

# Constitution

Updated November 9, 2008

## Preamble

Since, as we believe, it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to unite certain of His servants here under the name Treasuring Christ Church of Raleigh, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Treasuring Christ Church, do hereby organize ourselves and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and to bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible and as articulated in the Affirmation of Faith and Covenant of this church.

## Article 1—Name

1.1 This body shall be known as Treasuring Christ Church, Inc., of Raleigh, North Carolina.

## Article 2—Purpose

2.1 The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ ([1 Cor 3:11](#); [Eph 2:20](#)), and He guides His church in all affairs through the Holy Scriptures (Ps 119; [2 Tim 3:15-17](#)). Therefore the purpose of this church is to glorify God through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit ([Isa 43:7](#); [Eph 1:6](#); [12](#), [14](#)).

2.2 The priorities of ministry of this church flow from the vision of God's glory revealed in Jesus Christ. We exist to savor this vision in worship ([John 4:23](#)), to strengthen the vision in nurture ([1 Cor 14:26](#); [2 Peter 3:18](#)), and to spread the vision in evangelism, missions, and loving deeds ([Matt 5:16](#); [28:18-20](#); [1 Pet 2:9](#); [3:15](#)).

2.3 In order to remain true to our Lord and His word, this church must be marked by preaching the whole counsel of God ([Acts 20:27](#); [2 Tim 4:1-2](#)), administering baptism ([Matt 28:19](#); [Rom 6:1-4](#)) and the Lord's Supper ([Luke 22:19](#); [1 Cor 11:17-34](#)), loving one another ([John 13:34-35](#); [1 John 3:11-24](#); [4:7-12](#)), and practicing formative ([1 Thess 5:14](#); [1 Tim 5:1-2](#); [Tit 2:15](#)) and corrective discipline ([Matt 18:15-20](#); [1 Cor 5:1-5](#)).

## Article 3—Membership and Covenant Partnership

### Section 1—Qualifications for Membership

3.1.1 To qualify for membership in this church, a person

1. must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration,
2. who has been baptized in obedience to Christ,
3. and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible.
4. Each member must sustain the doctrines of our church and not hold any settled convictions contrary to them, in accord with our Member Affirmation of Faith,
5. and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.

3.1.2 The normal process for becoming a member is

1. completion of all of the Getting Connected Class,
2. an assessment of qualification for membership in a meeting or series of meetings with the church leadership,
3. and an affirmation by the church on the basis of the person's profession of faith. Normally, newly elected members shall relinquish their membership in other churches.

### Section 2—Admission of Members

3.2 To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders (pastors) for admission and accepted by vote of at least 75% of the voting members present at any regular or special meeting of the members. At that point, newly elected members shall relinquish their membership in other churches. Those applying for membership will be received as members by baptism or letter of transfer. A statement of faith may suffice in the event that a letter of transfer is not obtainable.

### Section 3—Duties and Privileges of Membership

3.3.1 In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those who are members of this congregation shall be entitled to lead in the ministries of the church. At the discretion of the elders (pastors), non-members may serve the church for purposes that include but are not limited to administration, maintenance, professional consultation, and construction.

3.3.2 It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and to vote on the election of elders and deacons, on decisions regarding membership status, on the annual budget, on the acquisition of real property, and on such other matters that are submitted to a vote.

### Section 4—Church Discipline

3.4.1 Formative discipline is inherent in the preaching, teaching, and exercise of other ministries in the church. When formative discipline fails due to sin, corrective discipline is then necessary. Corrective discipline is for the good of the church and the member who has sinned. It is never to be

entered into lightly or quickly. The goal of corrective discipline is always remedial, that is, the goal is always the salvation and holiness and good of the one being disciplined.

3.4.2 Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders (pastors) and the corrective discipline of the church, according to the instructions and examples in [Matthew 18:15-17](#), [1 Corinthians 5:1-12](#), [Galatians 6:1-2](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:14](#), and other relevant biblical texts.

3.4.3 The purpose of discipline should be:

1. For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual(s) disciplined ([Heb 12:1-11](#); [Matt 18:15-17](#); [1 Cor 5:5](#); [Gal 6:1](#));
2. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them ([1 Cor 5:11](#); [1 Tim 5:20](#); [Heb 10:24-25](#));
3. For the purity of the church as a whole ([1 Cor 5:6-7](#); [Eph 5:27](#); [Rev 21:2](#));
4. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians ([Matt 5:13-16](#); [John 13:35](#); [Acts 5:10-14](#)); and
5. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character ([Deut 5:11](#); [John 15:8](#); [Eph 1:4](#); [1 Pet 2:12](#)).

3.4.4 It is desirable in the case of public sin that a confession be made before the church in a specially called meeting, so that the church can freely extend forgiveness. Such public confession is especially necessary in the case of elders (pastors) and deacons ([1 Tim 5:19-20](#); [Gal 2:11-14](#)).

