

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

PRESTONSBURG, KY

We declare and establish this constitution and by-laws for the preservation and security of the principle of our Faith and to the Glory of God, and so that this body may be governed in an orderly manner. This document will preserve the liberties of each member of CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH and the freedom of action in her relation to other churches.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE ONE: NAME

This body shall be known as CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH of 171 Abbott Creek Road, Prestonsburg, Floyd County, Kentucky, 41653.

ARTICLE TWO: OBJECTIVES

The mission of Christ Community Baptist Church is to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) in making disciples of all nations by declaring the gospel, displaying the gospel, and defending the gospel to the glory of God.

The vision of Christ Community Baptist Church has been the vision of the church from the very beginning. As those redeemed by the blood of Christ, our vision is to bring God glory in all we do. The primary way we glorify God is by gathering together as a church to read the Word from the Scriptures, hear the Word through preaching, sing the Word through hymns, and see the Word through the ordinances.

ARTICLE THREE: What We Believe

Our Confession of Faith

We embrace that orthodox, historic, and confessional faith handed down by our Reformation, Puritan, and Baptist forefathers. The confessional standard of our church is the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith.

Abstract of Principles

An excellent summary of the 1689 Confession's teaching is set forth in the following statement of faith, the Abstract of Principles, which was adopted in 1858 as the statement of faith for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. All who desire to join CCBC in membership will be required to affirm this statement and will be responsible for believing and living in accordance with it.

The Scriptures

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by inspiration of God, and are the only sufficient, certain and authoritative rule of all saving knowledge, faith and obedience.

God

There is but one God, the Maker, Preserver and Ruler of all things, having in and of himself, all perfections, and being infinite in them all; and to Him all creatures owe the highest love, reverence and obedience.

The Trinity

God is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence or being.

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 author or approver of sin nor to destroy the free will and responsibility of intelligent creatures.

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.

The Fall of Man

God originally created man in His own image, and free from sin; but, through the temptation of Satan, he transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and wholly opposed to God and His law, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

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, suffered and died upon the cross for the salvation of sinners. He was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended to His Father, at whose hand He ever liveth to make intercession for His people. He is the only Mediator, the Prophet, Priest and King of the Church, and Sovereign of the Universe.

Regeneration

Regeneration is a change of heart, wrought by the Holy Spirit, who quickeneth 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.

Repentance

Repentance is an evangelical grace, wherein a person being, by the Holy Spirit, made sensible of the manifold evil of his sin, humbleth himself for it, with godly sorrow, detestation of it, and self-abhorrence, with a purpose and endeavor to walk before God so as to please Him in all things.

Faith

Saving faith is the belief, on God's authority, of whatsoever is revealed in His Word concerning Christ; accepting and resting upon Him alone for justification and eternal life. It is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, and is accompanied by all other saving graces, and leads to a life of holiness.

Justification

Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal of sinners, who believe in Christ, from all sin, through the satisfaction that Christ has made; not for anything wrought in them or done by them; but on account of the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, they receiving and resting on Him and His righteousness by faith.

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 saints seek to obtain, pressing after a heavenly life in cordial obedience to all Christ's commands.

Perseverance of the Saints

Those whom God hath 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; and though they may fall, through neglect and temptation, into sin, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the Church, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be renewed again unto repentance, and be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

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 particular societies or churches; and to each of these churches he hath given needful authority for administering that order, discipline and worship which he hath appointed. The regular officers of a Church are Bishops, or Elders, and Deacons.

Baptism

Baptism is an ordinance of the Lord Jesus, obligatory upon every believer, wherein he 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 fellowship, and to participation in the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is an ordinance of Jesus Christ, to be administered with the elements of bread and wine, 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, to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a bond, pledge and renewal of their communion with him, and of their church fellowship.

The Lord's Day

The Lord's Day is a Christian institution for regular observance, and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, resting from worldly employments and amusements, works of necessity and mercy only excepted.

