



CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Modified on March 24, 2024

PREAMBLE

Since it pleased Almighty God, by His Holy Spirit, to call certain of His servants to unite here under the name Redeemer Baptist Church of Canton, Missouri, for the worship of God and the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Redeemer Baptist Church, do hereby organize ourselves and adopt this Constitution and Bylaws 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 Statement of Faith and Covenant of this Church.

ARTICLE 1 - NAME

- 1.1 The name of this church is Redeemer Baptist Church.
- 1.2 It is a Missouri nonprofit religious Corporation. Its principal office is in Canton, MO and also serves as the registered office. The Registered Agent of the Corporation shall be one of the elders chosen by the elders. This Corporation may hereafter be referred to as the “Church.”

ARTICLE 2 - AFFILIATION

- 2.1 The Church is an independent, self-governing body, completely free of all outside control.
- 2.2 Recognizing, however, the value of partnerships for the sake of the Gospel, the Church may voluntarily affiliate with denominations, church planting networks and mission organizations to accomplish the Great Commission (*Matthew 28:19-20*). The Church possesses the freedom and authority to bring to conclusion any partnership which the body believes inhibits or undermines the spread of the Gospel.

ARTICLE 3 - PURPOSE

- 3.1 This Church exists by the grace of God, for the glory of God, which shall be the ultimate purpose in all its activities. This Church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:
 - a. Worshiping Him;
 - b. Equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study;
 - c. Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Holy Scripture;

- d. Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work, local, domestic, and international;
- e. Administering baptism and the Lord's supper;
- f. Encouraging Biblical fellowship among believers;
- g. Practicing formative and corrective discipline; and,
- h. Serving and loving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ.

ARTICLE 4 - STATEMENT OF FAITH

4.1 The guiding doctrinal beliefs of this Church are found in the Redeemer Baptist Church Statement of Faith.

ARTICLE 5 - MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Qualifications

- 5.1.1 To qualify for membership in this Church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized through immersion, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must sustain the doctrines of our Church and not hold any settled convictions contrary to them, in accord with our Statement of Faith, and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.
- 5.1.2 Because the Church values active, committed membership, we require that prospective members transfer or renounce membership in any other church as they formally join with us, except in cases of cooperative membership (see 5.4).
- 5.1.3 The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification 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.

5.2 Admission of Members

- 5.2.1 To be admitted into Church membership, applicants:
 - a. shall be ordinarily, but not necessarily, recommended by the elders for admission;
 - b. must publicly share their testimony with the Church (in oral or written form);
 - c. must be accepted by at least three-quarters of the members present at any regular or special member meeting; and,
 - d. shall at that point relinquish their membership in other churches.

5.3 Duties and Privileges of Membership

5.3.1 In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the Church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the Church who are members of this congregation; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the Church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

5.3.2 Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend member meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

5.4 Cooperative Membership (Temporary)

5.4.1 Persons temporarily residing in the Canton area who are members of an evangelical church may apply for cooperative membership. Qualifications and admission are identical to those for full membership as set out above (see 5.1, 5.2), except that home church membership must be retained. Elders will notify the leadership of the home church and seek a recommendation for the cooperative member.

5.4.2 Duties and privileges of cooperative members are the same as for other members except that:

- a. when absent from the Canton area for extended periods of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our Church services; and,
- b. while they will be encouraged to participate in member meetings, they will not be eligible to stand for any office or to vote.

5.4.3 Termination of cooperative membership as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for other members, except that the elders shall notify the leaders of the home church of that termination. Cooperative membership will normally terminate immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the Canton area.

5.5 Church Discipline

5.5.1 Formative discipline is inherent in the preaching, teaching, and exercise of other ministries in the Church. When formative discipline fails due to sin, corrective discipline is then necessary. Corrective discipline is for the good of the Church and the member who has sinned. It is never to be entered into lightly or quickly. The goal of corrective discipline is always remedial, that is, the goal is always the salvation and holiness and good of the one being disciplined.

5.5.2 Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the Church and/or rendering doubtful a profession of faith, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the Church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or

congregation, deposition from office, and excommunication (*Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5*).