#### *Section 5—Termination of Membership*

3.5 Termination of membership shall be recognized by the church following the death of a member. The church shall also recognize a transfer of membership or the voluntary resignation of a church member who is in good standing. Membership may be terminated as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the elders (pastors) and with the vote of 75% of the voting members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

#### *Section 6—Covenant Partnership*

3.6.1 International workers cooperating with Treasuring Christ Church, who are on the field in situations that prevent them from joining an evangelical church located near them or others who find themselves transitioning temporarily to Raleigh from outside our area, may desire, after consultation with the elders (pastors) of Treasuring Christ Church, to apply for non-residential membership. The qualifications for non-residential membership are identical to those for membership as set out above.

3.6.2 Though non-residential members are expected to live a life reflecting the spirit of the Church Covenant, the privileges of non-residential members are distinct from those of members due to geographical distance and other factors. Non-residential members may seek to participate in as much of the covenant life of Treasuring Christ Church as possible but shall not be expected to attend all members' meetings and shall not vote on the election of elders and deacons, on decisions regarding membership status, on the annual budget, on the acquisition of real property, and on such other matters that are submitted to a vote.

3.6.3 Termination of non-residential memberships as a disciplinary measure shall be the same as termination of membership. Non-residential membership shall normally terminate as the non-residential member covenants in membership with an evangelical church located near them.

### **Article 4—Meetings**

#### *Section 1—Corporate Worship Meetings*

4.1 A regular corporate worship meeting shall be held once a week and other such meetings may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

#### *Section 2—Members' Meetings*

4.2.1 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.

4.2.2 There shall be an annual members' meeting, at which normally elders and deacons are elected and a budget is approved by the voting membership. The elders (pastors) shall ensure that these meetings are held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

4.2.3 Special members' meetings may be called, as requested by the elders (pastors), at an acceptable time other than the regular weekly corporate worship time, or at the written request, submitted to the elders (pastors), of fifty voting members or 10% of the voting membership (whichever is greater). In the event of a written request from the members, the elders (pastors) shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

4.2.4 All annual and special members' meetings shall be announced at all regular corporate worship meetings of the church at least two weeks preceding such meetings. No business may take place if such notifications have not been made.

4.2.5 For all members' meetings, a quorum shall be a minimum of fifteen members or 10% of the membership (whichever is greater), sixteen years old or older. No business may take place if a quorum is not met. All members sixteen years old or older may make motions, participate in discussion, and vote. Members less than sixteen years of age may participate in discussion only. A non-member may make presentations to the church which are informational in nature and may answer questions regarding the presentation with permission from the elders (pastors).

4.2.6 On any matter that is brought to vote, a two-thirds majority is needed for it to pass (unless this Constitution specifies otherwise). Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. Only votes cast by voting members who are present at the time of the meeting will be counted unless an absentee vote is approved by the elders under special circumstances that prevent a member from attending.

4.2.7 One of the elders (pastors) shall preside at all members' meetings of the church.

#### **Article 5—Officers**

##### *Section 1—Summary*

5.1.1 Jesus Christ is the Lord and head of this church and He rules primarily through the Scriptures.

5.1.2 The biblical offices of the church are elders (pastors) and deacons. For the purposes of this Constitution, a distinction shall be made between "vocational elders (pastors)," who receive compensation from the church, and "non-vocational elders (pastors)," who do not receive compensation from the church. This distinction does not, however, represent a structural or governing hierarchy among the elders (pastors). Our church also recognizes the administrative positions of clerk and treasurer. The elders shall designate the clerk and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

5.1.3 For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of North Carolina, one of the elders shall serve as president of the corporation and the clerk shall serve as secretary of the corporation. The elders shall serve as the board of trustees.

##### *Section 2—Elders (Pastors)*

5.2.1 In keeping with the principles set forth in [Acts 6:1-6](#); [1 Tim 3:1-7](#); [5:17](#); [Tit 1:5-9](#); [Jas 5:14](#); and [1 Pet 5:1-4](#), the elders (pastors) shall oversee the ministries and resources of the church. They shall seek the mind of Christ through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the word of God as they joyfully undertake the work of shepherding God's flock. The elders (pastors) shall teach and exhort; refute and admonish those who contradict the truth; pray for the sick; care for the church's members; devote themselves to prayer, to the government of the church, and to ministry. They shall be responsible for examining and instructing prospective members, examining and recommending all candidates for offices, overseeing the work of the deacons and other church leaders, conducting corporate worship meetings, administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, encouraging sound doctrine, equipping the membership for the work of the ministry, coordinating and promoting the ministries of the church, mobilizing the church for world missions, and overseeing church discipline. The elders (pastors) are further to ensure that all who minister the word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

5.2.2 Each elder must sustain the doctrines of the Elder Affirmation of Faith and not hold any settled convictions contrary to them.