Liberty of Conscience

God alone is Lord of the conscience; and He hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to His word, or not contained in it. Civil magistrates being ordained of God, subjection in all lawful things commanded by them ought to be yielded by us in the Lord, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

The Resurrection

The bodies of men after death return to dust, but their spirits return immediately to God — the righteous to rest with Him; the wicked to be reserved under darkness to the judgment. At the last day, the bodies of all the dead, both just and unjust, will be raised.

The Judgement

God has appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by Jesus Christ, when every one shall receive according to his deeds; the wicked shall go into everlasting punishment; the righteous, into everlasting life.

ARTICLE FOUR: CHURCH COVENANT

Having, as we trust, been brought by divine grace to repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and to, by His Spirit, give ourselves up 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 God's gracious aid, solemnly and joyfully covenant with each other as one body in Christ to:

Commit to walking together in Christian love, exercising affectionate hospitality, care, and watchfulness over each other even if that means humbly and graciously warning, rebuking, and admonishing one another as the occasion may require (John 13:34-35; Hebrews 3:12-14).

Commit to the ministry of attendance, understanding that our regular attendance at worship services encourages the faith of our fellow church members and expresses our own devotion to Christ as the Lord of our lives (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Commit to honoring the Lord in our home, workplace, and community by living a life worthy of the gospel both in conduct and speech (Philippians 1:27).

Commit to cheerfully contribute regularly to the financial support of this local church for the expenses of gospel ministry and relief of the poor (Proverbs 3:9-10; Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Corinthians 9:23; 2 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Timothy 6:17-19).

Commit to maintaining the unity within this local church by affirming our doctrinal standard and pursuing relational peace among the congregation (Ephesians 4:3).

Commit to having a heart for the spiritually lost and to share the good news of what Jesus Christ has done for sinners when opportunities arise (Romans 1:16; 1 Peter 3:15).

ARTICLE FIVE: GOVERNMENT AND AFFILIATION

The government of this church is in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership.

All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable only to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

This church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support other like-minded Baptist churches.

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE SIX: PARLIAMENTARY RULES

Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, is the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all business meetings of the church.

ARTICLE SEVEN: MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this church shall consist of those who have confessed Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, completed the membership three-step process (Membership Matters Classes, Membership Meeting, and Congregational Affirmation) and have followed God in biblical baptism, which is by immersion only.

SECTION 1: ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

Any person may offer himself/herself as a candidate for membership into this church. All such candidates shall be presented to the church in the regular church service for membership in the following order:

Attend all membership classes

Attend membership meeting

A pastor will learn biographical information in this meeting, listen to the testimony of God's converting work in the life of the prospective member, confirm the prospective member has a biblical understanding of the gospel, and establish a plan to be baptized if they have not already.

Congregational Affirmation

The majority vote of members present must be taken for admission into membership.

If the prospective member is affirmed, he/she will read the church covenant before the congregation.

If a prospective member is voted against from joining the membership of CCBC, a six (6) month period of investigating the concerns of the church will proceed where the prospective member can pursue reconciliation regarding stated concerns, attend Lord's Day services faithfully, and display to the church a life that is in step with the Holy Spirit. After the six (6) month period the prospective member will be able to approach the congregation for an affirmative vote into membership.

SECTION 2: DUTIES AND RIGHTS OF MEMBERS

Duties and rights as outlined in church covenant.

SECTION 3: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

By death.

Being led to another church.

By request of said member.

By not participating in the life of the church for at least 6 months. If a member has been absent from gathering with the church for at least 6 months, a hand-written letter will be sent to the member by a pastor at the midway point seeking to restore the member to active attendance.

Terminated in accordance with Section 4.

SECTION 4: DISCIPLINE

It shall be the practice of this church to emphasize to the members that every reasonable measure will be taken to assist in any trouble. The elders, other members of the staff and deacons are available for counsel and guidance. The attitude of members toward one another shall be guided by a concern for redemptive action rather than punishment.

Should some serious condition exist which would cause a member to become a liability to the general welfare of the church, the elders will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. If it becomes necessary for the church to take action to exclude a member, an eighty percent (80%) vote of the members present is required for exclusion; and the church may proceed to declare the person to be void of Christian character and lifestyle.

