presented in this document.

Each of the foregoing meetings was open to all and publicized in advance. We deeply appreciate those who were able to participate! Before going into effect, the budget proposal must be approved (or amended) by the congregation.

### Budget Proposal Overview

Last year was tough financially. Several of our larger givers were unable to continue giving due to circumstances beyond their control, e.g., moving out of state, job loss, etc. Also, for the first time in two decades, we experienced a decline in attendance over the past year. Although every church is bound to experience occasional blips in attendance, when attendance dips so does giving. In our case, giving lagged budget by 8% in 2016. In response, we reduced spending enough to allow us to end the year near "break even." To be precise, we spent only \$2,396 more than we took in – for a deficit of less than one half of 1%.

Although we tightened our belt in many areas, our largest cost savings was achieved by temporarily reducing the amount of assessments we pay our denomination (MCC). MCC requires us to pay a monthly assessment of 11.5% of our income. However, MCC has also issued guidelines for how congregations, during a time of hardship, can temporarily reduce their assessments. In accordance with those guidelines, the Board voted to reduce our assessment to the lesser of 2% of income or \$1,000 per month, effective October 1, 2016.

This year's budget assumes that the assessment reduction will continue through the first 3 months of 2017 – although, under MCC guidelines, the Board could extend the reduction longer if deemed financially necessary. So if giving levels do not rebound quickly, we will have some flexibility.

Because giving did not match budget last year, we have made this year's budget proposal as frugal as possible. This year's budget assumes slightly less giving than was budgeted last year, and is supplemented by a transfer of \$13,000 in profits from LifeJourney Press. Those profits are generated from the sale of a book our church has published on homosexuality and the Bible called *The Children Are Free*.

## What's The Plan To Grow Giving?

The best way to grow giving is to create positive momentum within our church community on a variety of fronts. Steps we've already taken seem to be making a real difference. Attendance is growing again. As we seek to continue building momentum, we're focusing on four areas critical to any thriving church:

- Compelling Worship. Our brand new Worship Arts Minister is helping us lift the power and beauty of our worship to new levels. Engaging worship is directly related to attendance; it gives people a compelling reason to get out of bed on Sunday mornings!
- Missional Focus. As a congregation, we need to embrace some really big projects that will greatly bless the lives of hurting people. That's one of our most important reasons for being – to share the love of God in amazing ways. When we do that, when we let our light shine, people get excited and want to be part of what we're doing. Over the past year, our Local Outreach Board has been working very hard to identify the ways we can make a big difference right here in Indianapolis, and will soon be unveiling some really exciting initiatives!
- Grassroots Marketing. This year we're going to launch a sustained grassroots marketing campaign. We will provide creative resources and opportunities (on social media and beyond) for each of us to invite neighbors, family, and friends to check out LifeJourney Church.
- Thoughtful Stewardship. This year we're also reviewing and updating our approach to stewardship – studying what other thriving churches are doing – to make sure we're inviting people to become financial givers in the best possible, least intrusive ways.

### Not Yet A LifeJourney Giver?

You see and experience the beauty of what LifeJourney does all the time. You know what our church means to you.

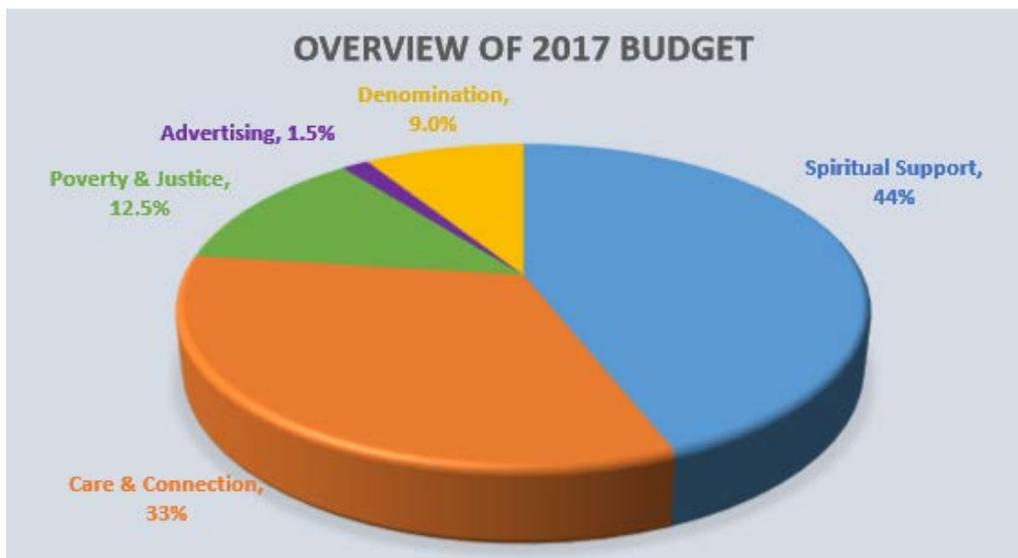
If you would like to help close our 8% giving gap, so we can get back to operating at full throttle, we invite you to establish a personal giving account at:

<http://www.LifeJourney.church/donate>

Or grab some of the new offering envelopes on display at the Welcome Desk in the Social Hall.

Thank you for helping us renew our giving momentum!!

The graph below provides a bird's eye view of the proposed budget, with explanatory notes below.



Calculation Note: When budget line items contribute to multiple categories, they've been allocated *pro rata*. Example: building costs are allocated across the 4 top operational categories since our building supports each of those categories. Detailed line-by-line info appears later in this document.

**Spiritual Support = 44%.** This category includes time and resources allocated to supporting the spiritual life and growth of people in our congregation. Examples include worship, preaching, Be Still & Know daily devotional, Discipleship courses, children's church, Ministry Teams, and Oasis Groups.

**Care & Connection = 33%.** This category includes time and resources allocated to caring for our congregation and fostering deep people-to-people connections. Examples include pastoral care, visits, calls, and letters, counseling sessions, weddings and funerals, Oasis Groups, and social events. As Jesus said, "Love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12.

**Poverty & Justice = 12.5%.** The scriptures repeatedly call us to care for the needy and oppressed. That's why we already support Dayspring Shelter for Homeless Families in Indianapolis, a girls' school in South Sudan, 34 impoverished children through Child Fund International, and home construction for impoverished Navajos. As noted above, our Local Outreach Board is also developing exciting new service opportunities right here in Indianapolis.

**Advertising = 1.5%.** The amount we are currently able to allocate to advertising falls far below the 10% level recommended for thriving churches. In future years, as resources grow, we hope to increase our level of outreach, moving closer to the 10% benchmark.

**Denomination = 9%.** As noted above, we are part of a denomination called the Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC). As a member congregation of MCC, we are required to pay assessments and pension fund dues. The current assessment level is 11.5% of income, but we will pay less during the first quarter of 2017, for reasons explained above. For the year as a whole, averaged out, we expect to pay 9%. We also donate a portion of Pastor David's time to serve as leader of the regional MCC network of churches that covers Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

In summary, the budget being proposed by the Board will allow us, together, as a congregation, to . . .

- Support the spiritual life and growth of the people within our congregation,
- Share lots of love and promote deep spiritual connections within our congregation,
- Help those in greatest need here in Indianapolis and around the globe, and
- Extend a warm welcome to others who need a good spiritual home, but haven't fit in other churches.

Because of your generosity, MANY people are being helped enormously!

## Budget Detail – Explanatory Notes

The notes below correlate to specific line items in the proposed budget, which begins right after the notes. This is probably more than you ever wanted to know about the details of our church budget. ☺ But the Board believes financial transparency is essential to the integrity of our church and the confidence of our donors. If you have questions or suggestions about this budget proposal, you are welcome to email them to Board@LifeJourney.church. The Board will also be happy to take questions at the Congregational Meeting.

**General Offering.** This line item reflects general giving through electronic accounts and in the offering plate.

**Other Income.** This line item includes \$13,000 in profits from LifeJourney Press from the sale of our book on homosexuality and the Bible called *The Children Are Free*, as well as income from things like rental payments from outside groups using our building, interest earned on bank accounts, fees from discipleship classes, paper recycling, etc.

