

CHURCH CONSTITUTION

Preamble

We, the membership of Fellowship Capital City in Trenton, New Jersey establish the following articles, to which we voluntarily submit.

DRAFTED August, 2014

BY-LAWS

(Rules of Order)

Article I – NAME

The name of this incorporated body shall be Fellowship Capital City of Trenton, Mercer County, New Jersey.

Article II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this church shall be:

1. To spread a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the enjoyment of all peoples through Jesus Christ.
2. To proclaim the Gospel in Trenton, the surrounding communities, and to the ends of the earth winning souls for Jesus Christ for the glory of God.
3. To faithfully and earnestly preach and teach the holy, inspired, infallible Word of God, for the glory of God.
4. To create and foster a love of Scripture within the local body of believers.
5. To administer the ordinances of the New Testament; namely, believer's baptism and communion.
6. To establish and maintain ministries to educate, equip, and inspire saints to fulfill the Great Commission.
7. To provide Christian fellowship for those of like faith.
8. To provide a place of public, corporate worship.
9. To continue planting new churches locally and globally.
10. To promote a culture of life in Trenton and seek justice and protection for the unborn.

Article III – ASSOCIATION

This church is autonomous and subject only to Christ, its Head. Therefore, it cannot join anything outside itself, but only affiliate with churches and organizations which hold strong biblical convictions and are vigorously opposed to all apostasy and compromise. This church declares itself presently in fellowship with:

1. Daughter church of Fellowship Community Church in Mt. Laurel, NJ
2. Association of Baptists for World Evangelism (ABWE)
3. North American Mission Board (NAMB)
4. Baptist Resource Network of Pennsylvania/South Jersey (BRN)

If these associations should waver from their present biblical stand, this church, in standing true to the Word itself, could no longer fellowship with these associations.

Article IV – ORDINANCES

Section 1 – Baptism:

Baptism by immersion in water shall be the only form acceptable for those professing faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior in accordance with the scriptural teaching. This church appreciates and values those brothers and sisters in Christ who hold to infant baptism (i.e. Presbyterian Church of America) while respectfully disagreeing with their interpretation of Scripture. All members must be baptized by immersion. The pastoral staff shall approve all candidates for baptism. (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38, 41; 8:36-39)

Section 2 – The Lord’s Supper:

The Lord’s Supper shall be served to the assembled church periodically, at the discretion of the pastors, in accordance with the scriptural teaching. Since it is the Lord’s Supper, none who are His shall be barred, except in cases when members of the church are under discipline. Additionally, the pastoral staff will clearly communicate that only those professing saving faith in Christ shall participate. (1 Corinthians 5:11, 12; 1 Corinthians 11)

Article V – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 – Reception of Members:

A. Anyone professing faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, giving testimony of a regenerated heart and concerted effort to turn from sin toward God, and declaring himself/herself in accord with the principles, practice and doctrines of this church, may become a candidate for membership. Prior to becoming a member of the church, each person must have been baptized as a believer by immersion.

B. Elders shall have the opportunity to meet personally with candidates in order to ascertain their qualifications for membership.

C. Names of candidates approved by the Elder Board will be presented for approval to the membership, who will be given the opportunity to vote. Any member casting a negative vote shall give reason for the negative vote to the Church Board. If the reason given shall be found to be sufficient as to warrant disqualification, membership shall be withheld; if not, the vote shall be declared unanimous unless the board deems it appropriate to bring the matter before the church. The right hand of fellowship shall be extended to the accepted candidate(s) following completion of membership requirements.

Section 2 – Responsibilities of Members:

Each person, upon coming into the membership, voluntarily subscribes to the obligations of the church covenant, including church discipline. Barring extenuating circumstances, it is expected of members to be regularly involved in a Bible study group and serving consistently in the church.

