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# CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

REDEEMER FELLOWSHIP  
1210 CHAMBERS STREET  
EUGENE, OR 97402



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# CONSTITUTION

Redeemer Fellowship  
Eugene, Oregon

Accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, the Holy Bible as the verbally inspired Word of God, and seeking to carry out the Great Commission as recorded in Matthew 28:18-20, we adopt the following articles:

## ARTICLE I—NAME AND INCORPORATION

The name of this organization, a non-profit corporation, shall be "Berean Baptist Church of Eugene, Oregon", but operating and doing business as "Redeemer Fellowship."

## ARTICLE II—PURPOSE

Our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. In fulfilling this purpose, we believe that as we regularly meet together for worship, discipleship, and fellowship, we grow in our passion to make and multiply other disciples of Jesus Christ.

## ARTICLE III—AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

### ***The Bible***

We believe that the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments are God's Word<sup>1</sup>, written through men<sup>2</sup>, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, *The Bible* is infallible—as originally given<sup>4</sup>, essential for instruction in faith and practice<sup>5</sup>, and the sufficient revelation of Christ Jesus. Therefore, the Word of God is our final authority<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:37; Psalm 119; <sup>2</sup> 1 Peter 2:21; <sup>3</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16; <sup>4</sup> Psalm 12:6; <sup>5</sup> Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:14-16; Luke 22:27, 44-45; Acts 17:2-3; 2 Peter 3:16; <sup>6</sup> Hebrews 4:12

### ***God***

Regarding God's nature, we believe in one God<sup>1</sup>—eternal<sup>2</sup>, living<sup>3</sup>, holy<sup>4</sup>, true<sup>5</sup>, and all-glorious<sup>6</sup>, existing in three distinct persons, while sharing divine perfection in their one essence<sup>7</sup>, comprising of the Father<sup>8</sup>, the Son<sup>9</sup>, and the Holy Spirit<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy 6:4; <sup>2</sup> Genesis 1:1; <sup>3</sup> Matthew 16:16; <sup>4</sup> Isaiah 6:3; <sup>5</sup> Romans 3:4; <sup>6</sup> Psalm 138:5; <sup>7</sup> John 17:21;

<sup>8</sup> Malachi 2:10; <sup>9</sup> John 1:1; 5:18; <sup>10</sup> John 15:26

As to God's divine perfection, we believe He is unchanging<sup>1</sup>, boundless in knowledge<sup>2</sup>, infinite in power<sup>3</sup>, limitless in His presence<sup>4</sup>, perfect in His wisdom<sup>5</sup>, justice<sup>6</sup>, mercy, grace, faithfulness, and love<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Numbers 23:19; <sup>2</sup> Isaiah 46:9-10; <sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 32:17; <sup>4</sup> Jeremiah 23:24; <sup>5</sup> Romans 11:33; <sup>6</sup> Deuteronomy 32:4;

<sup>7</sup> Exodus 34:6

As to God's character, we believe that God has revealed himself truly<sup>1</sup>, though not exhaustively<sup>2</sup>, in His creation<sup>3</sup>, in the human conscience<sup>4</sup>, and by divine revelation through His Word—*The Bible*. In so doing, He has displayed His regard for His creatures<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 1:1-3; <sup>2</sup> Romans 11:33-36; <sup>3</sup> Romans 1:17; <sup>4</sup> Romans 2:15; <sup>5</sup> Hebrews 1:1-2

As to God's work, we believe the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share in the work of creation<sup>1</sup>, providential governance<sup>2</sup>, judgment<sup>3</sup>, and salvation<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:1, 26; Psalm 33:6; <sup>2</sup> Romans 11:33-36; <sup>3</sup> Acts 10:42; <sup>4</sup> Psalm 34:2

## ***God the Father***

Regarding God the Father's nature, we believe He is an eternal personal spirit<sup>1</sup>, and the source of all authority<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> John 6:46; <sup>2</sup> Matthew 28:18

As to God the Father's work in creation, we believe that by His decree, He created all things.