**Advertising.** In 2016, a special donation from the estate of Joe Hardesty enabled us to spend twice as much as was budgeted for advertising outreach. For 2017, we will need to drop back to our normal level of \$5,000. Historically, our church has spent much less on advertising than the 10% benchmark that is typical for thriving churches. So we have set a goal to gradually increase funding for advertising until we reach more normative levels. If giving exceeds budget this year, our proposal calls for an addition \$2,500 to be allocated to advertising this year.

**Building Maintenance/Repairs.** This line item funds routine maintenance and incidental repairs.

**Building Major Repair Reserve.** This line item funds periodic large repair or remodeling projects. Examples include things like a new HVAC unit, parking lot repair, repairing the building exterior, replacing worn carpet, etc. In the past, these major repairs have been budget busters. As a result, we've tended to delay major repairs long past when they were needed. This line item helps us accumulate funds in advance, so we can make major repairs when needed.

**Church Networking.** Every year we set aside a small amount of funds to send voting delegates to our denomination's triannual General Conference and to send staff to training/resourcing conferences sponsored by the OPEN Church Network, of which we are also a part. The level of activity last year took us over budget by almost \$1,000, but that amount was offset by a transfer of profits from LifeJourney Press. This year, we anticipate activity will return to normal for this line item.

**Cleaning/Grounds.** We are budgeting slightly less for 2017 than we actually spent in 2016 because last year we had one large significant grounds expense not expected to recur, i.e., rental of a mower one week when our primary mower was under repair.

**Congregational Care System.** This line item funds our annual fee to the company that provides and maintains the software system that enables us to track the attendance, activity, and special needs of people in our congregation, so we can provide the best possible loving care.

**Printing.** This line item has been reduced to reflect savings we're achieving thanks to everyone's careful, conscientious use of the copy machine!

**Security.** This is a new, and unexpected, line item that covers the cost of having a police officer watch over us on Sunday mornings. We began this practice midyear in 2016 after the Pulse Nightclub shooting. We are not alone. Many churches these days have police watching over them on Sundays. This feels like a necessary expense in our modern world.

**403(b) Employer Contribution.** This line item reflects our church's matching contributions to our employee retirement plans. The church matches the first \$100 each employee contributes to his/her retirement account monthly.

**HR Outsourcing.** This line item reflects fees we pay to an outside payroll processor.

**Salary Expense.** This line item is slightly higher than last year, reflecting staff adjustments during 2016, including hiring a new Worship Arts Minister, hiring a part-time youth ministry position, and expanding the scope of responsibilities assigned to our Minister of Operations to include building and grounds management. The Board of Directors regularly compares the salaries of our staff to those of similarly-sized churches, using a nationally respected survey source, with the goal of keeping our salaries consistent with similarly-sized churches.

**Benevolence.** Occasionally we provide small amounts of assistance to congregants in dire financial need of things like food. We don't budget for this. Instead, funding comes from special bequests we have received. Disbursements from these bequests require a vote of the Board of Deacons. We show this line item here so you can see the level of last year's benevolence activity.

**Homeless Ministry and Local Outreach.** We now have a Local Outreach Board that oversees our Homeless Ministry and is also actively developing other exciting local service ministries expected to launch in 2017 and 2018. We this in mind, we have created one consolidated line item called Local Outreach that will cover the Homeless Ministry and these other new service opportunities. In addition to the funds shown here, our local outreach projects will have access to another \$800 in 2017 that was specifically donated for their support. Thus, the 2017 funding total for local outreach projects will be \$2,400 from the budget, plus the \$800 specifically donated, for a total of \$3,200, representing a 33% increase over last year. In future years, we hope to continue growing the Local Outreach line item significantly, so we can share more and more of God's love here in central Indiana.

**MCC Denominational Tithes.** To understand this line item, be sure to read the information provided on p. 1 of this document. For 2017, we anticipate payment of a reduced assessment at least through the end of March, and possibly longer. Once giving returns to the budgeted level for three consecutive months and our operating reserves equal at least one month's budgeted expenses, i.e., \$42,053, we will resume normal assessment payments. Our operating reserve currently stands at \$24,412.

