

**REDEEMER
COMMUNITY
CHURCH
OF
ASHEVILLE, NC**

CONSTITUTION

**AMENDED AND RESTATED
DECEMBER 17, 2014**

**Constitution
of the
Redeemer Community Church of Asheville, NC**

*Adopted by the Membership on February 27, 2011. Amended and Restated by the Membership on
December 17, 2014.*

Preamble

We, the members of Redeemer Community Church of Asheville, NC, having been brought together by the will of God and formed by His Holy Spirit and Word, do establish the following articles and voluntarily submit ourselves for the preservation and security of the faith once delivered to the saints, and that this body may be governed in an orderly manner to the glory and renown of Christ our head.

**Article I
Name**

The name of this church shall be

REDEEMER COMMUNITY CHURCH OF ASHEVILLE, NC

**Article II
Purpose**

Redeemer Community Church exists to bring the life of every individual to intersect with the all satisfying beauty of Jesus Christ by authentic worship and witness to the power of His kingdom.

**Article III
Confession of Faith**

We believe that the Holy Bible (in its original manuscripts) is the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. In recognition of the Bible's final authority, we do hereby adopt, as our confession of faith, the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 (hereafter referred to as the "LBC").

"This ancient document is a most excellent summary of things most surely believed among us. We accept the same, not as an authoritative rule or code of faith, whereby we are to be fettered, but as an assistance to us in controversy, a confirmation in faith, a standard for church officers, and a means of instruction in righteousness for the body. In this Confession the members of our church will have a body of divinity in small compass and by means of Scriptural proofs will be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them." (1 Peter 3:15; Charles Haddon Spurgeon)

**Article IV
Statement of Faith**

As Baptists from a reformed tradition we have a rich heritage of sound statements and confessions of faith upon which we can draw to speak the truth to our generation. While Redeemer Community Church *Elders and Deacons* must hold substantial agreement with the LBC, we also believe that with regard to church membership a more concise statement of our beliefs ought to be the standard for *membership* in Redeemer Community Church. The Abstract of Principles (1858) is a systematic summary of doctrine and one of the earliest statements of faith found in the history of Christianity in America. Using the Abstract of Principles as our guide, we adopt the Statement of Faith shown below. We set forth the following Statement of Faith with the prayer that it will encourage and strengthen our unity, fellowship, witness, enjoyment, and effectiveness in Gospel missions. Substantial agreement with the Statement of Faith is expected of all members.

1. The Scriptures

The Scriptures, the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, were given by the inspiration of God. They are the all-sufficient, certain, infallible, inerrant, authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and practice. Nothing, whether a supposed revelation of the Spirit or man's traditions, is ever to be added to the Scripture. No tradition of man, church council or denomination shall be accepted in place of the plain meaning of Scripture. We affirm that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the Scriptures, assuring believers of the truthfulness of God's written Word. We deny that this witness of the Holy Spirit operates in isolation from or against Scripture. Isaiah 8:20; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; Revelation 22:18-21.

2. God and the Holy Trinity

There is only one true and living God. He is the Creator, Preserver and Ruler of all things. He is self-existent, infinite and eternal in His being and His perfections. God has revealed Himself to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being. Exodus 3:14; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Colossians 1:15-20.

3. Creation

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and all things, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days and all very good. God created man, male and female, in His image. He created man with reasonable and immortal souls in righteousness and holiness. Man owes to his Creator whatever worship, service or obedience He is pleased to require of him. Genesis 1:1, 31; John 1:1-4; Revelation 4:9-11.

4. Providence

God from eternity, decrees or permits all things that come to pass, and perpetually upholds, directs and governs all creatures and all events; yet so as not in any wise to be the author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures. Daniel 4:34-35; Psalm 115:1-3.

5. Sin and the Fall of Man

Man was originally created upright and free from sin. Through the temptation of Satan, Adam and Eve transgressed the command of God and fell from their original state of holiness and righteousness. Consequently, all their posterity inherits a nature corrupt and opposed to God and His law. All are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors. Genesis 2:16-17; 3:6-7; Romans 3:10-20; 5:12.

6. Election

Election is God's eternal choice of some persons unto everlasting life - not because of foreseen merit in them, but of His mere mercy in Christ - in consequence of which choice they are called, justified and glorified. Ephesians 1:3-7; 1 Peter 1:1-4.

7. The Mediator

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is the divinely appointed mediator between God and man. Having taken upon Himself human nature, yet without sin, He perfectly fulfilled the law, and suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, rose again on the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose right hand He ever lives to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe. Acts 14:6; Hebrews 7:20-28; 1 Timothy 2:5.

8. Regeneration

Regeneration is a change of heart, brought about by the Holy Spirit, who makes alive the dead in trespasses and sins, enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the Word of God, and renewing their whole nature, so that they love and practice holiness. It is a work of God's free and special grace alone. Ephesians 2:4-5; Titus 3:5-7.

9. Repentance

Repentance and faith are inseparable. Repentance is a saving grace by which a sinner out of a true sense of sin and an understanding of the mercy of God in Christ, does with godly sorrow and hatred of sin turn

from it to God, with a determination to walk before God so as to please Him in all things. Acts 20:21; Luke 24:46-48; 2 Corinthians 7:10.

10. Faith

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority of whatever is revealed in His Word, receiving and resting upon Christ alone for justification, salvation and eternal life. It is worked in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness. Romans 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:1-6.

11. Justification

Justification is the gracious act by which God fully and completely forgives sinners and imputes to them the righteousness of Jesus Christ at the moment they believe. Justification is by faith in Jesus Christ alone, not for anything found in them or done by them. It is bestowed only on those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:21-26; 4:4-5; 5:1-2; 17-19; 8:30.