Genesis 1:1; 1 Corinthians 8:6

As to God the Father's work in redemption, we believe that by His decree He has purchased a people and adopted them as his children out of this world<sup>1</sup>, to conform them to the image of His Son<sup>2</sup>, to the praise of His glorious name<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 1:3-4; <sup>2</sup> Romans 8:28-29; <sup>3</sup> Ephesians 1:11-12

## ***God the Son***

Regarding God the Son's nature, we believe that He is the Son of God<sup>1</sup>, being of one essence with the Father<sup>2</sup>, eternally proceeding from Him, and without beginning<sup>3</sup>. He was conceived in the flesh by the Holy Spirit<sup>4</sup>, born of a virgin<sup>5</sup>, and is both fully God and fully man<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> John 20:31; <sup>2</sup> Colossians 2:9; <sup>3</sup> Colossians 1:15-16; <sup>4</sup> Matthew 1:18; <sup>5</sup> Matthew 1:23; <sup>6</sup> John 6:46, 10:30, 38; Titus 2:13; Philippians 2:6-8; Colossians 1:15-17; 2:9; Revelation 4:11

As to God the Son's work in creation, we believe that He, as the very Word of God<sup>1</sup>, is the agent by which all things were created<sup>2</sup>, and are ever-sustained<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> John 1:14; <sup>2</sup> John 1:3; <sup>3</sup> Hebrews 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17

As to God the Son's work in redemption, we believe that He lived a perfectly obedient life<sup>1</sup>, died a substitutionary death, having been crucified on a cross to atone for our sins<sup>2</sup>, rose bodily from the dead<sup>3</sup>, and ascended into the heavens<sup>4</sup>, as witnessed by many<sup>5</sup>, where He now advocates at the right hand of the Father<sup>6</sup> on behalf of those who believe in Him<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 4:15; <sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:3; <sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:4; <sup>4</sup> Luke 24:29-43, 51-53; <sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:5-8; <sup>6</sup> 1 John 2:1; Hebrews 7:25; <sup>7</sup> Romans 1:16; Ephesians 2:8-9

1     **God the Holy Spirit**

2             Regarding the nature of God the Holy Spirit, we believe that He is eternally proceeding from God  
3     the Father and God the Son, while comprehending and revealing the thoughts of God.

4             John 14:26; 15:26; 1 Corinthians 2:8-11

5             As to God the Holy Spirit's work, we believe He is sent by the Father and Son<sup>1</sup> to convict the world  
6     of sin, righteousness, and judgment<sup>2</sup>, to bring to spiritual life from spiritual death<sup>3</sup>, and to permanently  
7     indwell the saints<sup>4</sup>, sealing<sup>5</sup>, sanctifying<sup>6</sup>, guiding<sup>7</sup>, teaching<sup>8</sup>, equipping<sup>9</sup>, and comforting<sup>10</sup> all those  
8     who believe in Jesus.

9             <sup>1</sup> John 7:39, 14:26-27, 15:26; <sup>2</sup> John 16:8; <sup>3</sup> John 3:6-8; <sup>4</sup> Romans 8:9; <sup>5</sup> Ephesians 1:13; <sup>6</sup> Ezekiel 36:26-27;  
10            <sup>7</sup> John 16:13; <sup>8</sup> Ezekiel 36:26-27; <sup>9</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:7-10; <sup>10</sup> Acts 9:31

11    **Humanity and Its Destiny**

12            Regarding humanity, we believe that we were created in the image of God<sup>1</sup>, first with Adam from  
13    the dust of the ground, and then Eve from Adam's side<sup>2</sup>. Thus, they are the historical parents of the  
14    human race, originally being without sin, and created to love and enjoy God<sup>3</sup>.

15            <sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:26-27; <sup>2</sup> Genesis 2:7; <sup>3</sup> Genesis 1:22, 28

16            We believe that although God created mankind upright<sup>1</sup>, our first parents were led into sin by  
17    personal disobedience to the revealed will of God<sup>2</sup>. It was in this manner they fell from their original  
18    innocence and communion with God<sup>3</sup>.

19            <sup>1</sup> Ecclesiastes 7:29a; <sup>2</sup> Ecclesiastes 7:29b; Romans 1:21-23; Genesis 3:17; <sup>3</sup> Genesis 3:1-7

20            Thereby, as head of the human race, through Adam's fall became the fall of all his posterity, thus  
21    separating humanity from God, and properly incurring a nature of corruption, hostility, guilt, death,  
22    and condemnation.

