



Constitution & Bylaw

of the

Journey Church

355 Treeland Drive

Ladson, SC 29456

A registered 501c3 Nonprofit aligned with the South Carolina Baptist Convention

Adopted: November 22, 2008

Last Revision: May 29, 2026

Constitution of the Journey Church

Preamble

The Journey Church exists to develop and deploy disciples of Jesus Christ (for His glory).

Section I: Name & Identification

The name of this body shall be known as the Journey Church, located in the Charleston area of South Carolina. Website: www.journeychurchsc.org. Mailing Address: 355 Treeland Drive, Ladson, SC 29456.

Section II: Statements of Faith

The Scriptures

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men, divinely inspired, and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth (without any mixture of error) for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union. It is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

God

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being; the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all-powerful and all-knowing. His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

A. God the Father

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, all-loving and all-wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

B. God the Son

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind, yet was without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever-present Lord.

C. God the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Savior and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers both the believer and the church in worship, evangelism and service.

Man

Man, the special creation of God, is made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherited a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. *Regeneration*, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Savior.

B. *Justification* is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer unto a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. *Sanctification* is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes, and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. *Glorification* is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

The Church

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel. It observes the two ordinances of Christ, is governed by His laws, exercises the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeks to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are elders and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of elder is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, tongue, people and nation.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience demonstrating the believer's faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; symbolizing the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the

dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

Family

God has ordained and authored the foundational institution of human society to be the family. The family is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, as both are created in God's image. While equal in worth, the man and woman are created unique in their essence established at birth. Together the husband and wife complement one another through marital oneness to reflect both the gospel and their Creator. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to respect her husband and graciously follow the servant leadership of her husband, reflecting the church's willing submission to the headship of Christ.

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Jeremiah 1:5; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.

Section 3: Guiding Values

- Intimacy with God that is daily, habitual and God-Centered.
- Relational Evangelism that focuses on sending out laborers who love the lost and share the gospel of Jesus.
- Genuine Community that is authentic, loving and focused on growth.
- Intentional Discipleship that is deliberate and focused on mentoring and developing new leaders.
- Everyone Laboring with open hands that serve selflessly.
- Relevant Environments that are God-honoring and engage the community with excellence.
- Missional Investment that focuses on sacrificial and generous church planting strategies.

Bylaws of the Journey Church

Article I: Membership

Section 1: General

- At the Journey Church we refer to constituents of our church body as “covenant members”.
- Members have exclusive rights to self-govern.
- Members of the Journey Church assist in leadership by supporting and implementing the God-given direction as delegated by the elder-team.

Section 2: Candidacy

- A person seeking to become a member can do so after clearly sharing their testimony of conversion, testifying that Jesus is his/her one and only Savior and Lord, meeting with one of the leaders of the church, and signing the Journey Church covenant.
- Believer's baptism by immersion is a requirement to be a member of the Journey Church.
- Members can be removed or suspended based on certain standards prescribed in the Bible. This discipline will be implemented through the elder-team. If at all possible, reconciliation is the goal of all disciplinary action.

Section 3: Designation

- We do designate types of members as limited to the following:
- Members (this person has signed a membership covenant and is to uphold the covenant standards)
- Watchcare (this person is dually associated in good standing with both their home church and Journey Church. Example: a college student studying at a local college near Journey Church who still wants/needs to remain associated with their home church.)

Section 4: Responsibilities

- Responsibilities of the Journey Church member are spelled out in the Journey Church covenant and reads:

Membership Covenant

“...We are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” (Ephesians 4:15–16)

THE PURPOSE OF THE JOURNEY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP COVENANT IS:

1. To join God’s work of forming an authentic church community.
2. To clarify the on-going responsibilities of each member.
3. To encourage consistency, accountability, and loving unity within the church family.
4. To accomplish God’s call for the Journey Church family. This agreement does not imply that you will never fall short of the goals, but that the desire of your heart is to fulfill each of the responsibilities stated to the best of your ability. We trust that your commitment will be a personal blessing to your own journey in Christ, as well as a blessing to those around you.

