

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

September 1997

(revised September 2001, amended August 2014, February 2017, May 2023, February 2025)

PREAMBLE

Grateful to Almighty God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - for his grace supremely revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and authoritatively proclaimed in the Holy Scriptures of the Christian Faith, we, the members of the Christian Catholic Church, do establish this constitution to which we agree and voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Christian Catholic Church (doing business as Christ Community Church, the name hereafter used in this document), a nonprofit religious corporation organized under the laws of the State of Illinois, United States of America, currently at 2500 Dowie Memorial Dr., Zion, IL. To be "Christian" is to be identified with Christ in a personal relationship through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. To be "Catholic" [universal] is to be identified with the whole household of God, and to invite all, regardless of race, nation, or class, to come to Christ. To be "church" is to be "called out" as God's people to share in his purpose for men.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose of the Christ Community Church is to glorify God in obedience to the great commission and the great commandments (Matthew 28:18-20; 22:34-40). Having become the people of God through his Word, we unite in order that our Triune God may be more widely known, that people will put their trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation and grow in the grace and knowledge of God.

ARTICLE III: DECLARATION OF FAITH

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible, authoritative Word of God, and our rule for faith and practice.
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his virgin birth, in his sinless life, in his miracles, in his vicarious and atoning death through his shed blood, in his bodily resurrection, in his ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in his personal return in power and glory.
4. We believe that the salvation of lost and sinful man is only by the grace of God through faith in Christ alone, and that regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential.
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life.
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of eternal life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of eternal punishment.
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. We believe that Christ commanded two ordinances to be observed by the Church until Christ returns: water baptism and the Lord's Supper, both open to all believers.

ARTICLE IV: BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP

- FIRST** We are in agreement with the Declaration of Faith of the Christ Community Church.
- SECOND** We recognize that persons can only become members of the church who have repented of their sins and have trusted Christ alone for their salvation.
- THIRD** We recognize that such persons must be able to make a good profession and declare that they know, in their hearts, that they have repented and are trusting Christ, and have the witness of the Holy Spirit.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 Active membership** is open to believers twelve years of age or older who agree with the statement of faith and doctrine of the church and who have been admitted to membership according to the provisions of Section 2. Voting age for members shall be eighteen (18) years.
- 1.2 Associate membership** is open to believers twelve years of age or older who agree with the statement of faith and doctrine of the church, but who retain membership in another church while temporarily living in the vicinity. It shall also be open to those who have moved from the community but who continue an active interest in and support of the church. Associate membership does not give the right to vote or hold office.

SECTION 2: ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1** One becomes a member of Christ Community Church by publicly subscribing to the Declaration of Faith and Basis of Fellowship of the church and signing a written statement to that effect; by being baptized (or having been previously baptized) as a testimony of faith in Christ; and by being approved for church membership by majority vote of the Elder Board.
- 2.2** Ministry with children is limited to those who have been members for at least six months or who meet other guidelines established by church policy.

SECTION 3: CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP

One will cease to be a member of Christ Community Church for any of the following reasons:

- 3.1** By request in a letter from the member or from another church joined.
- 3.2** By prolonged absence (two years) from attendance and support of the church and its activities as determined by the Elder Board, after contact and upon receiving a letter from the Board (where possible).
- 3.3** By death.
- 3.4** By church discipline, after rejection of counsel and upon receiving a letter from the Elder Board (see Section 4, "Church Discipline").

SECTION 4: CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Membership may be terminated by the Elder Board as the conclusion of a process of scriptural church discipline. The Bible mandates disfellowshipping (termination of membership) of members unwilling to repent of:

1. Heresy (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 John 7-11)
2. Divisiveness (Titus 3:10; Rom. 16:17)
3. Sin that disgraces the name of Christ (1 Cor. 5)
4. Refusal to reconcile with another Christian (Matt. 18:17)

Termination of membership by discipline is the last resort in a process sketched by Jesus in Matthew 18. The elders are to follow this process:

- aim to restore the erring member;
- limit discussion of the offense to a narrow circle of witnesses and going public only if necessary;
- proceed without malice and in a spirit of humility.

SECTION 5: REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP

Reinstatement is possible by majority vote of the Elder Board without repeating the requirements for membership stipulated in Article II, Section 2.