12. Sanctification

Those who have been regenerated are also sanctified by God's word and Spirit dwelling in them. This sanctification is progressive through the supply of Divine strength, which all Christians seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in obedience to all Christ's commands. John 17:17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 12:14; 2 Peter 1:3-8.

13. Perseverance of the Saints

Those whom God has accepted in the Beloved, and sanctified by His Spirit, will never totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end. They may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, and grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves. They shall, however, be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. John 10:27-30; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:19; 1 John 2:19.

14. The Church

The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church, which is composed of all His true disciples, and in Him is invested supremely all power for its government. According to His commandment, Christians are to associate themselves into local churches. To each of these churches He gives needful authority for administering the order, discipline and worship which He has appointed. The regular officers of a Church are Pastors or Elders, and Deacons. Matthew 16:18; Hebrews 10:23-25; Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

15. Every Member Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

God is sovereign in the bestowing of spiritual gifts. It is, however, the believer's responsibility to develop their sovereignly given spiritual gift(s). The baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs at conversion and is the placing of the believer into the Body of Christ. It is the privilege and responsibility of every believer to minister according to the gift(s) and grace of God that is given to him. No gift is more essential than another, nor proves the presence of the Holy Spirit; neither is an indication of deep spiritual experience. 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Ephesians 4:7-8; Romans 12:1-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

16. Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer. The believer is immersed in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of his fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ, of remission of sins, and of his giving himself up to God to live and walk in newness of life. It is prerequisite to church membership and to participation in the Lord's Supper. Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:41-42; Romans 6:1-4; 1 Peter 3:18-21.

17. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and the fruit of the vine, and to be observed by His churches till the end of the world. It is in no sense a sacrifice, but is designed to commemorate His death and to confirm the faith and graces of Christians. It

is to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with Him and of their church fellowship. 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-32; Luke 22:14-20.

18. Worship and the Lord's Day

Worship is to be given to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and to Him alone. Since man's fall into sin, worship cannot be rendered to God without a mediator; and the only accepted mediator is Jesus Christ. The only acceptable way of worshipping the true God is appointed by Himself, in accordance with His own will. The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercise of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Exodus 20:1-6; Deuteronomy 12:32; 1 Timothy 2:5; Isaiah 58:13-14; Hebrews 4; 5.

19. Christian Liberty and Liberty of Conscience

Christ has purchased for all believers a liberty inherent in the gospel. It comprises freedom from the guilt of sin, from the condemnation that follows upon guilt, from the wrath of God, and from the severity and curse of God's law. It includes free access to God and the yielding of obedience to Him, not with the fear of a slave for his master, but with a childlike love and readiness. God alone is Lord of the conscience. He has set it free from all obligations to receive or obey any doctrines and demands of men which are in any respect in opposition to His Word or not contained in it. John 8:31-36; Galatians 5:13; 6:7-8; 1 Corinthians 7:17-24; 1 Corinthians 8.

20. Marriage

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. God instituted marriage for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind in accordance with His laws, and for the prevention of immorality. It is the duty of Christians to marry only "in the Lord". Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and his church. As such, same-sex marriage is contrary to the will of God.

In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership roles within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments. Genesis 2:21-25; Matthew 19:1-9; 1 Corinthians 7:1-7, 39.

21. Missions and Evangelism

We believe God has redeemed every disciple and incorporated them into His Church, to make them ministers of reconciliation with Him and instruments for Him in the salvation of all the elect and the restoration of the fallen world, to the praise of His glory. Using the diversity of gifts given us by the Spirit and within the sphere of influence that divine providence has afforded us, each believer must put on a readiness to communicate the gospel of peace to the lost, calling upon them to repent of their sins and trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ as their only hope for righteousness before God. God has called some to be elect martyrs and bear their witness unto death for the cause of Christ. Nevertheless it is the calling of every saint to bear injustice and trial for the Name of Christ, for to this we have been called and received command in the final words of the Lord Jesus to all who follow Him. 2 Corinthians 5:18-6:1; Matthew 28:19-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8; 8:1-4; Romans 1:16-18; 1 Peter 2:21; Revelation 6:10-11.

22. The Restoration of All Things

We believe in the personal, glorious, and bodily return of our Lord Jesus Christ with his holy angels, when he will exercise his role as final Judge, and his kingdom will be consummated. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the just and the unjust—the unjust to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell, as our Lord himself taught, and the just to eternal blessedness in the presence of

him who sits on the throne and of the Lamb, in the new heaven and the new earth, the home of righteousness. On that day the church will be presented faultless before God by the obedience, suffering and triumph of Christ, all sin purged and its wretched effects forever banished. God will be all in all and his people will be enthralled by the immediacy of his ineffable holiness, and everything will be to the praise of his glorious grace. Acts 1:9-11; 17:31; 24:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-6.

Article V Church Covenant

Having been brought by God's sovereign grace to repent and believe in the good news of Jesus Christ and his saving work, and having been baptized upon our profession of faith, we do now, relying on His grace, solemnly and joyfully affirm our covenant with each other.

We will pray and labor to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, devoted to the glory of God, resting in the gospel of his Son, and dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit.

To that end, we will not forsake assembling together, but will faithfully attend our corporate worship, treasuring our church's weekly opportunity to sing, pray, and receive the whole counsel of God's Word. We will defend and maintain a gospel-centered ministry by upholding and attending to biblical preaching, the administration of the sacraments, and the exercise of church discipline.

We will walk together in brotherly love, as becomes the members of a local church: we will pray for and serve one another, exercise an affectionate care and watchfulness over each other, and reject all opportunities to speak or hear gossip or slander. We will instead seek to encourage one another and build each other up in the faith.

We will rejoice with those who rejoice and endeavor with tenderness and sympathy to bear each other's burdens and sorrows. We will seek to proclaim and adorn the gospel of Christ before our family, friends, and neighbors and faithfully transfer the gospel to future generations. We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of our local church, to the care of our members, and to the spread of the gospel locally and to all nations.

