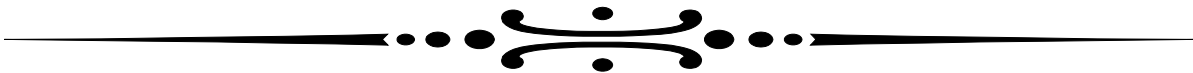


Christ Church Tri- Cities

Constitution and Statement of Faith



Revised A.D. 2023

Preamble

Whereas we, the elders and members of Christ Church Tri-Cities, Washington, a local congregation of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, desire to cultivate a vibrant church community which welcomes all ardent followers of Jesus Christ, and

Whereas we desire to encourage a broad fellowship of serious students of the Word of God who recognize that our unity in prayer and in the Spirit is a potent force against Satan and his devices, and

Whereas to achieve these ends we recognize that we live together with saints who hold different understandings of this or that portion of Scripture,

We do therefore acknowledge and hold to both the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1647 and the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 and do welcome any believer into our fellowship who may hold to either of these confessions, and

We do also establish the following articles, to which we freely submit ourselves.

Article I — Name and Association

Section 1 - Name: The name of this church is Christ Church Tri-Cities.

Section 2 - Association: Christ Church Tri-Cities is a member of the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches (CREC). The CREC is focused on building communities of believers that begin each week with God-honoring worship and then joyfully extend that worship into every day of the week through our families, our friendships and our vocations. We appreciate the CREC for being faithful to the great Reformed confessions of faith while allowing for differences of belief and practice within those broad boundaries and under the authority of Scripture. We hereby adopt

the Constitution of the CREC, as that Constitution requires.

Article II — Purpose

The purpose of the church is to glorify God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—by worshiping Him in spirit and truth,¹ declaring the whole counsel of God as revealed in His Word,² observing the sacraments established by our Lord for His Church,³ doing the good works for which we were created in Christ Jesus,⁴ and proclaiming the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.⁵

Article III — Declaration of Faith

Although the Holy Scripture is the only infallible and ultimately authoritative rule of faith and life, we also hold to the following creeds and confessional statements under the authority of Scripture: The Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Definition of Chalcedon; and the Westminster Confession of Faith and the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689. We recognize that there are differences between our two Confessions, and we may take exception to some points in them (though for the most part they are very much alike); however, they are still a most excellent summary of what the Scriptures teach, and are useful tools for instructing believers and refuting error.

Section 1 — Our Creeds:

The Apostles' Creed (2nd century)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hades. On the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of

1 John 4:23

2 Acts 20:24-27

3 Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26

4 Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:14; 3:8

5 1 Corinthians 1:23-24

God the Father Almighty; from thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Nicene Creed (A.D. 325/381)

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the Prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church; acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Definition of Chalcedon (A.D. 451)

Following, then, the holy fathers, we unite in teaching all men to confess the one and same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This selfsame one is perfect both in deity and in humanity; truly God and truly man, with a rational soul and a body; consubstantial with the Father according to His deity, and consubstantial with us according to the humanity; like us in all respects, sin only excepted. Before the ages He was begotten of the Father, according to the deity, and in these last days, for us and for our salvation, He was born of Mary the virgin, who is Godbearer according to His humanity; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord,

only begotten, to be acknowledge in two natures; without confusing them, without interchanging them, without dividing them, and without separating them; the distinction of natures by no means taken away by the union, but the properties of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one subsistence; not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, as from the beginning the prophets have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the symbol of the fathers has handed down to us.

Section 2 – Summary Statement: What We Believe

No historic confession or creed can be expected to address all contemporary issues; however, the paragraphs that follow are intended to be both a summary of and an addendum to that fuller expression of what we believe.

We believe that the Bible, and it alone, is the inspired, infallible, and authoritative Word of God.

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He is omnipotent; that is, He is all-powerful. He is omnipresent; that is, He is present throughout all Creation but not limited by it. He is omniscient; that is, nothing is hidden from His sight. The God we serve is holy, righteous, good, severe, loving, and full of mercy. He is the Creator, Sustainer, and Governor of everything that exists.