23            Romans 1:21-32, 3:23, 5:9-10, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Colossians 2:13

24            Therefore, we believe that every human being is enslaved to sin<sup>1</sup>, and morally incapable<sup>2</sup> of loving  
25    and honoring God, and therefore facing eternal judgment and wrath from Him<sup>3</sup>.

26            <sup>1</sup> John 8:34; <sup>2</sup> Romans 6:16, 20, 23, 8:7-8; <sup>3</sup> John 3:3

27    **Humanity and Salvation**

28            We believe that God the Father, in His desire to save humanity, sent His Son—Jesus—to die as a  
29    sinless<sup>1</sup> substitute for sinners<sup>2</sup> once for all<sup>3</sup>, and to rise from the dead, thus guaranteeing and  
30    securing the resurrection to eternal life for those who believe in Him<sup>4</sup> and His substitutionary work—  
31    which is the gospel.



<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians 5:21; <sup>2</sup> Romans 5:8-21; Titus 3:3-7; <sup>3</sup> Romans 6:10; <sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; Philippians 3:20-21;  
Colossians 1:21-22, 2:13

We believe that because of man's corrupt nature and incapability to submit to God, God freely saves by regenerating the heart, by the power of the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>, through the hearing of the gospel—Jesus's life, death, resurrection, and ascension<sup>2</sup>. It is His work that guarantees<sup>3</sup> redemption<sup>4</sup> for those who place their individual faith<sup>5</sup> in His person and work alone<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ezekiel 36:26-27; <sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 2:14, 15:3-5, 45; <sup>3</sup> Ephesians 1:14; Jude 24-25; <sup>4</sup> Hebrews 9:12; <sup>5</sup> Acts 17:30; John 5:24; Romans 3:23-26; <sup>6</sup> Ephesians 2:8-9

## **Satan**

Regarding Satan, we believe he is a powerful being<sup>1</sup> who was created by God<sup>2</sup> and consigned to reign over this present world<sup>3</sup>. His work includes destroying<sup>4</sup>, murdering<sup>5</sup>, deceiving<sup>6</sup>, and accusing<sup>7</sup> humanity, constantly opposing God, while remaining under God's sovereign control<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Revelation 12:4-9; <sup>2</sup> Ezekiel 28:12-16; <sup>3</sup> 1 John 5:19; 2 Corinthians 4:4; <sup>4</sup> 1 Peter 5:8; <sup>5</sup> John 8:44; <sup>6</sup> John 8:44; <sup>7</sup> Zechariah 3:1; <sup>8</sup> Job 1:6-12

We believe that for those who have placed their faith in Jesus and his redemptive work on their behalf, Satan has lost his condemning power<sup>1</sup> and at the appointed time, he will meet his final doom, being cast into the lake of fire forever<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Colossians 2:15; John 12:31; <sup>2</sup> Jude 6-7; Revelation 20:10

## **The Church**

Regarding the universal Church, we believe that she is comprised of all those who possess a persevering faith in Christ<sup>1</sup>, both in generations past, present, and future. These are the saints of God who were called out of the world and into fellowship with Him<sup>2</sup>, thus overcoming the world<sup>3</sup>, with Christ Jesus as her head<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hebrews 7:25; Ephesians 2:8-9; Revelation 5:9; <sup>2</sup> Ephesians 1:3-4; <sup>3</sup> 1 John 5:4-5; <sup>4</sup> Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22

Regarding the local church, we believe that God has commanded her, for her joy, to regularly gather together in congregational worship<sup>1</sup>, devoting themselves to the Word of God, prayer, the ministry of fellowship<sup>2</sup>, in addition to the biblical ordinances of water baptism<sup>3</sup> and participation of the Lord's Table<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 16:19; Hebrews 10:24-25; <sup>2</sup> Acts 2:42; Colossians 3:16; <sup>3</sup> Matthew 28:19; <sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Regarding the gifts of the local church, we believe that the Holy Spirit has dispensed on every saint different gifts for worship, the common good of the church body<sup>1</sup>, and for the advancement of the gospel<sup>2</sup>, to the glory of God among the nations<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:11-14; Romans 12:4-8; <sup>2</sup> Romans 10:15; <sup>3</sup> 1 Peter 2:9, 4:11; Mark 16:15

## ***The Return of Jesus***

Regarding the return of Christ Jesus, we believe that the blessed hope of God's children<sup>1</sup> is that at the appointed time He will return to His world personally<sup>2</sup>, physically<sup>3</sup> and suddenly<sup>4</sup> in power and magnificent glory<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Titus 2:13-14; <sup>2</sup> Acts 1:9-11; Revelation 1:7; <sup>3</sup> Mark 14:62; Philippians 3:20-21; <sup>4</sup> 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3;

<sup>5</sup> Luke 21:27

As to the last day, we believe that at His coming, God will bodily raise everyone from the dead.

