

Constitution and Bylaws

Redeemer Church
8400 Cypress Lake Dr
Fort Myers, FL 33919

Constitution

Preamble

Since it is the purpose of this church to glorify God in all that we do and to advance the kingdom of God by evangelizing the lost and encouraging the spiritual growth of the believers through the ministry of the Word of God and the administration of the ordinances taught in the New Testament, and desiring that all things be done decently and in order within this church and that we preserve the freedom of the action of this body while maintaining relationships with churches of like faith and practice, we, the members of Redeemer Church of Fort Myers, Florida, do hereby organize ourselves in accord with the 501(c)3 Nonprofit Statutes and adopt this Constitution and Bylaws as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the statement of Faith (Appendix A) and Covenant (Appendix B) of this church.

Article I – Name

The name of this organization shall continue to be Redeemer Church of Fort Myers, Florida.

Article II – Purpose

It shall be the purpose of this church to work to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ as recorded in Matthew 28:19-20: To go and make disciples of all people groups throughout Fort Myers, Florida, the United States, and around the world by proclaiming the gospel and by baptizing disciples and teaching them to know and live in obedience to the Word of God.

Article III – Membership

This church shall consist of those who have repented of their sin, believe in and trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, have been baptized as a believer by immersion, have sought membership and been approved as a member, and whose interpretation of the Bible is consistent with the Baptist Faith and Message Statement adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000, a copy of which is attached to this Constitution.

Article IV – Officers

The biblical officers of this church are elders and deacons. The church may also recognize administrators and other representatives as listed in the Bylaws or otherwise required from time to time. The selection and duties of such officers, administrators, and representatives shall be in accord with the New Testament and the Bylaws.

Article V – Meetings

This church shall meet regularly for worship, biblical instruction, prayer, fellowship, and the transaction of business as provided in the Bylaws.

Article VI – Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by an affirmative vote of three-fourths or greater of the eligible members present, provided the required number for a quorum is met, at any regular members' meeting of the church or any special members' meeting called for that purpose. Notice of intention to amend the Constitution including the specific wording of the proposed amendment shall be made publicly available in writing at the church and shall be announced publicly during the two Sunday morning worship services immediately prior to the meeting.

Bylaws

Article I – Membership

Section 1 – Redeemer Church

Redeemer Church of Fort Myers, Florida (or Redeemer) is a Christian church whose members profess repentance of their sins and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, have affirmed this profession through baptism and evidence it in their lives, and agree to assemble regularly to live out their common faith as they hear God's Word preached and taught, baptize believers, partake of the Lord's Supper, sing praises to God, pray, work to spread and share the Gospel, encourage one another in mutual accountability, practice and submit to church discipline, and exercise the gifts of the Holy Spirit for the strengthening of Christ's local church as Redeemer and His universal church.

Section 2 – Eligibility and Admission to Membership

Upon completion of any membership training required by Redeemer and meeting with at least one elder, a person who meets the minimum requirements below may be recommended by the elders for membership with Redeemer:

1. Understands the Gospel – the God, who is holy and just, created Man in His own image; that Man, by nature and choice, rebels and sins against God and is therefore deserving of death as the just punishment for sinning against a perfectly holy God; that Jesus, God's only Son, came in the flesh as a man, lived a perfectly holy life, and died on the cross to pay the penalty for sin; that God raised Jesus bodily from the death; and that all those who repent of their sin and believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior are forgiven of their sin, reconciled to God, and granted eternal life;
2. Appears to genuinely and credibly confess repentance for sin and belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
3. Has been baptized by immersion as a believer;
4. Agrees with the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith and agrees with Redeemer's statement of faith (the Baptist Faith and Message adopted by Southern Baptist Convention in 2000);

5. Agrees to be governed by Redeemer's Constitution and Bylaws;
6. Is not under discipline in any other church unless, after examining the matter, the elders at Redeemer believe the other church's discipline was unbiblical or otherwise improper; and
7. Is not a member of (or will resign from membership in) any other church, unless a special exception is warranted and is recommended by the elders and approved by the church. Special exceptions may, but are not required to, include temporary but lengthy time periods away from the Fort Myers area for things like military service, education, jobs, or regularly living in multiple homes. A special exception may be implemented by creating an associate membership whereby associate members have all the rights and privileges of being a member except they would not be allowed to vote at members' meetings (but are encouraged to otherwise participate) and would not be expected to actively participate in and regularly attend Redeemer when they are absent because of this special exception.