**OPEN Church Network Membership.** In addition to being a member of MCC, our denomination, we are also one of the founding congregations of an exciting new trans-denominational network of churches committed to supporting and resourcing congregations like ours, i.e., congregations who believe Jesus wants churches to be places that welcome all people as equal partners in ministry, including women, LGBT people, rich and poor, young and old, liberal and conservative, etc. Membership in OPEN costs only \$399 per year, and offers us the opportunity to learn from many innovative, thriving congregations, while also expanding our potential hiring network when we have vacant staff positions.

**Media Team.** The Media Team budget was intentionally higher in 2016 to allow the team to accumulate funds for some necessary equipment purchases. For 2017, this line item returns to its more normal level.

A detailed line item budget follows.

**LifeJourney Church 2017 Proposed Budget**

	2016 Budget	2016 Actual	2017 Base Budget	2017 Budget Step 1
<b>Income</b>				
General Offering	511,829.71	470,662.50	504,637.95	507,397.18
Other Income	3,950.00	16,978.77	16,950.00	16,950.00
Total Income	<u>515,779.71</u>	<u>487,641.27</u>	<u>521,587.95</u>	<u>524,347.18</u>
<b>General Expenses</b>				
*Advertising	5,000.00	12,441.03	5,000.00	7,500.00
Bank Charges / Credit Card / Merch Serv Fees	4,800.00	5,501.33	5,550.00	5,550.00
Building Maintenance/Repairs	7,000.00	2,159.49	3,500.00	3,500.00
Building Major Repair Reserve	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
*Church Networking (MCC and OPEN)	1,500.00	2,557.81	1,500.00	1,500.00
Cleaning / Grounds	7,200.00	9,195.92	7,200.00	7,200.00
Congregational Care System (Fellowship One)	2,308.11	2,308.11	2,300.00	2,300.00
*Congregational Events	3,360.00	8,715.96	3,360.00	3,360.00
Discipleship 101 & 102	700.00	925.26	925.00	925.00
Insurance - Building & General Liability	12,000.00	11,264.50	11,140.00	11,140.00
MCC Pension Fund	2,700.00	2,382.25	2,700.00	2,700.00
Mortgage - Interest	16406.92	16,099.70	15344.92	15344.92
Mortgage - Principle	18253.88	18,561.10	19315.88	19315.88
Newcomer and Member Gatherings	180.00	221.45	240.00	240.00
Office Supplies	1,600.00	1,683.91	1,600.00	1,600.00
Postage	1,200.00	959.61	1,200.00	1,200.00
Printing	7,412.00	5,230.46	6,500.00	6,500.00
Sanctuary supplies	1,000.00	959.32	1,000.00	1,000.00
Security	0.00	3,322.50	7,280.00	7,280.00
<b>Employee related expenses</b>				
403(b) Employer Contribution	6,000.00	5,800.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Payroll taxes - Comp FICA	11,184.30	10,809.10	10,850.00	10,850.00
Christmas Gifts / other employee expenses	275.00	233.80	275.00	275.00
HR Outsourcing	1,550.00	1,629.39	1,680.00	1,680.00
Insurance - Employer paid LIFE / LTD	3,300.00	3,069.22	3,300.00	3,300.00
Insurance - Worker's Compensation	1,650.00	1,570.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Recruitment Expenses	0.00	493.09	0.00	0.00
Salary Expense	273,524.40	268,623.01	291,000.00	291,000.00
Staff Development	450.00	238.95	450.00	450.00
<b>Local and Global Outreach</b>				
Benevolence	-	2,350.00	-	-
*Global Outreach	11,400.00	24,277.80	12,600.00	12,600.00
Homeless	1,200.00	75.00	0.00	0.00
Local Outreach	2,400.00	104.20	2,400.00	2,400.00
MCC Denominational Tithes	57,399.10	41,307.24	45,385.15	45,644.38
OPEN Membership	399.00	399.00	399.00	399.00
<b>Ministry Team Expenses</b>				
*Children & Family Ministries	9,864.00	11,370.65	9,364.00	9,364.00
Hospitality	3,300.00	2,979.84	3,300.00	3,300.00
Media Team	4,500.00	4,500.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
Oasis	1,020.00	116.13	400.00	400.00
Pastoral Care	2,200.00	2,031.67	2,200.00	2,200.00
Worship Arts	5,000.00	4,328.52	5,000.00	5,000.00
<b>Utility Expenses</b>				
Alarm	612.00	737.46	603.00	603.00
Electric	10,320.00	9,667.84	9,900.00	9,900.00
Gas Water Sewer	5,635.00	5,120.32	6,300.00	6,300.00
Internet	1,390.00	1,359.46	1,390.00	1,390.00
Stormwater	1,750.00	1,697.40	1,700.00	1,700.00
Telephone	1,836.00	1,797.18	1,836.00	1,836.00
	<u>515,779.71</u>	<u>490,036.77</u>	<u>521,587.95</u>	<u>524,347.18</u>
Expense total with designated reserve funds		516,175.98		
Weekly Budget Amount	\$9,842.88	\$9,051.20	\$9,704.58	\$9,757.64
Increase in weekly budget			-\$138.30	\$53.06

