

# **Constitution and Bylaws of Richland Creek Community Church**

## **ARTICLE I**

### **NAME AND PRINCIPAL OFFICE**

The name of the Corporation is RICHLAND CREEK COMMUNITY CHURCH and will be further referred to in the bylaws as the "Church." The name is derived from a geographical entity, Richland Creek, which runs south/southeast through the northern part of Wake County passing through Wake Forest and emptying into the Neuse River in Raleigh, North Carolina.

The "Community" concept is one which fosters a broader sense of inclusion as opposed to denominational mention in name (Denominational affiliation is discussed in Article IX).

For legal and business purposes the Church has been incorporated.

The Church will maintain its principal office at 3229 Burlington Mills Road, Wake Forest, NC 27587 and shall use P.O. Box 855, Wake Forest, NC 27588 as its official mailing address. The leadership of the Church has full power and authority to change the principal office from one location to another and Constitutional/Bylaw amendment is not necessary prior to or as the result of such a change of official address or principal office.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **PURPOSE**

Christ instituted the Church, died for it, and has chosen to extend His Kingdom in this world through His Church. The Church is comprised of God's people. Working collectively and corporately we blend our differences and gifts for the purposes of glorifying God through edifying one another, building up the body of Christ toward Christ-like maturity, and reaching the lost for Christ (Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Corinthians 14:26, Ephesians 4:16).

This Church will be built upon the spiritual foundation established when a people corporately and boldly confess Jesus as Lord and lift Him up in faith and practice as the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:13-20).

### **SECTION I                      Worship**

The Church exists first to worship God (service follows worship - Matthew 4:10). By worshipping Him, we fulfill the Great Commandment to "love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength" (Mark 12:29-30).

Man was individually and corporately created to worship. Worship is the avenue for which people experience the Living God in a direct, personal, and intimate way. When God's people gather for worship, there should be an anticipation of what God will do and an openness to receive Him and be changed as He is worshipped in spirit and truth (John 4:24).

## SECTION II Ministry and Service

The Church also exists to minister to people. The Church's business is to preach the gospel to the poor, bring healing to the brokenhearted, preach deliverance to those being held captive by sin, bring recovery to the spiritually blind, and facilitate release to those oppressed by the power of sin, all the while heralding the proclamation that this present moment is the accepted time of salvation (Luke 4:18-19).

The Church must not see itself as the served, but as the servers. The Church exists to serve unselfishly in the name of Jesus, to meet the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of those in the Church, community, and world (1 Peter 4:10-11; Matthew 25:34-40; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Galatians 5:13).

The Church lifts up Jesus Christ as the perfect model for ministry and service (John 13:1-15) and seeks to follow His example in daily service, thus fulfilling the second commandment which is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31).

## SECTION III Evangelism and Missions

The Church also exists to communicate God's Word. Thus our mission is to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with all people, all over the world.

Each of the Gospels and Acts captures the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-49; John 20:21; Acts 1:8) and mandates all Christians for all times the urgency of proclaiming the person and message of Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:35-38; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

This Church shall seek to make disciples and establish Church plants both at home and abroad as the Lord gives opportunity.

## SECTION IV Discipleship

The Church also exists to edify and teach the Bible to God's people. Discipleship is the process of becoming more like Christ in one's thoughts, feelings, and actions. It is a process that begins at regeneration, continues throughout sanctification, and culminates at the believer's glorification. In life, discipleship is the ongoing pursuit of becoming a mature, fruit-bearing part of the body of Christ. A disciple counts the costs, acknowledges the sacrifice, and abandons all else for the sake of the high and holy calling of God placed on his life (Luke 14:25-33).

The Church also exists to equip believers in spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:12-13). Discipleship is not done at the expense of evangelism but is done in order to better facilitate evangelism and missions.

## SECTION V Fellowship

The Church also exists to encourage a unified incorporation into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12). Upon baptism into the local body, a believer is identified as a person belonging to the fellowship of the family of God (Ephesians 2:19). Members pray for, support, and lift up one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, share the common experience of a personal/intimate relationship with God (Romans 8:15-17; 1 John 1:87; Acts 2:44-47; Hebrews 10:23-25; Romans 15:5,7; John 13:34-35), and are joined together by the Holy Spirit of God.

## SECTION VI                      Purpose Summary

This congregation is organized as a Church exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Revenue Law), including, but not limited to, for such purposes, the establishing and maintaining of religious worship, the building of Churches, parsonages, schools, chapels, radio stations, television stations, rescue missions, print shops, daycare centers, and camps; the evangelizing of the unsaved by the proclaiming of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; the educating of believers in a manner consistent with the requirements of Holy Scripture, both in Sunday and weekday schools of Christian education; and the maintaining of missionary activities in the United States and any foreign country.

### ARTICLE III

#### STATEMENT OF FAITH

- **In essential beliefs — we have unity.**

*“There is one Body and one Spirit...there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of us all...”* Ephesians 4:4-6

- **In non-essential beliefs — we have liberty.**

*“Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters... Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls... So then each of us will give an account of himself to God... So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.”* Romans 14:1, 4, 12, 22

- **In all our beliefs — we show charity.**

*“If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.”* 1 Corinthians 13:2

#### THE ESSENTIALS WE BELIEVE:

##### 1. ABOUT GOD

We believe there is one true God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. He is the Creator and Sustainer of all things (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Psalm 18:35).

##### 2. ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became fully Man without ceasing to be fully God through His miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit and sinless life. He voluntarily paid for the sins of all people by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in Him alone. The third day, He arose from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God the Father, where He,

the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for His own (Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Hebrew 1:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:5).