Section 3 – Church Discipline:

Church discipline will occur when a member of the church is behaving in one or more of the following ways: their behavior is contrary to the teachings of the Bible, their behavior is harmful to the reputation of the church, their behavior is harmful to themselves and/or others. Our goal is to address the behavior in love and see repentance—that is discontinuing the behavior in question—by first having an elder confront the individual or group in private. If the behavior were to continue, two or more elders would confront the individual or group. If the behavior should continue to persist the behavior would be addressed before the members of the church in the hope that the individual or group will repent and discontinue the behavior in question. At any point in the process the elders may withhold the ordinance of communion or suspend privileges or responsibilities of the members in question. If they should persist in their harmful behavior they may be dismissed from the church (Matthew 18:15-17).

Section 4 – Termination of Membership:

A. Death

B. Withdrawal - Any member in good standing, upon presentation of a written request to the deacons, shall be allowed to withdraw from the membership.

C. Departure - Any member who has been absent from the services of the church for a continuous period of six months shall be contacted by the Church Board. Unless satisfactory explanation has been given to and accepted by the Church Board, that member will be removed from the church membership roll.

D. Church Discipline – The Church Board shall be responsible to administer church discipline where necessary in accordance with biblical principles. Dismissal of a member must be approved by a majority vote of church members in an officially called congregational meeting. (Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; Titus 3:10)

Article VI – OFFICERS, BOARDS and STAFF

This church shall be pastor/elder led. The Church Board shall consist of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastors, and the Elder Board. The total number of pastors on the Board shall not exceed the number of lay-elders.

Section 1 – Elders:

A. Qualifications:

1. Qualifications for elders shall be such as are prescribed and set forth in the New Testament (1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9). No man shall be elected to the office of elder who has not been a member of the church for at least one year, and who is not at least twenty-five years of age.

Scriptural qualifications

1 Tim 3:1-7 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his

children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

2. Elders will hold each other accountable in: financially contributing to the ministry regularly, ensuring that their exercise of freedoms (i.e. use of alcohol) is done in a manner that does not detract from the ministry or cause others to stumble, and maintaining sexual purity.

3. All elders shall be members subscribing wholeheartedly to the Statement of Beliefs and the Church Covenant.

4. All elders shall normally assume their duties on the first Sunday of the church year. Retiring officers shall hold office until the terms of the newly elected officers begin.

B. Election:

The church shall elect from its membership a minimum of three (3) elders. The number of elders shall be enlarged at the discretion of the Church Board. The term of office shall be for three years and so arranged that where possible one third (1/3) of the deacons are elected each year. A deacon, having served two consecutive three year terms, shall normally step down for a period of one year unless the church board specifically determines this is not in the best interest of the church, in which case the person may be eligible for re-election to another three year term.

1. The Primary Ballot:

- a. The primary ballot is a write-in nomination and will be distributed to all church members at least two months prior to the annual meeting.
- b. The names of the nominees will be inserted by the voter and the ballot should be mailed without a signature to the chairman of the deacons or deposited in a ballot box conveniently located in the church prior to a date specified by the Church Board. Ballots received after this date will be considered null and void.
- c. The Church Board will consider those men who receive the highest number of votes as nominees for the office of elder. The Church Board will determine the appropriate number of elders for the following year.

- d. Individuals who scripturally qualify, as determined by The Church Board, will be contacted for their consent before their names are presented at the annual meeting.
- e. Only the names of those nominees shall be made public.

2. The Affirmation at the Annual Meeting:

- a. All members in good standing and at least 18 years of age shall have the right to affirm nominees.
- b. Names presented will be the only names considered. There will be no further nominations from the floor at the annual meeting.
- c. The affirmation slips will be counted by an appointed committee and names posted or announced.

C. Responsibilities:

- 1. It shall be the duty of the elders to assist the pastors in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church; to be their counselors; to exercise special and prudent watch-care over the church membership.
- 2. The elders shall be stewards of all church funds.
- 3. The elders shall participate in the distribution of the elements of the Lord's Supper.
- 4. The elders shall, together with the pastor, constitute the Discipline Committee.
- 5. The elders shall make recommendations to the church concerning the salary and benefits of the pastor, associate pastors and ministry staff. The Church Board will be responsible for the employment or termination of all individuals compensated by the church.
- 6. The elders will be responsible for the services in the absence of the pastors.
- 7. At the first board meeting after each annual church election they shall elect from their number a chairman and a secretary. The secretary shall keep a faithful record of any work, acts, or transactions performed by the Board. Meetings shall be held at the call of the chairman or senior pastor. A majority of the full number shall constitute a quorum.
- 8. The elders shall act as the pulpit committee.
- 9. The elders shall ensure that an audit of the church financial records occurs at least every third year.
- 10. Elders, along with the pastors, shall act as the examining council for all candidates for church membership.