Daniel 12:2; Acts 24:15; John 5:28-29; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

As to the non-elect, God will judge all who suppressed the truth in unrighteousness<sup>1</sup> and consequently consign them to eternal conscious misery in Hell<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Romans 1:18; <sup>2</sup> Matthew 3:12b; 10:28; 18:8; 25:31-46; Mark 3:29; Luke 16:26; Acts 17:31; Jude 12-13;

2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 14:11; 19:3; 20:10, 15

As to the elect, God will gather them into His consummated kingdom to share in His everlasting joy<sup>1</sup>, in His presence<sup>2</sup> where they will reign with Jesus Christ forever in the New Heavens and New Earth<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 3:12a, 24:30-31; <sup>2</sup> Matthew 25:23, 46; John 3:16, 14:3; 1 Corinthians 15:22-24; 2 Timothy 4:1;

Luke 22:28-30; <sup>3</sup> Matthew 19:29; Romans 8:17; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Luke 22:29-30; 2 Timothy 2:12

## **ARTICLE IV—MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of this church shall consist of those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, have expressed that faith by water baptism as specified in the bylaws, who are in agreement with the doctrine and practice of this church, and who have been received into fellowship by regular action of the church as set forth in the bylaws.

## **ARTICLE V—OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION**

The officers of the corporation shall consist of the Chairman of the Board of Elders who shall be the President and registered agent of this corporation. The Secretary of the Board of Elders shall be the corporate secretary.

## **ARTICLE VI—MEETINGS**

Meetings of the church will be held for worship, prayer, praise, fellowship, business and any other special purposes as set forth in the bylaws.

1                                    ARTICLE VII—CHURCH AUTONOMY

2            The government of the church is ultimately vested in its members. It is subject to the control of no  
3 other ecclesiastical body. Redeemer Fellowship maintains fellowship with local, regional, and national  
4 Conservative Baptist associations and agencies as well as others established by the elders.

5                                    ARTICLE VIII—AMENDMENTS

6            This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of members present and voting at any  
7 called business meeting as specified in the bylaws, provided such amendments have been submitted  
8 in writing at a previous business meeting.

9                                    ARTICLE IX—DISSOLUTION

10           In the event of a division or dissolution of Redeemer Fellowship, the property of this church entity  
11 shall be disposed of by the elders or group which represents the church membership which is loyal to  
12 the constitution and by-laws. Should any controversy arise as to whether such loyalty exists, the  
13 question shall be submitted to a nonaligned separate board of godly people and their decision shall  
14 be final.

15           Should a condition arise at any time in the future when for any reason, Redeemer Fellowship's  
16 work cannot continue, the church properties shall be transferred to or liquidated, with the proceeds  
17 going to one or more non-profit 501-c3 organizations.

18           Should conditions arise where a consolidation with another church of the same beliefs expressed  
19 in this constitution be advisable, the elders shall negotiate the terms of such consolidation as far as  
20 the property of this church is concerned.

21                                    ARTICLE X—BYLAWS

22           The corporation will adopt bylaws for its general administrative and charitable practices.

# BYLAWS

## ARTICLE A – CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

### **Section 1. Membership Qualifications**

Membership within Redeemer Fellowship (hereinafter “this church”) is based upon an accurate understanding and personal trust in Jesus Christ and His completed work for salvation—the essence of biblical faith. This faith is initially expressed in public baptism. Individuals will be received into the membership of this church after: completing the steps of the membership process as defined in the policies set forth by the elders and affirmation through a majority vote of current members present at any called member meeting of this church as outlined in Article E, Section 2 of the bylaws.