The church may restore to membership any person previously excluded upon request of the excluded person and by vote of the church upon evidence of the excluded person's repentance and reformation.

ARTICLE EIGHT: MEETINGS/GATHERINGS

SECTION 1: CHURCH MEETINGS WORSHIP

1. Regular worship services for the entire body and for all people who attend shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday) and at such times are agreeable with the church.
2. Special services for evangelism and Bible study shall be held as the church may be led by the Holy Spirit.

SECTION 2: BUSINESS MEETINGS

Every three (3) months the church shall hold regular business meetings by the elders for budget, ministry, and business updates. If and when a situation arises, the business meeting may be postponed until another date by announcement of the elders, or in case the church is without elders present, or in the case of being without elders, by announcement of the acting moderator.

Special business meetings can be called by the elders or acting moderator after announcement at one prior regular service of the church to consider matters needing immediate attention.

All business meetings having to do with the employment of professional personnel, with the sale, conveying, mortgaging or otherwise disposing of any, or all property of the church, must be announced from the pulpit on two Sunday mornings at the regular hour of services, next preceding the regular called business meeting. These matters of business must receive at least eighty percent (80%) of the votes of the members present and voting at such meetings, for approval.

A business meeting is not required for the elders to spend up to \$200.00 of church funds for ministry purposes. The purchases must be reported to the treasurer and recorded.

SECTION 3: QUORUM

The quorum shall be made up of at least fifty percent (50%) of members of the church over the age of 18 years old.

SECTION 4: VOTING

Each member shall be entitled to one vote. A simple majority of the membership in attendance and voting will govern on any item called to a vote before the corporate body unless otherwise designated in the Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE NINE: CHURCH MINISTRIES & MISSIONS

SECTION 1: CHURCH MINISTRIES

The church shall strive to maintain programs of Bible teaching, church member training, church leadership training, new member classes, action and support, and education and performance. All organizations related to the church program shall be under church control, all officers being elected by the church and reporting regularly to the church, and all program activities subject to church coordination and approval. The church shall provide the human resources, the physical resources and the financial resources for the appropriate advancement of these programs.

Membership - CCBC believes membership matters because the Bible points us toward membership for our encouragement, protection, and our instruction (Acts 1:15; 2:41, 44-47; 4:4; 5:11-13). We seek to carry out this vision

through the following three-step process by which an individual becomes a member of Christ Community Baptist Church: Membership Classes, Member Meeting, and Congregational Affirmation.

ARTICLE TEN: CHURCH OFFICERS

The officers of this church, CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH, shall be elder(s), deacons, and other leaders as needed. All of these offices shall be elected by the church and shall be in good standing. Other officers of the church, including the heads of various teaching, training, and missionary organizations shall be elected annually by the church upon recommendation of the elder(s) unless otherwise indicated. A church officer that is not an elder or deacon is in a temporary office position that can be maintained or removed at the elders discretion.

SECTION 1: PASTOR/ELDER

CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH believes in a plurality of elders/pastors (Gk. presbuteros). CCBC elders/pastors are men who, by the grace of God, meet the biblical qualifications for being an elder in Scripture. They are men who recognize they are under-shepherds to the Chief Shepherd Jesus, and willfully and joyfully shepherd God's people entrusted to them until Christ returns. Elders at CCBC are responsible for pastoring the church in teaching the Word, prayer, and oversight. Elders serve in leading the local church through preaching, teaching, prayer, and ministerial oversight.

The elders at CCBC must align in cheerful confession of the doctrinal standard of Christ Community Baptist Church which is the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689) and the Baptist Faith & Message.

There shall always be at least one elder at CCBC. Additional elders shall be appointed by the elder(s) already present at CCBC (a majority vote) and membership (at least 80% vote).

