

**CREEKSIDE BIBLE CHURCH
BYLAWS**

Article I NAME

This local expression of the body of Christ shall be called Creekside Bible Church, referred to herein as “the church” or “CBC.”

Article II LIMITATIONS

These Bylaws of the church are subordinate to the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments.

Article III PURPOSE

The purpose of Creekside Bible Church (CBC) is to be a local group of baptized believers who glorify God through living and proclaiming the truth of Scripture. Our method of pursuing this purpose will be as follows:

- to magnify Jesus Christ through personal and public worship (Romans 15:6)
- to edify others through service, fellowship, prayer, and teaching (James 1:27; Ephesians 4:12)
- to evangelize the world through living, preaching and teaching the Word of God (Matthew 28:19, 20)
- to keep our lives pure (Ephesians 5:26, 27; James 1:27b) through personal examination (I Corinthians 11:28-31) and public accountability (Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:6, 7, 13)

Creekside Bible Church will operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the classification of legal charities, and no part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of any individual; and no substantial part of the activities of the organization, or any receipt of its funds, shall be utilized for any other purpose except those mentioned above.

The church shall not have or issue shares or stock, and no dividends shall be paid. No part of the income or assets of the church shall be distributed to any member or officer without a process of full consideration as determined by the Elders. The church is prohibited from lending money to guarantee the obligation of a member or officer of the church. No member or officer of the church has any vested right, interest or privilege in or to the assets, property, functions, or activities of the church. The church may contract in due course, for reasonable consideration, with its members or officers without violating this provision subject to the church’s then current Conflict of Interest policy.

Article IV LOCATION OF OFFICE

The *registered* office of the church shall be located within Matthews, North Carolina at such address as the Elders of the church shall determine. The Board of Elders, with confirmation by a majority vote of the members, may change the address of the registered office from time to time, upon filing the appropriate statement with state officials.

Article V MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Purpose

Membership in CBC is a public expression of a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:9; I John 1:3) and a desire to glorify Christ through mutual accountability with other Christians. Followers of Christ are commanded to regularly gather together (I Corinthians 11:20; Hebrews 10:25) and are called to be accountable to each other (Ephesians 5:21).

Section 2. Prerequisites

The following prerequisites must be fulfilled for membership at Creekside Bible Church:

1. Salvation – Individuals desiring to become members of CBC must present a verbal and written testimony of their salvation experience (i.e., faith in Christ) to the elders. The members of CBC do not hold to professing a mere creed (truth about Jesus – Matthew 7:21-23), but to knowing a person – the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 10:9-10).
2. Baptism – Believer's baptism is a public testimony to the inner identification with Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41). Therefore, conversion is a prerequisite to baptism. Due to the significance of baptism in Scripture and the picture that this act of obedience is the work of Christ, individuals must be baptized as believers prior to joining the church (Matthew 28:19). CBC baptizes by immersion those at least 12 years old who give credible testimony to the reality of their salvation. In the case of an individual who is physically unable to undergo baptism by immersion, the elders withhold the right to make an exception.
3. Statement of Faith – Individuals seeking membership must read and assent to the Statement of Faith. By assenting to the Statement of Faith, a member understands that these are the doctrines that CBC teaches, and that no one may cause confusion or division in the body by teaching doctrines contrary to the Statement of Faith.
4. Membership Covenant – All potential members of CBC are asked to read and affirm the membership covenant, thereby agreeing to support the policies and beliefs of this body; they must express a willingness to use their gifts for the edification of the body; and they must agree to be held accountable by the leaders and members of CBC (Hebrews 13:17).
5. Age – Individuals must be 18 years or older to be considered for membership.

Section 3. Process

The following process should be followed by persons desiring membership at CBC:

1. Attend and complete the membership class (or classes).
2. Read and assent to the Statement of Faith and the Bylaws.
3. Complete and submit the membership application to a staff pastor or elder.
4. Participate in a membership interview with an elder or someone designated by the elders.

The Elders will communicate to the congregation the names of those desiring to join the church. At least two weeks after this communication, individuals who have completed the membership process will be presented to the congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service in order to publicly affirm the membership covenant and to be welcomed into the body.