### **Section 2. Membership Responsibilities**

Membership within a local church carries both privileges and responsibilities. Members of this church are accountable to each other. Through the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, members should desire to stir one another up:

1. to joyfully submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
2. to faithfully attend corporate worship, regular meetings, and various opportunities offered by the church for spiritual growth, fellowship, and relationship building (Hebrews 10:23-25).
3. to personally cultivate the practice of spiritual disciplines (Luke 18:1; Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Ephesians 5:1-21; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).
4. to obediently participate in the ordinances of baptism and communion (Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 22:19-20).
5. to generously steward the resources God has given each member through sacrificial, cheerful, and voluntary financial giving, service, and participation in community (Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
6. to thoughtfully walk in holiness in all areas of life and by God’s grace, striving to put certain attitudes and actions to death while stimulating love and good deeds through the Spirit (1 Peter 1:13-16, 4:1-3).
7. to abstain from all sexual immorality, whether single or married. If married, to demonstrate complete fidelity within heterosexual and monogamous marriage. Sexual purity involves: fleeing and abstaining from adultery, homosexuality, fornication, and pornography (Romans 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20, 10:8; Ephesians 5:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).
8. to intentionally preserve the gift of marriage and agree to walk through the steps of marriage reconciliation within this church before pursuing separation or divorce from his or her spouse (Matthew 19:1-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11).

9. to humbly submit to the biblical procedures for church discipline where unrepentant sin is evident in another, the hope of such discipline being repentance and restoration (Matthew 18:15-18; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Hebrews 12:5-6).
10. to respectfully obey the elders and other appointed leaders of this church, diligently striving for unity and peace within this church (Ephesians 4:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:5).

### **Section 3. Membership Rights**

Every member should expect spiritual care by the elders, other appointed spiritual leaders of the church, and from the other members of the church.

All members eighteen (18) years of age and over shall be eligible to vote on all church matters requiring a vote and should exercise this right by participating in its member and business meetings. Members of this church have no property rights and shall be entitled to no personal claim to its assets.

### **Section 4. Membership Classification**

Any individuals who have been received into this church through normal action, as specified under Article A of these bylaws, is considered a member without classification. Because of the nature and meaning of church membership, this church will not maintain an inactive membership list and no one will be permitted to retain member status outside of the guidelines in Article A, Section 5 of these bylaws.

1. **Associate Members:** are students or other persons living temporarily in the area who desire the spiritual fellowship and care of a local church without terminating membership in their home church. Associate Members are expected to fulfill the responsibilities in Article A, Section 2 of these bylaws, but are not eligible to vote, hold office, and have no property rights or any personal claim to the church's assets.
2. **Homebound Members:** are individuals who may live within an area where they would be able to attend, but are unable due to physical limitations. Homebound members are expected to fulfill as many of the responsibilities in Article A, Section 2 of these bylaws as physically possible, but are not eligible to vote by proxy, hold office, and have no property rights or any personal claim to the church's assets.

### **Section 5. Termination of Membership**

Termination of membership shall be on the unanimous vote of the elders. A membership list shall be maintained and reviewed regularly.

Members can be removed through:

1. voluntary resignation of membership by one in good standing,
2. death, or
3. action taken by the elders as a result of the disciplinary process. Requests by members to remove their membership while subject to the formal disciplinary process, will not be accepted.

1   **Section 6.**   Church Discipline

2                   Church discipline is the process of correcting sin in the life of the congregation and its  
3                   members. Church discipline is not punishment. Punishment is retribution towards someone  
4                   for doing something wrong. As followers of Christ, this church is responsible to carry-out  
5                   discipline out of love for any member consistently living with unrepentant sinful attitudes and  
6                   behaviors that are not in obedience to Christ and his Word (John 15:1-11). The purpose of  
7                   discipline is to encourage the individual to bear fruits in keeping with repentance so that  
8                   their joy may be full and prove to be followers of Jesus Christ. Any action set forth in  
9                   policies and procedures is taken to work towards this purpose and not for retribution, but for  
10                  restoration.

11   **Section 7.**   Member Restoration

12                  Restoration to the fellowship of the church occurs when there are signs of true repentance.  
13                  What true repentance looks like depends on the nature of the sin. Sometimes, repentance  
14                  is a black and white matter, as with a man who has abandoned his wife. For him, repenting  
15                  means returning to her, plain and simple. Yet sometimes, repentance does not mean  
16                  conquering a sin completely so much as demonstrating a new diligence in waging war  
17                  against the sin, as with a person caught in a cycle of addiction.