ARTICLE VI: CHURCH GOVERNMENT, LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

SECTION 1: PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of power and authority in the church. All who receive him become members of his Body, the Church, are given power to become children of God, and constitute God's true priesthood. When God leads us to form congregations he also calls individuals to various ministries of these congregations and directs the Holy Spirit to work through them. By the same Holy Spirit, Christ enables his people to know whom he has called and leads them to accept ministers and select officers to conduct the affairs of the church.

SECTION 2: GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

One must be a member of Christ Community Church, must support the church in attendance and giving, testify by word and deed to a vital experience of God's grace, exhibit sacrificial love for others, and know God's Word. In addition, one must meet the specific qualifications for the office in question.

SECTION 3: ELDERS

3.1 Definitions

The biblical terms "elder," "overseer," and "pastor" refer to complementary aspects of the primary leadership office within the New Testament church, indicating among other things, maturity, authority, and the shepherding role, respectively. Elders selected by the church for vocational ministry within the fellowship are referred to herein specifically as "pastors" for purposes of clarity. Elders elected to direct and oversee the total ministry and administration of the church constitute the Elder Board, of which the Senior Pastor is a member by virtue of his position and responsibilities.

3.2 Qualifications of Elders

Elders shall be men who meet the qualifications found in I Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:3-9, who agree with the purpose and statement of faith and doctrine of the church. As men of recognized spiritual maturity who are above reproach, they shall be examples to the congregation in life, thought, service and stewardship. As part of their recognized ministry gifts, abilities and experience, elders shall have proven themselves to be effective leaders who possess sound judgment and decision-making capabilities.

3.3 The Elder Board

3.3.1 Description, Purpose and Composition

The Elder Board shall be composed of the Senior Pastor and at least five (5) other elders elected by the church. In addition, one or two pastors of the church will serve as nonvoting members of the Board. (The Board shall, at its first meeting of each elective year, choose which associate pastor or pastors will serve on the Board for the coming year.) The primary purpose of the Elder Board is to promote the spiritual health and growth of the total church body through providing leadership in the fulfillment of the church's biblical purposes and priorities.

3.3.2 Authority

The membership entrusts the Elder Board with the responsibility for the direction and oversight of the entire church, and vests in it the authority to decide and act on its behalf in all matters except those which follow, or which are excepted elsewhere in this constitution:

- Electing elders or standing committee members
- Modifying the church constitution
- Affiliating/disaffiliating with any external organization
- Calling or dismissing a Senior Pastor

However, nothing herein shall absolve the Elder Board of its authority as required by state law.

3.3.3 Election and Term

Elder Board nominees shall be presented to the church by the Nominating Committee, their names having been announced at least four Sundays prior to the Annual Meeting, for election by written ballot to a three-year term which begins immediately upon election. Only men who have been active members of the church in good standing for at least one year may be nominated as elders. Elder nominees do not run "against" each other; all shall be elected who receive at least three quarters of all votes cast. If possible, approximately one-third of the Elder Board members shall be elected each year. After two consecutive terms, an elected elder must leave the Board for at least one year before being eligible for reelection.

3.3.4 Officers, Meetings and Decisions

At the first meeting after the Board is elected, it shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman and any other officers deemed necessary. It shall hold regular meetings at least monthly, and shall hold special meetings at the call of the chairman, or any four

members. A majority of the voting members shall constitute a quorum. Every effort shall be made by the chairman and other Board members to work in agreement, but in the event of unresolved differences, a majority vote of those present at a legally constituted meeting shall have final authority.

3.3.5 Accusations and Removal

Accusations against an elder shall not be considered unless supported by two or more witnesses as required by I Timothy 5:19-20. Duly supported accusations will be investigated by the Elder Board who will administer appropriate admonishment or discipline, if verified. If deemed necessary, an elder, other than the Pastor, may be removed from office by unanimous vote of the other Board members at a legally constituted meeting wherein a quorum is present.

3.3.6 Responsibilities

3.3.6a Leadership, Oversight and Coordination

Working together with the pastoral staff, the Elder Board shall lead and guide the church in fulfilling its biblical purposes and priorities as espoused in Article II of the constitution, through the overall direction, oversight and coordination of its ministries and administrative affairs. The Board may assign a liaison to any group or organization in the church.

3.3.6b Planning and Evaluation

The Elder Board with the Senior Pastor shall ensure the development of annual goals, objectives and long-range plans, in each area of church purpose. Accordingly, the Board shall review and evaluate the church's effectiveness in fulfilling its priorities and goals, and initiate appropriate affirmative or corrective actions.