Section 4. Policies

- CBC appreciates letters from other churches, but does not recognize these as substitutes for the membership process.
- Members seeking to withdraw their membership from CBC are requested to contact an elder and personally communicate this intent.
- Members who are absent from services for an unusual length of time are encouraged to notify church leaders of any difficulties. If a member is absent from services for two months or more, the elders shall continue to seek to resolve any problem or meet any special circumstances (e.g. sickness, schooling, work, military). Until this resolution occurs, membership voting privileges will be suspended for the individual due to the extended absence. But if an understanding is not reached, the absentee member shall be released from the membership roll of the church at the discretion of the Board of Elders.
- In certain cases, even though attendance requirements are met, a lack of fulfillment of the membership covenant may reach a level where the Elders may determine that removal of an individual from membership is still necessary.
- CBC does not retain an "inactive" church membership roll.
- The Elders may approve the reinstatement of an individual who has been removed from membership if they deem it appropriate.
- Erring church members (i.e., those in unrepentant sin) will be dealt with according to the four-step process of church discipline found in Matthew 18.

Article VI CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Section 1. Weekly Services

CBC holds services on Sunday, and any other day deemed beneficial to the needs of the body.

Section 2. Members Meetings

2.1. Annual Meetings

There shall be an annual Members Meeting held for the purpose of providing financial and ministry reports, approval of the budget, and other appropriate business. Time and place shall be announced from the pulpit, and/or in written format at least two weeks prior to the meeting date.

2.2. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the church membership shall be called by the Elders and announced to the church membership. When a meeting is called for the transaction of specific matters of business, then no other business shall be conducted except that which is stated in the meeting notice. Except in the case of emergencies, members will be notified at least one week in advance of any called special meeting.

2.3. Decisions

A congregational quorum shall consist of forty percent of all voting members. Once a quorum has been established, a simple majority of votes cast is required to approve a motion, unless otherwise indicated in these Bylaws. Within the confines of the Bylaws and as deemed appropriate by the elders, the meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner as befits a follower of Christ.

Article VII CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Church discipline shall be carried out as set forth by Christ in Matthew 18. The Elders can provide a written discussion of this process.

Article VIII GOVERNMENT

Section 1. Authority

This church acknowledges only the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head; the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, church order, and discipline; the Holy Spirit as its Teacher; and is neither accountable to nor under the jurisdiction or supervision of any other ecclesiastical body. The provisions of Article VIII, Section 1 shall not be abridged by any vote of the membership.

Section 2. Elders

2.1. Powers

Subject to the limitations of these Bylaws, all the activities and affairs of CBC shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for the shepherding and the spiritual oversight of the membership (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). This church can thrive only as decisions are made in conformity to the Word of God, and as each member (including leadership) submits in love to one another under the authority of Christ as the head of the body (2 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 4:15, 16; 5:21).

2.2. Priorities of the Board of Elders

The following are the priorities of the Board of Elders:

- to live holy lives as an example to the congregation (Hebrews 13:7)
- to rule the church of God with a servant attitude (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3)
- to feed (i.e., teach) and lead the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 5:17)
- to facilitate the ministries of the people (Ephesians 4:11, 12)
- to warn and protect the flock as a shepherd who loves and cares for the affairs of the sheep (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 1:3, 4)
- to pray and study (Acts 6:4; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- to be free from self-interest (1 Thessalonians 2:5-6)

2.3. Number

The authorized number of qualified men on the Board of Elders shall always be at least three. Elders should be added as necessary to properly shepherd an increase in the flock.

2.4. Equality

All elders are equally responsible for the oversight of the church regardless of the position they hold in the utilization of their particular gifts. Those elders with greater teaching giftedness, however, will carry the greatest responsibility for the teaching of the body. Staff elders are expected to be responsible for oversight of most of the day-to-day functions of the church.

2.5. Selection

Candidates being considered for the office of Elder, including the commitment inherent thereto, shall be carefully examined by the Board of Elders as to their desire, their qualifications (see Section 2.6), and their support of the Bylaws and Statement of Faith.