\*2016 Actual expense includes budget and designated reserve funds. Actual Budget Expense Total only includes budget amount.

# Balance Sheet - As of 12/31/2016

(Includes unrealized gains) (Accrual Basis)

1/10/2017

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Account	12/31/2016 Balance
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	
PNC Building Fund	23,793.60
PNC Checking	28,554.10
PNC Designated Savings	47,323.11
PNC LJPress	17,440.78
<b>TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	<b>117,111.59</b>
<b>Other Assets</b>	
2931 & 2933 E. 56th	232,000.00
55th Place Building	1,346,794.47
Accumulated Depreciation, Bldg	-368,618.45
<b>TOTAL Other Assets</b>	<b>1,210,176.02</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>1,327,287.61</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
<b>Credit Cards</b>	
A Platt 0323	0.00
A Thurnall 0331	0.00
D Hays 0543	294.74
D Walker 2525	0.00
D Zier 0315	0.00
G Miner 0281	0.00
H Myers 4179	0.00
J Hamilton 0257	0.00
J Powell 4200	0.00
J Ruhana 5026	0.00
M Merida 0273	282.04
M Spence 5058	0.00
S Bradford 1772	0.00
S James 0265	593.14
V Wyatt 0299	0.00
<b>TOTAL Credit Cards</b>	<b>1,169.92</b>
<b>Other Liabilities</b>	
Mortgage 55th Place	323,249.13
Mrtg, Rental 2931 & 2933	83,064.58
<b>TOTAL Other Liabilities</b>	<b>406,313.71</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>407,483.63</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>	<b>919,803.98</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>1,327,287.61</b>

## The entirety of Article VII of the Bylaws shall be amended as follows:

### Article VII – Appointed Sub-Boards

A. Responsibilities – The appointed sub-boards will be responsible for matters pertaining to the development and operation of their assigned area of oversight. The appointed sub-boards shall keep adequate records and make timely reports to the Board of Directors.

B. Qualifications – Members of the ~~Appointed sub-boards~~ Board of Deacons must be Members in good standing of the church for at least six (6) months. Individuals appointed to other sub-boards need not be Members in good standing.

1. Conflict of Interest – More than one person from a household, family, or committed relationship; ~~someone who is a church employee;~~ or someone who is a Clergy Candidate shall not be eligible to serve on the appointed sub-boards, except this restriction shall not apply to the Board of Deacons.

C. Composition – There shall be up to nine (9) members of each appointed sub-board appointed by the Board of Directors.

D. Term of Office – The term of office for members of the appointed sub-boards shall be three-year staggered terms, with some being appointed by the Board annually.

E. Meetings – The appointed sub-boards shall meet at least six (6) times a year. The meetings shall be open to the congregation and to the public to attend as Observers without voice or vote, except in the case of the Board of Deacons, who need confidentiality to discuss the circumstances of individuals who need care.

1. Minutes – Minutes shall be available to Members of the church upon request. Minutes shall include a record of those present and decisions made. A copy of the minutes shall become part of the permanent church records. The Board of Deacons is exempt from this requirement since their decisions concern confidential care-giving situations.

F. Quorum – No less than a majority of the members of the appointed sub-boards must be present in order to transact business.

G. Officers – The Board of Directors shall appoint the Chairperson of the appointed sub-boards. The Chairperson shall moderate meetings of the appointed sub-boards.