D. The elders shall serve as Trustees of this church, representing this corporation as its agent.

- 1. The chairman and secretary of the elders shall act as representatives of the church when conducting business with governmental authorities.
- 2. The elders shall appoint from its body committees to care for the property, to hold, repair and preserve the same. They shall superintend improvements and perform any business concern assigned to them by the church. They are at all times servants of the church and subject to its corporate action.
- 3. They shall have authority to purchase, lease or acquire services or goods in any

manner not to exceed 1% of the annual budget.

4. In the case of an unforeseen situation requiring prompt action, and upon the declaration of an emergency by a unanimous vote of the Church Board, the limit is raised to 2% of the annual budget. Any decision that exceeds these parameters shall be specifically reported to the congregation in a timely fashion.

5. They shall not have authority to sell, lease, give away or dispose of church property in any manner to exceed 1% of the annual budget nor to mortgage or encumber the same with debts to exceed the above amount, except as the church shall order by a corporate act.

Section 2 – The Pastors:

A. Qualifications:

Any candidate for the pastorate of the church shall meet the requirements as set forth for elders in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

B. The Calling and Election of a Senior Pastor:

1. When the Senior Pastor's position becomes vacant, the deacons shall become the pulpit committee, augmenting themselves as they deem appropriate.

The Deacons shall present a single candidate to the church, arranging for an appropriate candidating experience. This shall include speaking at least two times at a worship service of the church.

2. The candidate shall be elected and consequently called by a three fourths (3/4) vote of the qualified church voters present (provided a quorum is present), and voting upon the recommendation of the Pulpit Committee. Notice of this meeting shall be given on two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting and by letter sent to the membership.

3. The Senior Pastor shall be elected for an indeterminate term.

C. Responsibilities of the Senior Pastor:

1. Upon assuming his duties he shall become a member of the church.

2. The pastor shall preach regularly at the church services, administer the ordinances, and be an ex-officio member of all church boards and committees with the right of choice as to serving on such boards and committees. He shall have the oversight of the entire work of the church and shall perform the duties common to his office.

3. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for the pulpit supply.

D. Termination of the Senior Pastor:

1. The term of office may be ended upon thirty days notice on the part of the pastor.

2. The church may terminate the term of the pastor at a meeting specially called by the Deacons. Termination shall be by a 3/4 vote of members present at the meeting. The pastor's duties shall cease as of the vote to terminate. Unless the termination is due to discipline on the part of the pastor, the church shall pay the pastor two months severance pay. If the termination is for immorality or felony, no severance pay shall be due the pastor, but the church shall consider its responsibility to the pastor's family.

E. Associate and Assistant Pastors

The church may choose to call an undetermined number of associate and assistant pastors.

1. The Church Board shall gain church approval to call a new associate or assistant pastor.
2. The Senior Pastor shall develop a job description with the approval of the Church Board and present a candidate to the church in an appropriate candidating experience. The Associate or Assistant Pastor shall have the same biblical qualifications as the Senior Pastor and be elected in the same manner. Associate Pastors will report to the Senior Pastor. Assistant Pastors will report to an Associate Pastor or the Senior Pastor.
3. The Church Board shall maintain a current copy of the job description for each Associate and Assistant Pastor.

F. Vacation: The pastors shall have an annual vacation, the time and extent to be agreed upon by the pastors and Church Board.