With the guiding help of the Holy Spirit, the church leadership covenants the following:

1. We commit ourselves to lovingly care for you and seek your formation in Christ (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12).
2. We covenant to provide teaching, preaching, and counsel from the Scriptures, spanning the whole counsel of God’s Word (Acts 20:27-28, Galatians 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:17-18).
3. We commit to helping you in times of need (Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-35, James 2:14-17).
4. We covenant that your elders and deacons will meet the criteria assigned to them in the Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-13 and 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9, 1 Peter 5:1-4).
5. We covenant to pray for you regularly, particularly when you are sick (James 5:14).
6. We covenant to be on guard against false teachers (Acts 20:28-31).
7. We covenant to help you become equipped to serve Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13).
8. We covenant to seek God’s will for our church community to the best of our ability as we study the Scriptures and follow the Spirit (Acts 20:28, 1 Peter 5:1-5).
9. We covenant to set an example and join you in fulfilling the duties of church membership (1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Timothy 4:12).
10. We covenant to exercise church discipline when necessary (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; Galatians 6:1).

With the guiding help of the Holy Spirit, I covenant the following:

- I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace of Jesus Christ. I have been baptized by immersion to give testimony of my identification with the body of Christ and obedience to the Scriptures.
- I have read, understood, and agree to Journey's doctrinal statement and by-laws and will not be divisive to its teaching and content. I also understand the importance of submission to

- church leadership and will be diligent to preserve unity and peace
- (Hebrews 13:7, 17; Ephesians 4:1-3).
 - I will endeavor to maintain a close relationship with the Lord through regular personal Bible reading, prayer, fellowship, and practice of the other spiritual disciplines.
 - My journey in Christ will be evident through my regular participation in the corporate worship services, and intentional pursuit of relationships within our church community (Psalm 119:97, 105; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25).
 - By the help of the Holy Spirit, I will seek to walk in holiness
 - - putting sin to death (Colossians 3:5) and stirring up love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24) - and will willingly confess and repent when I fall short (1 John 1:8; James 5:16), knowing that He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).
 - I will strive to properly manage the resources God has given me, including my time, body, gifts and talents, attitudes, finances and possessions.
 - (Ephesians 5:15-18; Romans 12:1-2; Ephesians 4:1-16; Galatians 5:22-26; Proverbs 3:9-10). This includes regular giving to Journey Church that is sacrificial and cheerful (2 Corinthians 8-9).
 - I commit myself to the Journey Church's church family and agree to aid in fulfilling its missional purpose to bring the gospel to our neighbors and the nations. I recognize that this will be accomplished by pursuing Journey's vision and core values.
 - I commit to using the spiritual gift(s) God has given me for the building up of the church, both as part of Journey Church and universally member
 - (Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-31). This includes regularly serving at Journey Church and in other gospel ministries in my community.
 - I covenant to practice the humility and sacrificial attitude of Christ by considering the needs of others, not gossiping, and seeking spiritual friendships.
 - (Philippians 2:1-11; 1 Corinthians 13:4-5), (Proverbs 16:28, Matthew 18:15-17)
 - I covenant to follow the biblical procedures of church discipline and submit myself to informal discipline as I strive to live out the gospel in community and formal discipline if the need should ever arise (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-5).
 - If I withdraw from membership while the subject of pending disciplinary action according to Matthew 18:15-17, I expressly consent and submit to the elders' continuing authority to complete the disciplinary process set forth in our church by-laws.
 - I covenant to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). God enabling me, I will strive to consider my commitment to this Membership Covenant.
 - I understand that it is an evaluative tool, as well as an affirmation of my continuing

conviction and purpose.

- My responsibility will be to notify the Journey Church leadership if at any time I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Journey Church.

Section 5: Voting Rights of Members

- Democratic votes will occur only at specified times such as:
- The incurring of indebtedness for acquisition of real property
- Calling of the lead pastor
- Affirmation of a new elder
- Dissolution of the church
- Day-to-day operational decisions will be made by the ministerial staff with counsel and oversight provided by the elder-team.
- The elder-team may send issues to the members for a vote at their discretion.
- Only members who have signed covenants will be allowed to vote.
- When voting takes place, a 2/3 majority is required. If the elder-team deems it necessary to raise the majority level needed to pass an item, they may do so. Voting shall generally occur via raised hand or ballot during the family meeting. The decision to vote in an alternative method rests solely with the elders and officers of Journey Church.