18   **Section 8.**   Church Disruptions

19                  Any person deemed by a member of the staff or elders to pose a physical or psychological  
20                  threat to any person or to the church, or to be causing, about to cause, or capable of  
21                  causing disruption to the religious services and activities of the church, shall be considered  
22                  a trespasser on church property, and may be ejected summarily. No church employee or  
23                  elder shall incur any liability for acting in good faith in the interests of the church pursuant to  
24                  this section.

1     ARTICLE B – CHURCH GOVERNMENT

2     **Section 1.   Overview**

3             Jesus Christ is the Head of the church. Under His headship, the church is elder-led. This  
4             elder leadership is congregationally-affirmed. Those who have been congregationally  
5             affirmed as elders of this church, under the authority of God’s Word and Holy Spirit, have  
6             been granted the privilege and responsibility of spiritual oversight, and are accountable to  
7             this church’s members for the careful exercise of these responsibilities. The goal of church  
8             government is to provide a context out of which Christian ministry, by the people of God,  
9             best flourishes.

10    **Section 2.   Organization**

11           1. Elder-led

12           Those who function within the office of elder are biblically qualified males. The elders  
13           have the privilege and responsibility of leading the congregation in seeking to discern  
14           the mind of Christ for all the decisions of the church and shepherding the church  
15           members in those decisions.

16           2. Congregationally-affirmed

17           The final earthly authority rests with the church members as it corporately seeks God’s  
18           will. The church members affirm the leadership of the elders and contribute to seeking  
19           the mind of Christ as it is revealed in the Scriptures.

# 1 ARTICLE C – ELDERS

## 2 **Section 1. Overview**

3 The qualifications for the office of elder are established in 1Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.  
4 Specifically, an elder is chosen when he is recognized for his high spiritual character, his  
5 proven household management, and his demonstrated leadership in the church. The office  
6 of elder will only be filled by biblically qualified, naturally-born males who are members of  
7 the church as set forth in the bylaws under Article A.

## 8 **Section 2. Responsibilities**

9 Include, but are not limited to:

- 10 1. Devoting themselves to prayer and the Word of God.
- 11 2. Governing and leading the church.
- 12 3. Teaching the Word of God both publicly and privately.
- 13 4. Protecting the church from false doctrine.
- 14 5. Administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's table.
- 15 6. Caring for the spiritual needs of the church both individually and corporately.
- 16 7. Examining prospective members, ensuring that they understand and believe the  
17 gospel.
- 18 8. Overseeing the process of church discipline and restoration.
- 19 9. Overseeing the work of the deacons and other ministry leaders.
- 20 10. Examining, training, and mentoring potential elders.
- 21 11. Scheduling member and business meetings, providing a moderator for them, and  
22 ensuring that the reporting and recording of official church business is performed.
- 23 12. Establishing and evaluating policies, procedures, and practices for the church, making  
24 adjustments as necessary.
- 25 13. Evaluating the church ministries, making adjustments as necessary.

## 26 **Section 3. Organization & Affirmation**

27 The elders shall organize themselves however they determine to be best in order to achieve  
28 the mission of the church. The elders are equal in authority but may be specialized in  
29 function in order to carry-out proper oversight.

30 The elders shall consist of members serving three-year terms. After serving three-years, an  
31 evaluation will be completed by the other elders. In light of that evaluation, a period of  
32 purposeful rest should be granted, which length shall be determined by the elders on a  
33 case-by-case basis. When the period of purposeful rest is complete, the individual elder  
34 may be reaffirmed by the congregation to serve another three-years following the  
35 procedures set forth in these bylaws.



Nominees for the office of elder will be evaluated by the existing elders to determine that biblical qualifications are met. The elders must unanimously agree upon a nominee before recommending him to the congregation. Recommendations may be submitted by church members to the elders for their consideration.

The affirmation of elders may be held at any members' meeting of the church. Nominees for the office of elder should be made known at least four weeks prior to any called member's meeting. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified, should express this concern to the elders within 21 days after official nomination.

#### **Section 4. Resignation, Dismissal, & Vacancies**

An elder's term of office may be terminated by written resignation with a (30) day notice submitted to the elders unless other arrangements can be made by mutual agreement of both parties, or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express that concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action will be done following the instructions of Jesus in Matthew 18:15–17 and 1 Timothy 5:17–21. After a thorough corroborating investigation by the elders, (or appointed committee by them) any elder may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any members' meeting of the church.