The following steps are the process by which the Board of Elders evaluates an individual to discern God's hand upon his life and to discern his qualifications for leadership:

1. Consideration – The Board of Elders must agree that an individual who desires to be an elder has the potential for leadership. This step of consideration may be initiated by the Elders or the nominee (1 Timothy 3:1).
2. Demonstration – The Elders will evaluate a candidate's biblical qualifications, giftedness, spiritual maturity, and leadership skills (1 Timothy 3:1-7).
3. Presentation – After an adequate evaluation has been completed, and if the Elders are in agreement as to the individual's capability of serving as an elder, the congregation will be notified of the candidate's desire. Once the Elders have considered any additional insight provided by the congregation, the Elders will present the candidate to the church body for affirmation (by a two-thirds vote of those members voting at an official meeting) as one whom God has qualified for leadership. Any prospective elders presented to the

congregation for affirmation will be voted on individually by signed written ballots.

Elders may be staff elders (staff pastors employed by the church); or they may be non-staff elders (“lay elders” not employed by the church). Staff pastors will be selected and hired with the understanding that they will automatically be expected to serve as elders. Prospective staff pastors must therefore meet the qualifications for elders.

2.6. Qualifications

Each non-staff member of the Board of Elders must have been a member of CBC for at least a year and must have been demonstrating godly character, faithfulness to the membership covenant, and leadership qualities in ministry. Each elder must meet the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall have the following characteristics:

- male (I Timothy 3:2; though women are gifted by God to serve in various roles in the church, He has clearly stated in His Word that the office of elder is limited to men)
- blameless (above reproach) as a steward of God (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6, 7)
- a one-woman man (i.e. if married, faithful to his wife; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- temperate (sober, vigilant) (I Timothy 3:2)
- sober minded (prudent) (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- of good behavior (orderly, respectable) (I Timothy 3:2)
- given to hospitality (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
- apt to teach (exhort believers and refute false teaching) (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
- not given to wine (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- not violent (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- patient (moderate, forbearing, gentle) (I Timothy 3:3)
- not a brawler (not contentious, not soon angry or quick tempered) (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- not covetous (not a lover of money) (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
- rules well his own house (which embodies proper relationships with all family members in his household as well as the responsible financial management of his family’s needs) (I Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6; I Timothy 5:8)
- his children must willingly follow his leadership, not accused of rebellion to God (Titus 1:6)
- not a novice (not a new convert, has demonstrated growth) (I Timothy 3:6)
- has a good reputation with outsiders (I Timothy 3:7)
- a lover of good (men and things) (Titus 1:8)
- just (Titus 1:8)
- holy (devout) (Titus 1:8)
- self controlled (Titus 1:8)

2.7. Accountability

Elder accountability is first and foremost unto God (Hebrews 13:17; I Peter 5:1-5). It is mandatory, however, that the elders be accountable to one another and to the congregation. If an elder errs, the primary goal should always be spiritual restoration (Galatians 6:1-5). In situations where the erring elder has rendered himself disqualified, the Board of Elders will require his resignation. Accountability between elders and before the people must always be consistent with Matthew 18:15ff and I Timothy 5:19. Church members are encouraged to share ministry opportunities and concerns with the elders. If a church member desires to attend an elders' meeting, he/she must notify the Chairman of the Board. The Elders may still reserve a part of any elders' meeting for confidential business.

2.8. Decisions of the Board of Elders

The Board of Elders will function according to a principle of unanimity. Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration only by consensus of the Board of Elders in a spirit of humility with each elder regarding one another before himself.

- In cases of normal business, a quorum consists of a majority of elders present. However, elders not present should be notified as soon as possible of important decisions, and strong objections will warrant reconsideration of decisions.
- Whenever the matter to be considered concerns large capital expenditures (those not in budget and those not involving designated funds), affirming an elder or deacon, sending of a missionary, approval of the yearly budget, or the amendment to or modification of the Bylaws or the Statement of Faith, a quorum shall consist of all the members of the Board of Elders (with the exception of any elder that is being voted upon) whether voting in person, by email, or by telephone to be later confirmed in writing. In the above decisions, the Board of Elders shall seek the approval of the congregation. A two-thirds (2/3) congregational vote of those members voting is required to approve these matters.
- The Board of Elders may call, or request the dismissal (for reasons other than disqualification as in Section 2.7), of a staff pastor if its decision is unanimous (not including the pastor under consideration) and approved by two-thirds (2/3) of the congregation. In calling a staff pastor, the Board of Elders shall serve as the pastoral search committee. In addition, the Board of Elders may designate other church members to be a part of this committee.