We believe in the true deity and full humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that He came down from heaven and was born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, worked miracles, died a vicarious death by which He atoned for sin through His shed blood, rose again bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father forever reigning over all. He now intercedes for us, His people, and will return personally in power and glory to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the full deity of the Holy Spirit, acknowledging Him together with the Father and the Son in the works of creation, redemption, and providence.

We believe that because of Adam's sin, all mankind is dead in sin, is in rebellion against God, and breaks His Law. For the salvation of such lost and sinful people, rebirth by the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary.

We believe that salvation is by God's grace through faith in Christ alone, and that faith without works is dead.

We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whom Christians are baptized into the Church, and by whose indwelling we are transformed and empowered to live a godly life.

We believe that the Son of God, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, a Church chosen to everlasting life out of all the nations, in the unity of the true faith; and of this Church we are and forever will be living members. Therefore, God calls us to be joined to a local church belonging to that greater body.

We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost. Those who have done good will rise to everlasting life, and those who have done evil, to everlasting damnation. And so we who belong to Christ will live forever with Him.

Article IV – Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications: Membership in Christ Church Tri-Cities is designated by households⁶ and is a mutually binding covenant between the church and its members. A household may be accepted into membership after the representative head of household asserts the following on behalf of his or her household

⁶ Acts 16:30-31

and demonstrates the truth of these claims to the elders' satisfaction:

A. They heartily believe the statement of Christian faith found in Article III, have been baptized (or in the case of a household holding to believers' baptism, the adults and those children who have professed faith have been baptized), and are committed to the maintenance of a holy fellowship and participation in the worship of God as set forth in our constitution.

B. They are not presently walking in unrepentant sin or heresy.

C. They are willing to submit to the rule of Christ in all things. This willingness includes subjection to the moral law of God in all of life,⁷ submission to one another⁷ in the bonds of Christ's church,⁸ and submission to the church leadership.⁹

D. They wish to be formally recognized as members of Christ Church Tri-Cities and united to the congregation by their public vows expressed at a regular worship service of the church.

Section 2 - Mutual Responsibilities: Membership in the church conveys these mutual responsibilities in the body life of the church:

A. Participation in the Lord's Day worship of the church, and in such special meetings or activities as it may be possible to attend when they are held.¹⁰

B. Mutual love, prayer, help, hospitality, service, accountability and counsel within the church fellowship, according to each member's gifts and graces.¹¹

7 Exodus 20; Book of Deuteronomy; Matthew 5-7

8 Ephesians 5:21

9 Hebrews 13:7, 17; Galatians 3:21; James 1:21-25; Matthew 5:17-19

10 Hebrews 10:23-25; Acts 2:42-47

11 2 Timothy 2:22; Romans 15:14; James 5:16; Matthew 5:21-24; Galatians 6:1-3, 10; 1 Corinthians 12:7; Ephesians 4:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:11, 14; 1 John 1:3; 3:17-18

C. Contributing to the well-being of the church both locally and abroad with material gifts, tithes, and offerings, as the Lord provides.¹²

Section 3 - Informal Membership: The local church is a visible and geographical manifestation of Christ's Body on earth. Therefore, we believe that all baptized Christians, inasmuch as they are members of the Body of Christ, should be members of local churches in their own geographical area. Non-members who attend Christ Church Tri-Cities regularly for six months will be regarded as informal members of the church, at the discretion of the elders, and will be placed under the elders' authority and pastoral care. Informal members will normally not be involved in leadership or teaching roles in the church, but the elders may make exceptions to this general rule on a case-by-case basis. The elders will continue to encourage those recognized as informal members to come into formal membership in the church by taking membership vows.

Section 4 - Congregational Meetings: The elders shall periodically call Congregational Meetings for the purpose of directing the affairs of the church and as a formal channel through which the elders and deacons may instruct the flock and receive input and advice from the heads of member households.

A. Protocol for a Congregational Meeting

1. Attendance: Household members, which includes husbands and wives, independent men, and independent women, are expected to attend congregational meetings if possible. These are open meetings unless otherwise announced. (Compare Article IV, Section 2B on the responsibilities of church membership.)