### **3. ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We believe that the Holy Spirit has come into the world to reveal and glorify Christ and apply the saving work of Christ to people. He convicts sinners of their need for Christ, baptizes them into the Body of Christ, imparts new life to them, imparts spiritual gifts to them, indwells them, and seals them until the day of redemption.

Each believer is called to live in the power of the indwelling Spirit and in so doing, his faith will be manifested in works pleasing to God (John 16:5-14; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; Matthew 3:11; Galatians 5:22; Mark 1:8; 2 Corinthians 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:1-7; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:8-21; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 12:13).

### **4. ABOUT THE BIBLE**

We believe that every word in the original writings of the Holy Scriptures is inspired by God and therefore without error. We accept the Holy Scriptures as the supreme and final authority on all matters on which it speaks (2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; Psalm 19:1-7).

### **5. ABOUT MAN**

We believe that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin through disobedience to a divine command and, therefore, brought all mankind under condemnation. Man's nature is, therefore, such that he is totally unable to please God for acquisition of a right standing before Him (Genesis 1:27, 3; Romans 5:12; Romans 3:9-18; Isaiah 53:6; Romans 3:23).

### **6. ABOUT SALVATION**

We believe that salvation is the gift of eternal life received only through a personal trust in Jesus Christ, Who was man's substitute for sin. This gift is given by the unmerited favor of God (grace) and is given without regard to any and all human works or goodness. All those who believe in Jesus are eternally secure in Him.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1 Peter 1:3-5; John 10:28-30).

### **7. ABOUT THE CHURCH**

We believe that God admonishes His people to assemble together regularly in a local Church for worship, for participation in ordinances, for evangelism, for edification through the Scriptures and for mutual encouragement (Hebrews 10:25).

### **8. ABOUT CIVIL GOVERNMENT**

We believe that God has ordained and created all authority consisting of three basic institutions: 1) the home, 2) the Church, and 3) the state. Every person is subject to these authorities, but all (including the authorities themselves) are answerable to God and governed by His Word. God

has given each institution specific biblical responsibilities and balanced those responsibilities with the understanding that no institution has the right to infringe upon the other. The home, the Church, and the state are equal and sovereign in their respective biblically assigned spheres of responsibility under God. (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-24; Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-14)

## **9. ABOUT HUMAN SEXUALITY**

- A. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe that God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance (Genesis 2:24; 19:4-7, 13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1: 26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).
- B. We believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:10; Ephesians 5:22-23)

## **10. ABOUT FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS**

- A. We believe that men and women are spiritually equal in position before God, but that God has ordained distinct and separate functions for men and women in the home and the Church. The husband is to be the leader of the home, and men are to be the leaders (Pastors/Elders, and Deacons) of the Church. Accordingly, only men are eligible for licensure and ordination by the Church (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 2:8-15; 3:4-5, 12).
- B. We believe that God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loves the Church. The wife is to submit herself to the scriptural leadership of her husband as the Church submits to the headship of Christ. Children are a heritage from the Lord. Parents are responsible for teaching their children spiritual and moral values and leading them, through consistent lifestyle example and appropriate discipline (Genesis 1:26-28; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Psalm 127:3-5; Proverbs 19:18; 22:15; 23:13-14; Mark 10:6-12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4, Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

## **11. ABOUT DIVORCE**

We believe that God disapproves of and forbids divorce and intends marriage to last until one of the spouses dies (Malachi 2:14-17; Matthew 19:3-12; Mark 10:1-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2-3).

## **12. ABOUT ABORTION**

We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustifiable taking of innocent human life. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth or population control, or the physical or mental well being of the mother are acceptable (Job 3:16; Psalm 139:14-16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:44).

### **13. ABOUT ETERNITY**

We believe in the imminent return of Christ for His Church, the eternal state of punishment for the unsaved called hell, and the eternal state of blessing for the saved called heaven (Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Philippians 3:20; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15; John 3:16; 1 John 2:25).

### **AUTHORITY OF THE STATEMENT OF FAITH**

The Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself is the sole and final source of all that we believe. We do believe, however, that the foregoing Statement of Faith accurately represents the teaching of the Bible and, therefore, is binding upon all members. All literature used in the Church shall be in complete agreement with the Statement of Faith.

## **ARTICLE IV**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

#### **SECTION I                      General**

The New Testament presents a picture of definable groups of people who, once committed to the Lord, identified themselves with and committed themselves to a particular local body (Acts 2:42-46; 1 Corinthians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; Acts 11:26).

Membership in this Church is open to any person who has personally trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, who has received baptism by immersion as a believer, and who desires to be committed to Richland Creek Community Church as a local body of believers. Membership is not a prerequisite for involvement in every ministry, but is required for ministry leadership, involvement in certain ministries as determined by the Elder Body and participating in congregational decision making and voting.

Membership in this Church does not afford the members with any property, contractual, or civil rights based on principles of democratic government. Although the general public is invited to all of the Church's worship services, the Church property remains private property. The Senior Pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Elder Body) has the authority to suspend or revoke the right of any person, including a member, to enter or remain on Church property. If after being notified of such a suspension or revocation, the person enters or remains on Church property, the person may, in the discretion of the Senior Pastor (or in his absence, an individual designated by the Elder Body), be treated as a trespasser.

Membership in this Church shall consist of all persons who have met the qualifications for membership (see Section II of Article IV) and are listed on the membership roll.

#### **SECTION II                      Qualifications for Membership**

1. A personal belief in Jesus Christ for salvation.
2. Believer's baptism (by immersion) as a public testimony of salvation.
3. Completion of the Church's membership class(es).