H. Vacancies – In the event of a vacancy on the appointed sub-boards, the Board of Directors may appoint a qualified ~~member~~ individual to fill the unexpired term.

I. Discipline – The church cannot condone disloyalty, unbecoming conduct, or dereliction of duty on the part of any member of the appointed sub-boards. Therefore, the Board of Directors may remove by a majority vote of the full Board of Directors, any ~~member~~ sub-board appointee guilty of the above.

### ~~RIGHT TO APPEAL~~

- ~~Right to appeal~~—The decision of the Board of Directors is not subject to appeal.

J. Limitation of Liability – No ~~member of the appointed~~ individual appointed to the sub-boards shall be liable for any act or failure to act by any director, officer of the Church, other ~~member of the appointed individual~~ appointed to the sub-boards, or any employee of the Church. No ~~member of the appointed individual appointed to the sub-boards~~ shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in the title to any property acquired by the Church, ~~or~~ No member of the appointed sub-boards shall be liable for any loss arising from any fault in any security in which the Church might invest, or from bankruptcy, insolvency, or wrongful act by any person to

whom the Church might entrust any of its property, ~~or. No member of the appointed sub-boards shall be liable for any loss due to error of judgment or oversight on his/her part, or for any other loss whatsoever occurring in the carrying out of the duties of his/her office, unless this loss arises from the member's individual's own willful neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions.~~

K. Indemnity – The church shall protect every individual appointed to the ~~member of the appointed~~ sub-boards against all costs arising in relation to his/her relations with the Church, unless they are occasioned by his/her own willful neglect or fraudulent or criminal actions.

## **Candidate Forms For Board of Directors**

Four positions on the Board of Directors are up for election at this year's Annual Meeting. The Board is responsible for overseeing the operations of LifeJourney Church. The Nominating Committee is responsible for recruiting and nominating at least one qualified candidate for each open Board position.

The Nominating Committee has nominated the following awesome candidates for the four open Board seats:

Genese Parker, nominated for reelection

Graham Melendez, new nomination.

Robert Ferguson, new nomination.

Todd Deckard, new nomination.

In addition, anyone who wishes is allowed to self-nominate on or before February 12. To self-nominate, you must have been a member in good standing of the church for at least six months. If you wish to self-nominate, email Board@LifeJourney.church to receive a self-nomination form.

We want to thank and honor three outgoing Board members who did not wish to stand for re-election this year. They have each served with great distinction and are ready for a rest: Jon Hamilton, Ernest Disney Britton, and Scott Coolidge.

*An informational form prepared by each candidate nominated for election follows.*

## NOMINEE: GENESE PARKER

1. Please state why you feel you may be called to run for the Board of Directors.

I am passionate about encouraging people to grow both in their personal relationships with God, as well as in their relationships with the people in their faith community. In the past three years as a member of the board, I believe I have made many strides in this effort, however I feel my work isn't done yet. Additionally, in the past six years of attending LifeJourney I have come to think of this church community as my family. I feel called to serve, support and lead my church family in ways that increase a sense of love, healing and compassion, while empowering our community to release that love, healing and compassion into the larger Indianapolis community.

2. Please describe any past experiences that you believe would help you serve effectively on the Board.

I have served on the Board of Directors at LifeJourney for the past three years. I am currently serving as Vice Moderator. During my time as a board member I have also served on the Personnel committee and the Nominating committee. I partnered with Pastor David to co-author and lead the Mosaic Community Diversity curriculum, which many Oasis groups completed in 2015. I have served as an Oasis group leader and as a member of the LifeJourney Praise Team and Choir.

For several years, I served as a campus minister with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, where I worked to develop a Multi-Ethnic Christian Fellowship for college students at Indiana University. I am currently considering how I may support a new up and coming, multi-cultural and LGBT inclusive campus ministry that would like to start a new chapter locally.

In addition to these previous church leadership roles, I am a licensed social worker. I am currently working at Riley Hospital for Children with those who are living with cancer and Sickle Cell Anemia. Before beginning my work at Riley, I worked as a Care Coordinator at the Damien Center where I had the privilege of serving individuals living with HIV. I have also worked with children in the Marion County Juvenile Detention Center and those transitioning out of foster care into independent adulthood.

