

# **PIPE CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

## **PREAMBLE**

In order that the witness of this Church may be born and carried out in accordance with Scriptural doctrines, that its worship, teachings, ministry, and fellowship may be conducted in harmony with Christian principles, and that its business affairs may be administered in an orderly fashion and in a responsible manner consistent with biblical teachings, we do adopt and set forth this constitution and its accompanying bylaws.

## **ARTICLE I - NAME**

This organization shall be known as Pipe Creek Community Church.

## **ARTICLE II - PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Church is to glorify God and manifest His character to our community by:

1. Worshiping the Triune God through Jesus Christ.
2. Building individual members to full maturity in Christ.
3. Emphasizing an "every member ministry" based on individual spiritual gifts.
4. Building strong family relationships with the foundation of biblical standards.
5. Training our children, by our God-given rights, in the grace and law of Jesus Christ.
6. Ministering to one another's physical and spiritual needs through fellowship among those in the Body of Christ, His.
7. Bringing non-believers to faith in Christ, both locally and worldwide.
8. Glorifying God by demonstrating the love of Christ to the community.

## **ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The sole basis of our belief is the Bible, God's infallible written Word. We believe that it was uniquely, verbally, and fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that it was written without error in the original manuscripts. It is the supreme and final authority in all matters on which it speaks.

We explicitly affirm our belief in basic Bible teachings, as follows:

1. There is one true God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each of whom possess equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality.

2. Jesus Christ is God, the Living Word, who became flesh through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and His virgin birth. Hence, He is perfect deity and true humanity united in one person forever.
3. He lived a sinless life on earth and voluntarily atoned for the sins of men by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone.
4. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which He lived and died.
5. He ascended bodily into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own.
6. Mankind was originally created in the image of God. But Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God and alienated themselves from their Creator. That historic fall brought all people under divine condemnation.
7. Man's nature is corrupted, and he is, therefore, totally unable to please God without regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.
8. The Salvation of man is wholly a work of God's free grace and is not the work, in whole or in part, of human works, goodness, or religious ceremony. God imputes His righteousness to those who put their faith in Christ alone for their salvation, and thereby justifies them in His sight.
9. It is the privilege of all who are born again by the Spirit to be assured of their salvation from the very moment in which they trust Christ as their Savior. This assurance is not based on any kind of human merit, but is produced by the witness of the Holy Spirit, who confirms in the believer the testimony of God in His written Word.
10. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and to apply the saving work of Christ to men. He convicts and draws sinners to Christ, imparts new life to them, continually indwells them from the moment of Spiritual birth, and seals them until the day of redemption. His fullness, power, and control are appropriated in the believer's life by faith.
11. Every believer is called to live so in the power of the indwelling Spirit that he will not fulfill the lust of the flesh but will bear fruit to the glory of God.
12. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, His body, which is composed of all men, living and dead, who have been joined to Him through saving faith.
13. God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly for worship, for participation in ordinances, for edification through the Scriptures, and for mutual encouragement.
14. At physical death, the believer enters immediately into eternal conscious fellowship with the Lord.

15. At physical death, the unbeliever enters immediately into eternal conscious separation from the Lord.
16. 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; At this time, the dead will be resurrected with their bodies, the believer to eternal joy with the Lord, and the unbeliever to condemnation and endless, conscious suffering.
17. The Lord Jesus commanded all believers to proclaim the Gospel throughout the whole world and to disciple men of every nation. The fulfillment of the Great Commission requires that all selfish ambitions be subordinated to a total commitment to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.
18. There exists a personal spirit of Evil, Satan, our adversary, who, with great power, carries on organized opposition to the Kingdom of God and seeks the demise of man; he will suffer ultimate and total defeat at the hands of Jesus Christ.

We accept these large areas of doctrinal teaching on which, historically, there has been general agreement among all true Christians. We desire to allow for freedom of conviction on either doctrinal matters, provided that any interpretation is based upon the Bible alone, and that no such interpretation shall become an issue that hinders the ministry to which God has called us.

#### **ARTICLE IV - GOVERNMENT**

The government of this Church shall be under the Lordship of Christ and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit as exercised through a Board of Elders comprised of those whom the Lord has gifted to rule as Elders. The Elders will be assisted in this capacity by Deacons, various officers, committees, and staff as set forth in the bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP**

Membership in Pipe Creek Community Church shall be the means whereby the individual confesses his faith in Jesus Christ, commits himself to this body of believers by accepting the responsibilities which the Scriptures teach and rest upon him as a member of Christ's body, and entrusts himself to its spiritual care and counsel. Any individual who makes a genuine profession of faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord and accepts our Articles of Faith, may under the procedures outlined in the bylaws, become a member of Pipe Creek Community Church.