4. A commitment to abide by the membership covenant.

### SECTION III                      Categories of Membership

In an effort to properly reflect the membership of the Church, there shall be two classes of members: Resident members and non-resident members. Resident members are those who reside within the area served by the Church. Non-resident members are those members who reside outside the area served by the Church and have not joined another Church. Students and members of the military who reside outside the area served by the Church and Church-sponsored missionaries shall be considered resident members. The rights and privileges of members shall be identical except that only resident members shall be entitled to vote.

A special category of classification shall be given to those persons who for various reasons wish to affiliate with this Church in a formal way but who do not wish to withdraw their membership from their existing home Church. Although we prohibit dual membership, a watchcare relationship shall be established for those who request such relationship. Those who participate within the watchcare relationship shall meet all membership requirements and responsibilities mentioned herein and shall be entitled to all privileges and opportunities except for the following: 1) These persons shall not be entitled to vote as is the right of regular members, and 2) This Church shall not request a transfer of letter from the home Church of the watchcare member. These persons shall be considered watchcare members.

### SECTION IV                      Responsibilities of Membership

The responsibilities of membership are described in the membership covenant which includes the following four statements:

1. I will protect the unity of my Church by acting in love toward other members, by refusing to gossip, and by praying for and serving with the leaders as they follow biblical standards (Romans 15:5, 19; 1 Peter 1:22; Ephesians 4:29; Hebrews 13:7).
2. I will share the responsibility of my Church by praying for its growth, inviting the un-churched to attend, and by warmly welcoming those who attend (1 Thessalonians 1:2; Luke 14:23; Romans 15:7).
3. I will serve the ministries of my Church by discovering my gifts and talents, becoming equipped to serve, by developing a servant's heart and serving in appropriate areas (1 Peter 4:10; Ephesians 4:11-12; Philippians 2:3-4, 7).
4. I will support the testimony of my Church by attending faithfully, living a godly life, and by giving faithfully of my time, talents and resources (Hebrews 10:25, Philippians 1:27, 2 Corinthians 9:7, 1 Corinthians 16:2).

### SECTION V                      Discipline and Restoration of Members

1. The goal of all discipline is to restore a holy walk under the lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word. The purpose of any disciplinary action is for the repentance and restoration of the offending member, and to maintain the purity of the Church.

2. Every disciple should submit to Jesus Christ and His Word. Members of the Church are expected to conduct their lives in accordance with biblical standards as they grow to become more like Christ. When a member continually violates the direct commands of Scripture without repentance, he shall be dealt with according to the principles of discipline and restoration found in such passages as Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and Matthew 7:1-5.
3. Members in the early Churches were subject to discipline for reasons such as:
  - a. Unwillingness to become reconciled to an offended believer (Matthew 18:15-17).
  - b. Divisiveness in the Church (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:1-10).
  - c. Sexual immorality, habitual covetousness, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, or swindling (1 Corinthians 5:1-13).
  - d. General sinful conduct (Galatians 6:1).
4. Mutual submission to one another in the reverence of Christ (Ephesians 5:21) is part of that discipline. Along with mutual submission, God has called the Church to submission (1 Peter 5:5) and obedience (Hebrews 13:17) to the Elder Body He has placed over His Church.
5. When a member violates commands or prohibitions of Scripture in his life or teaching in such a way that his life and/or erroneous teaching continues to hinder the unity or peace of the Church or its testimony, the Elder Body and this Church body will take every reasonable measure to resolve the problem in accord with Matthew 18. This will include the following four steps:
  - a. Once the offended member has examined his / her own heart and taken it to the Lord, and once the offended member has looked at what might be behind his erring, he / she is then to “go and reprove him in private” (literally “between you and him alone,” Matthew 18:15).  
\* Therefore, the offending member should be approached privately, first.

Hopefully this step is all that will be required. Jesus says, “if he listens to you, you have won your brother.” But if he is unrepentant, the offended member must move to step two.

- b. Jesus says, “but if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed” (Matthew 18:16).  
\*Therefore, if the offending member does not listen to the one, the offending member should be approached by one or two more witnesses.

Logically, it is not a requirement that they be witnesses to the sin, but rather, they are there to bear witness to the fact of this brother’s unwillingness to repent. The focus of discipline is no longer the symptom (immorality, drunkenness, stealing, etc.), but now the focus shifts to the root sin (rebellion, a lack of repentance).

- c. Jesus clarifies, “And if he refuses to listen to them [the two or three witnesses], tell it to the Church” (Matthew 18:17).

\*Therefore, the sinning believer's name is shared with the congregation by a representative of the Elder Body at a family meeting. Enough of the details are shared to communicate the seriousness of the situation. If the efforts of the entire Church are unable to secure the brother's repentance within an appointed time, then we shall move to the fourth and final step.

Of course, the purpose of this step is to enlist the prayer of the body as well as their involvement, as the Lord leads, in calling the individual to repentance.

- d. Jesus tells us, "and if he refuses to listen even to the Church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer."

\*Therefore, if there is no repentance, then, in similar manner to step three, the sinning believer's name is shared with the congregation by a representative of the Elder Body. The heart of the action taken in step four (2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15) will be communicated with the congregation at a family meeting. After the family meeting, the member's name will be removed from the Church role. This entire process should be well documented and kept with all Church records.

6. Restoration of the member: The right to exclude a sinning member or the withdrawal of fellowship from the member is in harmony with the teaching of the Word of God and is balanced by the call to restore such a person who has given satisfactory evidence of repentance (2 Corinthians 2:6-8). When a person gives such evidence and his lifestyle is judged to be in accordance with the membership covenant, the Elder Body shall recommend to this Church that the person be restored to full fellowship.

