

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS REDEEMER CHURCH. INC.

ARTICLE I. TITLE

The legal title of this church will be known as Redeemer Church of Rocky Mount, NC. Redeemer Church is a religious, not for profit entity duly registered and recognized by the North Carolina Department of State. Redeemer Church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention. It is also affiliated with Acts 29 and The Summit Network.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this church is to glorify God through making disciples and planting churches.

ARTICLE III. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: Membership

The membership of Redeemer Church shall consist of persons who profess their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, having given public testimony to their Christian faith through believer's baptism by immersion as set forth in the New Testament. All candidates will be required to complete the membership process (meet with an elder and attend the membership class), affirm the church covenant (see Section 2) by signature, affirm the church's core beliefs, and be in sympathy with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement. For these Bylaws, membership is defined as covenant members who have met the above requirements, and the terms "covenant members," "members" and "membership" are used interchangeably herein.

1a: Watchcare Membership shall comprise those who are in the military, college, or who otherwise know of a short-term residency in our community and who, because of their temporary residency, do not desire to transfer their membership. After meeting the requirements above, Watchcare members will be afforded all the privileges of members, excepting the privilege of voting during Members' Meetings. When a Watchcare member moves away, their membership shall be terminated.

1b: Non-Resident Membership shall comprise those individuals who for reasons of health and family have moved away and who can not join a local church in their relocated area. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

1c: Every year the membership rolls of Redeemer Church will be purged. This will aid in keeping accurate records of the church membership.

1d: Yearly, the members of Redeemer Church will renew their covenant with one another. In so doing, those renewing their covenant will remain on the membership roll of Redeemer Church.

Section 2: Members' Covenant with One Another and the Lord Jesus

The church is the vehicle by which God is accomplishing His purposes in the world. The church exists to display the glory of God because all things exist for His glory. Followers of Jesus have been invited graciously into God's redemptive purposes for the world through the church. In light of this reality, the

opportunity to join a local church is much more than a commitment to consistent attendance or active involvement in community. It is also a sacred call to be involved in the redemptive work of our sovereign God and to be a microcosm of the universal household of God. Therefore, we will covenant together to fulfill these purposes and hold one another accountable to this high calling.

As members of Redeemer Church, we affirm this covenant with one another, by God's grace, for our growth, and ultimately for the glory of our Triune God:

A. To be a Baptized, Regenerate Community that Makes Disciples

Having been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (Jn. 6:44; Acts 3:19, 16:31, 17:30, 20:21; Rom. 10:9-10; Eph. 2:8-10;), and to surrender our lives to Him (Lk. 14:25-33), and having been baptized by immersion as born again Christians (Jn. 3:3; Acts 8:38, Acts 10:44-48) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:1-4), we covenant with one another as one body in Christ to glorify God (Isa. 43:7; 1 Cor. 10:31) by making disciples of Jesus among all nations (Matt. 28:18-20; 2 Tim. 2:2; Ps. 67:1-2; Rev. 7:9-10).

B. To Worship Together Regularly around the Scriptures and the Lord's Supper

Together, we will draw near to God in worship (Acts 2:42; Heb. 10:22). We will delight in the glory of God (Ps. 16:11, 37:4, 63:1-11), depend on the presence of God (Matt. 28:20; Jn. 15:5, 16:7; 1 Pet. 4:11), and grow in the knowledge of God (Phil. 3:10; Col. 1:9-12; 2 Pet. 3:17-18) by submitting to the Word of God in all matters of life, as the all-sufficient authority in our lives and in His

Church (Ps. 19:7-11, 119:105-112; 2 Tim. 3:14-4-5). Together, we will hold fast to the hope we profess (Heb. 10:23). We will participate regularly in the Lord's Supper (Lk. 22:7-23; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:23-32) as we reverently and joyfully remember the past work of Christ's atoning sacrifice (2 Cor. 5:21), celebrate the present help of Christ as our mediator who ever lives to intercede for us at the Father's right hand (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:14-16, 7:25, 9:24; 1 Tim. 2:5), and anticipate the future return of Christ as the King of Kings (Titus 2:13; Rev. 19:16).

C. To Disciple and Care for One Another in Large and Small Groups

The gospel creates community—we are committed to living life together and challenging one another to grow as disciples of Christ. We are committed to living out the gospel and its implications for everyday life (1 Pet. 3:15, Gal. 2:14). Together, we will spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24). We will meet with one another consistently in small groups and actively participate in the corporate gatherings of this local church, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (Heb. 10:25). We will also pray for one another regularly (Eph. 6:18-20) and serve one another selflessly (Rom. 12:9-13).