2. Visitors: Visitors and friends of Christ Church Tri-Cities are welcome to attend open sessions of our Congregational Meetings when the following requirements are met: A current member of the church will notify the elders prior to the meeting on the

¹² 1 Corinthians 9:14; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 9:6-11; Hebrews 13:7

visitors' behalf; and at the opening of each meeting, visitors will be recognized and welcomed and instructed as to the protocol and agenda of the meeting. (However, they will not be allowed to speak at the meeting unless they are requested to do so by the elders).

B. Procedures for Congregational Meeting

When the elders and deacons desire advice from the households of the church, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Set the issue or proposal before the households at a stated Congregational Meeting.
2. Open up for general discussion led by an elder.
3. Call for an advisory vote either by show of hands, by voice vote, or by ballot, at the discretion of the elders.
4. A household consisting of a husband and wife, each get one vote, and single independent men and women each get one vote.

Article V – Government

In accordance with the teaching of the New Testament, there are two offices in the church, elder and deacon. Those who serve in either capacity must be and continue in agreement with the Confession of Faith found in Article III.

Section 1 - Elders: In the New Testament a church was provided with a plurality of elders. The elders are also called pastors, bishops (overseers), and teachers. As such they are particularly charged with the spiritual oversight and instruction of the entire congregation, and are thus worthy of special honor (Acts 20; 1 Tim. 5:17).

A. Qualifications and Responsibilities: The qualifications for the office are laid down in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus). The office imposes on its holder a special responsibility for the spiritual life of the congregation. It is part of the duty of elders to teach the people, both publicly and privately,

to exhort them to love and good works, to pray for them, and to rule over them in the Spiritual sense (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-4).

B. Duties: The elders shall exercise God-ordained and scripturally-based authority over the worship of the congregation, the musical service, the times and places of religious services, the uses to which the church properties shall be put, the financial affairs of the church, and the apportionment of offerings. These and any other administrative responsibilities for the life and work of the church shall be carried on subject to the fundamental authority of the Holy Scriptures, and with due respect to the individual liberty of conscience of each believer in the church. The elders may from time to time delegate administrative responsibilities in respect to the financial and temporal affairs of the church to the deacons, subject always to the authority and direction of the elders.

C. Accountability: The accountability of the elders is essential and Scriptural. It is the duty and privilege of the congregation to hold the leadership accountable to the rule of Scripture and to follow the Scriptural mandate of correcting an elder that is prescribed in 1 Timothy 5:17-20. (See Art. 6, sec. 3 on discipline.) Serious sin shall be grounds for divesting an elder of his office. In keeping with the Levitical principle, an elder of advanced years or of limited physical capacity may be retired from active service by recommendation of the other elders. An elder also may resign for reasons sufficient to himself.

D. Recognition and Ordination: God gives men gifts for and calls them to the office of elder. Three things must be evident to become an elder serving this congregation: 1) There must be a calling and desire on the man's life and if so, he must make this desire know to the elders. 2) He must be graced with the character stated as prerequisite in 1-2 Timothy and Titus. 3) He must be recognized and duly tested by the congregation and elders. Those men who have been duly tested and desire such an office should be set before the congregation for a period of two weeks, giving the opportunity to state any concerns regarding

their qualifications.

An elder shall be set apart at an ordination service if he has not been previously ordained. For this occasion it is fitting that elders of sister churches should be invited to assist the church in the conduct of the examination and in the service of ordination.

E. Meetings: The elders shall hold stated monthly meetings. Special meetings may be convened by any two elders. A majority of the elders shall constitute a quorum. All decisions which entail the direct oversight and direction of the local body shall be made by unanimous consent. Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. A legible and accurate record of the proceedings shall be kept as well as a list of members, of deaths and removals of church members, and of marriages and baptisms.