2.9. Elder-appointed Membership Committees

To promote efficient handling of church business, the Board of Elders may appoint various committees from within CBC membership. The committees may exist for a specific time period as directed by the Board of Elders. Some committees may be long-standing (e.g. Finance Committee, Building & Grounds Committee, Missions Committee); other committees may be short-term (e.g. special events). These committees

shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the duties and with the powers specifically delegated by the Board of Elders. The general functions of the committees shall be the following:

- to bring considered recommendations to the Board of Elders concerning ministries
- to provide a wider base of counsel to the Board of Elders in their general oversight of specific ministries

2.10. Offices

A Chairman, Vice-chairman and Secretary shall be chosen by the Board of Elders.

2.11. Terms

All elders are allowed to serve as long as they desire the office, are biblically qualified, and are physically and mentally able. Staff elders will serve on the Elder Board for the duration of their employment by the church.

- Any elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically or mentally incapacitated, if he becomes spiritually disqualified as outlined in Section 2.6, or if his inability to serve is established in the minds of the remainder of the Board of Elders. (See Section 2.8.)

Any erring elder may be removed from office by a unanimous vote by the remaining members for reasons other than those stated in Sections 2.6 and 2.7.

- Any elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman or the Vice-chairman of the Board of Elders. Staff elders who resign from the Board are likewise resigning from their employment by the Church. However, a temporary absence from the Board may be requested and granted by the Board of Elders upon review of the circumstances surrounding the request.

2.12. Delegation of Deacons

The Board of Elders shall nominate Deacons as delineated in Article VIII Section 5.

Section 3. Staff Elders

3.1. Qualifications

As elders, staff pastors must meet the qualifications set forth in Article VIII, Section 2.6 and must clearly possess a “pastor’s heart” (I Peter 5:1-4).

3.2. Responsibilities

The primary task of a pastor is the “equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:11-12). Along with the task of equipping, the pastors will also be responsible with the other elders for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. The Elder Board will determine the specific job descriptions of all individual staff elders.

3.3. Term

The term of a pastor is for an indefinite period of time. Dismissal shall be in accordance with Article VIII, Section 2.8 and, except in cases in which a pastor is rendered disqualified, should carry thirty days notice. A pastor shall give a thirty-day notice prior to his resignation.

The Board shall not consist of more than seventy-five percent pastoral staff.

Section 4. Non-staff Elders

The non-staff Elders, in addition to their other biblical duties, are responsible for facilitating discussion of, and pro-active determination of, salary, benefit packages (i.e., health insurance, pension plans, vacation), and other financial issues related to the staff Elders and other church employees. In the event that there is less than two non-staff Elders, these issues will be determined by the currently serving non-staff Elder along with the Chairman of the Deacons.

Section 5. Deacons

5.1. Purpose

The role of Deacons shall be one of support to the elders. The Deacons will be involved in ministries of mercy, compassionately ministering to the poor and needy in a thoroughly Christian manner. Deacons are to emulate our Lord's example of humble, loving service.

Deacons are to be responsible for ministries such as, but not limited to, the following:

- caring for widows and orphans
- hospitality
- the poor
- special needs
- benevolence
- helps
- encouragement
- stewardship

Deacons will be involved in other ministries as determined by the Board of Elders, such as care of the property, and help with oversight of the church finances (Acts 6:1-7).

5.2. Qualifications

A deacon must have been a member of CBC for a minimum of one year, faithful to the membership covenant, and have the following characteristics (I Timothy 3:8-13):

- male
- grave (respectful)
- not double-tongued
- not given to wine
- not greedy
- holding forth the mystery of the faith
- pure in conscience

- tested and proven
- blameless
- a one-woman man
- rules well his own home

5.3. Selection and Terms

Deacons shall be elected by the elders and brought to the congregation for confirmation. Unless designated otherwise by the Elders, the term of office for a deacon is to be one year with the possibility of being affirmed yearly for another term. The Board of Elders may establish a nominating committee to help with filling key ministry roles, such as that of the deacon.

