

Constitution
Of
Citylight Church Center City
Philadelphia, PA

Adopted July 16, 2022

Preamble

Since in God's providence He gathered some of His servants together in Philadelphia under the name Citylight Church Center City for the worship of God, their mutual edification, and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Citylight Church Center City do hereby organize ourselves as a Christian church in accord with the law and adopt this Constitution as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of and bring glory to Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the standards set forth in the Statement of Faith (2022) and Covenant (2022) of this church.

Article 1 – Name

The name of this church is Citylight Church Center City.

Article 2 – Purpose

This particular church exists ultimately for the same reason everything exists: The glory of God (1 Cor 10:31). More specifically, we glorify God as a particular church by

gathering to worship Him,

serving one another's good, both in the inward and outward man, in view of the coming day of Christ,

protecting our gospel witness and one another through the administration of church discipline,

publicly proclaiming the gospel through preaching and whatever other opportunities the Lord provides insofar as they are consistent with the teachings of The Bible,

administering the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper,

transmitting The Scriptures and the doctrines they teach to the next generation and encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work local, domestic, and international,

encouraging and serving other particular churches as they seek to carry out similar biblical purposes, that the whole body of Christ may be built up.

Article 3 - Membership

3.1 – Requirements for membership

3.1.1 To be eligible for membership in this church, a person must credibly profess faith in Jesus Christ and have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Each member must openly believe everything taught in our Statement of Faith, promise to keep the commitments expressed in our Church Covenant, and express a willingness to be held accountable to both by Citylight Church Center City.

3.1.2 The elders shall be responsible for assessing each person's eligibility for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

3.2 – Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants must be accepted by a simple majority vote of the members present at any members' meeting (ordinarily, but not necessarily, consenting with the judgment of the elders), and shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

3.3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

3.3.1 In accord with the duties listed in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of this church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources God has assigned to each. Only those who are members of this church shall be entitled to lead in the ministries of the church. Non-members may serve in various capacities with the approval of the elders.

3.3.2 It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters submitted to a vote.

3.4 – On Church Discipline

3.4.1 Church discipline is that part of the discipleship process wherein we correct sin and point disciples toward the better path. It is for the glory of God (Rom 2:24), the repentance and restoration of the erring disciple (1 Cor 5:4-5), the protection and purity of the church (1 Cor 5:6-7, 1 Tim 5:20), and the good of our corporate witness to outsiders (Matt 5:13-16, 1 Pet 2:11-12).

3.4.2 Any member persistently and intentionally neglectful of his or her duties outlined in our Church Covenant and/or guilty of conduct rendering doubtful his or her profession of faith shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Public discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or the church, dismissal from office, and excommunication (Matt 18:15-17, 2 Thess 3:14-15, 1 Tim 5:19-20, 1 Cor 5:4-5).

3.5 – Termination of Membership

3.5.1 – Termination of a person's membership in this church occurs upon his or her death, or by a simple majority vote of members' present at any member meeting (ordinarily, but not

necessarily, consenting with the judgment of the elders) to either accept a member's resignation or to remove them as an act of church discipline.

3.5.2 – A member may request resignation by notifying an elder of his or her desire to no longer be a member of this church. The church reserves the right to refuse a member's resignation request in order to pursue church discipline or for any biblical reason.

3.6 – Restoration of Membership

A person whose membership has been terminated for any reason may be received back into the membership of the church according to the normal process for receiving members outlined in Section 3.2. In the case of someone applying for membership who was previously excommunicated, he or she shall only be readmitted to membership when the church (ordinarily, but not necessarily consenting with the judgment of the elders) judges him or her to be walking in sincere repentance, and the church may require public testimony of such repentance before restoring him or her to membership.

Article 4 – Meetings

4.1 – Worship Meetings

Providential hindrance notwithstanding, worship services shall be held each Sunday and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

4.2 – Members' Meetings

4.2.1 In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4.2.2 There shall be a regular members' meeting at least every quarter, at some time apart from the Sunday service, and at a time acceptable to the membership. The elders shall see that these meetings of the church are regularly held and that the date, time, and location are communicated to members more than one month before the date of the meeting.

4.2.3 Providential hindrance notwithstanding, the elders shall present a budget at a members' meeting to be approved by not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. The approval of the members shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in its entirety. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level.

4.2.4 Special members' meetings may be called by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of twenty-five percent of the membership. Special meetings shall be called with at least two-weeks' notice. The location, date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church and posted at all entrances to the building in which the church is gathering for worship within the two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

4.2.5 An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present.

4.2.6 Meetings shall be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. On any matter that is brought to vote, a majority vote is needed for it to pass (unless this constitution specifies otherwise), recognizing that members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (Eph. 4:1-6). Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. Only votes cast by members present at the time of the meeting will be counted.