5.5.3 The purpose of such discipline should be:

- a. for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (*Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 Timothy 3:4–5; Hebrews 12:1–11; Psalm 119:115; 141:5; Proverbs 17:10; 25:12; 27:5; Ecclesiastes 7:5; Matthew 7:26–27; 18:15–17; Luke 17:3; Acts 2:40; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22*);
- b. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (*Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25*);
- c. For the purity of the church as a whole (*1 Corinthians 5:6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2*);
- d. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (*Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10*); and,
- e. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (*Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 Chronicles 19:2; Ezra 6:21; Nehemiah 9:2; Isaiah 52:11; Ezekiel 36:20; Matthew 5:16; John 15:8; 18:17, 25; Romans 2:24; 15:5–6; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12*).

5.5.4 In the process of restoration from church discipline, it may be appropriate for a confession to be made before the Church in a regular or special member meeting so that the Church can freely extend forgiveness and formally restore membership and privileges to the repentant believer.

5.6 Termination of Membership

5.6.1 Termination of membership shall be recognized by the Church following the death, transfer of membership, or voluntary resignation of any church member who is in good standing. Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) and with the vote of three-quarters of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members. The Church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline or for any other biblical reason.

ARTICLE 6 - MEETINGS

6.1 Worship Meetings

6.1.1 Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day (Sunday), and may be additionally held throughout the week as the elders propose. Elders are responsible for the organization and

implementation of the worship service. Worship services are public gatherings of members and non-members. Members are expected to attend worship services regularly whenever possible.

6.1.2 Discipleship groups shall be held regularly at various intervals, days, times, and locations. Elders shall have oversight in the structure and organization of these groups. Members are encouraged to attend discipleship groups.

6.2 Member Meetings

6.2.1 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.

6.2.2 There shall be a regular member meeting at least every quarter, at some time apart from the Sunday morning worship service, and at a time acceptable to the membership. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the Church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the Church by the responsible members.

6.2.3 Special member meetings may be called as requested by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of ten percent, or a minimum of five (5) members, of the voting membership. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special member meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.

6.2.4 A budget shall be approved by the membership at a member meeting prior to the start of the fiscal year. At this meeting, congregational approval 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. The fiscal year will commence on January 1.

6.2.5 An elder, designated by the elders, shall preside as moderator at all member meetings of the Church. In rare circumstances, the elders may designate a deacon to perform these duties.

6.2.6 The date, time, and purpose of any regular or special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the Church at least two (2) weeks preceding the meeting. At least seven (7) days prior to the member meeting, the secretary will make available to the membership all items that will be voted upon. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. If a member will be unable to attend in person, they may request in writing at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting for virtual accommodations. All reasonable efforts shall be attempted to satisfy this request.

6.2.7 Meetings shall be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. On any matter that is brought to vote, a two-thirds vote is needed for it to pass (unless this constitution specifies otherwise). Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. Only votes cast by members present (physically and virtually) at the time of the meeting will be counted.

ARTICLE 7 - OFFICERS AND STAFF

7.1 Summary

7.1.1 Jesus Christ is the Lord and head of this Church and He rules primarily through the Scriptures.

7.1.2 The biblical offices in the Church are elders and deacons. All officers must be members of this Church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

7.1.3 For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of Missouri, our Church recognizes the administrative assignments of president, secretary, and treasurer. The president shall be an elder designated by the elders. The secretary shall be either an elder or deacon. The treasurer shall be a deacon.

7.2 Elders

7.2.1 The elders shall be comprised of not less than two men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. Only men may serve as elders in accord with 1 Timothy 2:12; 3:2. At least one-third of the elders must consist of non-ministerial staff elders. Typically, one ministerial staff elder shall be recognized by the Church as particularly gifted and called to the regular preaching and teaching of the word of God. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. If there are not two qualified men to serve in this capacity, the Church may temporarily be led by one elder.

7.2.2 Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the Church. The elders shall provide oversight of the congregation and lead the Church to fulfill its ministries. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; James 5:14; and 1 Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed Church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the Church, and mobilize the Church for world missions. Further, the elders should seek to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, affirm our fundamental gospel convictions and do not teach our Church anything contrary to the Statement of Faith.

7.2.3 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. Non-ministerial staff elders may request up to a 3 month sabbatical every 5 years of service. Ministerial staff elders are subject to the terms of their contract in regard to vacations and sabbaticals. Upon the elders' discretion, a ministerial staff elder may resign his staff position, retain active involved membership, and remain an elder in the congregation.