5.4. Board of Deacons

The Board of Elders shall select the officers of the Board of Deacons. All decisions of the Board of Deacons shall be by simple majority vote.

Section 6. Additional Church Staff

Additional support staff may be hired at the discretion of the Board of Elders with consideration of the current budget.

Article IX CHURCH RECORDS

The church shall keep the following records:

1. minutes of Elders' and Deacons' meetings
2. minutes of the Annual Members Meeting
3. minutes of special called meetings of the congregation
4. rolls of the members in the congregation with the dates of their reception
5. resolutions adopted by the Board of Elders
6. appropriate accounting records
7. the Bylaws and all amendments to them currently in effect.

A member shall be entitled to inspect and copy any of the church records described above, provided the Board of Elders finds that the member has a legitimate purpose. This shall be done at a reasonable time and location, specified by the Board of Elders, and upon reasonable notice of at least 5 business days. The Board of Elders may limit access to any records that contain confidential information about a particular person or persons.

Article X FINANCES

Section 1.

CBC will be supported by the offerings of its people, who give as God prospers and according to His leading (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

Section 2.

The church treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, shall be responsible for financial records and shall provide periodic reports to the Board of Elders. These reports will be made available for viewing upon request.

Section 3.

The annual budget will be prepared by the Board of Elders based upon the financial information provided them by the church treasurer, prior to being submitted to the congregation for approval. The proposed budget will be made available to the congregation a minimum of one week prior to the Members Meeting.

Article XI TEACHERS

All teachers shall submit themselves to, and teach in accordance with, the Statement of Faith and the Bylaws. They shall also be faithful to the membership covenant, and seek to be an example of godly character to the church body.

Article XII MISSIONARIES

All missionaries supported through the church shall submit themselves to the official Missions Policy of the church and shall be approved by the Board of Elders. To help with these approvals, the Board of Elders may appoint a Missions Committee, which shall consist of at least one Elder, one Deacon, and members of the church body (the number of which shall be determined by the Board of Elders and which may vary from time to time).

Article XIII LICENSING AND ORDINATION

Section 1. Licensing

A CBC license, as recognized by the State, is issued by the Board of Elders and approved by the congregation in recognition of a man's call to the ministry. The purpose of the license is to allow a man to perform ecclesiastical duties and sacerdotal functions associated with the ministry (e.g. weddings, funerals). The license indicates that he meets the qualifications of being a "clergyman" in the eyes of the State.

Section 2. Ordination

Ordination by CBC refers to the mutual recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's call to the ministry, preparation as a shepherd, and qualification to serve. The council before which the candidate is examined shall be the CBC Board of Elders or by a panel that the Board of Elders designates. If approved by the Elders, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation for affirmation. Ordination shall be conferred for life so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office and to support the CBC Statement of Faith.

Article XIV ORDINANCES

Section 1. Believer's Baptism

See Article V, Section 2.

Section 2. Lord's Supper

All who have embraced Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and are walking in fellowship with the Lord are welcome to participate in the communion service.

Article XV DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, the assets of CBC will be distributed in accordance with a plan of distribution adopted by the Board of Elders and approved by the congregation (simple majority vote). No part of the assets of CBC shall benefit any pastor, elder, deacon, member, donor or private individual (except for required dissolution expenses). All assets must be distributed to one or more organizations whose purpose is consistent with that of CBC. Dissolution shall be only by three-fourths vote of the voting membership at a special meeting called for that purpose.

Article XVI AMENDMENTS

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the voting members in attendance at any Members Meeting. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the Board of Elders at least four weeks prior to the Members Meeting, at which the vote will be taken, and, if approved by the Board of Elders, must be made available to the membership at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

Addendum

Until the church has at least three qualified elders, the church-planting pastor shall have the authority to lead the church in the place of the elders.

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Amended 12.16.07