D. To Submit to the Leadership of the Church

We will cooperate with, submit to, and prayerfully support the leadership of the pastors (elders) who have been entrusted by God to serve and care for this body by teaching the Word of Christ to us and modeling the character of Christ before us (Heb. 13:7, 17; Ac. 6:1-7; 20:28-31; Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 5:17-20; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). We will seek the guidance of our elders and small groups in major life decisions.

E. To Be Good Stewards

We covenant that we will give cheerfully, regularly, and generously to the support of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel both in our city and through all nations (2 Cor. 8-9). We affirm that we will give our spiritual gifts, time, resources, and money in a sacrificial manner consistent with the gospel and for its progress.

F. To Display God's Glory through Unity and Discipline

Unity—Together, we will seek to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). We affirm that we are God's church and not our own. Therefore our preferences, needs, and desires are secondary to the mission and vision of the church. Part of maintaining unity and peace means we will adhere to Redeemer Church's "Core Beliefs" and will not be divisive over theological issues described in the BFM2000.

G. To Practice Restorative Discipline

We will humbly and gently confront one another and receive correction from one another in accordance with a New Testament understanding of church discipline and restoration (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1). We will submit to and prayerfully support the leadership of our pastors (elders) as they seek to oversee discipline among our church.

H. To Promote Christian Growth

We affirm our responsibility to grow in Christ and his gospel through the consistent practice of spiritual disciplines, such as prayer, fasting, Scripture reading, worship, and others. We affirm, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to exercise our Christian liberty with responsibility, remembering that because of the gospel, we have a special obligation to lead a new and holy life (i.e. issues such as cohabitation, extra-marital sex, homosexuality activity, drug

addictions, alcohol abuse, etc. are not consistent with this special obligation to lead a new and holy life).

I. To Encourage Gospel-Centered Families

We will endeavor to build gospel-centered homes. Husbands will seek to lead their wives and children sacrificially as Christ leads the church, meaning that husbands are ready to lay down their lives for their families (Eph. 5). Wives will seek to submit to their husbands, as the church does to Christ. As parents, we will raise the children under our care in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example, in order to seek the salvation of our family and friends.

Section 3: Termination of Membership

Membership shall be terminated in the following ways: (1) proof of membership in another church, (2) exclusion of the member by action of this church, (3) death of the member, or (4) as a result of a non-disciplinary meeting with an elder. A member who does not renew their covenant, annually, will have their membership terminated.

Section 4: Discipline and Restoration

Members of the church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with biblical standards of holiness as they grow to become more like Christ. When a member knowingly, blatantly and publicly ignores the direct commands and prohibitions of Scripture, principles of discipline and restoration will be applied. These principles are found in passages such as Matt. 7:1-5, 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1-2; 2 Thess. 3:6-15. Corrective discipline will be handled by the elders who will determine whether a matter should be brought before the covenant membership for action.

4a: We believe that church discipline, far from unloving, is needful to honor the name of Christ, protect the flock, educate and edify the body, and ensure purity. It is pursued in the hope that an erring brother or sister in Christ would repent and be restored into proper fellowship with the Lord and this church.

4b: It will be the responsibility of the elders to follow through on the action of Church Discipline, and any recommendation brought before the church concerning an individual member will be made by the elders.

4c: The process for discipline includes: **(1)** An initial, private, one-on-one admonition by a congregation member who has personal knowledge of ongoing improper Christian conduct. **(2)** If A, above, does not reveal the accusation false, or result in repentance and restoration, a second admonition in the presence of one or two other elders will be given. **(3)** A reasonable effort must be made to secure a private resolution of personal offense in the hope that such public censure by the church will not be required. **(4)** If, again, A and B, above, does not result in repentance and restoration, there will be a call for public correction before the gathered church at a Members' Meeting. If this also fails, then the member can be (a) publicly admonished, (b) removed from leadership position and/or (c) expelled from fellowship and his/her membership terminated with a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present. **(5)** If along the way, the accused repents, and makes any appropriate restitution, restoration will be considered accomplished through joyful reception by church leadership.

ARTICLE IV. ELDERS

Section 1: Responsibilities and Qualifications

As used in Scripture, the term “elder” is synonymous with “pastor” and “overseer.” The elders will be responsible for the oversight of the church and its ministries. They will meet regularly for prayer, personal accountability, and the fulfillment of their ministry responsibilities. All decisions made by the elders shall be reached after prayerful consideration, voting in a spirit of humility, with each elder regarding one another before himself, and moving toward the goal of unity (Phil. 2:3-4). The elders are responsible for leading the church to function as a New Testament church. The elders shall be covenant members of the church.