F. Closed Sessions: A closed session will be required from time to time when dealing with sensitive issues, e.g. the process of church discipline. At such times, only Elders or Deacons of the church's session may be present

Section 2 - Deacons

A. Qualifications: The qualifications for deacons are the same as those for elders, both in personal character and spiritual qualities (1 Timothy 3:8-13). This list may be expanded to include those qualifications mentioned in Acts 6:2-4. Equal emphasis must be placed on the spiritual and temporal nature of this office.

B. Ministry: Deacons are to minister in their roles as part of the body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8; Ephesians 4:16). God has primarily given them the duty of serving as spiritual helpers to the elders, taking the oversight of the temporal affairs of the worship service and responding to the needs of the body.

C. Accountability: Accountability of the deacon is essential and scriptural. Serious sin shall be grounds for divesting a deacon of his office. In keeping with the Levitical principle, a deacon of advanced years or of limited physical capacity may be retired from active service. A deacon also may resign for reasons sufficient to himself.

D. Ordination: The ordination of the deacon will be based on the church's recognition and appreciation of their particular gifts. In the event that a qualified man is recognized by the congregation, such a man may be suggested to the elders for the office of deacon. Newly appointed deacons shall be formally placed into this office by the laying on of the hands of the elders in the presence of the gathered assembly.

Article VI — Practice

Section 1 - Family: In order for the church to govern itself well, families within the church must govern themselves well, and likewise, individuals within each family must become self-governing. Unless there is an altar in the family (a place of sincere and meaningful worship) (see Art. 6, sec. 3B), there never will be a true altar in the church. A godly church will in turn become a blessing to the society and to the nation.

A. Marriage: Marriage is ordained by God in which two parties (male and female) enter into covenant with God, and this covenant is not to be broken. God hates divorce. Divorce and remarriage must be regulated biblically, not culturally. (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:1-12; Malachi 2:16; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16).

B. Husbands: Husbands are responsible to function as the head to their wives and families (Ephesians 5:23), to love their wives as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25), and to raise God-fearing children, who are not exasperated by the behavior of their fathers.

C. Wives: Wives are responsible to submit to their husband's

God-given authority, serving her husband and children and managing her home in an orderly fashion (Ephesians 5:21-24; Titus 2:4-5; Proverbs 31).

D. Parents: Parents are responsible to educate their children with the Scriptures, giving them a world and life view that is uniquely Christian (Deuteronomy 6:1-6). The children born (or adopted) into our families are born unto God. Our children are the “heritage of the Lord.” We as parents are His stewards (Psalm 127:3). As Christian parents, it is our Biblical responsibility before God to make proper provision for the godly development and maturity of the physical, intellectual, and spiritual life of our children (Ephesians 6:4). Our commission from God is to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” and to “train them up in His ways” (Proverbs 22:6). Careful consideration must be given to the virtues of Christian character and to the knowledge of Christian self-government (2 Peter 1:3-8; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm 127:5). Further, it is our goal to raise up our children to be men and women who are God-fearing, Christ-honoring, and Bible-loving (2 Timothy 2:15).

E. Children: Children must obey and honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1-3; Deuteronomy 6:1-6). Our children must be taught a clear Biblical worldview involving Christian principles, duties and interests, demonstrating a life that is good to their family, their church, their neighbor, their community, and the glory of Christ (Ezra 7:10). The church endorses the principles of Christian education at all levels, and the elders shall encourage Christian parents in their Scriptural duty of providing a thoroughly Christian education for their children.

F. Broken Families: Like those which are intact, broken families are to govern themselves according to the Scriptures. The remaining spouse will be recognized as the family head, and the remaining children must honor and obey. Realizing the difficulty of raising a family alone, the church must respond graciously and sacrificially toward the single parent and his or her children, as they endeavor to obey God.

G. Singles: Unmarried individuals and widows are free to marry or remain as they are. Several factors should influence their decision: age, gifts, self-control, current crisis, and personal devotion to the Lord for the sake of His Kingdom (Matthew 19:10-12; 1 Corinthians 7; 1 Timothy 5:11-15). Older widows who are really in need, left all alone, and who meet the Scriptural criteria, must be helped financially by the church (1 Timothy 5:1-16). The church must remember that “we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” We must be devoted to one another, no matter what place in life the Lord has assigned each.