G. Salary: The pastors' salaries and benefits shall be reviewed by the elders annually and a recommendation submitted prior to the annual church business meeting. In accordance with the church's desire to be good stewards of resources and cultivators of strong families, the elders will determine appropriate compensation for church staff that will meet the reasonable needs of families and individuals while avoiding excess.

H. Absence: Absence from services of the church will be by consent of the Church Board.

Section 3 - Support Staff

- A. An undetermined number of support staff may be hired to provide services such as administrative, secretarial, clerical, and building maintenance.
- B. All individuals hired for these positions shall have a lifestyle that is consistent with the Church Covenant.
- C. Support Staff shall be hired by the Senior Pastor with funds as provided in the church budget. Support staff will report either to the Senior Pastor or to an Associate or Assistant Pastor as designated by the Senior Pastor.

Section 4 – Appointed Officers:

The appointed officers of the church shall consist of Treasurer, Financial Secretary, and Church Clerk. They shall be appointed by the Church Board and shall serve for a term of one year, concurrent with the church year. No person shall hold two positions simultaneously. Upon his or her retirement or removal from office, the officer shall deliver to his or her successor or the Chairman of the Elders all records, files, and/or other papers belonging to the church and shall present the same with all contents complete to the date of surrender of such documents.

A. Treasurer:

1. The duties of the treasurer shall be the administration of all church funds as directed by the deacons and the maintenance of proper and complete records thereof.
2. The treasurer will prepare a financial report to be presented at the Annual Business Meetings and at other times as requested by the Church Board.

B. Financial Secretary:

1. The duties of the financial secretary shall be to keep the accurate record of all money received and assist the treasurer in recording all monies received at church services.
2. The records of all individual gifts shall be guarded as a sacred trust.
3. The Financial Secretary shall prepare tithe and gift statements as required by the Internal Revenue Service.
4. The Church Board shall appoint teams of two church members to count all regular offerings and to provide a summary to the Financial Secretary.

C. Church Clerk:

1. The church clerk shall keep record of all business meetings of the church.
2. The clerk shall keep a record of memberships and baptisms.
3. The clerk shall make a full report to the church when requested by the Church Board.
4. The clerk shall provide the financial secretary and the treasurer with a transcript of the minutes of each church business meeting in which authority is granted for the disbursement or transfer of funds.
5. The clerk, or any other member, shall not release the membership roll of this church to any group or individual.

Section 6 - Retention of Records:

The records of all officers and boards are considered to be church property, and are to be given over to the succeeding officers and boards as soon as practicable. Copies of the minutes of all Business Meetings and Church Board Meetings shall be maintained in the church office.

Section 7 – Indemnification

A. General Rule. Except as otherwise provided in these by-laws, Fellowship Capital City hereby agrees to indemnify, defend and save any officer, employee and/or individual harmless from any loss incurred (or which would have been incurred but for the payment thereof by Fellowship Capital City pursuant hereto) by any officer, employee and/or individual, including, but not limited to, court costs and attorneys' fees, by reason of any act or omission performed or omitted by the officer, employee and/or individual in pursuance of his or her duties on behalf of Fellowship Capital City. This indemnification shall only apply when such duties are within the scope of the officer's, employee's and/or individual's responsibilities and are authorized by appropriate church authority. Any such loss, damage or expenditure shall be paid or

reimbursed by Fellowship Capital City to the extent assets are available therefore, but no officer, employee and/or individual shall have any personal liability to any other officer, employee and/or individual or to Fellowship Capital City on account thereof.

B. Limitations. Insurance. The obligation(s) of indemnification provided above shall not include an obligation to pay (or reimburse) any claim, cost or expense which is otherwise payable pursuant to any contract of insurance or other right of indemnification.

Article VII – ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

It is recognized that the church may have within it various ministries.

Section 1 – Relationship to the Church:

All ministries of the church shall be under the supervision of the Church Board.

Section 2 – Finances:

No organization within the church shall have a separate bank account. All monies received shall become the property of the church and shall be handled through regular financial channels.

Article VIII – FINANCES OF THE CHURCH:

Section 1 – Fiscal Year

The fiscal year shall begin October 1 and end on September 30 or any one year period determined by the Church Board.