#### **ARTICLE VI - COVENANT OF DISCIPLESHIP**

##### **Section A - Introduction**

The revelation of our God as demonstrated by His love for us requires a response on our part. A part of this response in the Scriptures was often exemplified in the making of covenants to one another. For this reason, we have included a covenant commitment to this local body of believers who are to serve as our brothers and sisters and bear the responsibility for our growth in grace and in the knowledge of our God as Savior. Through this commitment, we acknowledge our desire to grow in obedience to God. We are to be concerned for both the physical and spiritual well-being of each other (Genesis 4:9) and are to encourage one another daily so that we do not turn away from the Savior (Hebrews 3:13). Since we bear a responsibility for each other before the Lord, we are to stimulate one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24) and are to acknowledge our need for one another.

## **Section B - Basis for the Covenant**

The basis upon which we are able to make a covenant with each other as members of Pipe Creek Community Church is as follows:

1. We believe that the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, is the Word of God and, thus, the final authority in our lives;
2. We believe that, because of our sinfulness, we need a Savior and that we, therefore, cannot trust in our own works, but must trust in Jesus Christ alone and in the sufficiency of His works;
3. We acknowledge Jesus Christ as the sovereign Lord of our lives and believe that, by His grace, we can serve Him and turn from whatever displeases Him to a life that is pleasing to God; and
4. We believe that this congregation of God's people will help us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our God and Savior, and are willing to submit to the authority of the spiritual leadership of this congregation as those who uphold its Constitution, who care for our Spiritual well-being, and who must give an account to the Lord on the last day.

## **Section C - Commitments of the Covenant**

Upon this basis, therefore, we covenant together as members of Pipe Creek Community Church to lead lives worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him.

We promise, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to worship the Triune God in spirit and in truth, privately in our families and together as the Body of Christ, and to obey God in every area of our lives as an expression of our worship of Him.

We also promise to exhibit a Christ-like character in our individual lives, in our families, in the Church, and in every area where we have influence, as a witness to the world of the reality of the living God, to exhibit a Christ-like care and watchfulness over each other by faithfully encouraging, exhorting, and admonishing one another that each of us may grow in our obedience to and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ in all areas of our life, to demonstrate our love for the Lord and our loyalty to one another by warning and rebuking another brother who may be overtaken in a fault or sin according to the steps in Matthew 18:14-17, to employ each and every member's gifts to the furtherance of the Church's purity, worship, and building up of the Body of Christ, and to train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We further promise to give of our time, talent and means in the measure that God has prospered us so that we might share with those in need, first within the Body of Christ, and then in the community and throughout the world, as a witness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to commit ourselves to the proclamation of the Gospel throughout the world.

Being mindful of our own weaknesses and insufficiency, and knowing that of ourselves we can do nothing, we humbly implore God's help and guidance in our solemn endeavor to fulfill this Covenant.

## **ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS**

All changes shall be guided by a desire to reflect biblical attitudes and principles.

This Constitution may be amended at a regularly scheduled or special Business Meeting of the Church provided:

1. That notice of the proposed amendment, written in full, has been mailed or otherwise provided individually to all Elders, Deacons, and the Pastor at least two weeks prior to the meeting;
2. That notice of the proposed business has been printed in the Church Bulletin or announced from the pulpit in the Sunday Morning Worship Service on at least two Sundays prior to the meeting;
3. That the affirmative vote for an amendment shall not be less than three-quarters of the votes cast by the members present, and
4. That the Board of Elders, in unity, endorses the expressed desire of the membership.

### **ARTICLE VIII - OTHER**

Pipe Creek Community Church is organized exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

No part of the net earnings of Pipe Creek Community Church shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its members, trustees, directors, officers or other private persons, except that Pipe Creek Community Church shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of Section 501(c)(3) purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Pipe Creek Community Church shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

The term for which this organization is to exist is perpetual, except that upon dissolution of Pipe Creek Community Church, the Board of Trustees shall:

1. Pay or make provisions for the payment of all the liabilities of Pipe Creek Community Church;
2. Dispose of all the assets of Pipe Creek Community Church exclusively for the purposes of the Church; and
3. Dispose of the Church's assets in such a manner, or to organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes, as

at the time shall qualify as an exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas, as said Court shall determine, to organizations that are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.