A person recommended by the elders for membership is admitted to membership upon congregational approval by majority vote.

Section 3 – Expectations of Members

The Bible instructs Christians to be regularly and actively involved in local Christian churches. Expectations of Redeemer members include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Attend Redeemer regularly, Hebrews 10:25;
2. Support/give regularly and cheerfully to Redeemer, 2 Corinthians 8,9; Psalm 24:1; Acts 4:32-37;
3. Love and be committed to entire body of Christian brothers and sisters at Redeemer, John 13:55; 1 Corinthians 3; James 2:1-9; 1 John 4:20;
4. Participate in the Lord's Supper at Redeemer, Acts 2:41-42; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26;
5. Exercise gifts to build up the local body of Christ Redeemer, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 14:12; Ephesians 4:12-13; and
6. Devote time and effort to understand the Bible, fellowship with other members, break bread together, and pray together and for each other, Acts 2:41-21.

Section 4 – Termination of Membership

Membership may be terminated in one of three ways:

1. Membership is automatically terminated by death.
2. Membership may be terminated by resignation (including letters of transfer) which must be congregationally approved by majority vote.
3. Membership may be terminated for reasons of church discipline which must be congregationally approved by an affirmative vote of two-thirds or more.

Section 5 – Process of Church Discipline

Matters of church discipline shall be handled consistently with Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Corinthians 5, and 1 Timothy 5:19-20. If any member refuses to repent of any clear sin after being confronted privately by the person offended (unless a special exception exists) and subsequently with one or two witnesses present, such refusal to repent shall be brought to the attention of the elders as a whole immediately. The elders shall investigate such matters in a timely fashion and in whatever manner they deem appropriate. If the member continues to refuse to repent of such sin after investigation and intervention by the elders, the elders shall notify the congregation of the member's unrepentant sin and recommend an appropriate course of action. No action will be taken against any member during the first members' meeting at which the congregation is notified of the need for church discipline against the member, with the exception that the immediate action may be taken against a member for very clear unrepentant and public sins. See 1 Corinthians 5. This gives time for repentance and prayer before a second members' meeting in which the matter will be voted on. The congregation shall have the final say over whether a proposed course of action is taken against the member including termination of membership, but must vote up or down, without any amendments, the elders' recommended course of action. All such church discipline votes, except in the case of membership termination as set forth in Article I, Section 4(3) above, shall be approved by majority vote.

An elder accused of unrepentant sin or other serious misconduct shall not take part in any elder investigation, congregational notification, or elders' recommendation of appropriate action with respect to that accusation. If the accusation is supported by two or three witnesses, see 1 Timothy 5:19, the remaining elders must notify the congregation of the general nature of the qualifying accusations against the elder in a timely fashion. The remaining elders, after investigating the accusation, may recommend any appropriate action or that no action be taken depending on the nature of the accusation and the strength of the evidence. The congregation shall have the final say over what, if any, action to take against the elder including termination of membership.

After appropriately referring a potential disciplinary matter to the elders and allowing them sufficient time to investigate and take appropriate action, a member who believes the elders should have referred but did not refer the matter to the congregation for disciplinary action may bring the matter to the attention of the congregation at a members' meeting.