We will, if 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 teaching 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.

ARTICLE VI Church Government

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose the membership of the church. However, as stated in the LBC (Chapter 26), the day to day government of this church will be vested in the two offices of Elder and Deacon as recognized by congregational vote and as described in this Constitution. Although the Elders and Deacons have authority and responsibility to govern the daily life of the congregation, the congregation retains final authority to discipline or to remove the officers if necessary and if proper procedure is followed (Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Timothy 5:19-20).

This congregation is a sovereign and independent Church of Jesus Christ which may join in voluntary association with other churches or associations upon recommendation of the Elders and upon two-thirds majority confirmation vote of the congregation. Withdrawals from such associations may be affected by the same procedure. Insofar as is practical, and in recognition of its historical connections and past commitments, associations with churches of like faith may be pursued by the above procedure. However, no association may infringe upon the independent status and voluntary cooperation of this church.

ARTICLE VII Church Membership

The New Testament illustrates and teaches that professing Christians are to be baptized and committed to a local church for worship, ministry, edification, discipline, and evangelism. While we recognize that the true spiritual condition of an individual is infallibly known only to God, we also recognize that the New Testament places upon the local church the responsibility of carefully guarding the admission and exclusion of its members. Therefore, the membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of this church and the conditions of such membership.

We believe that the New Testament teaches that a church is a congregation of persons who, by a good profession of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, give evidence of having been regenerated (born again) by the power of the Holy Spirit; and who have been Scripturally baptized as believers by immersion in obedience to the command of Jesus Christ.

Section 1: Requirements for Membership

Any person who professes repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptized by immersion as a believer (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38), and who expresses substantial agreement with the doctrines, aims, and government of this church, shall be eligible for membership (Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:3-6; Philippians 2:1-2). Because of the New Testament emphasis upon regenerate church membership, we believe the following constitute the fruit of a true work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration:

- 1) A contrite heart. Contrition is described in the Scriptures as godly sorrow for sins. Psalm 34:18; 51:17; Isaiah 66:2; 2 Corinthians 7:10.
- 2) Repentance toward God. Repentance is a change of mind toward God on account of sin. Ezekiel 18:31; Hosea 14:2; Joel 2:12; Acts 3:19; 8:22; 17:30.
- 3) Evidence of conversion. Conversion is a turning from sin (the dominion of it) and a turning to God to walk in His way of holiness. Psalm 51:12; Matthew 18:3; Luke 22:32; Acts 3:19.
- 4) Faith in Jesus Christ as Lord. Faith is totally relying upon the person and work of Jesus Christ for salvation. The evidence of this saving faith is a submissive spirit to live henceforward by loving Him and keeping His commandments. John 14:15; Matthew 28:20; Jeremiah 31:32-34.

The Council of Elders will oversee a new members course designed to survey vital areas of life and godliness within the context of the body of Christ at Redeemer Community Church. Every person desiring membership must attend the new members course as well as have read, studied, and given substantial agreement and conscientious commitment to the Statement of Faith, Church Covenant and Constitution of this church. It is expected that each individual should express a wholehearted commitment to support the ministry of this church (Hebrews 10:25-26; 1 John 1:3-7), a willingness to submit to the disciplines (both formative and corrective) of this church (Matthew 18:18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Corinthians 13:2, 10; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 3:10-11), and a willingness to commit themselves to the "Expected Conduct of Members" as stated in Article VII of this Constitution. All church members shall be received by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders, corroborated by a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation:

A. By a credible profession of faith - Any unbaptized person who meets the above mentioned requirements shall apply for membership to the Elders. The Elders shall then fix a time and place for meeting with the applicant, who shall attend and be questioned as to his or her basic Christian experience, substantial commitment to our doctrinal beliefs, and seriousness of intention to wholeheartedly support the total ministry of this church. This person will be admitted to the church upon their baptism (Acts 2:38-42).

B. By transfer of membership - Any person desiring to unite with this church, upon promise of a letter of recommendation from another evangelical church, shall be examined by the Council of Elders concerning his or her Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs, and seriousness of intention to wholeheartedly support the ministry of this church (Philemon). All such discussions and

presentations for membership will be conditional upon receiving a good recommendation from the previous church and the confirmation that they have received a believer's baptism.

C. By statement of faith - Any person who has previously been baptized upon confession of faith in Jesus Christ may be received into membership upon affirmation of the Statement of Faith without the necessity of transfer of Membership. No person may apply for membership if there remains an unreconciled relationship with another church or individuals in that church. The applicant must first demonstrate that they have done all within their power to make peace and move forward with God's blessing. Such cases are at the discretion of the Elders (Matthew 5:23-24).

Section 2: Forms of Membership

A. Regular - All who are received into the membership of the church on the above mentioned conditions shall be considered members in good standing until such status is changed by one of the conditions set forth in Section 4 of this Article. Any change in the status of membership shall be determined by two-thirds majority vote of the Elders, corroborated by two-thirds majority vote of the congregation.

B. Associate - The membership status of homebound, Christian workers, college students, the mentally impaired, and others whose relationship to the church involves special consideration and circumstances, shall be determined in each case by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elders, corroborated by two-thirds majority vote of the congregation. Temporary shepherding oversight may be extended in some cases for one year at a time without the privileges of voting and holding office, such as to students or temporary residents who are members of another evangelical church. Their home church shall be contacted before such shepherding is extended. Once they leave the geographical area, the oversight is dissolved. Such cases will be reviewed annually by the Elders for renewal of temporary oversight.

Section 3: Procedure for Receiving New Members

When the Council of Elders is satisfied that an applicant gives a credible profession of faith and meets the requirements for membership, the Elders may recommend that person for membership by a two-thirds majority vote. After receiving a confirmation vote of two-thirds of the congregation, the right hand of fellowship will be extended to the new member by the officers of the church at a regular worship service.

