

Constitution of Living Water Community Church Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

PREAMBLE

We, the members of Living Water Community Church of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, in order to more effectively carry out the commission given by Jesus Christ to his Church, do ordain and establish the following Constitution and Bylaws to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

This organization is incorporated and shall be known as Living Water Community Church, hereinafter referred to as *the church*.

ARTICLE 2 - PURPOSE

The purpose of Living Water Community Church is to develop a diverse family of fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ who reproduce that devotion in others.

ARTICLE 3 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

1. We believe that the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God, that they are inerrant in the original writings, and that they are the supreme and final authority of all Christian faith and life.
2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21
2. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and holy, eternally existing in three equal yet distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
Genesis 1:1; John 1:1-18; Matthew 28:19
3. We believe that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man in one person and that he eternally exists with the Father. He came to earth having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He led a sinless life and died on the cross as a sacrifice for the sins of all humanity. He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, where he is our Prophet, Priest, and King.
John 1:1-14; Matthew 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 John 2:1-2
4. We believe the Holy Spirit is fully God. The work of the Holy Spirit is to make evident the active and personal presence of God in the world and especially in the Church. The Holy Spirit glorifies God, convicts individuals of sin, cleanses believers from sin, seals, indwells, guides, comforts, instructs, unifies, and empowers believers for godly living and service.
Matthew 28:19; John 15:26; John 16:7-15; Romans 15:19; Ephesians 1:13

5. We believe that all humanity, as descendents of Adam and Eve, are created in the image of God. Adam and Eve willfully and voluntarily chose to sin by disobeying God. As a result of their disobedience, as well as our own, all humanity is now inherently sinful, lost and completely separated from God. It is only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit and faith in the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ that salvation and spiritual life can be obtained.

Genesis 1:27; Genesis 3; John 3:3; Romans 5:12; Romans 10:9-13; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:1-7

6. We believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ and his resurrection provide the only grounds for justification and salvation for all who believe. All who confess Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior are justified solely by his work on the cross and are saved only by grace through faith in him, not by any human merit or works.

John 3:16; Romans 5:1,8-9; Ephesians 2:8-9

7. We believe that the Lord's Supper and Believer's Baptism are ordinances to be observed by the Church. They are, however, not to be regarded as a means of salvation.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Matthew 28:19-20

8. We believe that the true Church, of which Christ is the Head, is composed of all persons who have been justified by God's grace through a saving faith in Jesus Christ alone. Only those who are members of the true Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church.

1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:1-6; Romans 12:4-8

9. We believe that the purpose of the Church is to worship God, to nurture believers, and to evangelize the world by actively demonstrating God's mercy, grace, and truth.

Colossians 3:16; Colossians 1:28; Ephesians 1:4-6; Luke 6:35-36; Matthew 28:18-20

10. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church and it is each local church's responsibility under Christ to decide, govern and be held accountable for its affairs in accordance with the teachings of Scripture.

Ephesians 1:22-23; Titus 1:5-9; James 3:1

11. We believe Christ will personally return to the earth in bodily and visible form and that his imminent return will be sudden.

Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 2 Peter 3:10

12. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the dead and a final judgment of both believers and unbelievers at which Jesus Christ will be judge. After this final judgment, believers will enjoy everlasting life in the presence of God, while unbelievers will be subjected to everlasting conscious punishment in hell.

Romans 2:5,16; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-46

ARTICLE 4 – MEMBERSHIP

This church may add to its membership any person who is at least sixteen (16) years of age, who confesses – with assurance of salvation – personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and whose character, conduct and reputation are maturing in accord with such confession.

Each member must subscribe to the Statement of Faith (Article 3), the Constitution, and the Bylaws of the church. Additionally, each member must have successfully completed a membership class and remain active in the spiritual life of the church.

The collective body of members shall be hereinafter referred to in this Constitution and Bylaws as *the membership*.

ARTICLE 5 – AUTHORITY

Living Water Community Church is a free, autonomous, and independent self-governing body of Christians under the authority of Jesus Christ. The membership may choose to affiliate itself with other organizations as stipulated in the Bylaws. However, such affiliation shall not supersede the church's authority to freely determine 1) its own policies and 2) the use of its property/resources.

ARTICLE 6 – CHURCH GOVERNMENT

All affairs of this church will be conducted in submission to the authority of God, the headship of Christ, and the direction of the Holy Spirit. The authority and responsibility to guide the affairs of the church will be entrusted to the Elder Board which is affirmed by and accountable to the membership. The Elder Board will serve as this church's final decision making authority in all cases, save the following which require a final affirmation by the membership:

1. The call or the removal of pastoral staff and the creation of new pastoral positions.
2. The incurring of indebtedness.
3. The purchase or sale of real property.
4. The affirmation or the removal of elders.
5. The establishment of the annual budget.
6. The amendment of the Constitution and Bylaws.

As servant leaders, the Elder Board shall remain open to and considerate of the church family which they are called to lead.