4.2.7 Members may be permitted to watch and/or listen to the meeting via various media at the discretion of the elders, however only members physically present at the meeting shall be permitted to vote or speak from the floor.

4.2.8 Position papers adopted by the elders shall be reported to the church at a members' meeting and may be annulled by the church by a majority vote of the members present.

Article 5 – Officers

5.1 – Summary

As Jesus Christ is the head of every church, so He is also the head of this church. He has given us a sufficient revelation of His will in the Bible, such that it functions as our highest authority. He also instituted two offices to continue in the Church until the time of His return: elder (also referred to in various English translations of Scripture by the titles of “pastor”, “shepherd”, “overseer”, “bishop”) and deacon. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of secretary and treasurer. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

5.2 – Elders

5.2.1 Subject to the consent of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with Acts 6:1-6, 20:28; Eph 4:11-16; 1 Tim 5:17; 2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:9, 2:7-8; Heb 13:17, Jas 5:14, and 1 Pet 5:1-4, the elders shall provide the church with an example of godly living, devote themselves to prayer (especially for suffering and wayward members), lead the church in the direction Jesus wants them to go as they discern His mind through prayer, godly counsel, and diligent study of Scripture, teach sound doctrine and rebuke those who contradict it, train future elders, equip the members of the church for the work of ministry, and keep watch over the souls of the members of the church with the goal of presenting everyone mature in Christ on the last day.

5.2.2 Elders shall be men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Tit 1:6-9 and subscribe from the heart to this church's Elder Statement of Faith. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

5.2.3 The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be submitted to the church for reaffirmation

every three years under the procedure outlined in section 5.2.5. Upon the completion of that term, he shall be eligible for another term if duly elected by the membership.

5.2.4 Some elders may receive pay for their labors. In recommending that the congregation call a new elder, or after a new elder has been recognized by the congregation, the elders may also recommend that the elder be compensated on a full-, part-time, or contract basis for his work (1 Tim. 5:17, 1 Cor. 9).

5.2.5 All elders, whether paid or unpaid, shall be called to serve three-year terms. There shall be no limit on the number of consecutive three-year terms an elder may serve. Near the conclusion of each three-year term, and at the discretion of the elders' collectively any time before the conclusion of the three-year term, the elders collectively or a subcommittee from their number will conduct a review of each elder. The review will address the elder's biblical qualifications, character, pastoral competence, and theological conviction. Based upon the review, the elders or their subcommittee may recommend that the congregation affirm the elder's calling and with the congregation's approval the elder shall continue in another three-year term. Should the elders or the subcommittee instead decide not to recommend the elder to another term, the elders will notify the congregation and the elder's service shall end at the conclusion of his term.

5.2.6 An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express their concern to at least two elders and only afterwards, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matt. 18:15-17 and 1 Tim. 5:17-21. Any elder may be dismissed by a simple majority vote of the members at any formally called members' meeting of the church, recognizing that members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (Eph. 4:1-6).

5.2.7 An elder employed by the church may be dismissed from employment by his supervising elder, if any. Such dismissal from employment does not automatically result in dismissal from the office of elder. At the discretion of the elders collectively he may continue to serve out his term. If a staff elder resigns his staff position, yet remains a member in good standing, he may continue serving in his office as a non-staff elder until his term expires.

5.2.8 The elders shall take particular responsibility to oversee worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, mobilize the church for world missions, examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, and oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and ministries. The pastors are further to ensure that all who minister the word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions and do not teach our church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith.

5.2.9 The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill staff elder positions. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position. Job descriptions must identify any reporting and/or supervisory relationships. The elders shall report hiring and firing decisions for paid staff to the congregation. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

5.2.10 The elders shall elect a chairman who shall serve as chairman of elders' meetings. In the absence of the chairman, the elders shall appoint another pastor to fulfill these duties. The chairman of the elders shall serve as the president of the corporation.

5.3 – Deacons

5.3.1 The office of deacon is described in 1 Tim 3:8-13 (cf. Acts 6:1-7). The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who have demonstrated the biblical character qualifications of 1 Tim 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3 in service to the church and who demonstrate gifts for the diaconal work to which they would be assigned. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church every three years. Since the office of deacon is an office of service, it comes only with the authority to do the tasks assigned to it, not to teach or oversee the church.