Section 4: Termination of Membership

A. Dismissal - Letters of dismissal shall be granted by the Elders, in corroboration with the congregation, to members who apply for them, provided they are in good standing and not subject to or under discipline at the time of the application. When such letters have been granted, the relationship to this church shall be considered terminated. Letters of dismissal shall be forwarded and given only to other evangelical churches (Philemon 2).

B. Discipline - It is right and in harmony with the Scriptures for the congregation, upon recommendation of the Elders, to exclude from this fellowship any person who persists in holding false or heretical doctrine; or who obviously and persistently lives a life inconsistent with his Christian profession; or who lives in violation of the law of the land; or who walks disorderly; or any person who persists in disturbing the unity and peace of this church; or who habitually absents himself from the stated meetings of this church without just cause (Matthew 18:15ff; 1 Corinthians 5:1ff; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 11, 15; Romans 16:17; Hebrews 10:23-25).

C. Other - It is understood that members are dismissed by death, by affiliation with another church, or by whereabouts unknown for at least six months (in regards to attendance at worship services). No member may withdraw their membership if they are under any disciplinary action by the congregation or Elders, or if such actions are in process.

ARTICLE VIII

Expected Conduct of Members

Section 1: Means of Grace

All public and private means of grace, such as keeping the Sabbath (Matthew 12:12; 28:20), regular attendance at the services of the church (Hebrews 10:25), daily systematic reading of the Bible, and private and family prayers shall be urged upon our members.

Section 2: Government of the Home

The church expects its members to follow the Scriptures in home government. God requires that godliness in the home have a high priority in every life. The home holds central attention in God's Law and is the object of frequent exhortation in the New Testament. Men are expected to rule their homes with gentleness but firmness. Women must be subject to their husbands in everything as unto the Lord. Parents must train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). This is accomplished by holy example, catechizing, consistent education, and firm discipline (including corporal punishment). Children must reverently obey their parents (Ephesians 6:1). These primary responsibilities, prayerfully executed, will honor the name of Christ in the community and strengthen the cause of Christ in generations to come.

Section 3: Missions and Witnessing

It is the duty of every Christian and of every church of Christ to seek to extend the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Missionary efforts are the natural consequences of regeneration (Psalm 51:10-14). It is the duty of every child of God to witness by life and word. Personal efforts at witnessing for Christ are expected of every member. Beyond this, we are committed to common efforts for sending the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

Section 4: Principles of Giving

We also assert our conviction that Christians are to support the work of the Lord by offerings made to the local church. Proportionate and sacrificial giving, as expressed in the tithe and special offerings, is a distinct and positive command in Scripture affirmed by Jesus Christ (Matthew 23:23; 2 Corinthians 8-9); hence, we pledge ourselves to systematic contribution for the support of this church with a proportion of our income according to the principle in 1 Corinthians 16:2.

Section 5: Christian Liberty

We shall require of each other in our daily walk and conversation loyal obedience to all those moral precepts established in the Word of God (Hebrews 10:24-25); however, where God has not prohibited certain practices in His Word, the Christian has liberty to participate in them. The following principles must always guide the Christian's exercise of liberty:

A. Fear of God - As the servant of Christ, all actions must be motivated by love to God, and all objects must be used for His glory. The freedom with which Christ has set us free is never an excuse for sinful self-indulgence (1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Timothy 4:4; 1 Peter 2:15-16).

B. Love of the brethren - Though no man may dictate to the Christian's conscience, the welfare of fellow saints must always deeply affect his decisions. In a spirit of serving the brethren, he must do that which he judges will edify them and prevent their stumbling. Furthermore, in the love of Christ we must resist any passing of judgment upon one another, knowing it is, "before his own master that he stands or falls" (Galatians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 10:23; 1 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 14).

C. Compassion for the unconverted - Use of liberty must always be regulated by its effect upon sinners, and that behavior chosen which is likely to promote the winning of souls to the glory of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:19-22).

D. Watchfulness over the soul - Though free in conscience to use all of God's creation, carefulness in practice is demanded because of remaining lusts. Where the Christian judges himself weak through lust, he must abstain in order to scripturally persevere (1 Corinthians 6:12; 9:23-27).

Section 6: Support of the Church Leaders

It is the duty of every member to respect the God-appointed officers of the church. The duties of church members toward their Elders, Deacons and other church leaders are as follows:

- 1) To pray for them, that God would open a door of utterance unto them, to unfold the mysteries of the Gospel (Ephesians 6:18-20).
- 2) To obey the Elders in the Lord, in whatsoever they admonish them, according to the word of God (Hebrews 13:17-22; 3 John 3-4).
- 3) To follow their example and footsteps, as far as warranted by the Word (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philemon 3:17; Hebrews 13:7).
- 4) To stand by them, in all their trials and afflictions, and to defend them in all good causes, as far as in them lies. In 2 Timothy 1:5 those of Asia are blamed for turning away or not standing by the Apostle.
- 5) To faithfully hold the officers to the biblical standard of a life and ministry "above reproach" (1 Timothy 3:2). Let it be done according to the principles of Matthew 18:15-21, 1 Timothy 5:19-20, and Galatians 6:1 with soberness and charity for the sake of the Gospel.

Section 7: Congregational Voting

Recognition of church officers by way of nomination and voting are responsibilities of voting members. Also, the exercise of exclusion by vote is the responsibility of the congregation. All members in good standing 18 years old and above may vote.