3.3.6c Corporate Life and Ordinances

The Elder Board shall ensure the essential elements of corporate life are continued and sustained, maintaining regular public meetings for worship, prayer, instruction, and fellowship. The Board shall also ensure that the ordinances of the church, believer's baptism, and the Lord's Supper are faithfully and publicly maintained.

3.3.6d Teaching and Doctrine

The Elder Board shall ensure that the church continues to teach and practice sound biblical doctrine as represented in the statement of faith and doctrine, and that it is related to the people of our culture, to the end that God is glorified, and individuals are redeemed.

3.3.6e Staff Relationships

The Elder Board will act on behalf of the congregation in relationships with the church staff as follows:

- Hiring or dismissal of pastoral staff, excluding the Senior Pastor;
- Advise and consent to the hiring of non-pastoral staff by the Senior Pastor,

- subject to the availability of budgeted funds;
- Establish policy on employment benefits and conditions for all staff and ensure the existence, approval and assignment of current job descriptions;
- Recommend compensation for all new staff, and annually review the compensation of all staff and recommend appropriate changes;
- Annually conduct a formal appraisal of the effectiveness of the Senior Pastor, and, with him, that of the other pastoral and ministry staff; and conduct interim evaluations as might be helpful or necessary.

3.3.6f Licensing and Ordination

The Elder Board shall bear responsibility for the licensing and ordination of qualified church members.

3.3.6g Appointment of Heads of Church Organizations

The Elders shall affirm the heads of the various church organizations which aid in the ministry of the church.

3.3.6h Discipline

The Elder Board shall administer church discipline, and it shall follow the biblical procedures in handling such matters, including referral to the church body. If a serious disagreement should arise that threatens church unity, the Board shall try to find a satisfactory settlement through prayerful and thorough investigation. Settlement or lack thereof, with recommendations for action, shall be reported to the church by the Board.

3.3.6i Finances

The Elder Board has final responsibility for the financial affairs of the church and for the acquisition, conveyance and encumbrance of real property. The Elder Board shall be the governing Board of Camp Zion.

3.3.6j Designation of Officers to Execute Deeds and Contracts

The Board shall authorize execution of deeds and contracts on behalf of the church.

3.3.6k Delegation

The Elder Board shall be able to delegate its responsibilities as it may choose, but no such delegation shall absolve the Board of its responsibility in any matter. Any delegation of responsibility accomplished by this constitution is subject to return to the Board by amendment of the constitution in accordance with Article VII hereof.

3.3.7 Accountability

The members of the Elder Board are accountable to Christ himself, to each other, and to the church membership by whom they have been elected, for living a life worthy of the Lord, and for the fulfillment of the specific responsibilities of their position.

SECTION 4: SENIOR PASTOR

4.1 Qualifications

In addition to the qualifications of elders described in Section 3.2, the Senior Pastor shall have recognized gifts and abilities to preach and teach the Word of God with spiritual conviction. The Senior Pastor must be a lover of people who relates well to others and has effective interpersonal relationships. He shall also be an able administrative leader who directs and oversees the work of others effectively.

4.2 Responsibilities

4.2.1 Spiritual Nurture and Leadership

In I Peter 5 the pastor is compared to a shepherd with a flock of sheep. As the spiritual undershepherd (Christ himself being the Chief Shepherd) he is responsible for the spiritual leading, feeding, protecting and teaching of the flock. The Senior Pastor shall fulfill his responsibilities through preaching, teaching, praying, visiting, counseling, and discipling.

4.2.2 Administration and Supervision

The administrative leadership of the Senior Pastor shall include supervision of the church office staff, other pastoral staff, and all other paid and volunteer staff of the church through whatever organizational arrangement he and the Elder Board shall agree upon. As a member of the Elder Board, the Senior Pastor shall minister in close cooperation with the Board, other elected leaders, and paid and volunteer staff. By virtue of his office, he shall be welcome at all meetings of committees or other organizational entities of the church.

4.3 Relationship with the Church

The relationship between the Senior Pastor and the church shall continue until terminated by either party. The decision to call a Senior Pastor or to sever the pastoral relationship shall be taken by secret ballot vote at a business meeting for which announcements shall have been made at least four Sundays before the meeting. Calling a Senior Pastor shall require a three-fourths majority vote; severing the pastoral relationship shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those present at a legally constituted meeting.