Section 6: Termination of Membership

- A member may part with the church at any time through various means:
- Written notification of self-removal from membership
- Transfer of membership to another church
- Written letter of discipline or expulsion (See Section 7)
- Death

Section 7: Discipline

- Redemption rather than punishment should be the guiding attitude of discipline.

- Correction will first come from the group leader or immediate leader over the individual.
- If action is not corrected, the second phase of discipline would be taken by the elder-team.
- Final decision for discipline will be delivered by the elder-team.
- If the individual is not willing to repent, the elder-team has the authority to dismiss the individual from membership. The goal of church discipline is always to bring about repentance of obvious sin and to then restore the individual back into the body of the church.

Article II: Meetings

General

- The church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, outreach and fellowship. Meetings shall be held at the place of assembly of the church or at such other place as may be designated from time to time by the staff and elder-team.

Elder Meetings

- The elder-team will meet regularly.
- Once a month meetings are suggested.

Annual Family Meeting

- There will be an annual family meeting held in November/December at such time as determined by the staff. The purpose of this meeting shall be to pray for the church body, explain the annual budget, and cast vision for future ministry.

Special Family Meeting

- The elder-team may call special business/family meetings at any time for any purpose by giving ample notice to the members.
- All family meetings will be conducted in an orderly fashion.
- Unless otherwise presented, all votes are to be taken without discussion.

Article III: Church Leadership

Elder

- Christ alone is the head of the church. Yet for the purpose of order, and in accordance with the teaching of the Bible, certain individuals will be called to lead the church through the role of elder.
- This office is to be filled by men only as prescribed in the New Testament.
- These men will be tested thoroughly before entering this office by the existing elder-team.
- An elder should display an above average understanding of theology, understanding of the church's mission, display a commitment to serving the church along with displaying a consistent commitment to sacrificial giving to the church.
- The elder team will be made up of staff-elders and lay-elders.
- All Elders serve as many as two consecutive terms of three years in duration before being eligible for a 1-year sabbatical. At the lead pastor's request, and with the agreement of the elder whose term is expiring, the sabbatical may be postponed or forgone. If a sabbatical is taken, after one year they may rotate back onto the Elder team with a unanimous vote from the Elder team.
- The lead pastor is an elder, but does not follow this rotation schedule. He is an elder as long as he is in the lead pastor position.
- The elder team should strive to maintain a balance of 50% lay to staff ratio. If for any reason the Elder team is 100% staff, the next elder nominated and affirmed must be a lay elder. Subsequently affirmed Elders should strive to balance the board towards a 50% lay to staff ratio.
- The elder-team provides oversight, accountability, and evaluation of the lead pastor. Dismissal of the lead pastor will come directly from the elder-team subject to the elder's rules of order.
- The elders' responsibilities are to:
 - Pray for the church.
 - Attend elder meetings.
 - Lead in modeling the values, mission and vision of the church.
 - Lead in implementing the values, mission and vision of the church.
 - Deal with discipline issues brought to the leadership.

- Be involved in the teaching and to uphold the truth of Scripture.
- Lead teams such as financial teams, personnel teams, etc.
- Assist the staff, servant leaders, and group leaders with pastoral care.
- Be involved in future strategy formulation and in casting future vision for the church.
- Uphold the biblical standards of an elder.
- Tithe faithfully to the church.

Elder Confirmation Process

- A candidate elder shall be nominated by a member, in good standing, of Journey Church. The elder team will conduct a full review of the candidate to affirm this nomination. The candidate elder will meet with an existing elder to ensure the candidate elder is fully informed on his upcoming responsibilities. The candidate elder will then undergo a full and thorough testing. After a thorough testing, the candidate elder is presented to the church body as a potential new elder. The church body will give feedback to the existing elder body on the candidate elder to ensure the candidate is above reproach. Once an adequate amount of time for feedback has transpired, no less than two weeks, the existing elder body will vote on the candidate elder. Confirmation of the candidate elder must be a unanimous vote by the existing elder body. Final confirmation of the candidate elder will be given by a member vote at a family meeting. A 2/3rd's vote by those at said family meeting is required for confirmation.