ARTICLE IX Church Discipline

Section 1: Formative Discipline

Formative discipline is the teaching of God's Word, the example of Christian living, and the mutual ministry of the members of the body of Christ. It has as its objective the instruction of disciples, the transformation of their lives, and their edification in love (Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 12:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4-27). Formative discipline has a sanctifying influence. Every member should be satisfied with his/her God-given ministry, and thus we shall all grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 4:7-12). Formative discipline utilizes the gifts of each church member, whether old or young, for the edification of all. Each who has been redeemed by Christ should live for Him and His church and not for him/herself. Therefore formative discipline is indicative of the self-supporting nature of Christ's body.

As members of this church we recognize our obligation to honor, serve, worship, praise and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ in all that we say and do (1 Corinthians 10:31). Jesus Christ is the head of the church and, therefore, its Lord and Lawgiver (Ephesians 1:22; Isaiah 33:22); and those who truly love Him will endeavor to keep His commandments (John 14:15). In His Holy Word our Lord has entreated believers to perform certain duties one toward another. Some of these duties are:

- 1) To love one toward another without offense or hypocrisy (John 13:34-35; Romans 12:9-10; 13:8-10).
- 2) To labor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3).

- 3) To endeavor for the edification and spiritual benefit of the whole body, that they all may grow up to be a holy temple in and for the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26; Ephesians 2:21-22; 4:12,29).
- 4) To look out for the best interests of others (Philemon 2:3-4).
- 5) To pray with and for one another (James 5:16).
- 6) Not to neglect the assembling of themselves together, for the celebrating of divine worship, and so promote one another's spiritual benefit (Hebrews 10:25; Acts 2:42).
- 7) To unanimously contend for the faith and truth once for all delivered to the saints, in the purity thereof, according to the Holy Scripture (Psalm 93:5; Zechariah 14:2; 1 Corinthians 14:33-40; 11:2; Jude 3).
- 8) In the case of doctrinal difference or unresolved disagreements in the church, it is the responsibility of the member to seek counsel and advice from the Elders before leaving the church in a disorderly manner. Such issues may be resolved because of misunderstandings and such disorderly leaving creates more misunderstandings.

The above duties, when faithfully performed by all, will have a positive, formative effect upon the whole assembly along with the blessing of the Spirit of Christ.

Section 2: Corrective Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties stated within this constitution or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition and calls for repentance have failed. In addition, for the sake of protecting the body against heresy or disorderly life, the church may enact corrective discipline according to the Apostolic instruction of 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 and Titus 3:10.

- 1) Church discipline can include admonition by the Elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).
- 2) The purpose of corrective discipline is for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22).
- 3) In regards to the body of Christ, the purposes of corrective discipline include:
 - a. The instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25).
 - b. The purity of the church as a whole (1 Corinthians 5:6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2).
 - c. The good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10).

- d. The glory of God by reflecting His holy character (Deuteronomy 39 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 40; 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17, 25; Romans 2:4-24; 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12).
- 4) Expelling or excommunication from the fellowship of the body will be enacted when restoration is not secured by the process of Matthew 18 or when the sinful actions are so publically scandalous that they require immediate expulsion. By a majority vote of the Elders, the case of the offending person shall be recommended to the congregation at a duly called meeting of voting members. The charges shall be presented in appropriate and sufficient detail with care that no person may be emboldened to similar sin and that the offender may not be harmed by failure to appreciate the gravity of his offense. Afterward the Elders shall charge the congregation as to their biblical responsibility to the offending member and make disciplinary recommendation. The offending party will be sent in writing a copy of the charges and recommendations of the Elders. After two weeks, if there is no clear indication of repentance according to the biblical standard, the congregation will reconvene to vote on the recommendation given them. The congregation shall have the right to excommunicate a member by two-thirds majority vote of the members present.
- 5) Corrective discipline other than expelling or excommunication shall be the responsibility of the Elders.
- 6) It is the duty and joy of the church to forgive and restore to membership those persons who give clear biblical evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6-8; 7:6-13; Matthew 18:18-19). Therefore, the object of the discipline having been accomplished and with the recommendation of the Elders the congregation shall have the right to restore an excommunicated person by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present and voting at a duly called Congregational meeting.

Article X Meetings

Section 1: Worship Meetings

Worship meetings shall be held each Lord's day, and additional meetings may be held as determined by the Elders. Corporate Worship Services are to be an overflow of the individual, personal worship of the congregation, and members are encouraged to come prepared to enter the Lord's presence.

Section 2: Members' Meetings

There shall be regular Member's Meetings at least once per quarter at a time apart from public worship. These meetings will be announced at last two weeks prior. One of these meetings, to be held in the fourth quarter of each calendar year, will be known as the Annual Congregation Meeting. In addition, special meetings may be held as deemed necessary by the Elders with notice to the membership of at least two (2) days. The Elders shall see that meetings are held regularly, and that reports are made available to the membership at large. A designated Elder shall preside as moderator. A quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by the members present. Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution, a vote is deemed successful by majority support of the congregation.

At any time, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, as long as all constitutional considerations have been met. An annual budget shall be approved by the membership at the Annual Congregation Meeting. Prior to this, at the Elders discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

A Special Member's Meeting may be called by ten percent (10%) of the voting membership submitting such a request to the Elders in writing. The Elders will then announce the date, time, and place at all

public services of the church within two weeks of the scheduled meeting, and the Special Meeting shall be held within one month of the receipt of the written request.

