

# **CONSTITUTION**

## **CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT CHURCH**

### **PREAMBLE**

"The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity as it emerged in the Protestant Reformation, in the Biblical instruction of the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, and in the great spiritual awakenings of the nineteenth century. These three influences have in large measure shaped its development and are to be borne in mind in seeking to understand its distinctive spirit.

"The Covenant Church adheres to the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation regarding the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine, and conduct. It has traditionally valued the historic confessions of the Christian church, particularly the Apostles' Creed, while at the same time it has emphasized the sovereignty of the Word over all creedal interpretations. It has especially cherished the pietistic restatement of the doctrine of justification by faith as basic to its dual task of evangelism and Christian nurture, the New Testament emphasis upon personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the reality of a fellowship of believers which recognizes but transcends theological differences, and the belief in baptism and the Lord's Supper as divinely ordained sacraments of the church. While the denomination has traditionally practiced the baptism of infants, in conformity with its principle of freedom it has given room to divergent views. The principle of personal freedom, so highly esteemed by the Covenant, is to be distinguished from the individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community."

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the Constitution and Bylaws of the Christ Community Covenant Church of Arvada, Colorado.

### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

The name of this Church shall be the Christ Community Covenant Church of Arvada, Colorado.

### **ARTICLE II - AFFILIATION**

The Christ Community Covenant Church shall be a member of the Evangelical Covenant Church and its Midwest Conference and is pledged to work in harmony with the Covenant and its decisions and to support its programs, policies and institutions.

### **ARTICLE III - CONFESSION OF FAITH**

This Church believes in the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct.

### **ARTICLE IV - MISSION OF THIS CHURCH**

Love God, Love Others and Advance the Kingdom Together.

### **ARTICLE V - MEMBERSHIP**

Membership is granted on application to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope, have been baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, and promise to support the ministry of this Church and to share its fellowship and obligations.

#### **ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS**

The officers of this Church shall be a Chairman, a Vice Chairman, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

#### **ARTICLE VII - CHURCH COUNCIL**

**Section 1.** The general administration of this Church shall be vested in a body known as the Council. The Council shall also serve as a board of elders to supervise the spiritual life of this Church, as stated in I Timothy 3:8-13.

**Section 2.** The Council shall consist of the Officers of this Church (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer) and other members as specified in the Bylaws. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Council.

**Section 3.** The Council shall organize itself in a manner specified in the Bylaws.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - CONGREGATIONAL BUSINESS MEETINGS**

**Section 1.** Regular Business Meetings shall be held at stated intervals, but not less than semi-annually. At the Regular Business Meetings, progress reports shall be provided by the pastoral staff and Council. Financial reports shall be submitted by the Treasurer. Council members for the ensuing year shall be elected by ballot. The Annual Budget shall be approved by the Council and shall be submitted for approval by the congregation.

**Section 2.** Notice of all Regular Business Meetings shall be made to Members not less than two weeks prior to the Regular Business Meeting and shall include the date of the meeting, time of the meeting, and an agenda of business to be transacted.

**Section 3.** Special Business Meetings shall be held when called by the Chairman or a majority of the Council.

**Section 4.** Eligible voters shall include all Active Members sixteen (16) years of age or older, who may vote at any such Business Meeting. All Business Meetings shall be open to all attendees, but only Active Members are eligible to vote.

**Section 5.** Absentee ballots may be used by eligible voters who are unable to attend a regular business meeting for the election of Church Council members and other issues. Requests for these ballots must be made prior to the start of the Church Meeting. Requests for an absentee ballot concerning an annual meeting with a Major Decision such as purchase or sale of property, major financial transactions, calling a pastor, etc. must be made in writing or via email at least two weeks in advance of such meetings. Completed absentee ballots must be returned to the Church Chairperson or their assignee in a sealed envelope before the start of the Business Meeting in which the voting on a Major Decision will occur.

#### **ARTICLE IX - PROPERTY**

In the event of schism within this Church, from which we earnestly pray God to spare us, the title of all Church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group which abides by this Constitution, as determined by the Executive Board of the Conference. In the event of dissolution, the property and all assets of this Church shall become and be the property of the Evangelical Covenant Church and its Midwest Conference.

#### **ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION**

Amendments in harmony with this Constitution and the Model Constitution for local Covenant Churches and not in conflict with Covenant principles and policies may be adopted by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in a Regular Business Meeting of this Church, provided the proposed amendment was presented in written form to the Council for its endorsement and, upon receiving Council's endorsement, provided to the Active Members at the preceding Regular Business Meeting. Articles IX and X can be amended only with the approval of the Executive Board of the Midwest Conference.