Section 2 - Worship: According to the Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 21, Art. 1, “There is a God who has Lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might” (Deuteronomy 6:1-4; Ephesians 5:21; John 4:23-24; Exodus 20:1-2; Romans 12:1-2). The services of the assembly are specifically intended to be times of worship and edification. The worship of God is the primary purpose of the gathered assembly. The church’s worship is expressed in the following ways:

A. Corporate: Special care shall be taken to provide for such exposition of the Word of God, the administration of the sacraments, and such ordering of the services as shall contribute, under the blessing of God, to this end. Special care must be given to follow, in conviction and conscience, the form of worship that best reflects the teaching of Scripture and elicits a sincere response on the part of the worshippers. Ephesians 5:19 is our guide for Spirit-filled worship. Thus psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs which are doctrinally sound are joyfully received as means to meaningful worship.

B. Family Worship: Due care shall be given to promote a life of daily worship (Joshua 24:15) and a rejection of the modern concept of limiting our expression of worship to the church

service only. Each family is encouraged to study, pray and sing together at home, where the seeds of deep conviction and godly character are sown (Deuteronomy 6:4-8, 20-24). The father is the head of his family in this spiritual office. His accounting on the last day will be in great measure a reflection on his faithfulness to this charge. Therefore, as a church, we are committed to equipping the saints for this high calling. (Matthew 18:6; 1 Timothy 5:8; Ephesians 6:1-4; Genesis 18:19)

C. Fellowship Boundaries: We of Christ Church Tri-Cities recognize that the Body of Christ is immensely larger than any local congregation and that the local church must seek the fellowship and counsel of other churches if it is to fulfill effectively the conditions of its own existence (Romans 12:16; Mark 9:38-41). To this end, association with like-minded churches, whether through conferences of elders, exchange of ministry, conferences of church members and families, or other relationships which do not compromise the independence of the local congregation, is both legitimate and useful for edification and encouragement.

Section 3 - Discipline: Discipline is a necessary, God-ordained part of the life, purity, and growth of the local church. The Scriptures are not silent on this issue, but are the sole guide in administering this function. The Scriptures must be used in determining both the steps to be taken and the boundaries to be observed, in order that neither the abuse of power nor the neglect of responsibility takes place.

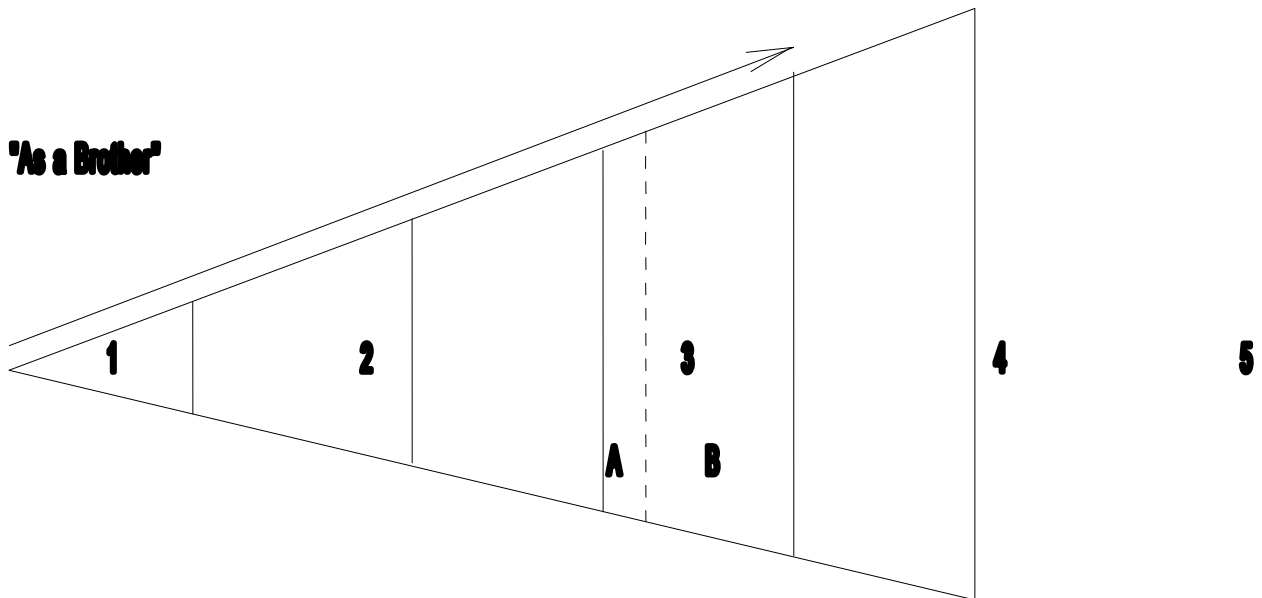
A. The Guiding Principles: Three guiding principles shall be observed:

1. Self-discipline is to be the norm.
2. Church discipline is to be the rule
3. Restoration is to be the goal.

It is the responsibility of the leadership in the church to clearly set forth and govern these objectives.

Corrective Discipline

'As a Gentle or Tax Collector'



1. "self-discipline" 2. "one on one" 3. "two or more brothers" 4. "the whole church" (a. Elders b. Congregation) 5. "put out of the church"

B. Informal: Private offenses are to be dealt with according to the order of Matthew 5:23-26; 18:15-20; Galatians 6:1-3; which could bring them ultimately to the attention of the congregation.

C. Formal: If the church member persists in open defiance of the will of God, it is the responsibility of the elders to recommend to the congregation that he be excommunicated (barred from communion and regarded as a non-member) until he manifests

repentance and seeks to re-unite with the church (1 Corinthians 5:4-5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-10; Matthew 18:17-20). The obligation of the elders to “watch over” the flock involves the responsibility to warn members specifically of the danger of indulged sin when such danger is apparent. The warning must be done gently and with fear (2 Timothy 2:24-25), but it must be done. Scripture clearly commands Christians to obey and submit to their God-given leaders (Hebrews 13:17). The rule of the elders over the church is limited to the principles of Christian life and conduct clearly revealed in Scripture. The elders’ authority is limited to the Scriptures, but within those limits it is a real authority which imposes a solemn responsibility upon the believer.

Article VII – The Spread of the Gospel

The church shall take an active part in the spreading of the gospel through its gifts, prayers, and witness. The entire life of each believer is to testify to Christ’s salvation and kingship, and the church shall strive to assist all of its members to fulfill their particular responsibilities within the body of Christ. (Matthew 13; 16:17-18; Romans 10:8; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:3-8)

Section 1 - How God is accomplishing His plan: God accomplishes His plan by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5-8; 16:8; Titus 3:3-6), by His powerful Word (1 Peter 1:22-25; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Corinthians 4:6), and by His people as they are obedient, unified, suffering, and sacrificially self-disciplined (Philippians 2:12; John 17:20-23; 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 1 Corinthians 9:19-27).

Section 2 - Where evangelism occurs: Evangelism occurs within the family, the church, and throughout the world (Acts 2:38-39; 1 Corinthians 14:24-25; Matthew 28:18-20).

Section 3 - Hospitality and evangelism: It is the duty of this body to always seek ways of extending its blessings and graces to the society in which it ministers, depending upon God’s means and providence (Romans 12:13; Acts 20:35). Our calling to

hospitality must reach our neighbor, our strangers within our area, and even to our enemies (Exodus 23:9; Matthew 5:43-48). We are to endeavor to live at peace with all men (Romans 12:18).

Article VIII – Ordinances

Christ Church Tri-Cities recognizes two ordinances which our Lord has given for the purpose of the edification of His body, the church (Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:26). These ordinances are to be administered by those alone who are qualified and called to do so, according to the commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:2).

Section 1 -Baptism

A. Baptism is administered under the guidelines and within the bonds of the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 and/or the Westminster Confession of Faith.