When an elder is dismissed because of sin that is deemed sufficient to disqualify him from shepherding, and if he refuses to repent from that sin, his dismissal will be accompanied by a public rebuke (1 Timothy 5:20).

A vacancy in the eldership because of death, resignation, dismissal, or any other cause, will be filled only in the manners prescribed in these bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as they occur.

The eldership, along with the congregation, will first seek to prayerfully disciple and exam aspiring and gifted men within the membership. At any time, the eldership, partnering with the members of this church can recognize those candidates. Should the necessity arise to look outside of the current eldership or body of this church to fill such a need, we will seek the guidance of other like-minded churches or parachurch organizations to find qualified and gifted candidates. The elders will recommend to the congregation the remuneration of elders as needed.

#### **Section 5. Accountability**

Collectively, the elders are accountable to the church members. Individually, they are accountable to one another.

#### **Section 6. Meetings & Voting**

The elders should meet as often as deemed necessary to carry-out proper oversight. In addition, they should also meet for dedicated times of prayer and learning.

In voting, when unanimity is not required, the elders should still prayerfully seek it, but may make decisions based on consensus. Once a decision is made, each elder should positively affirm and submit to the decision that has been reached, being an example to the flock in protecting unity and speaking well of the other elders.

If unanimously agreed upon in advance, some voting issues may be done through e-mail or in absentia, so long as it is documented in the official minutes.

## **Section 7.** Compensation, Rest and Sabbaticals, Professional Development, and Reviews

There is no qualitative or functional difference between elders who are remunerated (vocational) and those who are not. Both are equally recognized to serve the church body in the manner set-forth by Scripture. Elders are remunerated (fully or partially) according to the scope of responsibilities determined and agreed upon within the eldership.

### **7.1** Compensation

The compensation of any elder will be based on qualification, experience, job performance, longevity, and determined by the elders. Professional ministry resources for determining fair compensation including salary and benefits, should be consulted.

### **7.2** Rest and Sabbaticals

Vacation, days off, personal time, sick leave, sabbaticals, study breaks, or a leave of absence will be determined by the elders after discussing those needs with him and granted accordingly.

A fully or partially compensated elder who has served two consecutive three-year periods, will receive a reasonable time away from his daily responsibilities which may be for a period of up to one year. It is intended that this sabbatical serve as a purposeful rest during which time, he may receive respite and recuperation. Activities may include, but are not limited to: furthering his education, writing, or being involved with a special ministry or missions project.

Following an adequate sabbatical break, the elders will assess the elder and may reinstate him to his former work. The reinstatement will begin a three-year term.

The terms of remuneration during a sabbatical will be considered by the elders and presented to the congregation for approval at a regularly called meeting. Pulpit supply will be determined by the elders during that sabbatical year.

### **7.3** Professional Development

A fully or partially compensated elder is encouraged to further his education and improve his overall skills and leadership. Such opportunities may not count against Section 7.2. Opportunities may include, but are not limited to: advanced degrees, conferences, workshops, et.al. Expenses may be covered under the general budget or a designated account.

### **7.4** Performance Reviews

Annually, the elders, or the person whom they may appoint, will review all compensated elders.

1   **Section 8.   Weddings**

2                   Elders may perform weddings for church members only. Exceptions are limited to their  
3                   extended family or personal friends and may be done with approval by the other elders.

1     **ARTICLE D – DEACONS**

2     **Section 1.   Overview**

3             The qualifications for the office of Deacon/Deaconess are established in 1Timothy 3:8-13.  
4             Specifically, a Deacon/Deaconess is chosen when he or she is recognized for their high  
5             spiritual character, proven service, and demonstration of walking in the Spirit and wisdom.  
6             The office of Deacon/Deaconess will only be filled by those who are: biblically qualified,  
7             either naturally-born males or naturally-born females, and members of the church as set  
8             forth in the bylaws under Article A.