I am currently serving as President of the Board of Directors of GenderNexus, a new up and coming non-profit organization that seeks to empower the gender-diverse community. I believe my background in social work and leadership give me a unique perspective on the needs of our church family as well as our surrounding community.

3. Please describe your spiritual background.

I grew up in Indianapolis, IN. Throughout childhood, I attended Greater St. Mark Missionary Baptist church regularly with my mother. At the age of 16, I decided to follow Christ and was baptized in that church. From that point until now, I have pursued a deeper relationship with Christ through personal spiritual development as well as taking advantage of opportunities that would empower me to be challenged and stretched in my faith. I see this opportunity to continue serving on the Board of Directors as a chance to serve Christ while growing deeper in my faith and using my spiritual gifts to contribute to the overall growth and success of LifeJourney Church.

4. Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings except in emergencies. Are you willing to make this commitment? (The Board usually meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month.)

Yes       No

5. Board members must be members in good standing. To be a member in good standing, you must: (a) attend our Church regularly; (b) provide regular financial support to our Church in an identifiable form; (c) serve in at

least one area of church ministry; and (d) follow principles of responsible conflict resolution (Mt 18:15-17). Do you meet these requirements?

Yes                       No

6. Do you support the core mission of our Church to: (a) learn to follow Jesus; (b) do justice; and (c) help those in greatest need?

Yes                       No. If no, please explain:

7. Are you a regular generous giver to the Church?

Yes, I tithe                       I don't tithe, but I'm a regular giver  
 Other (explain):

8. If elected, will you respect the LifeJourney Leadership Guidelines (copy attached)?

Yes                       No If no, please explain:

## Nominee: Robert Ferguson

1. Please state why you feel called to run for the Board of Directors.

I believe God has blessed me with a particular set of skills that could be very useful in my service on the LifeJourney board of directors. Over the last 15 years I have been given multiple opportunities to lead several ministries at LifeJourney including Oasis co-leader of the Northwest Oasis, serving on the Board of Deacons since 2005 and founding Indiana's first black gay pride organization which has its roots at this church.

2. Please describe any past experiences that you believe would help you serve effectively on the Board.

I have served on the Deacon's Board so I am familiar with board procedures and protocol. I have 15 years of experience working with and within this congregation. I bring with me the cares and the concerns of our congregation as well as knowledge of issues that have historically impacted our membership as well as the hopes and aspirations of where we see ourselves in the future. Having founded and established a 501c3 organization, Indiana Black Pride, I bring organizational experience as well as board management experience. While I don't expect to be managing the board, I believe knowledge of how boards work will be helpful.

3. Please describe your spiritual background.

At an early age I was very involved with the youth programs at Witherspoon Presbyterian Church and was baptized at 13 years old. By the time I was in high school I became very involved with Campus Crusade for Christ. And in college participated in a missionary trip to Daytona Beach where we witnessed to other college kids on the beaches. Years later I felt a renewed and refreshed calling on my heart. In 1997 at Little Bethel Missionary Baptist Church I professed a calling to preach and after pastoral training was licensed to preach! I stayed at Little Bethel until I could no longer reconcile my sexuality and my understanding of the Baptist doctrine. I still felt called to preach but I did not know at that time how I could be of use to God. I went through a lost period where I was away from God but it seemed that just at the time when I was able to get back to my faith walk, I stumbled across Jesus Metropolitan Community Church at a pride festival. This church was a life raft for me and has helped me to grow and mature in my Christian faith. I have had occasion to preach here and host bible studies for the church in my home. Currently I am pursuing a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Biblical and Theological Studies and am hoping to continue on and earn a Masters of Theology.

4. Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings except in emergencies. Are you willing to make this commitment? (The Board usually meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month.)

Yes                       No

5. Board members must be members in good standing. To be a member in good standing, you must: (a) attend our Church regularly; (b) provide regular financial support to our Church in an identifiable form; (c) serve in at least one area of church ministry; and (d) follow principles of responsible conflict resolution (Mt 18:15-17). Do you meet these requirements?

Yes                       No

6. Do you support the core mission of our Church to: (a) learn to follow Jesus; (b) do justice; and (c) help those in greatest need?