#### **ARTICLE XI - DATE OF REVISION**

This revision of the Constitution of this Church has been adopted in January 2018 and shall become effective in July 2018.

## **BYLAWS**

### **CHRIST COMMUNITY COVENANT CHURCH**

#### **ARTICLE I - MEMBERSHIP**

##### **Section 1. Admission Into Membership.**

a) Application for Membership: A written application for membership shall be placed with the Senior Pastor and/or his designee. The applicants should complete the Membership Class, after which they shall appear before at least two Council members to give a confession of their Christian faith, according to Article V of the Constitution. When the Council or a committee appointed by the Council has reviewed their application and received their testimonies favorably, notice of their applications shall be given in writing to the membership.

Any member of this Church against the acceptance of an applicant must notify and appear before the Council within ten (10) days of the notice to the membership and give cause for his dissension, basing his objections on the Word of God. Applicants may then be accepted into membership at the next meeting of the Council or the Council may decide if the application shall be referred to a Business Meeting for further action.

b) Transfer of Membership: Applicants from other Christian churches shall submit letters of transfer, when available, to the Senior Pastor and/or his designee who shall act upon the applications according to the requirements of paragraph a) of this section.

c) Reception of New Members: Whenever possible and appropriate new Members shall be welcomed at a public worship service.

##### **Section 2. Responsibility of Membership**

Every Member shall assume the responsibilities and obligations placed upon them by the Word of God, this Church, the Midwest Conference and the Evangelical Covenant Church.

##### **Section 3. Discipline**

a) Negligent Members: Members who willfully neglect their duties or fail to attend services of this Church regularly or to contribute to its support according to their means shall be admonished by the Council. If this admonition is not heeded, they shall be dealt with as Erring Members.

b) Erring Members: Any member known to err in doctrine or conduct or who willfully violates the Constitution or Bylaws of this Church shall be counseled according to the procedure outlined in Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1. Any member having knowledge of such error shall, in the spirit of Christian love, seek to restore the brother or sister. If he or she does not heed this counsel, the matter shall be brought to the attention of the Council who shall in meekness and gentleness seek to restore them. Discipline shall then be administered in the spirit of Christ with due regard for the welfare of the individual as well as this Church.

c) Dismissal of Members: Dismissal of a member under paragraphs a) and b) of this section must be acted on by this Church, which alone has the authority. A two-thirds vote of those members present and voting at a Business Meeting is necessary for such action.

d) Forfeiture of Rights: A member who has been properly dismissed from this Church or has withdrawn from membership has forfeited all rights and privileges of membership in this Church.

##### **Section 4. Transfer of Membership Out of Christ Community Covenant Church**

Application for transfer of membership shall be provided, if requested.

##### **Section 5. Regular Attendees**

Regular Attendees shall be enrolled by this Church as a part of its total constituency. This Church and its pastor(s) shall serve them in all their spiritual needs, and they shall be encouraged to consider this as their church home. They shall be kept informed of the activities of this Church.

## **Section 6. Inactive Members**

The name of any member who, in the opinion of the Church Council, fails to meet the responsibilities of membership as outlined in Article I, Section 3 of these Bylaws for a period of six (6) months shall be placed on an "Inactive Membership" list. Members on the Inactive Membership List shall not have the right of vote while on that list. Exceptions to this policy are such as: Regularly enrolled in college outside of the Denver metropolitan area, those stationed in military service away from the Denver metropolitan area, those physically unable to attend Church services, etc. Inactive Members that return to this Church may be removed from the Inactive Membership list and reinstated as Active Members.

## **ARTICLE II - PASTOR(S)**

### **Section 1. Qualifications**

The pastor(s) of this Church shall meet the New Testament requirements of their position(s) (I Timothy 3:2-7) and, if qualified, shall be members of the Covenant Ministerium and follow the Rules of the Board of the Ministry. All pastoral staff, whether full time or part time shall, by virtue of their call, be members of this Church. Full-time pastors shall be called at a Regular or Special Business Meeting upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and approval of the Council. Termination of employment of pastoral staff may occur upon recommendation of the Senior Pastor and approval of the Council. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Council and all committees of this Church.

### **Section 2. Duties**

The pastor(s) shall devote themselves to the service of this Church, preaching and teaching the Word of God, administering the sacraments, and faithfully giving themselves to pastoral work. The Senior Pastor shall provide this Church with an accurate record of their pastoral acts and present a written report to the Annual Business Meeting. As chief of the Church staff, the Senior Pastor shall practice good administrative procedures and cooperate with the Council. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex officio member of the Council and all committees of this Church.