## SECTION VI Termination of Membership

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death
2. Lapse of contact with the Church for one year, regardless of the category of membership.
3. By personal request of the member who is not under corrective discipline of the Church.
4. Transfer of membership to another Church of like faith and order under the following conditions:
  - a. The Church member is in good standing and is not under the corrective discipline of the Church (See Section V - Discipline of Church Members).
  - b. The Church member is not seeking a letter to transfer to a Church which, based upon the judgment of the Elder Body, is not loyal to "the faith that was once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).
5. Notification that the member has joined another Church of a different faith and order.
6. Church discipline (See Section V)

**SECTION VII**                      Voting Rights of Membership

Every resident, non-watchcare member, shall have the right to vote on the following matters: the annual budget of the Church, significant changes to the budget, the disposition of all or substantially all of the assets of the Church, the merger or dissolution of the Church, the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness, amendments to the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the Church, the vote of affirmation for Pastors/Elders, the nomination and vote of affirmation for Deacons, and the removal of the Senior Pastor. Each member 16 years and older is entitled to one vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited.

**SECTION VIII**                      Nonliability of Members

A member of the Church shall not, because of such participation, be personally liable for the debts, obligations, or liabilities of the Church.

**ARTICLE V**

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

**SECTION I**                      Purpose

The Church believes that it is to provide its members with an education which is based upon and consistent with biblical teachings. The Church believes that the home and Church are responsible before God for providing a Christian education. To this end, the Church shall engage in ministries in education in keeping with the following dictates.

**SECTION II**                      Church Participation

All educational programs or courses of instruction formulated and offered by the Church shall be primarily for the benefit of the members of the Church; however, the Pastors may permit non-Church members to participate in Church educational programs or courses of instruction if they deem it in the best interest of the Church.

**SECTION III**                      Staff Membership

All instructors, teachers, and administrators shall be members of this Church. This provision shall not apply to visiting missionaries, evangelists, or preachers engaged for the purpose of delivering sermons, conducting revivals, or other special meetings on a temporary basis.

**SECTION IV**                      Statement of Faith Accord

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be taught and presented in full accord with the Statement of Faith of the Church. The Church shall not hire, appoint, or retain any employee or volunteer for its educational programs who fails to adhere to or expresses disagreement with the Statement of Faith.

**SECTION V**                      Unity

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted as an integral and inseparable ministry of the Church.

**SECTION VI**            Teaching

All educational programs or courses of instruction shall be conducted consistent with the teaching of the inerrant Word of God. Any assertion or belief that contradicts or questions a biblical truth is a pagan deception and distortion of the truth which will be disclaimed as false. It is the responsibility of every instructor or teacher to present the inerrant Word of God as the sole infallible source of knowledge and wisdom.

**SECTION VII**            Christian Walk

All administrators, instructors, and teachers shall continue or adopt a lifestyle consistent with the precepts which they teach, whether in or out of the classroom.

**ARTICLE VI**

**MEETINGS**

**SECTION I**            General

The Church shall hold regular meetings for worship, teaching, training, outreach, and fellowship. Meetings shall be held at the Church building at 3229 Burlington Mills Road, Wake Forest, NC or at such other place or places within or outside North Carolina as may be delegated from time to time.

**SECTION II**            Family Meetings

At a minimum, quarterly family meetings will be held by the Elder Body to communicate with the Church body. Special family meetings may be called at any time by the Elder Body for any purpose by giving notice to the members in accordance with Section III of this Article and Section VII of Article IV. The moderator shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. Unless otherwise presented, all votes are to be taken without discussion. All decisions will be by simple majority vote unless otherwise presented. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.

For any meeting under this article, the moderator, in his sole discretion, shall have full and unilateral authority to require non-members to leave the meeting room and to order the immediate removal of any member or other person present who is deemed by the moderator to be disruptive to the proceedings by act or presence. The moderator shall have full authority to order the removal of all children (ages to be determined by the moderator) if the moderator determines, in his sole discretion, that circumstances so warrant. If the moderator determines that compliance with his order of removal is unsatisfactory, the moderator may, in his sole discretion, revoke the disruptive person's right to remain on the premises in accordance with Section I of Article IV and treat the person as a trespasser.

**SECTION III**            Notice Requirements for Membership Meetings

1. **General Requirements** - Whenever members are required or permitted to take any action at a meeting, notice shall be given to members no less than two (2) weeks prior to a meeting.

Notification of membership meetings shall be given in any of the following manners which shall be deemed to be a reasonable method of calling a membership meeting.

- a. Distribution of written material to the congregation in attendance at a Sunday Morning service.
  - b. Announcement of the meeting in a Church newsletter or bulletin;
  - c. Oral announcement to the congregation at a Sunday morning service; or
  - d. Delivery by United States mail to each member identified on the membership roll.
2. Notice of Certain Agenda Items: Approval by the members of any of the following proposals is valid only if the nature of the announcement of the meeting is specified.
- a. Vote of affirmation of Pastors/Elders, or Deacons.
  - b. Amending the articles of incorporation;
  - c. Adopting, amending, or repealing the bylaws;
  - d. Disposing of all or substantially all of the Church's assets;
  - e. Adopting or amending a merger agreement;
  - f. Approving the acquisition of real property and related indebtedness; or
  - g. Removal of the Senior Pastor

#### SECTION IV                      Quorum

Those members present and voting at a meeting duly noticed and called shall constitute a quorum of the membership for the transaction of business.