4.4 Retirement

Pastors may retire at any time but will be expected to retire by age 70 unless by mutual consent they are retained on active status by the Elder Board. Retired pastors retain their credentials unless removed for cause by the Elder Board.

SECTION 5: OTHER PASTORAL STAFF

5.1 Qualifications

In addition to the qualifications of elders described in Section 3.2, other pastoral staff shall have recognized gifts, abilities, and effectiveness appropriate to the area(s) of ministry to which they are called to serve.

5.2 Responsibilities

Other pastoral staff shall perform duties mutually agreed upon under a job description

prepared by the Senior Pastor or others so designated and then adopted by the Elder Board. Members of the pastoral staff shall be responsible to the Senior Pastor. When the church is without a Senior Pastor, they shall be responsible to the Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board. When assigned to a committee by the Senior Pastor or Elder Board or a committee of the church, a pastoral staff member shall be a voting member of the committee.

5.3 Relationship with the Church

The relationship between a pastoral staff member and the Elder Board shall continue until terminated by either party. Selection or dismissal of a pastoral staff member shall be the responsibility of the Elder Board. Retirement expectations for Associate Pastors are the same as those for Senior Pastors (see 4.3.1. above).

SECTION 6: OTHER PAID STAFF AND VOLUNTEER STAFF

The Elder Board shall have the authority to hire and terminate non-pastoral staff as it may deem to be in the best interests of the church. As with all paid staff, the Elder Board shall have the authority to set pay levels and to establish all other terms of employment, whether acting directly or through others. Volunteer staff of the church may be selected by the pastoral staff but shall serve with the approval of the Elder Board, and their service may be terminated by the Elder Board. Volunteer pastoral staff shall meet the qualifications of elders described in Section 3.2. In the absence of a Senior Pastor, non-pastoral and volunteer staff shall be responsible to the Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board.

SECTION 7: CHURCH OFFICERS

7.1 Legal Representatives

To meet the requirements for a religious corporation under the laws of Illinois, the following shall be the corporate officers:

President	Senior Pastor
Vice-President	Vice-Chairman of the Elder Board
Secretary	
Treasurer	

The Elder Board shall also be the Board of Directors. The Elder Board (Directors) may elect additional corporate officers as it may deem to be in the best interests of the church, subject to the limitations of Section 3.3.6.

SECTION 8: DEACONS

8.1 Description, Purpose and Composition

The New Testament term “deacon” or “servant” indicates that deacons are servants of the church. They are men and women selected by the church to minister to physical, emotional and spiritual needs through promoting and carrying out ministries of care and compassion. Their work may include, without being limited to the following: visiting and serving communion to shut-ins and those who are hospitalized, distribution of deacons’ funds to relieve physical and material needs, contacting and encouraging people who have been missing from the church’s fellowship. The desired number of deacons, and the

ratio of men to women will be established by the Elder Board in proportion to the size and needs of the congregation.

8.2 Qualifications and Terms of Service

8.2.1 Spiritual Life and Character

Deacons shall meet the qualifications for serving as a deacon found in I Timothy 3:8-13, with a heartfelt desire to serve in this capacity. As men and women who hold firmly to the truths of Scripture with proven faithfulness in prior service, they shall be examples to the congregation of life, thought, service and stewardship.

8.2.2 Church Membership

Deacons shall have been active members of the church in good standing for at least one year, who agree with the purpose and statement of faith and doctrine of the church.

8.2.3 Selection

Recommendations for the diaconate (the group of deacons) may be made by any church member to the Elder Board. The Elder Board shall then select the deacons needed from those deemed to be most qualified.

8.2.4 Term

No specific term of office is recommended. However, there will be an annual review followed by recommissioning by the Elder Board. Termination of service will not necessarily preclude future service.

8.3 Officers and Meetings

The chairperson of the Deacons shall be selected by the Elder Board from among the pastoral staff, Elder Board members or the Deacons. At the first meeting after the Annual Meeting, they shall elect a secretary and any other officers deemed necessary. They shall meet as often as necessary to carry out their work.

8.4 Objectives and Evaluations

The Deacons shall conduct an evaluation at least annually to review the effectiveness of their ministry and establish goals and strategies for the coming year.

8.5 Accountability

The Deacons are accountable to Christ himself and to the Elder Board for the fulfillment of the specific responsibilities of their position.

SECTION 9: STANDING COMMITTEES

Members of standing committees shall be elected by the congregation at the annual meeting of the church, or at other times as necessary for terms not to exceed three years. Terms begin immediately upon election. After serving two consecutive three-year terms, members must wait at least one year before being eligible for reelection. The chairman of any standing committee shall be appointed by the Elder Board from the membership of the committee, the church staff, or the Board. The Board may appoint an elder representative or liaison to any committee.

9.1 FINANCE COMMITTEE

The finance committee shall coordinate the work of the financial affairs of the church, shall direct the work of budget preparation, and shall assist the Elder Board in financial affairs as requested. It shall see that adequate financial records and safeguards are maintained throughout the church.

9.2 BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Building and Grounds Committee shall, under the direction of the Elder Board, and in cooperation with the church staff, care for the church's real property. It shall recommend policy on building use and care to the Elder Board; advise the Finance Committee on budgetary needs, advise, assist, and equip the church staff in ensuring the safety, maintenance, and cleanliness of the church property; and assist the Senior Pastor in hiring, firing, and overseeing the Building and Grounds staff.

9.3 MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The Missions Committee shall endeavor to make missions work vital, visible, and meaningful throughout the church. It shall prepare the missions portion of the annual budget proposal and shall submit it to the Elder Board through the Finance Committee. It shall prepare and implement policy regarding the support of missionaries and missions projects. The chairperson of the Missions Committee shall be appointed by the Elder Board.

SECTION 10. NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee has the responsibility to identify and present qualified candidates for each elected position directly to the church at the annual meeting held for that purpose or at other times as necessary. It shall consist of one Elder Board member and one deacon selected by each group from among their number, one person appointed by the Senior Pastor, and two members elected at large from the membership. In the absence of a Senior Pastor, the vice-chairman of the Elder Board will appoint a member to the committee. Members of the church are encouraged to submit the names of potential nominees to the Nominating Committee for consideration.

Nominees for at-large members shall be presented by the outgoing Nominating Committee, or by the Elder Board in its absence. The at-large member terms shall consist of one year, and members may not hold consecutive terms. The committee shall be initially convened by the Elder Board, and shall select its own chairperson, meeting as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities. Nominees shall have been approved by a four-fifths majority of the Nominating Committee.

SECTION 11: OTHER COMMITTEES

11.1 General

Other committees or groups may be established as needed by the Elders. Members may be appointed by the Board or by the pastoral staff. Such groups serve at the pleasure of the Board and for a term of office determined by the Board.

11.2 Pastoral Search Committee

The Board shall appoint a Pastoral Search Committee as needed. This committee shall recommend to the Board a candidate for the position of Senior Pastor. A candidate approved by both committee and Board shall be presented to the congregation with the joint recommendation of both groups. All contacts with a candidate shall be handled by the committee until such time as a call is extended by congregational vote and accepted by the candidate. After this, contacts will be with the Elder Board.

SECTION 12: MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

12.1 Annual Meeting

There shall be an annual meeting of the members, scheduled by the Elder Board. The Senior Pastor shall cause the time and place of such meeting to be announced from the pulpit at one of the regular Lord's Day services of the church in the city of Zion, at least four Sundays prior thereto, and no other notice shall be necessary.

12.2 Special Meetings

The Elders or the Senior Pastor may call special meetings of the members at any time. Notice and purpose of such meeting shall be announced at least two Sundays prior to the meeting.

12.3 Voting Privilege, Quorum

All active members of the church shall be eligible to vote provided they are at least 18 years of age. Fifty, or ten percent of the members eligible to vote, whichever is fewer, shall constitute a quorum for any annual or special meeting. Each member shall have one vote, and a majority of the votes cast shall determine the action of the meeting. Members must be present in person and proxies will not be recognized. The Elder Board shall have authority to determine which members of the church are eligible to vote.

ARTICLE VI: CONSTITUENT DISSOLUTION

The Christ Community Church (doing business as Christ Community Church) is an Illinois religious corporation. Should this congregation cease to exist, all its real and personal property, appurtenances, and effects then owned or held by it shall revert, vest in and inure to the benefit of evangelical Christian ministries which the Elder Board of the Christ Community Church corporation at the time of dissolution may designate.

ARTICLE VII: AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the active members voting at any annual or other legally constituted meeting called for that purpose.

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