### **Section 3. Cooperation**

The pastor(s) shall, both in word and precept, work in harmony with the Covenant, the Midwest Conference, and other Covenant ministers.

### **Section 4. Call**

The Senior Pastor shall be called at a Regular or Special Business Meeting, the purpose of which shall be announced two (2) weeks in advance. The Senior Pastor shall be nominated by a Pastoral Search Committee and approved by the Council. The Pastoral Search Committee shall be elected by a Business Meeting. It shall be representative of the congregation and have five (5) to nine (9) elected members and shall work in consultation with the Midwest Conference Superintendent. Church Officers shall be ex officio members of the Pastoral Search Committee. The Senior Pastor shall be called by ballot with a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members required for a call. The call shall be for an indefinite period of time with a minimum of six (6) weeks notice required by this Church or the Senior Pastor for termination of his pastoral duties.

### **Section 5. Conclusion of Ministry**

Any request for the conclusion of the Senior Pastor's ministry shall be considered by the Council, and upon their approval, then the recommendation must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of members.

### **Section 6. Charges Against a Pastor**

If the Senior Pastor or any member of the pastoral staff shall err in doctrine or conduct, it shall be

handled first as an Erring Member according to Article I, Section 3, b) "Erring Members." Second, if there then remain any charges, those charges shall be submitted in writing to the Council charging a pastor with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Covenant (Matthew 18:15-18) and shall not be considered unless supported by the written testimony of three (3) witnesses. If, in the judgment of the Council, they err in doctrine or conduct, the case shall be referred to the Midwest Conference Superintendent. The Superintendent shall confer with the Covenant Executive Secretary of the Ministry. These two officers shall confer and determine the order of responsibility in pursuing the matter according to the Rules and Regulations of the Board of the Ministry of the Covenant regarding discipline prior to further action by this Church.

### **Section 7. Other Staff**

Personnel other than full time pastoral staff shall be recommended by the Senior Pastor or his designee for employment and approved by the Council and shall be under the supervision of the Senior Pastor or his designee.

Members of the church staff shall serve this Church in various capacities to perform duties in the area of their employment under the supervision of the Senior Pastor or his designee. Each person on the staff shall plan and lead programs in his area of responsibility consistent with the ministry of this Church; shall be responsible to recruit, train, motivate and support lay persons to work in his area of ministry; may establish and chair committees to advance the work in his particular area of ministry. The selection of committee members is the responsibility of the affected staff member.

## **ARTICLE III - OFFICERS**

### **Section 1. Qualifications**

Officers of this Church shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of this Church, financially and otherwise.

### **Section 2. Duties**

a) Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside at all Business Meetings of this Church and meetings of the Council. Care shall be taken to confer with the Senior Pastor in preparing the agenda for such Business Meetings and shall utilize the counsel that the Senior Pastor may give by virtue of their training, experience and calling. The Chairperson shall be an ex officio member of all committees of this Church. They are authorized to sign all corporate documents of this Church.

b) Vice Chairperson: The Vice Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson and during their absence assume that office and its duties.

c) Secretary: The Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Business Meetings of this Church and meetings of the Council. The Secretary is authorized to sign all corporate documents of this Church.

d) Treasurer: The Treasurer will work closely with the Bookkeeper (a hired staff position) to review and track the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer shall preside at all meetings of the Finance Committee and shall present a report of the financial condition of the church at each regular Business Meeting. The Treasurer shall be an ex officio member of the Finance Committee and is authorized to sign all corporate documents of this Church.

## **ARTICLE IV - CHURCH COUNCIL**

### **Section 1. Qualifications**

Members of the Council shall be members in good standing who are active in the support of the total ministry of this Church, financially or otherwise. The Council shall be elected from members meeting those qualifications shown in I Timothy 3:1-16. A vacancy on the Council occurring between the Regular Business

Meetings at which the Council is elected shall be filled by appointment by the Council members then in office, the term to expire upon election of a Council member at the next Regular Business Meeting.

## **Section 2. Duties**

Council members shall function as elders within the church and perform duties in accordance with 1 Timothy 3:2, 5:17 and Acts 20:28-31. Council provides spiritual oversight by maintaining the vision of the church and ensuring that it is consistent with scriptural doctrine and teachings. Council is also responsible for overseeing the church budget, facilities, and the Senior Pastor.