### **ARTICLE VII**

#### **CHURCH LEADERS**

#### SECTION I                      General

The leadership structure of Richland Creek Community Church is based upon the nature of the Church as revealed in Scripture, as well as the necessary legal requirements for a recognized religious organization. The leadership structure of the Church is intentionally designed to accommodate simplicity, growth, unity, and biblical teaching. The leadership structure of this Church involves a Senior Pastor, Elder Body, Deacons, ministry leaders, and trustees. The Elder Body shall consist of Elders who are monetarily supported by the Church (herein referred to as Pastors) and Elders who do not receive monetary support from the Church (herein referred to as Elders). Where the term Elder Body occurs, both are included.

#### SECTION II                      Elder Body (Pastors and Elders)

1. On the Elder Body Role - Jesus often described the Church as a "flock" (Matthew 25:22, 26:31; John 10:1-30; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2-3). Because the Church is a flock, it is cared for and led by shepherds (John 21:16-17).

Christ alone is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 1:22-23). Yet for the purpose of order, and in accordance with the Word of God, certain individuals have been charged with leadership according to their spiritual giftedness (Ephesians 4:11-13). Three different terms are used in the New Testament to refer to the same Church leader(s): "poimen" (Pastor), "presbuteros" (Elders), and "episcopos" (Bishop). These terms are used

interchangeably and reflect the different functions of the same office. The New Testament Church had a plurality of leadership in each local Church setting, herein referred to as the Elder Body. The primary Shepherd is Jesus, and then by extension the under-shepherds, or Pastors/Elders, lead the flock (1 Peter 5:1-2; Acts 20:17-18; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Timothy 5:17).

It is impossible for one individual or group of individuals to provide primary care for a growing Church (Exodus 18:17-23; Acts 6:1-7). To burden the Elder Body with functions unrelated to their primary areas of responsibility is to rob them of study time and devotion to the Word, and forces them to function in areas other than their primary calling and responsibility. This can lead to inaccurate teaching and poor leadership, which in turn weakens the body (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 2:4-5; Titus 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Ephesians 4:11-12; James 2:22; 1 Timothy 1:13, 2:15). Therefore, Pastors and Elders are to be liberated and equipped to devote themselves to the teaching of the Word of God, prayer, the gospel, and the leadership of the Church.

2. Requirements for the Elder Body Office - The requirements for this office are primarily found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9. All Pastors and Elders are to be ordained, and once appointed to office, these men shall become members of the Church if they are not already a Church member.

On Elder Body Leadership - Understanding that the Word of God calls for an Elder Body to lead the Church, many decisions and responsibilities regarding the life and direction of the Church are left to their spiritual oversight (Acts 11:30, 14:23; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 5:17). The Elder Body is the administrating body of the Church, equipping and overseeing the ministries of the Church (Exodus 18:17-18; John 21:16-17; Acts 20:17, 28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2). The Elder Body shall oversee the ministries of the body of Christ to ensure soundness of doctrine, and to maintain the biblical and practical integrity of the overall ministry of the Church. The Elder Body shall be empowered to make any and all decisions related to the life of the Church of a business, legal, or doctrinal nature not directly designated for congregational approval. This includes but is not limited to the selection and removal of all officers, agents, and administrative employees of the Church, changing the principal executive office or the principal business office of the Church in the state of North Carolina from one location to another, and the creation, adoption, alteration, and usage of a corporate seal. The Senior Pastor and Elders shall determine the compensation for all Church employees, including the pastoral staff.

In response to the biblical patterns of leadership, members are taught in Scripture to lovingly support their leaders and to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7,17; 1 Corinthians 16:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). The shepherding of this Church is led by the Senior Pastor and assisted by the Elder Body

In the case of the need to appoint new Pastor(s) or Elder(s) (Titus 1:5), the Senior Pastor and at least three other Pastors/Elders, appointed by the Senior Pastor, shall serve as a selection team. This team will (1) prayerfully determine which potential candidates to contact regarding the office of Pastor/Elder based on the current number needed, (2) ask the candidates of their desire to consider this office based on the scriptural qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, (3) ask permission of the candidate and then perform background checks on each candidate and (4) examine each candidate according to the scriptural qualifications to prayerfully determine their appointment to this office. Once the Elder Selection Team determines the needed/qualified candidate(s), the names will be submitted to the entire Elder Body for discussion and approval. Upon Elder Body approval, the list of names will go before the

congregation for a vote of affirmation. The vote of affirmation will be for individual names. Upon receiving the congregation's affirmation of at least 80 percent approval, those Pastors/Elders not previously ordained will be ordained at the earliest possible worship service. Pastors/Elders shall serve in this role until they submit their resignation or until the role is terminated by a two-thirds majority vote of the Elder Body.

4. The Senior Pastor - The Senior Pastor has ultimate responsibility for the oversight of the Church body and the shepherding of its members (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-32). The Senior Pastor is to challenge the congregation according to the Word of God and see that each Church member is biblically instructed and equipped to do his or her part in accomplishing the mission of the Church. The calling/appointment, supervision, and dismissal of pastoral staff, Church leaders, and employees is under the direction of the Senior Pastor and Elder Body (in accordance with Article IV, Section VII). The Senior Pastor shall be held accountable and evaluated by the Elders.

The Senior Pastor shall continue to serve until the relationship is ended by death, resignation, or terminated by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of those present and voting at a special family meeting of the Church called for such purpose. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the role of Senior Pastor, the Elder Body shall initiate procedures leading to the adoption by the Church of a process to select a new Senior Pastor.

### SECTION III            Deacons

The second ministerial office mentioned in the Word of God is the office of the Deacon, which in the New Testament is a servant-leader charged with the function of giving care to those in need. These servant-leaders liberated the apostles from direct oversight of pastoral ministries in order that they might be freed up to teach, pray and, lead. These men shall serve in the primary care-giving in the Church.