7.2.4 An elder is free to voluntarily resign their office giving as much advance notice as possible. An elder's term of office may also be terminated by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be only afterwards, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21. Any elder may be

dismissed by a three-quarters vote of the members at any formally called member meeting of the Church.

7.2.5 The elders may establish and oversee ministry positions and committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders shall also have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. The outworking of this responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to deacons or another staff member.

7.2.6 Each year the elders, in consultation with the deacons, shall present to the Church an itemized budget for congregational approval at a member meeting. Congregational approval shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in its entirety.

7.2.7 A paid staff or volunteer ministry position does not in and of itself constitute an elder's position or authority.

7.2.8 The elders may choose to operate among themselves by consensus, but they must have at least three-quarters approval of the elders in order to proceed with an action.

7.3 Deacons

7.3.1 The Church shall recognize for the office of deacon, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the Church and who possess particular gifts of service. The number of deacons shall be determined by the elders according to the needs of the ministry and the call and qualifications of men and women in the Church as stated in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6, these members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons.

7.3.2 Deacons shall advise and assist the elders in attending to the accommodation for public worship, shall attend to the normal care and maintenance of Church properties, and shall lead the Church in welcoming visitors and in caring for the members of the congregation, especially in their temporal needs. Deacons exercise a ministry of service, not a ministry of spiritual leadership. Although they may teach and preach in contexts in which they are not violating 1 Timothy 2:12-15 nor infringing upon the stated responsibilities of the elders, the responsibilities of deacons do not include preaching, teaching, or spiritual oversight. The deacons may be organized in the most fitting way to accomplish the mission of the Church. There is no requirement that the deacons meet as a committee of the whole.

7.3.3 One of the deacons will serve as treasurer. (see 7.6) Any deacon may be called upon to assist the treasurer as need arises. Each year the deacons, in consultation with the elders, shall prepare an itemized budget that the elders will present at a member meeting. Congregational approval shall proceed, without amendment, as a single vote on the budget in its entirety.

7.3.4 The deacons shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund of benevolence for the primary purpose of advancing God's Kingdom, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the Church its total receipts and total disbursements only.

7.3.5 No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the Church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders or the deacons responsible for the Church's finances.

7.3.6 As biblically taught in Titus 1 and Timothy 3, the elders are solely responsible for the spiritual oversight of preaching and teaching; these responsibilities are not part of the office of deacon.

7.4 Ministerial Staff

7.4.1 Elders may propose new paid ministerial staff positions. The elders shall present a job description, contract, and proposed hiring procedure for each position to the membership for approval.

7.4.2 Before hiring, the Church shall receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant along with an understanding of this constitution and bylaws. Upon the hiring of ministerial staff from outside the Church, they will simultaneously become members of the congregation.

7.4.3 The final hiring of all ministerial staff will be made by a vote of the congregation at a member meeting. Only one candidate for each ministerial staff position shall be recommended at a time.

7.4.4 The elders shall present a request to dismiss paid ministerial staff to the congregation for approval.

7.4.5 In the absence or incapacity of ministerial staff, the other elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

7.4.6 In the case of Ministerial Staff Elders, see additional procedures outlined in 8.5.

7.5 Non-Ministerial Staff

7.5.1 Elders may propose new paid non-ministerial staff positions. The elders shall present a job description and contract for each position to the membership for approval. The elders shall propose to the congregation all changes to job descriptions for approval.

7.5.2 The elders may hire and fire non-ministerial staff, or delegate that responsibility on a case-by-case basis. The elders will report hiring decisions and firing decisions for non-ministerial staff, or delegate that responsibility on a case-by-case basis.

7.6 Treasurer

7.6.1 The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders from among the deacons and approved by the congregation for a 3 year term. As needed, the treasurer may voluntarily resign their position or be removed by the elders.

7.6.2 The treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the Church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as designated by the Church. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in an accessible format belonging to the Church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee 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 annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the Church. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues, and

expenses of the Church at regular member meetings. The treasurer shall be responsible for distributing to each individual a record of their charitable giving for tax purposes at the end of each year following federal guidelines.

7.7 Secretary

7.7.1 The secretary shall be either an elder or deacon nominated by the elders and approved by the congregation for a 3 year term. As needed, the secretary may voluntarily resign their position or be removed by the elders.