Article XI Leadership and Organization

Section 1: Summary

The New Testament recognizes two offices in the Church of Jesus Christ, Elder and Deacon. Each takes its primary function from the person and work of their Lord as Shepherd and Servant. In obedience to Apostolic instruction these offices shall be occupied by men only. However, the Deacons may select women to assist them in attending physical need as circumstances may require, only let these women, “likewise be dignified, not slanders, but sober-minded, faithful in all things” (1 Timothy 3:11). Finally, to assist these officers and to insure that everything be done in order and above reproach for the sake of testimony, Redeemer Community Church recognizes the administrative positions under this Constitution of Clerk and Treasurer. All officers must be members and in good standing in the Church for at least one year prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2: Elders

The Council of Elders shall consist of all of this church’s duly elected vocational and non-vocational Elders. Within the Council of Elders, parity and mutual respect of each Elder’s authority will be practiced so that the Council of Elders speaks with plural unity to the congregation. However, within the plurality and parity of the Council of Elders, it must be recognized that Elders possess differing levels of spiritual maturity and proficiency of pastoral gifts. Therefore, it is the prerogative of the congregation to further recognize Elders who rule well and/or who labor in preaching and teaching with financial support (1 Timothy 5:17). Vocational Pastors shall receive an appropriate monetary remuneration by the congregation as is fitting for those who live of the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:1-12). Such remuneration shall be for the purpose of enabling the pastor to work hard at preaching, teaching and shepherding the flock of God, over which Christ has made him overseer. No such action on the part of the church is intended to make him a hireling, but rather to strengthen him as God’s freeman for the glory of the Church and the furthering of the gospel.

- 1. Responsibilities** - The Council of Elders shall be responsible for the general oversight of the church’s affairs, including but not limited to pulpit supply, all other teaching, financial decisions, oversight of the Board of Deacons, the health of the membership, all discipline matters, and all other power and duties which properly belong to the sole governing body of an independent church, but at all times shall be subject to a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation at a duly called Members’ Meeting unless otherwise stated. Unless otherwise stated in this Constitution, all decisions of the Council of Elders shall be made by consensus.
- 2. Administration of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper** - As it is the responsibility of Elders to examine and approve candidates for baptism and church membership (Articles V and VI), it is therefore the responsibility of the Elders to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper on behalf of the Church. The Lord’s Supper shall be observed at least once per month during regular worship meetings and its administration may be overseen by any of the Elders of the church.

The Elders shall have complete oversight over the administration and careful “fencing” of the Lord’s Supper, according to the Statement of Faith. Christian liberty in the matters of food and drink has application to the relationship between believers at all times and places (Romans 14:20-21; 1 Corinthians 10:31-32). This is especially true at the Lord’s Supper, the supreme symbol of Christian unity (1 Corinthians 10:14-17, 23-24, 31-33). While recognizing with the LBC, that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper with the elements of the Passover (unleavened bread and mixed wine), it must also be noted that the New Testament seems to allow some degree of liberty in the choice of the elements while maintaining the type and symbolic nature of them. Therefore, the Elders of this church shall exercise wisdom and liberty in accordance

with the above principles in the selection and administration of the elements of the Lord's Supper for our worship.

3. **Additional Functions** - The Council of Elders may also establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities as they may deem necessary for the well-being of the church. These positions or committees would be under the authority of the Elders and may not receive remuneration without a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation. Elders shall strive to care for the flock through faithful leadership, spiritual development and protection from doctrinal error as Paul exhorted the Elders of Ephesus in Acts 20:22-35.
4. **Selection of Non-Vocational Elders** - Elder candidates must meet the biblical qualifications for Elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9), as well as ascribe to the LBC and the Constitution of this church. All nominees for the office of Elder must be recommended by the congregation with the nominee's consent. When there is a prospective candidate for the office of Elder, the Council of Elders shall guide that person in his studies and preparation. It shall then call a council of Elders and brethren to examine the qualifications of the candidate. It shall look into the soundness of his conversion, the godliness of his walk, the soundness of his doctrine, the degree of his gifts, the extent of his training, and the blessing of God upon his labors for Christ.

If the council heartily recommends that the candidate be ordained to the office of Elder, the candidate shall be presented to the members for prayer and consideration, and each Elder shall be chosen by vote of an 80% majority. Unless the Elder becomes biblically disqualified by sinful behavior thereby coming under the discipline of the church, the office shall be for life. Sabbaticals are optional and may be requested for up to one year in length at such time the Elder may return to the council of Elders by a majority vote of the Council.

5. **Selection of Vocational Pastors** - Vocational Pastors are the ordained Elders of the church who in response to God's call, have devoted their vocational lives to the ministry of the Word and prayer in the service of the church of Christ. Vocational Pastors are supported financially by the church in return for their vocational labors.
 - a. **Duties** - In addition to the duties of their office as Elders as described in this Article, Vocational Pastors shall perform the duties determined by the Council of Elders and approved by the congregation. The duties shall be in writing at the time of the call to service, and substantial changes shall be approved by the church. The church's call of a Vocational Pastor is a call to the Eldership of the church. Therefore Vocational Pastors shall be members of the Council of Elders and have all the Biblical qualifications of an Elder.
 - b. **Vocational Call by the Church** - The members shall call Vocational Pastors by ballot upon recommendation of the Council of Elders and by at least a two-thirds majority of those members voting at the meeting with at least fifty percent (50%) of the membership of the Church present. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on the next two successive Sundays preceding the meeting. Written notice shall also be given by mail and/or email to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting.

6. Termination of Elders by the Church

- a) By resignation - The question of terminating the vocational call of a Vocational Pastor shall be considered at any time by the church upon the presentation of the Pastor's resignation.
- b) Grievance - Where a grievance exists against an Elder, either due to his preaching or teaching contrary to the beliefs of the Church as set forth in Article III of this

Constitution or to alleged conduct on his part unfitting an Elder, such grievance may be brought before the Council of Elders by any two members in good standing. If the Council, after thorough investigation and consideration, believes the grievance to be true and substantial, thereby concluding that the Elder is no longer “above reproach”, then the Elder may be removed from office at any duly called Members’ Meeting upon the recommendation of the Council of Elders when supported by closed ballot of a two-thirds majority of those members of the Church present and voting with at least fifty percent (50%) of the membership of the church present at such meeting. Oral notice of any such meeting, stating its object, shall be given from the pulpit on two successive Sundays next preceding the meeting. Written notice shall also be given by mail and/or email to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting. The grieving Elder in question shall be excused from all voting outlined above.