Yes                       No. If no, please explain:

7. Are you a regular generous giver to the Church?

Yes, I tithe                       I don't tithe, but I'm a regular giver  
 Other (explain):

8. If elected, will you respect the LifeJourney Leadership Guidelines?

Yes                       No If no, please explain:

## Nominee: Todd Deckard

1. Please state why you feel you may be called to run for the Board of Directors.

After much Prayer, I feel that the timing is right to join the Board. I would love to share my many gifts and talents with the congregation of LifeJourney Church

2. Please describe any past experiences that you believe would help you serve effectively on the Board.

For a total of 25 years, I have been a Staff Accountant for a National Company.

3. Please describe your spiritual background.

- United Methodist from birth through High School
- Assembly of God College
- Word of Faith movement, serving on staff in several churches

4. Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings except in emergencies. Are you willing to make this commitment? (The Board usually meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month.)

Yes                       No

5. Board members must be members in good standing. To be a member in good standing, you must: (a) attend our Church regularly; (b) provide regular financial support to our Church in an identifiable form; (c) serve in at least one area of church ministry; and (d) follow principles of responsible conflict resolution (Mt 18:15-17). Do you meet these requirements?

Yes                       No

6. Do you support the core mission of our Church to: (a) learn to follow Jesus; (b) do justice; and (c) help those in greatest need?

Yes                       No. If no, please explain:

7. Are you a regular generous giver to the Church?

Yes, I tithe                       I don't tithe, but I'm a regular giver  
 Other (explain):

8. If elected, will you respect the LifeJourney Leadership Guidelines (copy attached)?

Yes                       No If no, please explain:

**NOMINEE: GRAHAM MELENDEZ**

1. Please state why you feel you may be called to run for the Board of Directors.

I feel called to run for the board of directors because I would like to be at the core of the life of LifeJourney Church making history happen. I believe that the board of directors is vital to the life and longevity of the church and plays a very important role, especially in the communicating and partnering with the congregation to make decisions and changes happen that affect our church family. Thus, it would be my honor and privilege to be part of such a life-giving group of individuals that God has called upon to serve as their leaders and history-makers.

2. Please describe any past experiences that you believe would help you serve effectively on the Board.

There are several experiences that have shaped my growth in and out of the church that will help me to effectively serve on the board. I have participated and served on a plethora of ministry/oasis groups in the church that have aided my growth and maturity, especially by receiving wisdom and guidance from pastoral staff, deacons, and older members. Also, by continuing to work closely with the young adults and teenagers (the future of our church), I can bring a new insight into the board from a different perspective. Moreover, as a seminary student, I have gained a fair amount of knowledge about how board of directors work in churches, and I hope to put this into practice to further our church's mission and vision.

3. Please describe your spiritual background.

I was born in Cusco, Peru to a family that was Catholic in their beliefs, but when arriving to the California, my family moved towards the Protestant faith, in particular the Baptist church. As I began to be more involved in the church, I loved learning about Jesus and the Bible so much that I grew a desire to teach like my youth leader and pastor. It was after the movie, "The Passion of the Christ" that I accepted Christ into my heart and during college, I became a leader in both college and prison ministry. Through it all, I struggled to find a place that accepted me as I have been created by God, but after coming to LifeJourney Church, everything changed radically in that I found a place where God and the people of God are all about acceptance, vulnerability, and unconditional love.

4. Board members are expected to attend all Board meetings except in emergencies. Are you willing to make this commitment? (The Board usually meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month.)

Yes                       No

5. Board members must be members in good standing. To be a member in good standing, you must: (a) attend our Church regularly; (b) provide regular financial support to our Church in an identifiable form; (c) serve in at least one area of church ministry; and (d) follow principles of responsible conflict resolution (Mt 18:15-17). Do you meet these requirements?

Yes                       No

6. Do you support the core mission of our Church to: (a) learn to follow Jesus; (b) do justice; and (c) help those in greatest need?

Yes                       No. If no, please explain:

7. Are you a regular generous giver to the Church?

Yes, I tithe                       I don't tithe, but I'm a regular giver  
 Other (explain):

8. If elected, will you respect the LifeJourney Leadership Guidelines (copy attached)?

Yes                       No If no, please explain:

