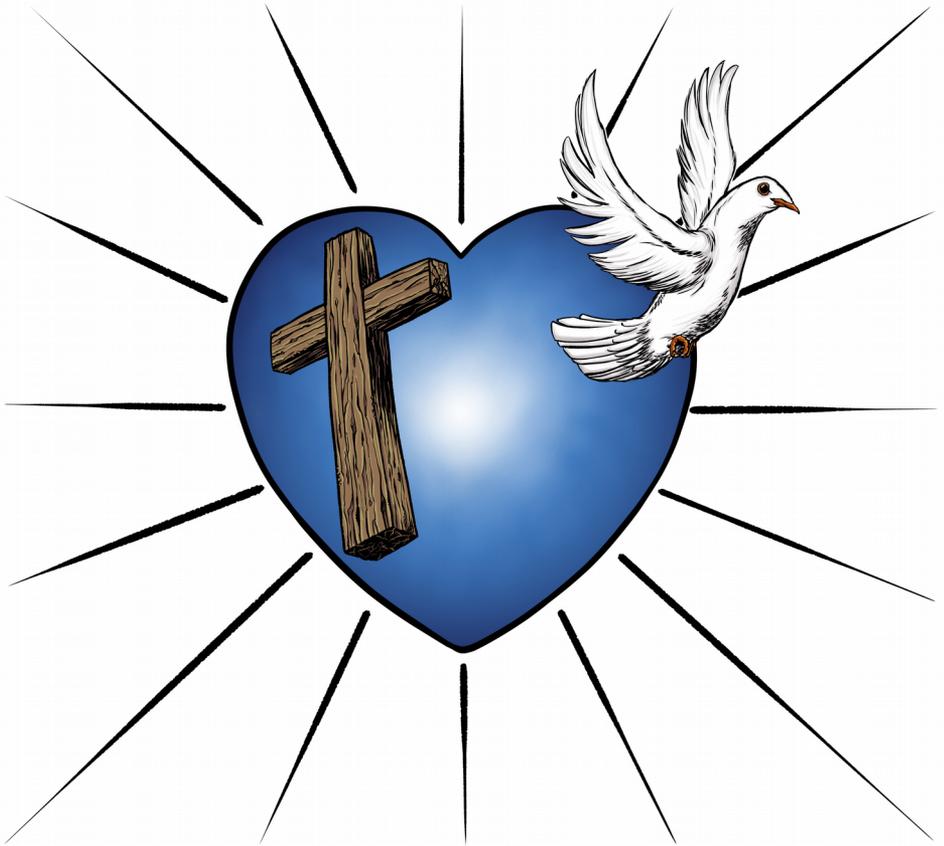


THE HEART OF CHRIST CHURCH CONSTITUTION/BYLAWS



Approved
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1 **CONSTITUTION OF THE HEART OF CHRIST CHURCH**
2
3
4
5

6 **PREAMBLE**
7

8 This local body, the members of The Heart of Christ Church, does hereby
9 establish the following articles, to which we willingly submit ourselves.
10

11 **ARTICLE I**
12

13 **THE NAME**
14

15 **Section 1.** This local assembly of Believers in Jesus Christ shall be known
16 as The Heart of Christ Church (THOCC), located in Lebanon County,
17 Pennsylvania.
18

19 **Section 2.** This Corporation shall have a seal bearing the name and date
20 of incorporation.
21

22 **ARTICLE II**
23

24 **OUR MISSION**
25

26 The Heart of Christ Church exists to transform lives to the heart of Jesus
27 Christ.
28

29 **OUR VISION**
30

31 The heart of Christ transforms lives through a personal relationship with
32 Him. We worship the Triune God, and take the message of salvation in Jesus
33 Christ into the world through teaching, prayer, and service to others so that all
34 may come to Him.
35

36 **ARTICLE III**
37

38 **STATEMENT OF FAITH**
39

40 This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible
41 itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final
42 authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is
43 the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine,
44 practice, policy, and discipline; the Pastor and Board of Elders are the Church's
45 final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.
46

47 **Section 1. Membership**
48

49 The membership of this Church shall be composed of individuals who are
50 believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and affirm the tenets of The Heart of Christ
51 Church Constitution, and who offer evidence by their confession and their
52 conduct, that they are living in accord with their affirmations and this

53 Constitution, and are actively pursuing and continuing in a vital fellowship
54 with the Lord, Jesus Christ. The membership of this Church shall have final
55 authority in all matters of church governance, as set forth and described in this
56 Constitution.

57

58 **Section 2. The God Head**

59

60 We believe there is one true God who is Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
61 as ascribed in the Canonical Christian Bible. He exists in three (3) persons,
62 called the Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1; John
63 1:1-3, 14:26)

64

65 **Section 2.1. God the Father**

66

67 We believe in God the Father, who is supreme over all! As Creator and
68 Sustainer of all, it is in Him that we live and move, and have our being. His
69 holiness is absolute, His sovereign dealings and choices are just, and His
70 character is immutable. He is the God of love, mercy, grace and goodness. He
71 is: self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal being. He is the God of wrath, justice,
72 and perfect wisdom. He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. He
73 seeks worshippers to worship Him in spirit and in truth. Out of his love, He gave
74 His only begotten Son to redeem the world. (Isaiah 6:3; Lamentations 3:22-23;
75 Malachi 3:6; John 3:16, 4:24; Acts 17:24-8; Romans 1:18, 11:33-36; 2
76 Corinthians 1:3; Hebrews 12:29; 1 John 1:5, 4:8)

77

78 **Section 2.2. God the Son**

79

80 God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and
81 born of the virgin Mary. Being at the same time very God and very man, He
82 fulfilled the Law and Word of the Prophets. He was crucified, died for our sins,
83 arose from the dead, and set us free from the law of sin and death. He
84 ascended into heaven, where He sits in authority at God the Father's right
85 hand, and reigns as the Head of His Body, the Church. His return is certain
86 and imminent, at which time He will judge the living and the dead. Jesus
87 Christ is the only way to salvation. (Isaiah 53; Luke 1:27-35; John 12:37-41,
88 14:6; Hebrews 8:1; Colossians 1:20-22)

89

90 **Section 2.3. God the Holy Spirit**

91

92 We believe that the Holy Spirit, though always present from all eternity,
93 took up His abode in the world in a special sense on the day of Pentecost, and
94 now indwells every believer. The Holy Spirit is the effective agent in our
95 conviction of sin, regeneration and sanctification. The Holy Spirit is the
96 church's life and witnessing power. He equips the individual and church for
97 practical, efficient, and joyous proclamation of the Gospel message. By His
98 gifts, He enables the believer to build and increase the church, achieving the
99 common good to glorify the Son. (Genesis 1:2; John 14:15-17; 2 Thessalonians
100 2:13; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 2:9-13)

101

102 **Section 3. Salvation**

103

104 Salvation, a free gift of God's grace, is received by faith through believing in
105 Jesus Christ's death and resurrection. God is faithful to forgive when we

106 confess and repent of our sins and acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord. We
107 acknowledge the need for each believer to make his/her Christian faith their
108 own. (Romans 3:23, 5:8-11, 6:23; Philippians 2:9-11)

109
110 We believe that, owing to universal death through sin, no one can enter the
111 Kingdom of God apart from being born again (saved). There is no work of man
112 whatsoever that can accomplish salvation, no church, no baptism, no
113 ordinance, however administered, that can in any way help a sinner take even
114 one step toward heaven. (John 3:3-7; Romans 3:20-24; Ephesians 2:8-9).

115
116 We believe that the sinner's redemption (purchase from sin) was
117 accomplished solely by the shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made
118 to be sin, and was made a curse for us, dying in our behalf on the cross.
119 (Romans 3:25, 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

120
121 We teach that salvation is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which
122 the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is
123 instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit
124 through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24; 1 Peter 1:23) when
125 the repentant sinner responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation.
126 Genuine salvation manifests fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in
127 righteous attitudes and conduct. Godly works are the proper evidence and fruit
128 of salvation (1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to
129 the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life
130 through faithful obedience to the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians
131 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10). This obedience causes the believer to be
132 increasingly conformed to the image of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians
133 3:18).

134 135 **Section 4. The Bible**

136
137 We believe the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God. Alone, and in its
138 entirety (the Canonical 66 Books), in its original autographs, is the infallible
139 and authoritative perfect reflection of God Almighty. It is the true and proper
140 Word of God and the ultimate rule and measure of the whole Christian faith
141 and doctrine. We affirm the faith of the historic Church as expressed in the
142 Apostles' and Nicene Creeds and as expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism. (2
143 Samuel 7:28; Matthew 5:8; John 17:17; Romans 3:4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2
144 Peter 1:21, 3:2; Hebrews 1:1-2; Jude; Revelations 22:18-19)

145 146 **Section 5. Prayer**

147
148 We believe in the power of individual and corporate prayer, as exemplified
149 by our Lord Jesus Christ. (Matthew 6:15-13; 26:40-41)

150 151 **Section 6. Marriage and Sexuality**

152
153 We believe that term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is the
154 ceremonial, physical, emotional, and spiritual union ordained by God which
155 joins one man (born male) and one woman (born female) in a single, exclusive
156 union, as delineated in Scripture. (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:21-24, Mark 10:
157 6-8) Furthermore, any other relationship termed as "marriage" outside of this
158 Biblical definition is an abomination unto God as stated in His Word and will

159 not be sanctioned in accordance to the Scriptures. (Leviticus 18:22-23,
160 Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:26-27)

161
162 We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man
163 and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has
164 commanded that no intimate sexual activity be committed outside of a
165 marriage between a man and a woman. (Genesis 1:27-28, Genesis 2:24,
166 Hebrews 13:4)

167
168 We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery,
169 fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or
170 any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is
171 sinful and offensive to God. (Genesis 1:27-28, Leviticus 18:22-23, Leviticus
172 20:13, Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

173
174 We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church
175 as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church
176 members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the
177 church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree
178 to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves
179 accordingly. (2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12)

180
181 We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess
182 and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
183 We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness,
184 respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed
185 toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture
186 nor the doctrines of the Church. (Ezekiel 18:30-32, Acts 3:19, Acts 17:30-31, 1
187 Peter 4:3-8)

188 189 **Section 7. Sanctity of Human Life**

190
191 We believe in the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.
192 We do not believe euthanasia is an option for end of life issues. (Psalm 139:13-
193 16; Isaiah 44:24; Luke 1:41)

194 195 **Section 8. Recognition of Sacraments**

196
197 We recognize the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper,
198 understanding that these rites do not instill salvation. (1 Corinthians 11:23-26;
199 Matthew 28:18-20)

200 201 **Section 9. Attitude Toward Civil Government**

202
203 We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of
204 three basic institutions: (1) the home; (2) the Church; and (3) the state. Every
205 person is subject to these three (3) authorities, but all (including the
206 authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word.
207 God has given each institution specific Biblical responsibilities and balanced
208 those results with the understanding that no institution has the right to
209 infringe upon the other. The home, the Church, and the state are equal and
210 sovereign in their respective Biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under
211 God.

212
213 We believe that civil government is ordained of God for the welfare of
214 human society to promote and protect the good and to restrain and punish
215 evil. Therefore, we consider it the duty of Christians to pray for rulers and for
216 those that are in authority over them and to give due loyalty, respect, and
217 obedience to them. However, where the demands of civil law would militate
218 against the supreme law and will of God, Christians should obey God rather
219 than man. (Daniel 4:17; Matthew 22:17-21; Acts 4:19, 5:29, 23:5; Romans 13:1-
220 7; 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-14)

221 ARTICLE IV

222 **STRUCTURE**

223
224
225
226 The Heart of Christ Church is composed of a Pastor(s), a Board of Elders, a
227 Board of Deacons, a Congregation of Communicant Members, a Christian
228 Education Department, and all such additional ministries and teams as shall
229 be recognized, established by, and responsible to the Boards of Elders and
230 Deacons.

231 ARTICLE V

232 **MEMBERS**

233 **Section 1. Application**

234
235
236
237
238 Any person(s) desiring to unite with The Heart of Christ Church shall
239 advise a member of the Board of Elders of their intent and subsequently
240 submit the request in writing to said Board on forms provided by the Church
241 for this purpose. Applicants shall meet with members of the Board of Elders
242 during a New Members Class at which time there shall be opportunity for
243 mutual inquiry and a review of the responsibilities and privileges of
244 membership of The Heart of Christ Church. The names of persons applying for
245 membership, and who have met with the Elders, will be publicly announced to
246 the Congregation two (2) weeks prior to being presented to the Congregation
247 for vote of membership. Any Member who may be opposed to the acceptance
248 of an applicant should contact one of the Elders to share their concern before
249 the Congregational vote.

250 **Section 2. Qualifications**

251
252
253 Persons who have trusted Christ as their personal savior, who have been
254 baptized, and who evidence a sincere desire to live in obedience to Christ as
255 outlined in the Scriptures, shall be eligible for consideration for membership in
256 The Heart of Christ Church. Applicants are qualified providing they are in
257 agreement with, and are willing to subscribe in writing to, (a) the doctrinal
258 position held by this Church, (b) are free from membership in oath bound
259 religious and/or social secret organizations, (c) are willing to be governed by
260 the Constitution of The Heart of Christ Church, and (d) meet all other
261 requirements outlined in The Heart of Christ Church Constitution.

262
263 It is the duty of all Members to take an active part in the functions of this
264 Church for the glory of God and the uplifting of mankind. This includes, but is

265 not limited to, regular attendance at Divine Worship and study services;
266 fervent prayer for the welfare of this Church; daily devotions in the home;
267 careful attention to the religious training of youth; liberal financial and moral
268 support towards the maintenance and benevolent undertakings of this Church;
269 obedience to her established law and authority; untiring zeal in bringing the
270 un-churched under her influence; a spirit of Christian Fellowship towards all
271 Members; and participation in the ministries of the Congregation where ever
272 possible.
273

274 **Section 3. Approval of Members**

275
276 Persons applying for membership must be approved by unanimous vote by
277 the Elders who were present during the New Member's Class, providing the
278 applicants meet all the requirements outlined in this Constitution.
279

280 Persons applying for membership, who have met with the Board of Elders
281 as outlined under Article V Section 1, Application and who have been
282 approved, shall present themselves at a worship service designated by the
283 Board of Elders, at which service the applicants shall publicly affirm their
284 membership commitment and be publicly affirmed as Members by a two
285 thirds (2/3) vote of those Members present.
286

287 **Section 4. Membership Status**

288
289 This Congregation consists of the Pastor(s) and other Christ believing
290 persons who have been admitted into its fellowship under the guidelines of this
291 Constitution. This Congregation recognizes three (3) groups of Members:
292 Communicant Members, Inactive Members and Child Members.
293

294 **Section 4.1. Communicant Members**

295
296 Adult persons who have been duly received into this community of faith
297 shall be Communicant Members of this Congregation and shall be entitled to
298 all its rights and privileges. Communicant Members of this Church shall have
299 the right to: voice and vote on Congregational matters at Congregational
300 Meetings, hold an elected or appointed office in the Church or an agency of the
301 Church, teach or serve in any instructional program of the Church, serve on
302 any standing Ministry/Team of the Church, or participate in any pulpit
303 ministry of the Church.
304

305 Communicant Members cannot be removed from membership except by
306 death, certificate of transfer, voluntary withdrawal, or disciplinary action as
307 described in this Constitution (ref. Article VIII).
308

309 Communicant Members shall be subject to annual review by the Board of
310 Elders as Communicant or Inactive Members. Communicant Members are
311 those who have received the Holy Sacrament of Communion at least twice
312 within the year and have attended worship services regularly (two thirds (2/3)
313 of all available formal services) within the past year and have in the judgment
314 of the Pastor and Board of Elders reasonably fulfilled the duties of membership
315 defined within this Constitution, unless hindered by sickness or other
316 circumstances beyond their control.
317

318 All Communicant Members are eligible to serve on the Board of Elders
319 and/or Board of Deacons after they have served faithfully as Communicant
320 Members for a period of two (2) years.

321

322 **Section 4.2. Inactive Members**

323

324 Persons placed on the Inactive Members list shall be notified by letter. They
325 shall not be permitted to vote at Congregational Meetings, be nominated for or
326 elected to office or hold any position within the ministries of this Church.

327 Persons placed on the inactive role shall be reviewed on a six-month interval.

328 After two (2) consecutive inactive six-month intervals said persons shall be
329 removed from membership in this Church and subsequently ineligible for
330 membership for a period of two (2) years.

331

332 Inactive Members returning prior to official removal from the roles for a
333 period of ninety (90) days, and after having attended the services of this
334 Church on a regular basis for at least that ninety (90) day period may be
335 considered a Communicant Member at the unanimous discretion of the Board
336 of Elders.

337

338 **Section 4.3. Child Members**

339

340 All children whose parent or parents are Communicant Members of this
341 Church shall be Child Members of the Church entitled to participation in the
342 ministries, instruction, encouragement, and admonition of The Heart of Christ
343 Church. All Child Members shall have the opportunity to become

344 Communicant Members only after proper instruction, baptism (if not done
345 prior), application and subsequent confirmation into this Church. Child

346 Members become Non-Members after the age of sixteen (16) if above
347 requirements are not met.

348

349 **Section 5. Charter Membership**

350

351 Persons associating with The Heart of Christ Church prior to its official date
352 of incorporation will be recognized as Charter Members (Communicant

353 Members) and shall be expected to meet the membership qualifications within
354 this Constitution. Persons associating with this Church after the date of

355 incorporation must apply for membership by means of the procedures
356 specified above.

357

358 **ARTICLE VI**

359

360 **ELDERS**

361

362 **Section 1. Spiritual Council**

363

364 The Board of Elders (consisting of current, active Elders) along with the
365 Senior Pastor, constitute the Spiritual Council and are responsible for the
366 spiritual welfare of this Church. Elders shall evidence those spiritual and social
367 qualifications and graces outlined in the Scriptures for the office of Elder. (1
368 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)

369

370 The Board of Elders shall be the ruling body of this Church in all spiritual

371 matters and in the general oversight of the work and ministry of all Church
372 ministries, officers, staff, individual Members, and all dependent branch
373 churches and other peripheral ministries.
374

375 The Board of Elders shall be responsible for providing direction and
376 guidance to the leadership of this Church. They are vested with the authority
377 to establish those programs, or take those corrective actions which they deem
378 necessary, in order to maintain a vibrant New Testament Church, in
379 accordance with the teaching of Scriptures and the provisions in the
380 Constitution of THOCC.
381

382 The Board of Elders shall administer discipline as the representatives of the
383 Congregation. Discipline shall in all cases be administered after the pattern of
384 Matthew 18:15-17 and in accordance with this Constitution (ref. Article VIII,
385 Discipline).
386

387 **Section 2. Organization of Board of Elders**

388
389 Prospective Elders are recommended by the Board of Elders (Titus 1:5; Acts
390 14:23; Numbers 11:16-17) and shall be affirmed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority
391 vote of Communicant Members at a Congregational Meeting. A husband and
392 wife cannot both serve as active members of the Board of Elders at the same
393 time. Elders shall serve until they request to be relieved of active Spiritual
394 Council ministry or are removed through disciplinary action by the Board of
395 Elders as ascribed in Article VIII Section 3. The number of Elders serving at
396 any given time shall be determined by the Board of Elders.
397

398 A President, Vice-President, and Secretary of this Church shall be chosen
399 annually from within the Board of Elders by the members of the Board and
400 shall be affirmed by a majority vote of Communicant Members at a duly called
401 Congregational Meeting. The Senior Pastor shall preside during the
402 appointment and approval of the officers.
403

404 The President shall conduct all meetings of the Board of Elders, joint
405 meetings of the Board of Elders and Board of Deacons, and all Congregational
406 Meetings, except when directed otherwise by the Board of Elders. In the
407 absence of the President, the Vice-President shall assume this responsibility.
408

409 The Secretary shall maintain an accurate record of all business transactions
410 of the Board of Elders at all regular and special meetings of the Board and all
411 Congregational Meetings. In the absence of the Secretary, the President shall
412 appoint a Communicant Member of this Church to assume this responsibility.
413

414 A majority of active serving Elders must be present to constitute a quorum
415 at each called Board of Elders Meeting in order to conduct business. At the
416 joint Board of Elders and Deacons Meetings a majority of active serving Elders
417 and a majority of active serving Deacons must be present to constitute a
418 quorum in order to conduct business.
419

420 **Section 3. Responsibilities**

421
422 The responsibilities of the Board of Elders shall include but not be limited to
423 the following activities:

- 424 1. The appointment or hiring, training and oversight of all ministries,
425 Church Officers, and Church Staff.
- 426 2. The establishment and implementation of Church goals and
427 objectives.
- 428 3. The development of Church policy and the approval of all policies
429 developed by Church ministries.
- 430 4. The interviewing of all prospective members and annual review of all
431 Communicant Members.
- 432 5. The establishment and maintenance of all job descriptions.
- 433 6. The approval of speakers, teachers, and any special features in any
434 service(s) of the Church as deemed necessary by the Board of Elders.
- 435 7. The ordination of those Communicant Members seeking to enter
436 pastoral ministry. Believing that God calls specific individuals from
437 within the Congregation to serve Him in ordained pastoral ministry,
438 the Elders shall carefully review such persons over a minimum of two
439 (2) years. These individuals shall have shown prowess in ministry
440 according to 1 Timothy 4, 5:22 and 2 Timothy 4:1-5 and be a
441 graduate of an accredited bible college and/or Theological Seminary.
442 After prayerful consideration, the Elders can recommend ordination
443 and appoint an Ordination Council. Upon recommendation of
444 ordination from the Ordination Council, the Elders shall arrange an
445 Ordination Service.
- 446 8. The development, approval, and signatory authority of all contractual
447 agreements between the Church, the Pastoral and Church Staff,
448 others providing service to the Church, and articles of incorporation.
- 449 9. The calling of Congregational Meetings.
- 450 10. The creating of new Pastoral and/or Church Staff positions and the
451 filling of any open or newly created positions in accordance with the
452 provisions of this Constitution.
- 453 11. The evaluation of all ministries and administrative functions of the
454 Church.
- 455 12. The recognizing and authorizing to a commissioned ministry of the
456 Church those Members whom God has called to a specific ministry
457 within the Church or as an extension of the Church's outreach that
458 does not require ordination. This action shall follow careful
459 consideration and prayer. Commissioning provides authorization to
460 the individual to perform duties necessary to and for the specific
461 ministry. Such Commissioned Ministers shall be responsible to the
462 Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders and shall be reviewed
463 annually.
- 464

465 The Board of Elders shall meet as often as deemed necessary for the
466 purpose of conducting Church business. They shall meet at least one (1) time
467 quarterly with the Board of Deacons to discuss mutual concerns.

468 **ARTICLE VII**

469 **DEACONS**

470 **Section 1. Board of Deacons**

471
472
473 The Board of Deacons (consisting of current, active Deacons) are
474 responsible for the physical welfare of this Church. Deacons shall evidence
475
476

477 those spiritual and social qualifications and graces outlined in the Scriptures
478 for the office of Deacon. (1 Timothy 3:8-18) The Board of Deacons shall be
479 primarily responsible for the proper stewardship of all Church property(ies)
480 which shall include land, buildings and contents, and vehicles.
481

482 **Section 2. Organization of Board of Deacons**

483

484 Prospective Deacons are recommended by the Board of Deacons and
485 appointed by the Board of Elders (Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; Numbers 11:16-17) and
486 shall be affirmed by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of Communicant
487 Members at a Congregational Meeting. A husband and wife cannot both serve
488 as active members of the Board of Deacons at the same time. Deacons shall
489 serve until they request to be relieved of active Board of Deacons
490 responsibilities or are removed through disciplinary action by the Board of
491 Elders as ascribed in Article VIII Section 3.
492

493 The Board of Deacons shall consist of at least five (5) members. Members
494 shall be added as deemed necessary by the Board of Deacons in accordance
495 with the provisions of this Constitution.
496

497 A Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary of the Board shall be chosen
498 from within the Board of Deacons annually by the members of the Board. The
499 Senior Pastor shall preside during the appointment of Board Officers. The
500 Chairman of the Board of Deacons shall conduct all meetings of said Board. In
501 the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman shall assume this
502 responsibility.
503

504 The Secretary shall maintain an accurate record of all business transactions
505 of the Board of Deacons at all regular and special meetings of the Board. In the
506 absence of the Secretary, the Chairman shall appoint a member of the Board to
507 assume this responsibility.
508

509 A majority of active serving Deacons must be present to constitute a
510 quorum at each called Board of Deacons Meeting in order to conduct business.
511

512 **Section 3. Responsibilities**

513

514 The responsibilities of the Board of Deacons shall include the following:

- 515 1. The management of all Church property(ies), buildings and contents,
516 and vehicles as it relates to the purchase, sale, insurance, and
517 maintenance of same.
- 518 2. The administration of the Church policy on the proper use of the
519 Church property(ies), buildings and contents, and vehicles.
- 520 3. The appointment of all Support Staff whose responsibility(ies)
521 directly relate to the maintenance of Church property(ies), buildings
522 and contents, and the maintenance and operation of Church vehicles
523 and equipment.
- 524 4. The administration of the finances of the Church in accordance with
525 the approved Financial Policy and Constitution of this Church.
- 526 5. The administration of the budgeting process, except budget approval
527 which shall be the responsibility of the Board of Elders, in
528 consultation with the Board of Deacons as required.
- 529 6. The submittal of recommendations to the Congregation for approval

- 530 of the purchase or sale of Church property(ies) and any other major
531 expense related to the building of a new facility(ies) and/or the
532 expansion or renovation of existing facility(ies).
- 533 7. The establishment and implementation of a program to care for the
534 special needs of the Congregation in accordance with established
535 policy approved by the Board of Elders.
 - 536 8. The appointment of any interim Team(s) which is required to
537 facilitate the work of the Board of Deacons. Team(s) which are
538 responsible for non-budgeted major expenditures related to the
539 physical property of the Church shall have a representative from the
540 Board of Elders and Congregation.
 - 541 9. The administering of the ordinances of the Church as requested by
542 the Senior Pastor and the Board of Elders.
 - 543 10. The signatory authority of the Board of Deacons shall include, but
544 not be limited, to the following:
 - 545 a. Vehicle titles
 - 546 b. Invoices in accordance with the most recent Financial Policy
 - 547 c. Mortgages
 - 548 d. Permits related to facilities
 - 549 e. Vendor Contracts for Equipment or Equipment Services
 - 550 f. Sales Agreements
 - 551 g. Leases of Equipment
 - 552 h. Personal Loans to the Church
 - 553 11. Additionally, members of the Board of Deacons shall support the
554 work of the Board of Elders in providing spiritual guidance to the
555 Congregation and other specific related responsibilities as requested
556 by the Board of Elders.
557

558 The Board of Deacons shall meet as often as deemed necessary for the
559 purpose of conducting church business. They shall meet at least one (1) time
560 quarterly with the Board of Elders to discuss mutual concerns. The Board of
561 Deacons shall be directly accountable to the Board of Elders.
562

563 ARTICLE VIII

564 **DISCIPLINE**

565 **Section 1. Authority for Discipline**

566
567
568
569 Christian discipline in The Heart of Christ Church shall be under the
570 authority of Biblical directives that shall be administered by the Spiritual
571 Council. (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, 11-13; Galatians 6:1; 1
572 Timothy 5:19-21)
573

574 **Section 2. Purpose and Reasons for Discipline**

575
576 All discipline administered by the Spiritual Council (ref. Article VI, Elders)
577 shall be in the Spirit of meekness and for the glory of God, having as its aim the
578 welfare and purity of His Church, and the spiritual growth and/or restoration
579 of the believer who has fallen. Church discipline shall be administered in the
580 event of: (a) violation of the Church Covenant to which the Member has
581 committed themselves, (b) unwillingness to be responsive and accountable to
582 the leadership of this Church, (c) unwillingness to adhere to and be governed

583 by the Constitution of this Church, (d) any practice of teaching doctrine that is
584 heretical or inconsistent with the beliefs of THOCC (Galatians 1:8-9; 2
585 Thessalonians 3:6-11; 1 Corinthians 5:11), or (e) divisive behavior that disrupts
586 the unity and ministry of this Church. (Titus 3:10-11)
587

588 **Section 3. Procedure**

589
590 Members/Leadership or attendees of THOCC who err in doctrine or who
591 engage in conduct that violates Scripture, as determined by a majority of the
592 Spiritual Council, shall be subject to Church discipline up to and including
593 excommunication. Such person(s) shall meet with the Spiritual Council along
594 with their head of household, where the issues will be discussed and a
595 resolution shall be determined. Members, if undergoing a probationary period
596 as part of their discipline, lose the rights outlined for Communicant
597 Membership (ref. Article V Section 4) during said time. If reconciliation and
598 restoration are refused by the offender, the Spiritual Council shall proceed
599 with the necessary steps for the removal of that person from the membership
600 and Church. If genuine repentance is observed, then the repentant believer is
601 to be restored to the fellowship. (Matthew 18:15-17)
602

603 **ARTICLE IX**

604 **PASTORAL AND CHURCH STAFF**

605
606
607 Every Pastor serving The Heart of Christ Church, any Branch Church, or
608 any related ministry of this Church, shall possess those spiritual gifts and
609 specific qualities of life outlined in the Scriptures for Elders.(1 Timothy 3:1-7;
610 Titus 1:5-9) Each Pastor shall have a personal awareness of those gifts and
611 qualities in their own life. They shall evidence the call of the Lord to serve His
612 CHURCH in a pastoral ministry. An inescapable conviction of the need for
613 personal obedience to the Word of God in their own life, and of the need to
614 communicate God's Word to others, shall be their primary motivation for
615 engaging in Christian ministry. They shall be prepared spiritually, physically,
616 emotionally, and intellectually so that they may have an effective ministry to
617 their family, to this Congregation, and to the Christian and non-Christian
618 community at large.
619

620 The Pastoral Staff shall meet with the Board of Elders at the Board of Elders
621 Meetings and/or any other related meetings as requested by the Board of
622 Elders. The Pastoral Staff shall not exercise any voting privileges on the Board
623 of Elders, except in the case of the Senior Pastor who serves as a member of
624 said Board.
625

626 **Section 1. Senior Pastor**

627
628 The Senior Pastor of The Heart of Christ Church shall be a graduate of an
629 accredited Bible College and/or Theological Seminary and hold or be actively
630 seeking ordained standing. The Senior Pastor shall be primarily responsible for
631 the Pastoral Ministry of this Church. He shall faithfully devote himself to
632 personal prayer, Bible study, and the preaching and teaching of the Word of
633 God. He shall demonstrate a compassion for the non-Christian community,
634 and a concern for the spiritual welfare of the Congregation through
635 appropriate personal and Pastoral Ministry. He shall provide leadership to the

636 Pastoral Staff in all matters relating to their ministry. He shall meet with them
637 on a regular basis for the purpose of prayer, mutual encouragement and
638 planning. The Senior Pastor shall attend Board, Ministry, and Team Meetings
639 as he deems necessary or as recommended by the Board of Elders, in order to
640 keep apprised of their ministries. (1 Timothy 4, 5:22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)
641

642 The Senior Pastor is the Spiritual Leader of The Heart of Christ Church and
643 shall be directly accountable to the Board of Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be
644 generally responsible for the coordination of all activities associated with the
645 regularly scheduled services of this Church, except for those which other
646 Church Staff or Agency Heads may be responsible, or when directed otherwise
647 by the Board of Elders.
648

649 The Board of Elders shall appoint a search team consisting of members of
650 the Board of Elders, Board of Deacons, and the Congregation to seek a
651 Minister when a vacancy of the Senior Pastor position arises or occurs.
652

653 The Senior Pastor is a called position. When a suitable candidate for the
654 Senior Pastor position is found the Board of Elders shall nominate said
655 candidate to the Congregation for consideration to the Call of Pastor. The
656 Board of Elders shall call a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of
657 affirming the proposed candidate to the Call of Pastor. In the affirmation of a
658 candidate to the Senior Pastor position a three-fourths (3/4) vote of
659 affirmation from the Communicate Members present at the duly called
660 Congregational Meeting shall be necessary to carry the decision. The Senior
661 Pastor shall be called for an indefinite period of time.
662

663 **Section 2. Associate Pastor**

664

665 Associate Pastor, which is a hired position, may be held by Bible College
666 and/or Theological Seminary student interns, graduates seeking ordination,
667 and/or Ministers with ordained standing. They shall be primarily responsible
668 for that specific Ministry of this Church which has been delegated to him by
669 the Board of Elders and in which he has evidenced special giftedness. He shall
670 faithfully devote himself to prayer and personal Bible study. He shall
671 demonstrate a compassion for the non-Christian community, and a concern
672 for the spiritual welfare of the Congregation through appropriate personal and
673 Pastoral Ministry. (1 Timothy 4, 5:22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)
674