ARTICLE 7 – OFFICERS

The officers of the church will be the Elder Board Chairman, the Elder Board Secretary, and the Elder Board Treasurer.

ARTICLE 8 – ELDER BOARD

The Elder Board will consist of biblically qualified servant leaders who have been affirmed by the membership. The Elder Board will be structurally divided into two groups. The first being the Governing Elders who actively govern the affairs of the church and who provide spiritual and pastoral care to the congregation. The second being the Advising Elders who

– while not actively governing the affairs of the church – also provide spiritual and pastoral care to the congregation. On a yearly basis, the Elder Board will assign each elder to either the Governing Board or the Advising Board.

ARTICLE 9 – MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Ministry Leadership Team will consist of the primary leader of each Ministry Team as determined by the Governing Elders. The Ministry Leadership Team – working under the authority of the Governing Elders – will be responsible for the direction, coordination, and execution of the church’s various ministries.

ARTICLE 10 – MEETINGS

A. Worship Services.

Regular Sunday services and other services providing for worship, fellowship, the observance of ordinances, and the preaching of the Gospel shall be conducted to effectively fulfill the church’s Purpose as stated in Article 2 of this Constitution.

B. Business Meetings.

The annual business meeting of the church shall generally be held in November, at such time as may be decided by the Governing Elders. At this meeting, the annual budget will be established, the Elder Board members affirmed/reaffirmed, and necessary business transacted. Special business meetings may also be held at the discretion of the Governing Elders in accordance with the Bylaws.

A quorum for any business meeting shall be one fifth (1/5) of the membership. All business meetings must be scheduled with a minimum of fourteen (14) days advance notice and the materials to be approved during the meeting must be made available to the membership on the Sunday prior to the meeting.

The fiscal year of the church shall extend from January 1st through December 31st.

ARTICLE 11 – PROPERTY RIGHTS

The church will have the power to receive, either by gift or by purchase, and to hold such real, personal, or mixed property as is authorized by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as deemed necessary for the business of the church, and will have the power to dispose of such property by mortgage, deed, or otherwise. All such property will be held solely in the name of the church.

The Elder Board will have the power to receive, purchase, sell, lease, convey, mortgage, deed or otherwise transfer property of the church only after having been authorized by the membership at a business meeting by three-quarters (3/4) of the votes cast.

Announcement of the proposed transaction will be given at the regular church service(s) two (2) weekends before the meeting.

All notes, mortgages, conveyances, assignments, leases, releases and other papers and documents on behalf of the church will be executed by the Elder Board Chairman, the Elder Board Secretary and the Elder Board Treasurer. The Governing Elders at their discretion and by appropriate resolution may authorize and delegate the authority to execute the aforementioned documents to a particular officer(s), a member(s) of the Elder Board, and/or a member(s) of the pastoral staff.

ARTICLE 12 – DISSOLUTION

In the event that the membership votes to dissolve the church corporation, all right, title, and interest in the property and other assets of the church will be transferred to another Christian organization or organizations which is/are approved by the membership, which possess(es) purposes and beliefs similar to that of the church, and which at that time qualify(ies) as an exempt organization(s) under the provisions of § 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The Elder Board Chairman, Elder Board Secretary and Elder Board Treasurer holding office at the time such dissolution is approved will be authorized to act with full powers on behalf of the church corporation in making such transfer of property and assets effective.

ARTICLE 13 – PASTORAL CREDENTIALING

The church reserves the right to provide two types of ministerial credentials to members of its pastoral staff.

- A. Licensed Pastor – This is the primary ministerial credential for members of the pastoral staff. It is conferred upon those individuals who demonstrate pastoral competence and theological alignment with the beliefs, doctrines, and purpose of Living Water Community Church.
- B. Ordained Pastor – This is the advanced ministerial credential for members of the pastoral staff. It is conferred upon those individuals who demonstrate pastoral competence and theological alignment with the beliefs, doctrines, and purpose of Living Water Community Church, who possess a formal theological degree, and who have served as a Licensed Pastor for a minimum of three years.

Both Licensed Pastors and Ordained Pastors are entrusted with the duties and responsibilities of the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, including but not limited to the preaching of God’s Word, the administration of the ordinances, and the officiating of weddings and funerals.

The Elder Board shall have the authority to develop a process for the examination and approval of all candidates for licensing and ordination.

The Elder Board may terminate a pastor's credentials when he no longer serves within the ministry of the church or in the event of him being disciplined per the Bylaws.

ARTICLE 14 - AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Constitution may only be made at a regularly scheduled business meeting. The proposed amendment must have been properly presented at a previous business meeting and recorded in the minutes thereof at least twenty-eight (28) days before the vote to adopt. A three fourths (3/4) majority of the votes cast is necessary to amend this Constitution. However, Article 3 of this Constitution can only be amended, substituted, or its contents changed by a unanimous vote.