If an elder is to be removed at CCBC, an eighty percent (80%) affirmative vote of members present (must be at least 80% membership gathered) and a majority vote of the elders at CCBC are needed. At least thirty (30) days notice shall be given of termination of the relationship unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by both the elder(s) and membership seeking to follow the will of the Lord and the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

The call of the elder shall take place at a meeting especially for that purpose; which meeting shall have been announced to the congregation at least two weeks in advance. The election shall be upon the recommendation of the elders, who seek other elder-qualified men to lead, love, and shepherd the flock of God at CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH in faithfulness to the gospel.

Elders can be paid a salary mutually agreeable to him and the church. It shall be reviewed yearly or sooner if the need arises. Pastoral pay will depend upon an elder vote (at least 50%) and membership vote (at least 80%) of those present at a business meeting.

Elders are permitted to be out of the pulpit (conferences/vacations/speaking engagements) as long as a two week notice is given for another elder to prepare for the sermon and Lord's Day service. A notice of absence is not required if the absence is due to sudden illness or emergency.

Supply - The church shall pay for a supply speaker if another elder is not preaching. It is the elders responsibility to see that the pulpit is filled every Lord's Day.

Elders are to regularly and generously support the ministry of Christ Community Baptist Church financially, setting the standard of giving to the rest of the congregation.

The wife of an elder - a pastor's wife is to be faithful in her character and actions. She is to be thoughtful in her appearance and manner, making her worthy of the respect of all people. She is to guard her speech so as to never utter maliciously false statements and charges which would damage the reputation and character of another person. She is expected to promote unity in the church and to wisely consider the possible consequences of any actions. She is to support her husband in light of the office to which he has been called (1 Timothy 3:11).

In good faith, the following should be observed by the elder and church prior to public announcement:

When an elder resigns he is requested to give to the church his reasons for resigning. This should be in writing and will be read to the congregation at a members meeting.

If an elder is asked to resign, he should be told the reasons for this request. This should be presented to him and the church in writing.

SECTION 2: DEACONS

CHRIST COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH, according to the New Testament, believes in the ministry aid of deacons (Gk. diakonos). Deacons are servant-oriented men who assist the elders in fulfilling ministries of the church. Deacons also serve alongside women in the congregation who assist them in ministries of the church (Romans 16:1; 1 Timothy 3:11). Deacons help ensure practical matters of church life are met to help free the pastors to devote themselves to the spiritual needs of the congregation such as teaching, praying, and oversight. Deacons at CCBC will serve under the oversight of the elders as they serve under Christ. Deacons lead in serving the local church.

The deacons at CCBC must align in cheerful confession of the doctrinal standard at Christ Community Baptist Church which is the Second London Baptist Confession of Faith (1689) and the Baptist Faith & Message.

The deacons shall meet as often as necessary, in times mutually agreed, in order that their duties might be carried out in an orderly manner.

A deacon is expected to be a regular in attendance, attending all regular services of the church, and is to participate in the activities of the church. No man shall be considered for ordination or election to the deaconship who has not previously proven himself faithful to the church and her doctrines and covenant and is an example of a Christian in his home, business and social relationships.

A deacon, who for any reason feels that he cannot faithfully fulfill the qualifications and duties of an active deacon, may resign by notifying the elders of the church for acceptance of that resignation.

Each deacon shall be free to confer with the elders about all matters and cases of discipline which in their judgment would be most wisely and spiritually handled privately.

Deacons are not a dictatorial board; along with the elders they serve the congregation as they serve under Christ. Deacons have no governing authority over the elders.

Deacons too are expected to regularly and generously support the ministry of Christ Community Baptist Church financially.

The wife of a deacon - a deacon's wife is to be faithful in her character and actions. She is to be thoughtful in her appearance and manner, making her worthy of the respect of all people. She is to guard her speech so as to never utter maliciously false statements and charges which would damage the reputation and character of another person. She is expected to promote unity in the church and to wisely consider the possible consequences of any actions. She is to support her husband in light of the office to which he has been called (1 Timothy 3:11).

Deacons are expected to undergo training for the specific duties and roles in which they have been called to serve.

Number & election:

Number - There shall be at least one (1) deacon active.