Section 3: Deacons

The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Deacons. Deacon candidates must meet the biblical qualifications for Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-7), as well as ascribe to the LBC and the Constitution of this church. All nominees must be recommended by the congregation, with the nominee’s consent, and nominations shall be presented to the Elders in writing at least one month prior to a duly called Members’ Meeting. A list of the Deacon candidates will be presented to the members for prayer and consideration, and each Deacon shall be chosen by vote of an 80% majority. Each Deacon shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of three years. Unless the Deacon becomes biblically disqualified by sinful behavior thereby coming under the discipline of the church, the Deacon shall serve the length of his term. After a Deacon has served two consecutive three-year terms, he shall not be eligible for re-election to the Board of Deacons for at least one year.

Deacons shall advise and assist the Elders in any service that shall support and promote the ministry of the word, new and existing ministries of the church, and the care of the members of the congregation. The Deacons may be organized in the most fitting way to accomplish the mission of the church. Thus the ministry of Deacons may involve several diaconal committees. All Deacons are expected to be present at regularly scheduled meetings of the Deacon body.

The responsibilities of Deacons do not include preaching, teaching, or spiritual oversight, which are the responsibilities of the Elders, or financial control of the church. Although they may teach and preach in contexts in which they are not infringing upon the oversight duties of Elders (Acts 6-7:53; Titus 2:3), the responsibilities of Deacons include the following:

- 1) Deacons shall attend to the benevolence ministries of the church. They shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the Elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only.
- 2) Deacons shall attend to the accommodations for public worship. Deacons may assist in providing for the elements during the Lord's Supper.
- 3) Deacons shall attend to the normal care and maintenance of church properties.
- 4) Deacons shall attend to the welcoming and greeting ministries of the church.
- 5) At the Elders’ recommendation, the church may recognize Deacons to serve in other specific capacities as needs arise in the church or ministry opportunities are presented.
- 6) Deacons may employ the assistance of church members to help them fulfill these responsibilities, when and if needed.

Section 4: Licensing and Ordination

A. Ministers of the Gospel - It is our hope that spirit-filled men will be called out from among us to proclaim the Gospel of the Grace of God. The church will commission such men by giving a license to those whose ministries will be limited in scope or time, or by ordination to the ministry for missionaries, military chaplains, and church planters.

When there is a prospective candidate for ordination to the ministry, the Council of Elders shall guide that person in his studies and preparation. It shall then call a council of Elders and brethren to examine the qualifications of the candidate. It shall look into the soundness of his conversion, the godliness of his walk, the soundness of his doctrine, the degree of his gifts, the extent of his training, and the blessing of God upon his labors for Christ.

If the council heartily recommends that the candidate be ordained, the church may give the recommended commission by a three-fourths majority of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting.

The Council of Elders, under the principles set forth in Article VIII of this Constitution, shall have the power to discipline, even to the revocation of this church's ordination, license, or appointment to office.

B. Installation of Elders - In a regular worship service of the church, the Council of Elders shall question newly elected Elders as follows:

- 1) Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and do you accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- 2) Have you personally adopted and will you cheerfully submit to and defend the LBC, Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, Constitution, and biblical authorities of this church?
- 3) Do you accept the Office of Elder willingly and joyfully, and do you promise to perform its duties of caring for the flock of God in the fear of His name?

Then the hands of the existing Elders shall be placed on the new Elders and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey those whom God has placed over them.

C. Installation of Deacons - In a regular worship service of the church, an Elder shall question newly elected Deacons as follows:

- 1) Do you believe the Scriptures as written in the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and do you accept them as the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- 2) Have you personally adopted and will you cheerfully submit to and defend the LBC, Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, Constitution, and biblical authorities of this church?
- 3) Do you accept the Office of Deacon willingly and joyfully, and do you promise to care for the poor and needy without partiality or prejudice and to manage the business of this church in the fear of God?

Then the hands of the Elders shall be placed on the new Deacons and prayer offered in their behalf. Following this, the people shall be exhorted to esteem and obey those whom God has placed over them.

Section 5: Clerk

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the Elders, Deacons, or the church.

The Elders shall appoint a member to the office of church Clerk. In the absence or incapacity of the Clerk, the Elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church Clerk.

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of North Carolina, the Clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

The church Clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this Constitution shall be available for all church members.

Section 6: Treasurer

The Treasurer, who shall not be an active Elder or a paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as designated by the church. The Treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The Treasurer shall render to the Elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at regular members' meeting.

The duties of the Treasurer are to:

- 1) Ensure that no expenditure exceeds its annual item allocation without approval of the Elders;
- 2) Minister closely with the Deacons to ensure timely dispensing of benevolence funds when required for various needs of the body;
- 3) Oversee the counting and banking of all funds collected by the church;
- 4) Oversee the maintaining of an accurate accounting of funds received and dispensed by the church;
- 5) Report the financial position of the church at the Annual Congregation Meeting
- 6) Submit a preliminary budget for the next year to the Elders;
- 7) Make available to the Elders and Deacons a monthly, written financial statement; and
- 8) Recommend to the Elders policies and practices relating to financial management that are not explicitly covered by this Constitution and By-Laws.

Article XII Finances

In order to be above reproach before God and one another as stewards of all the Lord has entrusted to Redeemer Community Church, it is important to establish proper financial accountability (1 Timothy 6:9-10; 1 Corinthians 16:3-4). To ensure this, the Deacons will exercise oversight of all financial matters of the church, under Elder authority (see Article X, Section 2, Part A). To support this responsibility, a Treasurer (Article X, Section 6) shall be proposed by the Elders and elected by the church under the provision for elections to account for all Redeemer Community Church finances.