5.3.2 A deacon's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that a deacon should be dismissed should express their concern to at least two elders and only afterwards, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matt. 18:15-17. Any deacon may be dismissed by a simple majority vote of the members at any formally called members' meeting of the church, recognizing that members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (Eph. 4:1-6).

5.3.3 Deacons shall take responsibility for tasks that the elders determine ought to be done by the church, but which the elders themselves should not directly oversee, lest they give up their unique focus on the ministry of the word and prayer (Acts 6:1-6). At least some deacons, but not necessarily all, shall administer church funds set aside by the elders to poor members of the church, and, as opportunity permits, may also do so to poor non-members, all under the oversight of the elders, and in accordance with the principles set forth in such passages as Luke 10:25-37; Acts 4:33-37; Gal 2:10, 6:10; Eph 4:28; 2 Thess 3:10; 1 Tim 5:3-16. Specific deacon titles and organization shall be decided by the elders in the most fitting way to accomplish the work assigned to them.

5.3.4 Deacons, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or teams to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

5.4 – Secretary

5.4.1 It shall be the duty of the secretary to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to provide reports as requested by the elders, deacons, or the church.

5.4.2 The church secretary shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

5.4.3 In the absence or incapacity of the secretary, the secretary shall recommend to the elders another member to perform the duties of the church secretary, and the elders shall then appoint a member to do so.

5.4.4 As with other official positions, the secretary shall be elected to a three-year term with no limit on renewal and may resign at any time or be dismissed by the elders for dereliction of duties specific to the secretary.

5.5 – Treasurer

5.5.1 The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member, shall be a member in good standing. The treasurer shall support the elders in providing oversight of the financial and accounting activities of the church, shall not have custody of church funds, and shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church to the elders at least monthly and at members' meetings at least quarterly. This responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also see that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to ensure 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, whenever they may require it, an account of all activities as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

5.5.2 As with other official positions, the treasurer shall be elected to a three-year term with no limit on renewal and may resign at any time or be dismissed by the elders for dereliction of duties specific to the treasurer.

Article 6 – Elections

6.1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, shall be an integral part of the election process.

Nominations shall proceed with the support of the elders.

All candidates for church office shall be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members.

The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Members of Christ's church should strive for unity in all things (Eph. 4:1-6).

6.2 – Selection of Officers

6.2.1 The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, secretary, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (providing that previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

6.2.2 The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

6.2.3 The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a two-thirds majority of all votes cast for the office of elder at a regularly scheduled members' meeting. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast.

6.2.4 The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election unless another date has been specifically designated.

Article 7 – Indemnification

7.1 – 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. The church shall purchase appropriate insurance to meet these potential liabilities.

7.2 – Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who (a) acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and (b) either believed that his or her conduct was not unlawful or failed to abide by a law that the elders determine to be in contradiction to biblical obligations.

7.3 – Procedure

If a majority 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 membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

Article 8 – Dispute Resolution

8.1 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 (e.g., Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8), the church shall urge its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without resorting to the civil courts.

8.2 An important exception to this principle exists for alleged criminal behavior (Rom. 13:3-4), not least because such behavior may in some cases legally be required to be reported to government authorities.

8.3 Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles and ordinarily avoid lawsuits to resolve disputes between the church itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities.

Article 9 – Deviations of Practice

If a church member believes the church to be out of accord with this constitution, he or she should inform an elder. When the elders determine that the church is out of accord with this constitution, they must provide an update at each members' meeting until the situation is remedied.

Article 10 – Amendments

The Statement of Faith, Elder Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths 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 at church services two successive Sundays prior to such a vote. The revised version of this constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church secretary.

Article 11 – Dissolution

11.1 In the event that the elders of the church determine that there is reasonable cause to dissolve Citylight Church Center City as a corporate entity, the elders shall recommend dissolution to the membership. The elders shall call a special members' meeting as set out in Section 4.2.4. Notice of the meeting shall be sent in writing to the membership and posted at all entrances to the building in which the church gathers for worship at that time no less than sixty days prior to the meeting. The notice shall state that the purpose of the meeting is to consider dissolution of the corporation and how the assets of the corporation will be distributed after all creditors have been paid. At least three-fourths of the members present at the meeting must vote in the affirmative to approve the proposal of dissolution.

11.2 After approval of dissolution by the members, all the corporation's debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other individuals, but shall be irrevocably designated, as approved by a simple majority of the members present at a members' meeting, to one or more religious organizations which meet the qualifications described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and which agree with the letter and spirit of the Statement of Faith. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of exclusively for such exempt purposes by a court of competent jurisdiction where the principal office of the corporation is then located.