Servant Team Leader (Deacon)

- Servant Team Leaders in our church are equated with deacons in the New Testament.
- Various staff members and some key volunteers serve the church as servant team leaders. These leaders serve the church by directing volunteers.
- There is no set length of service but each year there will be evaluation to determine effectiveness.

Group Leader

- A group leader is a leader over a small group of individuals under the direction and accountability of a staff and ministry director. The qualifications of a group leader are to:

- Be a covenant member of the church in good standing with the mission, vision, and values of the church.
- Have been involved in a small group at Journey Church for at least one semester prior to leadership consideration.
- Demonstrate an ability to rightly handle Scripture.

Staff Members

- Other staff members shall be hired as needed in accordance with the church's ministries and annual budget, as well as the personnel and financial policies of the church. Such staff members shall be responsible to their immediate supervisors or designated staff persons.

Article IV: Fiscal Responsibilities

Section 1: Accounts & Records

- The financial and ministry years shall begin January 1 and end December 31 of each year.

Section 2: Budget Management

- The budget is to be managed by the church-authorized leader of the ministry and the various staff persons according to their area of responsibility.
- Modifications to the budget are normative but material alterations beyond established guidelines by the elder team will require additional elder approval.
- If extenuating circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change, for example, if a budgeted item is not needed, or if expenses in a particular area are less than expected, the elder-team and/or staff can reallocate those resources as needed.
- The budget should, however, be the normative guide for the financial operation of the church.

Section 3: Inspection of Records

- Every member (in good standing) has the right to request any of these documents for inspection: one's own giving records, church's annual budget (less personnel details), balance sheet, statement of cash flows, and profit & loss statement. The requesting member will give the staff ample time to gather the requested information (10 days).

- The elder-team may restrict and limit inspections or establish set time-lines for such to be conducted.
- A copy of the Incorporation, Bylaws, Policies & Procedures will be maintained in the church office for inspection by members.

Section 4: Auditing Procedures, Financial, and Security

- The elder-team should establish an internal/external audit of all financial books on a regular basis.
- Audits demonstrate the wise stewardship of time and material resources, assure that key risk areas are being managed by adequate internal controls, that financial disclosures portray the ministry's financial condition, results of and reasonable compliance to laws and regulation, both inside and outside the church.
- All employees, leaders, and volunteers of children & youth under 18 years of age are to be properly screened at the time of enlistment and hiring, and these records should be constantly and accurately maintained.

Article V: Affiliations

The church shall have full power and authority to associate itself with and participate in organizations in keeping with the character and purpose of the church as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. Recognizing the benefits of cooperation with other churches in world missions, the Journey Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article VI: Amendments

Section 1: General Procedures

- The bylaws, policies & procedures will need to be reviewed at least annually by the elder-team. Any amendments, modifications, or changes should receive unanimous approval by the team empowered to administrate the document and unanimous approval by the elder-team.

Section 2: Presentation

- Once an amendment has been made, the elder-team should present the amendments to those persons that are affected by the change. If the entire congregation is affected, then they should be notified as a whole.

Article VII: Article of Dissolution

Section 1: Procedure

- If the Journey Church should ever cease to be a body of believers and be dissolved, all of its assets remaining after payment of all outstanding debts and obligations, costs, and expenses of such dissolution shall be distributed to the South Carolina Baptist Convention, a nonprofit organization, operating exclusively for religious purposes, as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under section 501 (c) (3) of IRC of 1986 or any regulations succeeding said section. Assets may be distributed only to organizations which agree with this church's doctrinal statements in the Articles of Incorporation.
- Members of the Journey Church, defined in the Bylaws, who are members in good standing at the time of dissolution, may, in a called meeting, designate a different beneficiary as described above, to receive the assets of the church after dissolution.
- No assets of the church shall be distributed to any member, officer, or staff of this church or any other individual.