B. Administration: In our congregation we acknowledge the differences between paedo- and credo-baptism positions. We affirm that these are not issues for division, but they are both respectfully understood under the broader subject of covenant living, about which we are unified. Each head of household must consider carefully their own convictions.

As credo-baptists, baptism is to be administered by immersion to all those who have made a credible and childlike profession of faith. (While we do not refuse fellowship to one who has been baptized by a different mode, the conviction here is that the Scriptures teach immersion.)

Paedo-baptists' children are brought forth to be baptized, and received as members of the Christian church by believing members of Christ Church Tri-Cities. The promise of regeneration and the need to be born again are embraced as certain realities by God's grace, and a matter of God's faithfulness to His elect people. Their parents are claiming their faith in the promise of God to His people (Deuteronomy 30:6).

In either case, we believe baptism is not nullified by the

mode of application.

C. Qualifications: Anyone who makes a credible confession of faith and is examined by the elders and is either an adult or is a child who is following the discretion of their parents, may and should be baptized. If you are a household of paedo-baptist conviction, then any infant who is a part of a believing family should be brought forth for baptism in obedience to the promise that the gospel is for you and your children (Acts 2:38-39).

Section 2 - Communion

A. Definition: Communion or the Lord's Table symbolizes the body and blood of Christ. It is a reminder to God's people of the new covenant in His blood (1 Corinthians 11:25). It is a real participation in Christ (1 Corinthians 10:14-17), and God blesses faithful participation in the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 10:16-17) and disciplines faithlessness in it (1 Cor 11:30).

B. Administration: The Lord's Supper shall be served to the assembled church at the discretion of the elders.

C. Qualifications: Baptized believers in our fellowship joyfully participate in the Lord's Supper in a worthy manner, giving due consideration to self-examination and self-discipline (1 Corinthians 11:28; 2 Corinthians 13:5). Baptized believers who do not regularly fellowship with us are welcome to participate in the Lord's Supper, provided they are not under church discipline.

The elders consider baptized children to be communicant members of member households, and those children may participate in the Lord's Supper provided they can heed their parents' instruction (Deut. 6:20, 16:14). Families may ask the elders to facilitate a formal profession of faith (public or private) for their children if they believe that is a prerequisite for participation in the Lord's Supper.

Article IX — Financial Responsibilities

Money in itself is good and a blessing from God. We are commanded to be good stewards of our resources, to be generous in our giving, and willing to share with others in need (1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19; James 2:1-12). Ungodly attitudes and consequent undisciplined habits regarding money are sinful and dangerous to the church. The Scriptures identify specific principles for financial responsibilities:

Section 1 - Individual: Christians are commanded to provide for their immediate family and needy relatives (1 Timothy 5:8, 16). They are also to share with those who instruct them in the Word (Galatians 6:6; Philippians 4:14-19). Good stewardship is commended, whereas slothfulness, greediness, and irresponsibility are expressly condemned (Proverbs 15:9; Colossians 3:5; 1 Timothy 5:8).

Section 2 - Church: The church is to provide for those elders who direct the affairs of the church, preach and teach, and do so effectively (1 Timothy 5:17). The church is also responsible to fund its own ministries and to provide for those qualified widows within the body (1 Timothy 5:9-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

Section 3 - Administration: Monies collected to meet the financial obligations of the church will be received at every Lord's Day worship service by means of a collection box or offering basket. The monies will be controlled directly by the elders and deacons, and disbursed at their discretion. "Designated giving," if utilized, will be according to the elders' announcement for specific ministries with objective time frames. Unsolicited designated giving may be returned to the giver, or included in the general fund, by the giver's choice.

At least two elders (or one elder and one deacon) will share collection and disbursement responsibilities for increased accountability. Quarterly reports will be provided through the church. Individualized reports will be provided annually.

Article X – Amendments

These articles may be amended at any time through a unanimous act of the elders, when the following conditions have been first fulfilled:

A. The elders approve a draft of the proposed changes and make a written copy of it available to the congregation at church.

B. After the congregation has had at least two weeks to review the changes, the elders seek due consultation with the households of the church at a congregational meeting.

Revised 2023