Elders will be men of prayer and the Word. Their qualifications are defined by specific Scripture passages in 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Eph. 4:11-12, 1 Tim. 5:17, and 1 Ptr. 5:1-4. The elders are the governing body of the church and consists of its pastor and elders. The Board of Elders shall have the power and authority to make rules and regulations not inconsistent with the laws of the State of North Carolina and these Bylaws. The Board of Elders shall manage the business affairs of the church, oversee all matters concerning the conduct of public worship, and it shall concert the best measures for promoting the spiritual growth and evangelistic witness of the congregation. It shall receive, dismiss, and exercise discipline over the members of the church.

The elders shall serve as Directors of the Corporation. When signatures of the Directors of the Corporation are needed to transact business, the signatures of at least two active elders reflecting the unity of the elders shall represent the Corporation. Prior affirmation of the membership will be obtained where necessary according to Article VII Section 3.

1a: The Lead Pastor shall be an Elder of the church. He shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God’s call, has devoted his

vocational life, full-time, to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. He shall preach, administer the ordinances and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office. In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

1b: Staff elders shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as one, who in response to God's call, has devoted his vocational life, full-time, to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. In addition to his duties as outlined in his job description, the staff elder shall assist the Lead Pastor in the performance of his regular duties as needed. In the absence or incapacity of the Lead Pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the Staff Elder(s) may assume the responsibility for his duties.

1c: Lay-elders must meet the same qualifications as staff elders and must also share in prescribed elder duties. A lay-elder is anyone serving in the office of elder but who does not seek to serve in full-time/part-time ministry.

1d: In the calling of any man to these positions, the elders will be responsible for recognizing godly and gifted men within the church. If necessary, the same process will be followed in searching for godly and gifted men outside of the church. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching and ministry gifts of any candidate before being asked to express her judgment, and must receive assurance from the elders that having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted agreement with our doctrine, church covenant and by-laws. Having been nominated by the elders, the congregation will voice her prayerful affirmation during a Special Members' Meeting, with

a call being extended to the candidate provided that a 2/3 majority of the voting members present, during the Special Members' Meeting affirm the elders' nomination. The call will also serve as receiving both the pastor and his wife, if he is married, and their children, if appropriate, into the membership of the church (unless they are already members).

Section 2: Elders'/Pastor's Covenant with the Church and the Lord Jesus

A. Pastors/elders are men entrusted with protecting, leading, equipping, and caring for the corporate church body and her individual members. The following is an overview of the requirements for elders as defined within the Scriptures. In serving as an elder (whether staff or lay elder), this man is pledging by covenant to meet the following qualifications and carry out the resultant ministries/ duties.

B. Elders are to: Along with the aid of members, appoint other elders according to the criteria assigned to them in Scripture (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Ptr. 5:1-4). Through prayer, seek God's will for our church community and to guide her use of resources to the best of our ability as the church submits to the authority of Scripture and the leading of the Spirit (Acts 20:28; 1 Ptr. 5:1-4). Oversee the growth of members as disciples of Christ and give an account for their growth in grace, truth, and love (Matt. 28:16-20; Eph. 4:15-16; Jam. 5:14; Heb. 13:17; 1 Ptr. 5:1-4). Provide teaching and counsel from the whole Scripture (Acts 20:27-28; 1 Tim. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:1-5; Titus 2:1). Equip the members of the church for the work of ministry, including future elders and church planters (Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2:2). Be on guard against false teachers and teachings (Matt. 7:15; Jn. 10:12-13; Acts 20:28-31; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 1 Jn. 4:1). Lovingly oversee the exercise of discipline when necessary, for the glory of God, for the good

of the one disciplined, and for the health of the church as a whole (Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5; Gal. 6:1; Jam. 5:19-20). Set an example and join members in fulfilling the obligations of church membership stated in the church covenant (Acts 20:28; Phil. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7-8; 1 Ptr. 5:3).

Section 3: Selection

Should the need for additional elders arise, there will be an active search initiated by the elders for men who meet the biblical qualifications. The elders will examine each candidate to determine if they meet the biblical qualifications. The number of candidates presented to the membership for affirmation will depend upon the needs of the church. There is neither a preset number of elders, nor a preset term of service. All elders must agree wholeheartedly with our core beliefs and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.

Section 4: Compensation for Staff

Compensation for all staff elders will be determined using the annual LifeWay Compensation Study that is released by the Southern Baptist Convention as well as Christianity Today's annual Compensation Handbook for Church Staff. The compensation for all staff will follow the average for each position listed in the LifeWay Compensation Study as well as the Christianity Today Compensation Handbook for Church Staff. In order to arrive at the yearly compensation package, consideration will be given to the averages of salaries for each position based upon report data on church size, education, years of experience, and church budget.