7.7.2 It shall be the duty of the secretary to record the minutes of all regular and special member meetings of the Church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, to maintain and make available current versions of the Church Covenant, Statement of Faith, and Constitution and Bylaws, and to render reports as requested by the elders, deacons or the Church.

7.7.3 In the absence or incapacity of the secretary, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the Church secretary.

ARTICLE 8 - ELECTIONS

8.1 Principles

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

- a. Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, shall be an integral part of the election process.
- b. All candidates for Church office shall be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members.
- c. 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.

8.2 Election of Candidates for the Office of Elder or Deacon

8.2.1 Provided that all constitutional procedures are followed, the congregation may vote to initiate the process for the election of candidates for the office of elder or deacon at a regular or special member meeting.

8.2.2 Church officers facilitate a process to collect nominations from the Church membership. The elders will approach each nominee to confirm willingness and qualifications according to Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3. At least two weeks prior to voting, a list of nominees will be made available to the Church membership by the secretary. 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 member meeting at which the Church votes on the candidates.

8.2.3 The congregation will vote to elect candidates from the list of nominees as defined per this constitution.

8.3 Candidacy and Installation to the Office of Elder or Deacon

8.3.1 Elders are responsible for the testing of each candidate's biblical qualifications and the individual training of each candidate in the responsibilities and duties of their office.

8.3.2 Following the completion of testing and training, the elders will propose the candidate to the congregation for installation. After an affirmative vote, the installation (ordination) of the officer will happen during an appointed worship service.

8.4 Election of Treasurer and Secretary

8.4.1 Election of treasurer and secretary shall follow procedures as outlined in 7.6 and 7.7.

8.5 Calling of Ministerial Staff Elders

8.5.1 In the calling of a ministerial staff elder, the same biblical qualifications for all elders, as listed in 7.2.2, will be prerequisite. The ability to preach will be assessed with particular care when selecting a potential ministerial staff elder. The candidate will preach in person to the congregation at least once before they are brought forward for a hiring vote.

8.5.2 The vote to call a ministerial staff elder shall take place at a member meeting set aside for that purpose. Notice of this special member meeting shall be announced at two Sunday morning worship services prior to the vote. Upon an affirmative vote of three-quarters of the members present, he shall be recognized as a member of the Church, an elder, and as ministerial staff.

ARTICLE 9 - INDEMNIFICATION

9.1 Mandatory Indemnification

9.1.1 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.

9.2 Permissive Indemnification

9.2.1 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.

9.3 Procedure

9.3.1 If a quorum 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 10 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

10.1 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 (see, 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 reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the Church shall encourage the use of biblically based principles and the avoidance of suits of law to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the Church, whether Christian or pagan and whether individuals or corporate entities. The elders may adopt policies and procedures to effect these aspirations.

ARTICLE 11 DEVIATIONS OF PRACTICE

11.1 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 member meeting until the situation is remedied.

ARTICLE 12 AMENDMENTS

12.1 The Statement of Faith and Church Covenant may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at a member meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous member meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at Church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

12.2 This constitution may be amended by a three-quarters vote of the members present and voting at a member meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous member meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at Church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

ARTICLE 13 DISSOLUTION

13.1 In the event that the elders of the Church determine that there is reasonable cause to dissolve the Redeemer Baptist Church as a corporate entity, the elders shall recommend dissolution to the membership. The Church shall be dissolved by a vote of three-quarters of the membership of the Church.

13.2 After approval of dissolution by the members, all of the corporation's debts shall be fully satisfied. None of its assets or holdings shall be divided among the members or other Individuals. The elders shall dispose of all the remaining assets of this Corporation exclusively for the purpose of the Church in such manner or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes consistent with those of this Church and shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes, as the elders shall determine.

ARTICLE 14 MISCELLANEOUS

14.1 Marriage Policy

14.1.1 The Statement of Faith expresses our fundamental biblical convictions on Christian marriage. Wedding ceremonies are spiritual observances of the worship of God. Individual elders may decline on their own conscience from officiating any wedding if, but not exclusively, it is determined that one or both of the parties are not biblically and/or legally qualified to marry. In loving respect for one another, so long as all parties affirm the positions of the Statement of Faith, the Church will support an elder's autonomy in this ministry to follow and not violate his conscience.