Deacons are given the freedom and authority to lead in their area of ministry under the supervision and leadership of the Pastors and Elders. There shall be no limit as to the number of Deacons, as this is dependent upon the Holy Spirit's calling in the Church coupled with the number of family units and needs within the Church.

In the case of the need for a new Deacon(s) (Acts 6:1-7), the congregation shall nominate Deacon candidates by ballot (three names maximum per ballot). The Senior Pastor, Deacon Chairman, and two other Elders / Pastors, appointed by the Senior Pastor, shall serve as a Deacon Selection Team. This team will (1) review the nominations from the congregation and prayerfully determine which potential candidates to contact regarding the office of Deacon based on the current number needed, (2) ask the candidates of their desire to consider this office based on the scriptural qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:8-12, (3) ask permission of the candidate to perform background checks on each candidate and (4) examine each candidate according to the Scriptural qualifications to prayerfully determine their appointment to this office. Once the Deacon Selection Team determines the needed/qualified candidates, the names will be submitted to the entire Elder Body for discussion and approval. Upon Elder Body approval, the list of names will go before the congregation for a vote of affirmation. The vote of affirmation will be for individual names. Upon receiving the congregation's affirmation of at least 80 percent approval, those Deacons not previously ordained will be ordained at the earliest possible worship service.

SECTION IV Ministry Leaders

A ministry leader is a lay person who ministers to a small group under the direction and accountability of a Pastor or those delegated by a Pastor. Ministry leaders must meet biblical requirements for godly leadership. Ministry leaders are extensions of the pastoral ministry of the Church.

SECTION V Trustees

A small group of individuals will be set aside by the Church to serve as trustees. Trustees are to serve as official representatives of the Church in terms of business contracts and other legal matters. Trustees, under the direction of the Elder Body or, if required, congregational approval, may borrow money and incur indebtedness on behalf of the Church and cause to be executed and delivered for the Church's purposes and in the Church's name, promissory notes and other evidences of debt and securities. Trustees may be asked to conduct other duties and activities as designated from time to time by the Elder Body. They are not a decision-making body. The number of Trustees is to be three (3) unless otherwise determined by the Elder Body. Trustees are appointed by the Elder Body and shall serve for three (3) year renewable terms. A written record will be submitted to the Elders after each action.

SECTION VI Other Staff Members

Other staff members shall be hired as needed in accordance with the above-stated areas of responsibility, the annual budget, as well as the personnel and financial policies of the Church. Such staff members shall be responsible to their immediate supervisors or designated staff persons.

SECTION VII Officers

Officers include president, moderator, treasurer and clerk. The Senior Pastor shall serve as president and moderator. A Pastor or other lay leader selected by the Senior Pastor shall be considered assistant moderator. The positions of treasurer and clerk shall be filled by the business administrator, bookkeeper, office administrator, or Church members as designated by the Elder Body.

1. The President - The Senior Pastor serves as the president and moderator of the Church.
2. The Moderator - The moderator shall preside at all family meetings of the Church and shall determine the rules of procedure according to his sense of fairness and common sense, giving all members a reasonable opportunity to be heard on a matter. The moderator is the final authority on questions of procedure, and his decision is final and controlling. In the absence of or at the request of the moderator, the assistant moderator shall carry out the duties of the moderator. In the absence of the moderator or assistant moderator, the clerk shall call the meeting to order and carry out the duties of the moderator.
3. The Clerk - The clerk shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate roll of the Church membership with dates of admission, dismissal, and other pertinent information and issuing letters of dismissal as authorized by the Elder Body and these bylaws. The clerk shall be responsible for preparing accurate and complete minutes of all family meetings of the Church, keeping record of all official documents of the Church, and serving notice of all meetings where notice is necessary as indicated in these bylaws. The clerk shall sign, certify, or attest documents as may be required by law. The clerk shall be custodian of the records of

the Church, including the membership roll, baptisms, certificates of ordination, licenses, and commissions. The clerk shall see that the reports, statements, certificates, and all other documents and records required by law are properly kept and filed. The clerk shall exhibit at all reasonable times to proper persons on terms provided by law the bylaws and the minutes of the meetings of the Church members. The clerk shall keep all records at the office of the Church and deliver them to any successor upon leaving office.

4. The Treasurer - It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon proper internal procedure and control as determined by the Finance Committee, all money or things of value paid or given to the Church, keeping at all times an itemized report of the receipts and disbursements. The treasurer's report and records shall be audited annually by a Certified Public Accountant.

#### SECTION VII Authority to Execute Legal Documents

Official documents of the Church may be executed by the Senior Pastor in the capacity of the president of the Church, by the clerk in the capacity of the secretary of the Church, and by the business administrator or trustee(s) in the capacity of the treasurer of the Church.

#### SECTION IX Finance Committee

The Elders shall appoint three to five Church members to serve on the finance committee for three year renewable terms. The financial manager and one Elder will serve in advisory positions on this committee. The finance committee shall carry out duties as designated in the constitution and bylaws and other Church policies and procedures.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

#### **INDEMNIFICATION**

#### SECTION I Actions Subject To Indemnification

The Church may indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, including all appeals (other than an action by or in the right of the Church) by reason of the fact that the person is or was a Pastor, Elder, Deacon, officer, employee, or agent of the Church, against expenses, including attorneys' fees, judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding; and if that person acted in good faith and in a manner he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his conduct was unlawful. The termination of any action, suit, or proceeding by judgment, order, settlement, conviction, or on a plea of *nolo contendere* or its equivalent, shall not, of itself, create a presumption that the person did not act in good faith and in a manner that he reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interests of the Church and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe that his or her conduct was unlawful.