Additionally, all paid staff should receive annual cost of living increases commensurate with the national cost of living average. The structure of each pay package must follow the compensation planning guidelines described by Guidestone Financial. The annual process for evaluating and adjusting elder compensation will be undertaken by the finance team.

Section 5: Dismissal

If at any time an elder is not fulfilling his role, fails to meet the biblical qualifications, or no longer desires to serve, the other elders along with the covenant members will evaluate the situation. If necessary, the elders will recommend steps to be taken and ask the membership for affirmation. The membership may provide input about an elder's lifestyle and performance according to biblical qualifications at any time in accordance with 1 Timothy 5:19-20.

An elder's service may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal if he is found to be physically or mentally incapacitated or spiritually disqualified. This process would originate among the elders currently serving and would then be taken to the church body to be affirmed by a 2/3 majority vote (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

ARTICLE V. ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Section 1: Administrative Staff

The administrative staff shall consist of those employees who assist the elders. The administrative staff shall be under the direction of the elders. Compensation for administrative staff shall be determined by the active elders in accordance with Article VII, Section 1.

Section 2: Membership

All administrative staff personnel shall be covenant members of the church as defined in Article I.

ARTICLE VI. MINISTRY TEAMS

Section 1: Responsibility

Selected ministries of the church will be carried out by ministry teams that allow members to exercise their spiritual gifts. The ministry teams will be coordinated by the elders and empowered by the church to fulfill their mission.

Section 2: Ministry Team Members

The elders will assign individuals for oversight of each ministry team and select a team leader (this includes Life Groups). There will be no preset term for team members, but the team leader and/or assigned elder can recommend rotation or sabbatical years for team members. The ministry team may then enlist members to help assist carrying out their mission. Elders can at any point remove a team leader from their area of responsibility or a ministry team as a ministry of the church if necessary.

Budget and cost expenditures for each ministry team shall be determined by the appointed elder of oversight, along with the aid of the ministry team leader.

ARTICLE VII. CHURCH SERVICES AND ORDINANCES

Section 1: Worship Services

The church shall meet for worship each Sunday or at other times as authorized by the elders.

Section 2: Baptism

Baptism shall be of believers by immersion in water. An elder will oversee the administration of this ordinance.

Section 3: Lord's Supper

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper regularly. An elder will oversee the administration of this ordinance.

ARTICLE VIII. COVENANT MEMBER MEETINGS

Section 1: Stewardship Meeting

The church shall hold an annual meeting for the purpose of discussing and affirming the proposed annual financial ministry plan. The elders shall develop and present the annual financial ministry plan in conjunction with appointed members of a financial ministry team.

Section 2: Special Covenant Member Meetings

The elders may call additional meetings to consider matters of a special nature or significance, including matters of discipline. Proper communication of the matter will be disseminated to the church body in order to allow ample time for intercessory prayer, the membership to ask questions, provide feedback, and express confidence and support for decisions recommended by the elders. An elder will lead the meeting.

Section 3: Affirmation by the Membership

Affirmation shall be a 2/3 vote by the covenant membership present at the meeting and not by proxy. Voting members shall be those covenant members of 16 years old or older. The

membership will be asked to affirm the recommendations of the elders for the following items:

- Annual financial ministry plan
- Capital purchases or building activities where the value exceeds 10 percent of the annual financial ministry plan
- Calling or dismissing elders

- Changes to the church Bylaws
- Other items the elders believe to be of significant importance
- Exclusion of a member by action of the church

Section 4: Meeting Minutes

Minutes of church covenant member meetings shall be maintained indefinitely.

ARTICLE IX. FINANCES

From time to time the church, at the discretion of the elders, may establish various designated funds to accomplish specific purposes. Contributions to these established funds shall be used for the intended purposes. Contributions marked with any other designation will not create a financial obligation to use the contribution for a particular purpose but will be deemed as advisory rather than mandatory in nature.

ARTICLE X. OTHER ITEMS

All other items not specifically covered by these Bylaws will be governed by the policies and procedures of the church.

ARTICLE XI. STATEMENTS

Section 1: The Bible

The Bible itself, as the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of God, is our final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind. It is the sole and final source of all that we believe.

Section 2: Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that term “marriage” has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex is rebellion against God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing

behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture nor the doctrines of the church.

ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

Recommendation for amendments to the Bylaws may be brought to the elders by the covenant membership. After prayerful consideration by the elders, amendments to the Bylaws may be presented at a special called covenant member meeting provided each proposed amendment has been presented to the membership in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting. Amendments to the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of church members present and voting, and not by proxy.