9     **Section 2.   Responsibilities**

10            The duties of the Diaconate are specifically appointed to free the elders to pursue the  
11            ministry of the Word of God and prayer. The nature of their function is serving rather than  
12            authority. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to:

- 13            1. Ministering to widows and problem solving
- 14            2. Organizing and administering various ways for serving
- 15            3. Maintaining church-owned facilities and property
- 16            4. Distributing benevolence to those in need from an established benevolence fund
- 17            5. Managing the church budget and finances

18    **Section 3.   Organization & Affirmation**

19            The Diaconate shall organize itself however it determines to be best in order to achieve the  
20            mission of the church under the oversight of the elders. Members of the Diaconate are  
21            equal in their position but may be specialized in function in order to carry-out proper service.

22            The Diaconate shall consist of members serving three-year terms. After serving three-years,  
23            an evaluation shall be conducted by the elders. In light of that evaluation, a period of  
24            purposeful rest should be granted, which length shall be determined by the elders on a  
25            case-by-case basis. When the period of purposeful rest is complete, the individual  
26            Deacon/Deaconess may be reaffirmed by the congregation to serve another three-years  
27            following the procedures set forth in these bylaws.

28            Nominees for the Diaconate will be evaluated by the current elders to determine that biblical  
29            qualifications are met. Recommendations may be submitted by church members to the  
30            elders for their consideration.

31            The affirmation of Deacons/Deaconesses may be held at any members' meeting of the  
32            church. Nominees for the office of Deacon/Deaconess should be made known at least four  
33            weeks prior to any called member's meeting. Any member with reason to believe that a  
34            nominated candidate is unqualified, should express this concern to the elders within 21  
35            days after official nomination.

1   **Section 4.   Resignation & Dismissal**

2           A Deacon's/Deaconess' term of office may be terminated by written resignation with a (30)  
3           day notice submitted to the elders unless other arrangements can be made by mutual  
4           agreement of both parties, or by dismissal. After a thorough corroborating investigation by  
5           the current elders, (or appointed committee by them) any Deacon/Deaconess may be  
6           dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members present at any members' meeting of the  
7           church.

8           A vacancy in the Diaconate because of death, resignation, dismissal or any other cause, will  
9           be filled only in the manners prescribed in these bylaws. Such vacancies may be filled as  
10          they occur.

11   **Section 5.   Accountability**

12          Collectively, The Diaconate is directly accountable to the elders and church members.  
13          Individually, they are accountable to one another.

14   **Section 6.   Meetings & Voting**

15          The Diaconate should meet as often as deemed necessary to carry-out and organize proper  
16          service to and for the church body. In addition, they should also meet for dedicated times of  
17          prayer and learning.

18          In voting, the Deacons/Deaconesses should prayerfully seek and make decisions based on  
19          consensus. Once a decision is made, each Deacon/Deaconess should positively affirm and  
20          submit to the decision that has been reached, being an example to the flock in protecting  
21          unity and speaking well of the other Deacons/Deaconesses.

22          If unanimously agreed upon in advance, some voting issues may be done through email or  
23          in absentia, so long as it is documented in the official minutes

1     **ARTICLE E – MEETINGS**

2     **Section 1.   Worship**

3             Corporate worship will be scheduled for each Sunday. Other meetings will be scheduled as  
4             agreed upon for purposes consistent with the overall vision, mission, and values of the  
5             church.

6     **Section 2.   Member Meetings**

7             1. Purpose:

8                 The purpose of member meetings is to affirm prospective church members, elders,  
9                 deacons, financial, legal, or property issues that require or are deemed worthy of  
10                congregational attention by the elders. Such affirmations shall be done through voting.

11               There will be an annual business meeting held. Other business meetings may be  
12               scheduled by the elders as needed.

13            2. Notification of Meetings:

14               All member or business meetings require a two-week notification when an affirmation  
15               by vote is required unless providentially inhibited.

16            3. Voting:

17               All questions shall be decided by a majority vote of the members present and voting  
18               unless otherwise specified within the bylaws.

19     **Section 3.   Facility Use & Property**

20             The church will use its facility and its property in a manner that meets the standards named  
21             in this church’s constitution and bylaws. Furthermore, Redeemer Fellowship affirms that all  
22             marriage ceremonies performed in the name of this church and any related celebrations or  
23             activities allowed in its facilities, shall be for unions that meet the standards prescribed by  
24             Scripture, under the direction of these bylaws and the policies and procedures as set forth  
25             by the elders.

1 ARTICLE F – AMENDMENTS

2           The bylaws set forth the general administrative practices of the church. These bylaws may  
3           be amended by three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a called member or  
4           business meeting as specified in the bylaws.