SECTION II Expenses Subject To Indemnification

To the extent that a Pastor, Elder, Deacon, officer, employee, or agent has been successful on the merits or otherwise in defense of any action, suit, or proceeding referred to in this Article, or in defense of any claim, issue, or matter in that action, suit, or proceeding, he or she may be indemnified against expenses, including attorneys' fees, actually and reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the action, suit, or proceeding.

SECTION III Limitations Of Indemnification

Any indemnification made under this Article, may be made by the Church only as authorized in the specific case on a determination that indemnification of the Pastor, Deacon, officer, employee, or agent is proper in the circumstances because he has met the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Section 1 of this Article. The determination shall be made (a) by a majority vote of a quorum consisting of the Pastor and Elders who were not and are not parties to or threatened with the action, suit, or proceeding; (b) if the described quorum is not obtainable, by independent legal counsel in a written opinion; or (c) by a majority vote of the members of the Church.

SECTION IV Timing Of Indemnification

Expenses of each person seeking indemnification under this Article may be paid by the Church as they are incurred, in advance of the final disposition of the action, suit, or proceeding, as authorized by the Elder Body in the specific case. The Elder Body may request the Pastor, Deacon, officer, employee, or agent to repay the amount if it is ultimately determined that he or she is not qualified to be indemnified by the Church.

SECTION V Extent Of Indemnification

The indemnification provided by this Article shall be deemed to be discretionary unless otherwise required as a matter of law or under any agreement or provided by insurance purchased by the Church, both as to action of each person seeking indemnification under this Article in his official capacity and as to action in another capacity while holding that office, and may continue as to a person who has ceased to be a Pastor, Elder, officer, employee, or agent and may inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors, and administrators of that person.

SECTION VI Insurance

The Church may purchase and maintain insurance on behalf of any person who is or was a Pastor, Elder, officer, employee, or agent of the Church against any liability asserted against him and incurred by him in that capacity, or arising out of his status in that capacity, whether or not the Church would have the power to indemnify him against liability under the provisions of this Article.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **CHURCH PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

All organizations and ministries of the Church shall be subject to the control of the Church and its leadership. The directors of those organizations shall report to the appropriate Church leadership.

## **ARTICLE X**

### **CHURCH TEAMS AND MINISTRY GROUPS**

All groups, teams, and other bodies shall be subject to the control of the Church and its leadership. The directors/leaders of these groups shall report to the appropriate Church leadership. Special teams or groups may be created for the Church from time to time by the Elder Body.

## **ARTICLE XI**

### **REAL PROPERTY**

#### **SECTION I** Title

Title to all real property of the Church shall be in the name of the Church.

#### **SECTION II** Purchasing Real Property

Real property may be purchased in the name of and on behalf of the Church by the act of the trustees and or other legal representatives of the Church after the proposal to do so has been presented and approved by the Church members as detailed in Article IV of this document.

#### **SECTION III** Disposition of Real Property

Real property of the Church may be sold, mortgaged, conveyed, transferred, or otherwise disbursed with the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at a family meeting as detailed in Article IV of this document.

## **ARTICLE XII**

### **AFFILIATIONS**

The Church shall have full power and authority to associate itself with and participate in organizations in keeping with the character and purpose of the Church as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. The Church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. Recognizing, however, the benefits of cooperation with other Churches in world mission, this Church voluntarily affiliates with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state, and local expressions.

## **ARTICLE XIII**

### **AMENDMENTS**

Every five (5) years the Constitution Review Team, as established by the Elder Body will review the Constitution and Bylaws of Richland Creek Community Church for the purpose of maintaining consistency with scriptural and doctrinal soundness. All requests for amendments to the bylaws must be in writing and shall be submitted to the Elder Body for study and consideration. The Elder Body shall issue a timely response to the proposed amendment, alteration, or revision to these bylaws. It is up to the Elder Body whether to propose such amendments to the Church for adoption. If proposed to the Church, amendments to the bylaws require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present at a family meeting of the Church as detailed in Article IV of this document.

## **ARTICLE XIV**

### **FINANCES**

#### **SECTION I**                      Annual Budget

The Church shall have an annual budget, voted on by the Church, to serve as the normative guide for the financial operation of the Church. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for receiving inputs from the Church staff and leadership regarding annual financial requirements and preparing the annual budget according to the process described in Section II.

#### **SECTION II**                      Development of Annual Budget

The annual Church budget shall be established through the following process:

1. The Senior Pastor shall be responsible for casting his vision for the next fiscal year to the Elder Body, staff, and all ministry leaders prior to the preparation of the budget.
2. All individuals involved in ministry leadership submit their ministry plans to support the Senior Pastor's vision and expected financial needs to their respective Elder Body member in their areas of responsibility.
3. The Senior Pastor and Elder Body will review and submit their inputs and financial needs to the Finance Committee according to their areas of responsibility.

4. The Elders submit the salaries for the Pastors. The Senior Pastor and Elders will submit the salaries for the Church staff to the Finance Committee.
5. The Finance Committee utilizes the submissions noted above along with the Finance Committee's assessment of overall Church financial requirements to prepare the annual budget.
6. The Finance Committee submits the proposed budget to the Elder Body for review, approval, and final amendments if necessary.
7. The final proposed budget is made available to the Church membership at least two weeks prior to voting on the budget.
8. At least one week prior to voting on the budget, a Church family meeting will be held to allow any Church member to obtain explanation and discussion concerning the budget. The Finance Committee can also answer questions on an informal basis at any time.
9. The budget is submitted for vote without discussion to the Church no later than December 15<sup>th</sup>. If the budget is not available for vote by December 15<sup>th</sup>, the budget will default to the previous year's budget. The budget will be approved based on the voting procedure as detailed in Article VI Section 2.