Section 2 – Monetary Principles:

The systematic giving of money for the support of the work of the Lord is worship as well as responsibility. It must be kept on the plane of voluntary, freewill offering. No monies shall be raised for the systematic continual support of the church and its various activities by any but the biblical plan of tithes, offerings and gifts and sacrificial love considerations for Christ's work. It will be the Senior Pastor's responsibility to ensure biblical principles regarding money, possessions, tithes, offerings, and gifts and up to the Holy Spirit to prompt and direct individuals to give.

Section 3 – Power to Sign Legal Papers:

Any note, bond, stock certificate, mortgage, deed, lease agreement, evidence of indebtedness, contract, or other instrument of writing or any assignment or endorsement thereof, executed or entered into between this church and corporation and any other person, co-partnership, association, or corporation, when signed by the chairman and secretary of the Church Board, together with the corporate seal of this church impressed thereon, shall be held to have been properly executed for all purposes, for and in behalf of this church and corporation.

Article IX – MISSIONS

It shall be the policy of this church that any missions support shall be viewed as an extension of this local body. Accordingly, all missions or missionaries supported by this church shall be accountable to this church. In addition, all missions, sending churches and missionaries shall be in agreement with our confession of faith both in doctrine and in practice. The principal focus of all missions outreach shall be evangelism and discipleship with the intent of getting believers involved in local churches consistent with our doctrine and practice.

Article X – USE OF THE CHURCH PROPERTY AND FACILITIES

Use of the church facility and properties, both real and intellectual, for other than church sponsored activities shall be by consent of the Church Board.

Article XI – MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH

Section 1 – Meetings of Public Worship:

Public worship services shall be held regularly on the Lord's Day.

A. The Meetings:

1. The Annual Meeting shall be held during the last month of the fiscal year as determined by the Church Board. Public notice of this meeting shall be given at least two Sundays in advance.
2. Other business meetings may be called at any time by the Church Board. Normally a public notice of same shall be given for two (2) preceding Sundays.
3. Any member desiring a special meeting may present his/her request to the Church Board. The determination as to whether such a meeting is called shall rest with the Church Board.

B. Quorum: A quorum consisting of 25% of eligible voting members shall be required to act upon all business of the church. The minimum voting age shall be eighteen (18).

C. The Moderator: The Church Board will appoint a moderator for each meeting, who shall conduct the meeting in an orderly manner and consistent with biblical principles.

D. Annual Reports shall be available to the membership in printed form one week prior to the annual business meeting.

Article XII – ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of eligible voting members present at any business meeting, providing that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been announced from the pulpit, and published in writing 30 days prior to the meeting at which action is desired.

Article XIII – ORDINATION, LICENSING AND COMMISSIONING

If the church decides by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the eligible members present at a regularly called business meeting to call a man to the pastoral ministry of this church, and recognizes that this person possesses the scriptural qualifications, they must choose to officially recognize him in one of three ways. It may call a council of

ministers and brethren to examine the qualifications of the candidate and upon the recommendation of that council, grant or withhold ordination recognition. The church may also choose to commission a man to the ministry without going through the process of ordination in which case an official commissioning service will be called by the church board and the candidate publicly recognized as a pastor of the church. The church may also choose to recognize the candidate as a minister through the issuance of a license that is issued and signed by the chairman and secretary of the Church Board.

Article XIV – DISSOLUTION

Section 1 – In event of the dissolution of this corporation, all of its debts shall be fully satisfied to the extent of the assets. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among its members, but shall be irrevocably dedicated by the Church Board, to such other non-profit religious corporations as are in agreement with letter and spirit of this constitutional statement of faith, and in conformity with the requirements of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Code of 1954 (Sec. 501-C-3) or any subsequent amendments thereto.

Section 2 – No profit shall ever accrue to the benefit of any persons from the assets, holdings or other transactions in which this corporation as a result of this dissolution may become involved.

Article XV – CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION

When questions arise with regard to the interpretation of this constitution, the decision of the Church Board shall be considered as the final authority.