Article II – Church Decision-Making and Offices

Section I – Congregation

The final human authority under Christ over Redeemer rests with the congregation – not pastors, elders, deacons, a denomination, denominational leadership, or any other human authority. The Bible and these Bylaws specifically give the congregation as a whole final decision-making authority over discipline, membership, disputes between members, and selection of leaders/representatives. See, e.g., Matthew 18:15-17; Acts 6:1-6, 11:22, 15:2-4; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 5:1-13, 6:1-8, 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 2:6-10; Galatians 1:2, 6-9; 1 Timothy 3:15; and 2 Timothy 4:2-4. These Bylaws also set forth other specific decisions that Redeemer has determined shall be made by the congregation as a whole. All other decisions not specifically reserved to the congregation in the Bible or these Bylaws may be made by the elders if not otherwise delegated by these Bylaws to a deacon, administrator, or other church representative. The congregation has a responsibility to provide helpful information and insight to its elders as they take or recommend actions, and to appropriately obey and submit to its leaders. See Hebrews 13:17. The elders have a responsibility to keep the congregation informed about significant matters under consideration and, when possible and appropriate, to see input and recommendations from the congregation on such matters.

Section 2 – Elders

1. Definition and Number – The Bible uses the terms elders, overseers, and pastors interchangeably to refer to the same local church office. See, e.g., Acts 20:17-28. These Bylaws will refer to those who fill the office as elders. The New Testament regularly refers to elders in the plural, see, e.g., Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23, 20:17; and James 5:14, although a precise number of elders for a local church is nowhere mandated in Scripture. Redeemer shall have, whenever possible, at least three elders meeting the necessary qualifications and may have as many additional elders as are necessary consistent with the size and spiritual needs of the church. Redeemer shall have, whenever possible, an equal or greater number of elders who are not employed by the church as those elders who are employed by the church.

2. Responsibilities – The elders at Redeemer are responsible for leading and directing the spiritual and practical affairs of the church, subject always and as appropriate to the authority of the congregation as a whole. Such responsibilities include, but are not limited to, exercising spiritual oversight over and shepherding the congregation, keeping watch over the souls of members, preaching and teaching and otherwise giving instruction in sound doctrine, rebuking those who contradict God’s Word, protecting the church and its members from spiritual attack and from twisted speech (untruthful, contrary to Gospel or Scripture), being God’s steward (including over financial and supervisory matters), being an example to the church, helping the spiritually weak, praying for the sick, being hospitable, admonishing the congregation and members when and where necessary by staying alert, and making decisions and caring for the entire congregation and otherwise managing the household of God. See, e.g., Acts 16:4, 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17; Titus 1:7-9; Hebrews 13:7; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:4. In exercising spiritual oversight over the congregation, the elders shall regularly review and update the membership rolls of Redeemer, and shall oversee the work of the Deacons (Section 3 below) and any administrators and representatives (Section 4 below).
3. Lead Pastor (Elder) – The Lead Pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described above (Article 2, Section 2.2), and shall be recognized by the church as a particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 3, Section 3, for elders. He shall preach, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the bylaws. In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.
4. Minimum Qualifications – Minimum elder qualifications are found in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9. In accordance with Scripture, the office of elder is limited to men.

Section 3 – Deacons

1. Definition and Number – The word for deacon in the Bible, “diakonos,” means servant or minister. As demonstrated in Acts 6:1-6, deacons serve several purposes: (a) to fulfill particular physical needs of the church by ensuring wise use of available ministry resources (though not deciding overall allocation of church resources); (b) to promote unity within the church by serving impartially; and (c) to support the ministry of the Word by freeing up others for preaching, teaching, and prayer. Deacons do not share the same responsibilities as elders or function as a separate deliberative body within the church competing with the elders over decisions.

There is no limit to the number of deacons that may be appointed by the church so long as each meets the minimum qualifications set out below and each fills an ongoing and significant particular ministry or service need of the church. However, many ministry and service needs of the church can and should be handled by non-deacon member volunteers and therefore the number of deacons should be limited and generally proportionate to the size and activity of the church.