Election - The election of deacons will be lasting appointments, as the call to be a deacon is a lifelong calling by God; similar to that of an elder. Deacons are elected with a fifty percent (50%) elder vote and a eighty percent (80%) membership vote of at least 50 percent (50%) members gathered. Likewise, the same percentage vote of elders and congregation is necessary for removal of a deacon if the deacon fails to meet assigned duties, resists church discipline, or desires to take a season where he is not actively serving due to illness, travel, or other personal reasons.

SECTION 4: TREASURER

The treasurer shall be elected by the church every three years; recurring terms can be approved pending church membership vote of at least eighty percent (80%) of at least fifty percent (50%) members gathered.

The treasurer shall count all funds received through all channels. The treasurer verifies and confirms that the funds are correct for deposit immediately at a bank of the church's choice.

The treasurer shall make all payments of all accounts of the church and shall disburse by check all money consistent with the budget of the church. Any exceptions will be made upon authority of the church.

The treasurer shall make a detailed financial statement quarterly of all obligations incurred, purchases made of all receipts at the business meetings. The treasurer shall be present at the business meeting.

The church may elect a financial assistant treasurer.

The treasurer shall consider it a part of his/her responsibility to promote, in every proper way, Scriptural giving on the part of the entire membership of the church.

SECTION 6: FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

The financial assistant to the treasurer may be elected by the church every three years; recurring terms can be approved pending church membership vote of at least eighty percent (80%) of at least fifty percent (50%) members gathered.

He/She shall receive the empty collection of envelopes after the money has been removed for deposit.

He/She shall count all money in cooperation with the treasurer to verify the deposit to be made.

He/She shall, along with the treasurer, keep a record for each individual contributor as provided.

SECTION 7: MODERATOR

An elder shall serve as moderator, and if an elder is not available, a deacon shall also serve as moderator in the absence of an elder for said meeting.

ARTICLE ELEVEN: CHURCH COMMITTEES

This church shall elect regular and special committees as the church deems necessary to carry out her mission and programs. All committees, except an elder committee, can be maintained or removed at the discretion of the elders.

SECTION 1: ELDER COMMITTEE

In case of a pastoral vacancy where there are no active elders serving Christ Community Baptist Church, the appointed deacon(s) at CCBC shall become the committee to search for a suitable pastor to present before the church for approval. If there is only one deacon currently at CCBC during this time, the deacon will prayerfully appoint two (2) other faithful members to assist in the prayerful discernment of identifying and appointing the next pastor of Christ Community Baptist Church.

The committee, if desired, shall consult the partnering local Baptist network in affiliation with the Kentucky Baptist Convention for suitable pastoral candidates.

The committee shall take steps necessary to secure an elder. They shall investigate the merits of every man under consideration in regard to his personal character, ministerial record, doctrinal beliefs, financial condition and preaching ability in determining his fitness for this pastorate position. Any prospect should be given a copy of the church Constitution and By-Laws. When a suitable candidate is found, the committee shall recommend him to the church at a special gathering announced at least two weeks prior.

The members present (at least 80% gathered) must pass an eighty percent (80%) vote in favor of the candidate for the church to move forward in hiring the candidate as an elder.

The committee shall work as a group and present all facts concerning the church to a prospective lead teaching elder. They shall know from the church precisely what obligations the church is willing to meet. They shall report progress to the church.

No two members from the same immediate family shall serve on this committee.

ARTICLE TWELVE: CHURCH ORDINANCES

SECTION 1: BAPTISM

This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus by personal faith, who professes Christ publicly at any worship service and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.

Baptism shall be by immersion in water.

An elder, alongside whoever the eldership shall authorize, shall administer the baptism.

Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service in the church.

Any person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by an elder. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the individual who has not been baptized yet professes Christ, he/she shall be removed as one awaiting baptism.

SECTION 2: THE LORD'S SUPPER

The church shall observe the Lord's Supper weekly. The elders/pastors shall administer the Lord's Supper, with the help of deacons if necessary. In the absence of elders, the deacons will authorize and serve the said ordinance.