5.2.3 The elders (pastors) shall normally be comprised of not less than three men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder (pastor) set forth in [1 Tim 3:1-7](#) and [Tit 1:6-9](#). Only men may serve as elders (pastors) in accord with [1 Tim 2:12](#); [3:2](#). No elder (pastor) shall hold the office of deacon or treasurer during his tenure.

5.2.4 The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this office in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders (pastors).

5.2.5 An elder's (pastor's) term of office may be terminated by resignation or dismissal. Any member with reason to believe that an elder (pastor) should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders (pastors) and, if need be only afterwards, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in [Matt 18:15-17](#) and [1 Tim 5:17-21](#). Any elder (pastor) may be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members at any formally called members' meeting of the church.

5.2.6 The elders (pastors) may establish paid and non-paid ministry positions and teams to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. A paid or volunteer staff position does not in and of itself constitute an elder's (pastor's) position.

5.2.7 The elders (pastors) may hire and fire non-ministerial staff or delegate that responsibility on a case-by-case basis. The elders (pastors) shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. The outworking of this responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to deacons or another staff member.

5.2.8 The elders (pastors) must have at least a two-thirds approval among themselves before submitting matters to a congregational vote (unless this Constitution specifies otherwise).

##### *Section 3—Deacons*

5.3.1 The office of deacon is described in [1 Tim 3:8-13](#) (cf. [Acts 6:1-7](#)). The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, those who are giving of themselves in service to the church, who possess gifts of ministry, and who are called to further service and care for the church's members. The number of deacons shall be determined by the needs of the ministry and the call and qualifications of church members. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons.

5.3.2 Deacons shall advise and assist the elders (pastors) in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the word, new and existing ministries of the church, and the care of the members of the congregation. The deacons may be organized in the most fitting way to accomplish the mission of the church. The responsibilities of deacons do not include preaching, teaching, or spiritual oversight, which are the responsibilities of the elders (pastors), although they may teach and preach in contexts in which they are not infringing upon the oversight duties of elders (pastors) ([Acts 6-7:53](#); [Titus 2:3](#)).

5.3.3 A deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or dismissal or when the elders determine that a particular deacon's area of ministry is no longer needed. Any member with reason to believe that a deacon should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders

(pastors) and, if need be only afterwards, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in [Matt 18:15-17](#) and other relevant biblical texts. Any deacon may be dismissed by a two-thirds majority vote of the voting members at any formally called members' meeting of the church.

#### *Section 4—Treasurer*

5.4 The treasurer, who shall not be an elder (pastor) or a paid church staff member, shall 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, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders (pastors) annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall collaborate with the elders to ensure that regular financial reports of the church are presented, when appropriate, at regular members' meetings. The treasurer shall work with the elders as the elders manage all unbudgeted funds.

### **Article 6—Election of Elders (Pastors) and Deacons**

#### *Section 1—Principles*

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

1. Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, shall be an integral part of the election process.
2. Nominations shall proceed with the support of the elders (pastors).
3. All candidates for church office shall be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members.
4. The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### *Section 2—Selection of Elders (Pastors) and Deacons*

6.2.1 The election of elders and deacons shall normally be held at the annual members' meeting of the church. The elders (pastors) should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process.

6.2.2 Names of nominees to serve as elders (pastors) and deacons shall be presented by the elders (pastors) and made known to the church at all regular corporate worship meetings at least two weeks preceding the vote. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders (pastors). Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders (pastors) as far in advance as possible before the relevant members' meeting at which the church votes on the candidates.

6.2.3 Nominees must receive a three-quarters majority vote in order to be elected. The persons elected shall assume their respective offices at the beginning of the fiscal year (unless another date has been specifically designated). Elections to fill any need that may occur during the course of the year may be held at any members' meeting, upon recommendation of the elders (pastors).

### **Article 7—Indemnification**

7.1 If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church may provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders (pastors) determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The church shall purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities.

7.2 At the discretion of the elders (pastors), the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

7.3 If at least two elders (pastors) are not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders (pastors) seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

### **Article 8—Dispute Resolution**

8.1 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., [Matt 18:15-20](#); [1 Cor 6:1-8](#)), the church shall urge 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 and the avoidance of lawsuits to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or non-Christian and whether individuals or corporate entities. The elders (pastors) shall direct the church in carrying out these aspirations.

### **Article 9—Amendments**

9.1 The Member Affirmation of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-quarters majority vote at a members' meeting.

9.2 The Elder Affirmation of Faith may be amended by a three-quarters majority vote at a members' meeting only after a recommendation by the elders. The elders must have an 80% majority approval among themselves before submitting such a recommendation to a congregational vote.

9.3 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at a members' meeting.

9.4 All proposed amendments to the Member and Elder Affirmations of Faith, the Church Covenant, and the Constitution must be offered in writing at least thirty days prior to the members' meetings at which they are submitted to a vote and shall be announced at all regular corporate worship meetings at least two weeks preceding such votes.