2. Responsibilities – Deacons are responsible for carrying out the particular ministry or service to which they have been assigned by wisely administrating the relevant allocated budget, recruiting and organizing and training sufficient volunteer members to carry out the particular ministry and service activities, following applicable church policies and procedures, requesting guidance from elders as necessary for situations not covered by existing church policies, recommending updates and revisions to existing church policies, and providing updates and reports to the elders and congregation as requested. Deacon positions may be added or eliminated as necessary. The church as a whole must approve the creation of any new deacon position along with a brief description of duties.
3. Minimum Qualifications – Minimum deacon qualifications are found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. The example of Acts 6:1-6 provides additional qualities to look for in deacons. In accordance with Scripture, the office of deacon is limited to men.

Section 4 – Administrators and Representatives

1. Clerk – The clerk shall be responsible for recording the minutes of (including key reports given at) all regularly scheduled and special member’ meetings. The clerk shall maintain an updated version of the Constitution and Bylaws and a current list of Redeemer members. The clerk shall give an annual report to the congregation listing the members of the church. The clerk shall maintain an updated central repository of all church policies. The elders may assign the clerk additional duties from time to time.

2. Financial Treasurer – The financial treasurer shall maintain accurate financial records of the church (including income and expenses, monthly reconciliation of bank account statements, and approved requisition forms) in full compliance with standard accounting procedures for non-profit organizations and all IRS regulations and guidelines. The financial treasurer shall, once expenditures have been properly approved, ensure payment of expenses by creating checks or setting up electronic payments. The financial treasurer shall prepare regular and annual financial reports, filing tax returns, making account transfers, and reconciling any discrepancies in monthly account statements. A member selected to serve as a financial treasurer may not simultaneously serve as an elder, deacon, or full-time paid church staff member so that they may act independently. The Treasurer shall be bonded for the amount set by the Church and paid by the Church.

3. Counters - The counters shall receive all tithes, offerings, and other funds given to or collected by Redeemer. At least two counters shall be present whenever such funds are received from the ushers or from others and whenever such funds are counted and recorded. Counters shall deposit all money received into Redeemer’s bank account. If money is received during a time the bank is closed, the counters shall deposit the money in the after-hour deposit. The counters shall identify and record all contributions to Redeemer by each individual giver and provide the individual giving records to the Deacon of Finance as requested. The counters shall regularly prepare a summary of all contributions and other income received and deposited and provide the summary to the Deacon of Finance and the financial treasurer.

4. Messengers - Messengers (or delegates or representatives) shall be chosen as necessary to represent Redeemer at local, associational, state, regional, national, and/or worldwide meetings in which Redeemer chooses to participate. Elders may serve as messengers to all such meetings in which they are willing and able to attend without needing to be approved by the congregation.

5. Corporate Directors - See Article VII of these Bylaws

6. Committees - the elders shall establish a search committee for any paid permanent elder position opening. Such search committees shall include an equal or greater number of non-elder members as elders, and all committee members shall be approved by the church. Any such search committee shall regularly inform the congregation of the nature of its progress and shall report any final hiring recommendations to the elders. If needed, the elders may establish other committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. Such committees may be established without obtaining the approval of the congregation.

Section 5 - General

All elders, deacons, administrators, and church representatives listed in Section 4 of Article II must be members of Redeemer.

Articles III - Elections and Approvals

Section 1 - Congregational Decisions

All decisions made by the congregation as a whole shall be on the basis of a majority of votes cast by eligible members present at an official members meeting (see Article V, Sections 2 and 4), unless otherwise indicated in the Constitution or Bylaws. A quorum shall be necessary for any votes to take place. A quorum shall consist of at least twenty percent of the eligible voting members of the church. The quorum will only be tested once at the beginning of each members meeting. Members in good standing and aged sixteen and above are eligible to vote at any members meeting.

Section 2 - Specific Matters Requiring Congregational Approval

The following matters, in addition to those otherwise set out in these Bylaws, must be approved by the congregation:

1. The elders shall propose, and the congregation must approve, an annual budget for total expenditures and for general categories of expenditures, and any increases during the course of the year to such budget.
2. The congregation must approve, after an affirmative recommendation of the elders, any off-budget expenditures greater than \$2500 including those paid from designated funds or those paid from reallocations of budget subcategories.