### SECTION III                      Budget Management

The budget is to be managed by the Church Leadership, Church Financial Manager, and Finance Committee according to their area of responsibility. Minor modifications within the budget can be made by the Elder Body or other staff with budget responsibilities if extenuating circumstances in the life of the Church mandate such a change. For example, if a budgeted item is not needed, or if expenses in a particular area are less than expected, the Elder Body can re-allocate those resources as needed. The budget should, however, be the normative guide for the financial operation of the Church. Significant budget increases during the budget year must be approved by the Finance Committee, Elder Body and if appropriate, the congregation prior to allocation and expenditure.

From time to time the Church, in the exercise of its religious, educational, and charitable purposes, may establish various funds to accomplish specific goals. Contributors may suggest uses for their contributions, but all suggestions shall be deemed advisory rather than mandatory in nature. All contributions made to specific funds or otherwise designated shall remain subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Elder body. No fiduciary obligation shall be created by any designated contribution made to the Church other than to use the contribution for the general furtherance of any of the purposes of the Church as defined in this constitution.

### SECTION IV                      Annual Audit

An annual audit from a Certified Public Accountant will be performed on the Church's financial matters and made available to Church members upon request.

### SECTION V                      Operating Bank Accounts

The Church will maintain checking accounts and other accounts at banks or other financial institutions as approved by the trustees. Bank resolutions granting authority for specific personnel

to sign checks or orders must be designated by the trustees. Individuals available to be approved for such authority are the trustees and the Church Financial Manager and the Church treasurer.

SECTION VI                      Fiscal Year

The Church's fiscal year shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31.

SECTION VII                     Accounting Procedures

Proper accounting procedures, as determined by an outside agency of Certified Public Accountants, shall be maintained by the Church.

SECTION VIII                  Records and Reports

The Church shall maintain the following records and reports:

1. Adequate and current books and records of accounts (financial records).
2. Minutes of the proceedings of its members.
3. A record of the members of the Church, setting forth the members' names and addresses. Contribution statements for contributors. All such records shall be kept at the Church's principal office.

**ARTICLE XV**

**ORDINANCES**

SECTION I                        General

The Church recognizes two ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion).

SECTION II                      Baptism

This Church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior. Baptism shall be by immersion in water. The Senior Pastor, or whomever the Senior Pastor shall authorize, shall administer baptism. Baptismal services shall be scheduled at the discretion of the Senior Pastor or other Pastor(s) specified by the Senior Pastor.

The physical element of water in baptism does not save the sinner, but is a voluntary external testimony to the work which the Holy Spirit has already done in the believer. Following the Lord in baptism is an act of obedience.

In Acts 10:47-48, the Gentile believers were baptized with water after they had been spiritually baptized by the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:3-6, Ephesians 1:13-14). We believe a person is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ upon conversion/belief (1 Corinthians 12:13).

**SECTION III**            The Lord's Supper

This Church shall observe the Lord's Supper in keeping with the commands of the Bible at such times as the Senior Pastor or Pastor(s) specified by the Senior Pastor deem appropriate. The Senior Pastor or Pastor(s) specified by the Senior Pastor shall administer Communion. All who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior will be invited to participate.

The physical elements of bread and juice are not the actual body and blood of Christ, but represent Christ's body, broken for us, and His blood shed for our justification before God (1 Corinthians 11:24-29). It is an occasion of remembrance and self examination.

**ARTICLE XVI**

**ORDINATION**

**SECTION I**            Ordination Qualifications

Any member of this Church or its mission Churches, who gives evidence of a genuine call of God into the work of the ministry and possesses the qualifications stated in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9, may be ordained as a minister of the Gospel.

**SECTION II**            Ordination Procedure

(A) Upon a conference with the Pastor and after the Pastor has approved the candidate for ordination, the Pastor shall call a council to examine the qualification of the candidate. The ordination council shall consist of Elder Body members.

(B) If the candidate is found worthy of ordination by the council, the ordination council may ordain the candidate on behalf of the Church.

(C) The Senior Pastor shall arrange for the ordination service.

**ARTICLE XVII**

**TAX EXEMPT ORGANIZATION**

The term for which the Church has been organized and incorporated is perpetual and it shall operate as a tax-exempt organization under United States Internal Revenue Code. In the event of dissolution of the Church, the assets thereof shall be liquidated and distributed in order as follows:

1. All real and personal property owned by the Church shall be sold.
2. All debts will be paid in full.
3. All Church Pastors and employees shall be given six (6) months salary. If insufficient funds remain, they will be split proportionately, based on salary, among such individuals.

4. All remaining funds will be distributed at the discretion of the Elder Body of Richland Creek Community Church to one or more Christian organizations which have like faith, belief, and purposes as ours and which qualify as an exempt organization as described in Sections 501 (c) (3) and 160 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or the corresponding provision of any prior or future law.

## **ARTICLE XVIII**

### **INCORPORATION**

It is the desire and intent that the Church shall operate as a corporate entity not-for-profit pursuant to the North Carolina General Statutes. None of its funds shall be released to the benefit of any individual connected with the organization, except in consideration of services rendered. Accordingly, all references to the "Church" herein shall be interpreted to be references to the "Corporation" as that term is defined under General Statutes of North Carolina, and the officers of the Church, specifically president, moderator, clerk, and treasurer, shall have the same definition, meaning, and authority to bind the Church as the same officers referred to under the said General Statutes.