Section 1: Collections

After each service in which collections are received, the Treasurer, or his designee, and one other person (preferably a Deacon) shall count the receipts and sign a register recording the amount. The Treasurer is

responsible to ensure the deposit of any collections and to keep accurate records of each individual's or family's giving, if known.

Section 2: Payments

All payments or reimbursements must be approved by an Elder who is not directly involved with the transaction. Benevolence payments must be approved by the Deacons prior to actual distribution.

Section 3: Designated Giving

Designated gifts shall be permitted to be contributed only to the fund accounts established by the Elders, having received approval by the congregation and thereby identified in the Redeemer Community Church chart of accounts. Disbursement of funds from fund accounts shall be in accordance with the purpose of the fund account and under the supervision and full control of the Elders.

Section 4: Monthly Procedures

A monthly church expense and budget report will be prepared by the Treasurer to be presented to the Elders and Deacons. Each employed staff member of Redeemer Community Church who requires expense reimbursement will submit an expense reimbursement report for review by the Treasurer. The monthly expense and budget report shall be available for review by any church member on request. However, confidentiality of individual or family giving will be maintained.

Section 5: Annual Procedures

The Treasurer shall draft a new calendar year budget and submit it to the Council of Elders. The Elders shall seek input from the Deacons and other members of the church, if necessary. The Elders shall present the budget to the entire church for approval at the Annual Congregation Meeting. The annual budget is to be made available to the church for review for at least two weeks prior to its approval by the congregation at the Annual Congregation Meeting. The budget shall be approved by a 50% majority of the members present at the Annual Congregation Meeting. Whenever the Council of Elders must make significant budget adjustments (affecting five per cent or more of the total annual budget), these will be presented to the church for approval prior to formal adoption. The Elders may appoint an appropriate individual to review the year's financial records and report findings back to the Council of Elders.

Section 6: Salary Compensation

Salaries to be paid to Redeemer Community Church staff shall be recommended to the Elders by an ad hoc committee consisting of the Treasurer, Chairman of the Deacons, a non-vocational Elder and one other member of the congregation appointed by the Council of Elders. The committee's recommendation shall follow the same procedure for approval as the annual budget. Any person receiving compensation from the church shall not be in a position to approve the amount of the salary prior to the congregational vote.

No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the Elders.

The Deacons shall reorganize at its first meeting following each annual congregational meeting. A Chairman, Vice-chairman and Secretary shall be elected to serve for one year or until their successors are elected.

Article XIII Biblical Counseling

All Christians struggle with sin and the effect it has on our lives and our relationships (Romans 3:23; 7:7-25). Whenever a Christian is unable to overcome sinful attitudes or behaviors through private efforts, God desires that he seek assistance from other members, and especially from the Elders who

have the responsibility of providing pastoral counseling and oversight (Romans 15:14; Galatians 6:1-2; Colossians 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:15-26; 2 Timothy 3:16-5:2; Hebrews 10:24-25; 13:17; James 5:16). Therefore, this church encourages and enjoins its members to make confession to and seek counsel from each other and especially from pastoral and lay counselors.

Section 1: Principles of Counseling

All counseling at Redeemer Community Church shall be based on scriptural principles rather than those of secular psychology or psychiatry. Neither the pastoral nor the lay counselors of this church are trained or licensed as psychotherapists or mental health professionals, nor should they be expected to follow the methods of such specialists. The pastoral and lay counselors of Redeemer Community Church seek to apply biblical principles to all aspects of life. If a member or regular attendee of Redeemer Community Church seeks help in legal, financial, medical, or other technical questions, the counselor will apply scripture to the matter to the best of his ability. The pastoral or lay counselor shall seek to cooperate with professional advisors and help the counselee consider their advice in the light of relevant scriptural principles.

Section 2: Confidentiality in Counseling

Confidentiality is to be respected as much as possible; however there are times when it is appropriate to reveal certain information to others. In particular, when the pastoral and lay counselors of this church believe it is biblically necessary, they may disclose confidential information to appropriate people. Typical circumstances include:

- 1) When a counselor is uncertain how to address a problem and needs to seek advice from another pastor or counselor.
- 2) When there is concern that someone may be harmed unless others intervene.
- 3) When abuse or another crime must be reported to the authorities.
- 4) When a person refuses to renounce a particular sin and it becomes necessary to seek the assistance of others in the church to encourage repentance and reconciliation or to begin the process of church discipline (Proverbs 15:22, 24:11; Matthew 18:15-20).
- 5) When observers sit in on counseling sessions to assist the counselor or for training purposes (including audio & video recordings).
- 6) When the counselee's pastor, staff and/or church leadership is needed to provide pastoral assistance (when the counselee is not a member of the counselor's church).

Article XIV Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the Christian Church (see, e.g., Matthew 18:15-20, 1 Corinthians 6:1-8), the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

Article XV Amendments

The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by three-quarters majority vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church

services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote. The revised version of this Constitution shall be made available to all church members by the Clerk.

Article XVI 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 costs 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.

Section 3: Procedure

If a quorum of the Elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of Elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the majority vote of the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

Article XVII Non-Profit Status and Dissolution

Redeemer Community Church is a religious organization and is not organized for profit. In the event of the dissolution of Redeemer Community Church by the Council of Elders, no member, officer of the church, or private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any assets. Upon dissolution, assets of the church shall first be used to pay any outstanding debts. Following this, the remaining assets of the corporation shall be given to a non-profit corporation of like faith and practice and/or to missionaries supported by the church.

The selection of recipients, as well as the timing of the actual transfers, shall be determined by vote of the Council of Elders with consideration given to recommendations made by the Board of Deacons. Actions required to carry out the dissolution shall be performed by the Board of Deacons, who shall seek out legal assistance to complete the process.