3. Church policies (such as use of the church building and property, nursery procedures, financial processes, or requirements, for partaking of the Lord's Supper) shall be approved by the elders and need not be approved by the congregation as a whole. However, the congregation should be notified of official written standing policies and should, whenever possible, be given an opportunity to provide input to them.

Section 3 - Selection of Elders

All elders must be nominated by the elders and congregational approved by at least a two thirds vote. Members are encouraged to recommend to the elders qualified candidates to serve as elders. An elder serves a three year term from the date of election and may be renominated and approved for one successive three year term. After two successive terms, (six years of successive service) an elder shall take a least one year off before being renominated and approved as an elder.

Notwithstanding the above requirements, an elder who has been called to serve as and is financially supported by the church as the Lead Pastor shall serve continuously as an elder until he is no longer the Lead Pastor. Similarly, other financially supported ministry staff may, at the designation of the congregation, serve continuously as an elder for as long as he holds the financially supported position. Such elders are not limited to any particular term of service and are not required to take any time off from service as an elder.

Section 4 - Selection of Deacons

All deacons must be nominated by the elders and congregational approved by majority vote. Members are encouraged to recommend to the elders qualified candidates to serve as deacons. A deacon shall be nominated and approved for a particular service or ministry the duties of which are set forth briefly in writing. A deacon serves a two year term from the date of election. A deacon may be nominated and approved for a second and successive two year term. After two successive terms (or four years of successive service in the same deacon position), a deacon must take at least one year off from serving in that particular service or ministry before being nominated and approved again for the same service. Deacon position vacancies can be filled at any time and do not need to be filled if the service or ministry is no longer needed.

Section 5 - Selection of Administrators and Representatives

All other administrators and church representatives (other than elders and deacons as set forth above) shall be nominated by the elders and congregational approved by majority vote. The terms of service shall be set forth as part of the motion approving such administrators or representatives. There are no restrictions on being nominated and approved for successive terms of service any of these positions, except that all persons who have served in the same position for five consecutive years must take one year off before serving in the position again.

Section 6 - General

Nominations for elders and deacons may not be voted upon at the time of the nomination and must hold over for a vote until the next members meeting. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated individual is unqualified to an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak during a members meeting in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant members meeting.

Article IV - Church Employees

Section 1 - Paid Ministry Staff

The elders shall recommend, and the congregation must approve, the creation of any paid ministry staff positions including a brief description of the duties of such position and whether the person filling such position will continuously serve as an elder. Prior to filling any such positions, the congregation must approve sufficient funds for such positions as part of the annual budget or as a specific change to the current budget. If the person filling the position will serve as a permanent elder, the person must be nominated and approved in the manner set forth for elders in Article III, Section 3. If the person filling the position will not serve as a permanent elder, then the person shall be nominated by the elders and approved by majority vote of the congregation consistent with the provisions of Article III, Section 5 (except for the five-year term limitation). The person would thereafter be eligible to serve as a term elder if nominated and approved as set forth in Article III, Section 3.

All paid ministry staff shall be supervised by the elders who shall determine the specific responsibilities, hours, vacation, compensation and benefits (neither to exceed that authorized by the congregation) evaluation, and (if necessary) recommendation to terminate. The elders may delegate direct supervisory responsibilities over particular staff members to a single elder, group of elders, or deacon. An elder who serves as paid ministry staff shall have no vote within the elders in determining his own compensation, benefits, hours, vacation, and evaluation, but he is

allowed to vote on such matters to the extent such decisions are made by the congregation as a whole (e.g., compensation as part of budget approval).

Section 2 - Paid Administrative Staff

The elders shall recommend, and the congregation must approve, the creation of any paid (whether full-time, part-time, or hourly) administrative staff position including a brief description of the duties of such position. Prior to filling any such positions, the congregation must approve sufficient funds for such positions as part of the annual budget or as a specific change to the current budget. The elders shall be authorized to fill any such funded positions without the need for congregational approval but shall timely notify the congregation of the person selected.