## **Section 3. Size, Composition, Election and Tenure**

a) The Council shall consist of ten (10) members, and may include both men and women, in addition to the Senior Pastor who is an ex officio member.

b) At the Annual Business Meeting, Council members shall be elected for terms of three (3) years. They shall be elected by the Church and shall serve no more than two (2) consecutive terms. Any Council member who has served the term limit will be eligible for re-election after a lapse of one (1) year. Council members running unopposed must receive a two-thirds (2/3) approval of those members voting. The members of the Council will determine which of their number will serve in the officer roles described in Article III following each election period. The names of the officers will be published for the congregation. The Council shall have the freedom to re-assign responsibilities within its membership when such changes are deemed by the Council to be in the best interest of the Church.

## **ARTICLE V - COMMITTEES**

Committees are designated standing, administrative, or special.

### **Section 1. Standing Committees**

The following Standing Committees shall be responsible to and regularly report to the Council and shall exercise such duties, obligations, rights and responsibilities as the Council may prescribe in writing from time to time. Chairmen of Standing Committees must be members of this Church, but do not need to be members of the Council.

a) Executive Committee: The Executive Committee, consisting of the Officers and the Senior Pastor of this Church, shall strive to promote effective working relations and communication in this Church. The Executive Committee shall also review goals for the Senior Pastor, evaluate the performance of the Senior Pastor annually, and recommend the compensation for the Senior Pastor to the Finance Committee. This Committee shall have no legislative power but shall function in an advisory capacity to the Council, unless specific responsibilities shall have been assigned to it by the Council.

b) Finance Committee: The Finance Committee shall consist of the Treasurer, as an ex officio member and Chairperson, a member of the church staff, and at least two members appointed by Council. This Committee shall provide oversight to ensure compliance with the financial policies and procedures of this Church and present recommendations to Council for approval. This Committee shall provide assistance to the Treasurer in the performance of their responsibilities. The Finance Committee shall prepare and present to the Council a suggested annual church budget.

### **Section 2. Special Committees and Task Forces**

Special Committees or Task Forces for specific purposes may be appointed by the pastoral staff or the Council according to need. Special Committees or Task Forces shall be terminated by the pastoral staff or Council when it is determined that the Special Committee is no longer required.

## **ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS**

### **Section 1. Public Services**

Public services shall be conducted regularly on Sundays and, when deemed appropriate, on weekdays for worship, the preaching and teaching of God's Word, and prayer.

### **Section 2. Celebrating the Sacraments**

The sacrament of Holy Communion shall be celebrated regularly. The sacrament of Baptism shall be celebrated in keeping with Covenant policies and according to the needs of the constituency.

### **Section 3. Congregational Business Meetings**

Business Meetings shall be held regularly but not less than semi-annually, as specified in Article VIII of the Constitution. Special Business Meetings may be called by the Chairman of this Church in consultation with the Senior Pastor or by a majority of the Council.

### **Section 4. Council and Committee Meetings**

Regular meetings of the Council shall be held not less than monthly. Committees and Task Forces shall meet not less than at a frequency specified by the Council. Special meetings of the Council, Committees and Task Forces may be called by their respective Chairmen.

### **Section 5. Organization Meetings**

Meetings, finances, budgets and activities of the organizations of this Church shall be planned and conducted regularly under the direction and supervision of the Council.

## **ARTICLE VII - GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **Section 1. Quorum**

- a) Fifteen (15) percent of the Active Membership present and voting at a Business Meeting properly called shall constitute a quorum.
- b) The quorum for the Council, all Committees and Task Force meetings shall be a majority of their respective memberships.

### **Section 2. Definitions**

- a) "Ex officio as used in the Constitution and Bylaws of this Church shall mean "by virtue of office." Ex officio members have, in every respect, the same privileges, duties, obligations, rights, and responsibilities as elected members including, but not limited to, being counted for purposes of a quorum and voting rights. The sole difference between an elected member and an ex officio member is the method of selection to the position.

## **ARTICLE VIII – FINANCIAL AUDIT**

The financial statements and records of this Church shall be audited biannually by an independent certified public accountant and the report of such audits shall be approved by the Council and presented to the Membership of this Church at its next business meeting. An additional independent audit can be ordered by the Council at the recommendation of the Finance Committee. All organizations operating as a part of this Church, having separate accounting for funds, shall be financially audited by an independent Certified Public Accountant approved by Council.

## **ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these Bylaws not in conflict with the Constitution may be adopted at any Regular

Business Meeting or at a Special Business Meeting called for that purpose, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Active Members present and voting, provided that such amendments have been presented in writing to the Council for its endorsement and, upon receiving Council's endorsement, provided to the Active Members at a preceding Regular Business Meeting.

#### **ARTICLE X - DATE OF REVISION**

This revision of the Bylaws of this Church has been adopted in July 2021 and shall become effective July 18, 2021.