675 The Associate Pastor(s) shall assist in the regularly scheduled services of
676 this Church as requested by the Senior Pastor or the Board of Elders. He shall
677 preach at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and/or fill in for the Senior Pastor
678 in his absence at the discretion of the Board of Elders. He shall provide
679 spiritual leadership and council to those Ministries or Teams to which he has
680 been assigned to by the Board of Elders.
681

682 He shall perform those additional responsibilities as outlined by the Senior
683 Pastor or the Board of Elders for that position in an appropriate Job
684 Description. The Associate Pastor(s) shall be directly accountable to the Senior
685 Pastor and the Board of Elders of this Church.
686

687 **Section 3. Contractual Agreement**

688

689 A contractual agreement shall be developed for each Pastor by the Board of
690 Elders annually which shall delineate the responsibilities and relationships
691 between the Pastor and this Church, especially as it relates to their personal
692 expenses, working conditions, insurance, remuneration, and termination of
693 service.
694

695 **Section 4. Dissolution of Contractual Agreement**

696

697 A Pastor shall serve until their Pastorate is terminated by resignation or by
698 request of the Congregation. He shall give a minimum of thirty (30) days
699 notice to the Board of Elders in writing prior to terminating their services. In
700 the event that the Congregation votes to terminate the Pastor's services, his
701 salary shall continue for thirty (30) days after the vote of the Congregation.
702

703 If at any time a Pastor's personal belief, preaching, or teaching is not in full
704 accord with the doctrinal position of this Church, or if there is a failure to
705 properly attend to his duties as outlined in this Constitution or in the
706 contractual agreement between the Pastor and this Church, his services can be
707 terminated. This action will be taken after an impartial review is conducted by
708 the Board of Elders and after a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the
709 Communicate Members present at an annual or special Congregational
710 Meeting called in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.
711

712 **Section 5. Church Staff**

713

714 Church Staff are those individuals hired to places of employment within this
715 Church by the Board of Elders. Church Staff employees of The Heart of Christ
716 Church do not have to be Members of this Church for reason of employment.
717 Staff employees must however adhere to and affirm the Statement of Faith and
718 other Constitutional provisions of The Heart of Christ Church as provided
719 within this Constitution.
720

721 A contractual agreement shall be developed for each Church Staff employee
722 annually which shall delineate the responsibilities and relationships between
723 the employee and this Church, especially as it relates to their working
724 conditions, insurance, remuneration, and termination of service.
725

726 Church Staff shall be directly accountable to the Senior Pastor and the
727 Board of Elders of this Church.
728

729 **Section 6. Extended Church Staff**

730

731 Extended Church Staff are those individuals in ministries outside the
732 geographical areas in which the local Church Staff and Congregation normally
733 conduct ministries, who are receiving financial support from The Heart of
734 Christ Church on a regular basis, and who are Communicant Members of the
735 Congregation. Extended Church Staff shall possess those particular spiritual
736 gifts, qualities of life, and special abilities that are required in the area of
737 ministry in which they are engaged. Their qualifications shall be identical to
738 those required for local Church Staff for any given area of ministry, except
739 where special conditions or environments dictate the need for additional
740 qualifications.
741

742 Extended Church Staff as outlined above, shall be directly accountable to
743 the Senior Pastor, the Board of Elders, and functionally accountable to the
744 external Agency with which they are serving. Individuals serving as Extended
745 Church Staff shall be responsible for those ministries and activities as outlined
746 by the Senior Pastor, the Board of Elders, or the Agency with which they are
747 serving. These responsibilities and relationships of this Church and the
748 Extended Church Staff Member shall be clearly delineated in a contractual
749 agreement or other appropriate document(s).

751 ARTICLE X

752 **OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH**

753 All Officers are appointed annually by the Board of Elders and affirmed by a
754 majority of Communicate Members at a called Congregational Meeting.

755 **Section 1.** The offices of President, Vice President, and Secretary are as
756 ascribed in Article VI Section 2.

757 **Section 2.** The Treasurer shall oversee all financial transactions with the
758 authority to settle all expenses as necessary. Responsibilities include but are
759 not limited to, the custody of all financial and tax records with availability to
760 the Board of Deacons for inspection and annual review. The Treasurer shall be
761 a member of the Board of Elders or the Board of Deacons.

762 **Section 3.** The Financial Secretary shall assist the Treasurer with financial
763 transactions by receiving, depositing, and distributing all monies as well as
764 issuing receipts as applicable by law. He is responsible for the compilation of
765 all financial and tax records as well as the submission of all records to the
766 Treasurer. The Financial Secretary shall be a Communicate Member of this
767 Church.

773 ARTICLE XI

774 **CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

775 Any number of attending Communicant Members present at a duly called
776 Congregation Meeting shall constitute a quorum.

777 **Section 1. Annual Meeting**

778 The President of the Board of Elders, or in his absence the Vice President of
779 said Board, shall preside at all Congregational Meetings. The Congregation
780 shall hold an annual meeting in February of each year to receive financial
781 reports, elect Church Board Members, review other reports per the Church
782 Board, and conduct any other business requiring action by the Congregation.
783 In the event of cancellation due to unforeseen circumstances a make up date
784 will be issued.

785 The date of the Annual Congregational Meeting shall be determined by the
786 Board of Elders and announced to the Congregation at two (2) regular Sunday
787 services preceding said meeting. The minutes of the preceding annual meeting,
788 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
789 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
790 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
791 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
792 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
793 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing
794 reports of the Church Treasurer, and all agencies and standing

795 ministries/teams shall be presented in print for Communicant Members to
796 review two (2) weeks prior to the meeting.

797

798 **Section 2. Special Meetings**

799

800 Special Meetings may be called by the Board of Elders or upon written
801 request to the Board of Elders by twenty-five percent (25%) of the
802 Communicant Members. The Church Board shall then issue a call for such a
803 meeting within four (4) weeks after the request has been received. Proper
804 notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of a special Congregational
805 Meeting. Only such business as has been mentioned in the call may be
806 transacted at such a special meeting.

807

808 **Section 3. Voting**

809

810 All Communicant Members of the Congregation as ascribed by this
811 Constitution shall be entitled to vote. A list of all Inactive Members who are
812 ineligible to vote will be posted two (2) weeks prior to the Annual
813 Congregational Meeting. The Board of Elders President shall retain a copy
814 during voting. Communicant Members serving in the armed services, stateside
815 and stationed abroad, will be permitted to give their proxy for vote to the
816 Senior Pastor.

817

818

818 **ARTICLE XII**

819

820 **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

821

822 This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the
823 Communicant Members present at any regular or specially called
824 Congregational Meeting providing two (2) Sundays immediately preceding
825 said meeting: (a) a general announcement of the proposed amendment has
826 been made to the Congregation, (b) an exact copy of the proposed amendment
827 has been posted in the Church, and (c) printed copies are made available to the
828 Congregation. Printed copies of the latest revision of this Constitution will be
829 made available to the Congregation as quickly as possible following the
830 meeting in which it was amended.

831

832 The Board of Elders shall review this Constitution every three (3) years to
833 determine what changes, if any, are required to make the document more
834 accurately reflect the standards and practices of this Church.

835

836

836 **ARTICLE XIII**

837

838

838 **MINISTRIES**

839

840 **Section 1. Christian Education**

841

842 We believe Christian Discipleship is one of the most important duties of this
843 Church. Therefore, a Christian Education Department shall be created having
844 the authority to maintain the Discipleship Ministries of this Church. The CE
845 Dept. shall be responsible to the Board of Elders who shall have oversight in
846 the creation, maintenance, and administration of all Christian Discipleship
847 Ministries of this Church as per Article VI Section 3. (Psalm 51:13; Matthew

848 28:18-20; Titus 2; Romans 12:4-7; Colossians 3:15-17; 2 Timothy 2:2)
849

850 **Section 2. Christian Missions**

851
852 We believe Christian benevolence (giving to the physical needs of the
853 people) and outreach (ministering to the spiritual needs of the people) to be
854 the mission and mandate of this Church. (Matthew 25:31-46, 28:18-20)
855 Therefore, a Missions Department shall be created having the authority to
856 maintain the Missions Ministries of this Church. The Missions Department
857 shall be responsible to the Board of Elders who shall have oversight in the
858 creation, maintenance, and administration of all Missions Ministries of this
859 Church as per Article VI Section 3. (Mark 1:17; Matthew 9:38; Acts 1:8, 14:21; 2
860 Corinthians 5:20)

861
862 **ARTICLE XIV**

863
864 **ASSOCIATIONS AND/OR AFFILIATIONS**

865
866 This Church shall be an independent local Congregation of Christian
867 believers. The Heart of Christ Church may seek ways to be a part of the wider
868 body of Jesus Christ through involvement in networks, organizations,
869 associations and/or denominations of Christians. Any and all involvement
870 with said wider Church entities shall be instituted and/or terminated by a
871 majority vote of a duly called Congregational Meeting.

872
873 **ARTICLE XV**

874
875 **OPERATION / DISSOLUTION**

876
877 The supreme legislative and administrative power of this Congregation is
878 vested in the Congregation itself, assembled in meetings duly and legally called
879 as provided in this Constitution. Nothing in the Constitution or Bylaws of any
880 wider Church entity to which this Congregation may now or at any time in the
881 future belong to or participate in may be construed as having the power to
882 abridge or impair the self-governing power of this Congregation in the
883 management of its own affairs. These affairs include but are not limited to, the
884 right to retain or adopt its own methods of organization, worship, and
885 education; to formulate its own covenants and confessions of faith; to admit
886 Members in its own way and to provide for their discipline as it shall
887 determine; to acquire, own, manage, and dispose of property and funds; to
888 control its own benevolences; and to withdrawal by its own decision from any
889 wider church entity at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of
890 any real or personal property owned by it.

891
892 In the case of the Congregation deciding to separate from any wider church
893 entity, the title to and control of all properties, real or personal, shall remain
894 with the Congregation.

895
896 The Heart of Christ Church shall conduct its activities so that none of its net
897 earnings/income or contributions in whole or in part inures to the benefit of its
898 Members except that reasonable compensation may be paid to the Pastor(s)
899 and employees.

901 Upon the dissolution of The Heart of Christ Church, all the existing funds,
902 less any amounts necessary to pay debts, all property which it possess, whether
903 real, personal or mixed, tangible or intangible, and including any devise,
904 bequest, gift or grant contained in any will or other instrument (whether held
905 in trust or otherwise and whether to the Church) shall be transferred to a
906 religious and/or charitable institution and/or purpose that qualifies under the
907 provision of 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and whose purpose of
908 mission is similar to that of this organization.
909

910 **ARTICLE XVI**

911 **INTERPRETATION**

912
913
914 As used in this Constitution, references to the singular or plural number,
915 masculine or feminine shall each be deemed to include the other whenever the
916 context so indicates.
917

918 _____
919 President Date

920

921 _____
922 Vice-President Date

923

924 _____
925 Secretary Date

926

927 _____
928 Treasurer Date

929

930 _____
931 Pastor Date