All paid administrative staff shall be supervised by the elders who shall determine the specific responsibilities, hours, vacation, compensation and benefits (neither to exceed that authorized by the congregation) evaluation, and (if necessary) recommendation to terminate. The elders may delegate direct supervisory responsibilities over particular staff members to a single elder, group of elders, or deacon.

Section 3 - Service Providers and Contractors

Elders are authorized to negotiate and hire service providers and contractors to perform services to or for Redeemer as long as sufficient funds have been authorized by the congregation for such contract or services as part of a general expense category within the churches budget or as a special approved expense. Deacons, within their assigned service areas of responsibility, are likewise authorized to negotiate and hire service providers and contractors to perform services to or for Redeemer as long as sufficient funds have been authorized within the budget.

Article V - Meetings and Rules of Order

Section 1 - Worship Meetings

The Church shall meet regularly on Sundays at appointed times for Bible study and morning worship. The church may meet regularly at other times for worship, prayer, Bible study, teaching, fellowship, children and youth activities, or any other appropriate church activity. Any permanent changes to the churches regular Sunday meeting times shall be approved by the congregation. All other changes to the Churches regular meeting times, including temporary changes and cancellations for weather or other unusual events, shall be made by the elders.

Section 2 - Members Meetings

Members shall meet regularly to conduct the affairs of Redeemer. Regular members meetings shall be held in January, April, July and October of each year unless special circumstances arise. The elders shall determine specific dates, times and whether special circumstances exist to cancel such meetings, but in no event shall regular or special members meetings be held during the regularly scheduled times for Sunday morning worship and Sunday School.

Section 3 - Rules of Order

A moderator selected by the elders shall preside over members meetings. The meeting shall generally be conducted according to the most recent version of Robert's Rules of Order, especially the basic rules for making motions, amending motions, withdrawing motions, and cutting off debate on motions. The moderator shall be the final authority on all procedural matters, including any exceptions made to Robert's Rules of Order, and shall do so in an impartial manner and in order to promote efficient meetings.

Section 4 - Special Members' Meetings

Special members' meetings may be called by the elders. Additionally, special members' meetings shall be called by the church clerk whenever the clerk receives a written request for such a meeting by at least ten members or ten percent of the membership, whichever is greater, for the same general matter. Notice of time, place, and specific issues to be decided for any special members' meeting must be publicly announced one week beforehand during the Sunday morning service and by email and posted in writing at church. All special members's meetings must be announced during the Sunday morning worship service immediately prior to the meeting. No motions can be acted upon at any special members' meeting unless they have been posted in writing prior to the meeting in the same manner as set forth above in the requirements for noticing such meetings.

Article VI - General Provisions

Section 1 - Affiliations

Redeemer shall maintain cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention, Florida Baptist Convention, and Royal Palm Baptist Association. As an autonomous church cooperating with these bodies, Redeemer may support their programs or use their materials if they are in accord with the Bible and otherwise deemed appropriate.

Section 2 - Monetary Donations

Any monetary income received by the church, whether by regular donations, by will, by beneficiary, by policy or insurance, or any other way shall go into the general fund unless designated otherwise in writing by the donor or testator. While respecting the request of the donor or testator, decisions regarding whether to receive and use the funds for designated purposes or to create a designated account shall ultimately be made by Redeemer or its officers in accordance with church policies. The congregation shall be notified of the creation of any new designated fund, and shall be required to approve the creation of any designated fund that will expend an amount greater than \$2,500.

Section 3 - Special and Designated Offerings

Redeemer may announce and receive special or designated offerings from time to time (such as Lottie Moon and Annie Armstrong). All such special or designated offerings must be pre-approved by the elders and must go through the churches bank account.

Section 4 - Document Inspection

The church will follow all applicable state statues in regards to member requests for access to church records and other internal documents.

Article VII - Corporate Directors

Section 1 - Board of Directors

Redeemer shall elect annually a corporate board of directors consisting of at least a president, vice-president, and secretary/treasurer who shall each serve for one year. At least one elder must serve on the Board of Directors at all times. A person may serve no more than five successive terms in any of these positions. Nominations may be made by the elders or from the floor at the annual corporate meeting.

Section 2 - Annual Corporate Meeting

An annual corporate meeting shall be held prior to April 20 of each year at which meeting corporate directors shall be elected and an annual report presented. The date, time, and place of the annual corporate meeting shall be announced during the Sunday morning worship service prior to the meeting and posted at least ten days, and not longer than thirty days, prior to the meeting.

Section 3 - Authority

Corporate directors are the only persons authorized by the church to enter into written legal contracts, to buy and sell real estate, to open and close bank accounts, to sign papers obligating the church to mortgages and other loans, and to sign tax reports. The corporate directors may act in these matters only as agents of the church under the authority and at the instruction of the church. Actions to be taken by the corporate directors that do not require specific congregational approval in these Bylaws may be authorized by the elders (e.g., filing tax reports and changing bank accounts). Except for signing tax reports and entering into written legal contracts, signatures of at least two-thirds of the corporate directors are required for all such listed transactions.

Any authority to alienate, buy, sell, or encumber the real property, main structure, or any personal property of the church worth more than \$10,000 (including vehicles) shall be valid only when congregationally approved by an affirmative vote of two-thirds or more.

Section 4 - Responsibility

The corporate directors shall be responsible for maintaining and filing all necessary corporate paperwork.

Article VIII - Amendment to Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended by an affirmative vote of two-thirds or greater of the eligible members present at the time at any regular members' meeting or special members' meeting called for that purpose provided notice has been given as set out by the Bylaws.

Article IX - Rescission

These Bylaws shall become effective September 1, 2014, after adoption by the church and shall supersede any conflicting policies, procedures, or decisions which may have been made and adopted by Redeemer Church as recorded in its minutes.

Article X - Indemnification

Section 1 - Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and cost incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2 - Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

Appendices

- A. Baptist Faith and Message Statement - Adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000
- B. Church Covenant
- C. Statement on use of Buildings and Properties

Statement of Faith - Baptist Faith and Message 2000

Appendix A: Articles of Faith

I. The Scriptures

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, and 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.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

II. 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; and 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, 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.

Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.

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 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.

Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.

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 Saviour, 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 the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17

III. Man

Man is the special creation of God, 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 inherit 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.

Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.

IV. Salvation

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man, and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, 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 Saviour.

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.

Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.

V. 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.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.

VI. 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; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor 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, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.

VII. 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 symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, 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 and to the Lord's Supper.

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

Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.

VIII. The Lord's Day

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.

IX. The Kingdom

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22

X. Last Things

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.

XI. Evangelism and Missions

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life, and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle, and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.

XII. Education

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is co-ordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.

XIII. Stewardship

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are therefore under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.

XIV. Cooperation

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philippians 1:15-18.

XV. The Christian and the Social Order

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, and vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16,43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.

XVI. Peace and War

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9,38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36,38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.

XVII. Religious Liberty

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.

XVIII. The Family

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It 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. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. 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 submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

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; 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.

Appendix B: Covenant

Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to give up ourselves to Him, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, we do now, relying on His gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully renew our covenant with each other.

We will work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a Christian Church, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other and faithfully admonish and entreat one another as occasion may require.

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, nor neglect to pray for ourselves and others.

We will endeavor to bring up such as may at any time to be under our care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and by a pure and loving example to seek the salvation of our family and friends. We will rejoice at each other's happiness and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows. We will seek, by Divine aid, to live carefully in the world, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, and remembering that, as we have been voluntarily buried by baptism and raised again from the symbolic grave, so there is on us a special obligation now to lead a new and holy life. We will work together for the continuance of a faithful evangelical ministry in this church, as we sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations. We will, when we move from this place, as soon as possible, unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen.

Appendix C: Statement on Buildings and Properties

The buildings and properties of Redeemer Church will only be used in ways that do not contradict our convictions as found in our Statement of Faith (Appendix A).