

CONSTITUTION
of
PIONEER CHURCH
ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA

Article 1: Name

The name of this church is Pioneer Church Rock Hill.

Article 2: Purpose

This church exists by the grace of God, and the glory of God shall be the ultimate purpose of this church in all its activities.

This church glorifies God by loving Him and obeying His commands through:

- Worshipping Him in spirit and truth;
- Equipping the saints through the preaching, teaching and studying of Scripture;
- Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of Scripture;
- Encouraging, supporting, and participating in missions work – local, domestic, and international;
- Administering the ordinances of baptism and communion;
- Encouraging biblical fellowship among believers;
- Serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical and spiritual needs, in the name of Jesus Christ; and
- Calling fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity through instruction and encouragement regarding the nature of the local church.

ARTICLE 3: Membership

Section 1. Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, and such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

Section 2. Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and each applicant shall at such time relinquish any membership they may have at another church.

Section 3. Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accordance with Scripture and the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only members or those recognized as Residing Non-members of this congregation shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding the foregoing, but subject to Article 5, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

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

Section 4. On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline should ordinarily be contemplated only after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or the congregation, removal from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19– 20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).

The purpose of such discipline should be for:

- the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5; Hebrews 12: 1–11; Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5; Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5; Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1: 13–14; James 1: 22);
- instruction in righteousness and the good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33; Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Hebrews 10: 24–25);
- the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians 3: 13: 10; Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);
- the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; 36 Matthew 5: 13–16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and
- supremely, for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Romans 2:24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1; Ephesians 1: 4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

Section 5. Termination of Membership

The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership (i) following his or her death, and (ii) after a member has voluntarily resigned or joined with another church.

Membership may also be terminated as an act of church discipline (ordinarily, but not necessarily, at the recommendation of the elders) upon the vote of at least two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

If a member seeks to resign in anticipation of, or prior to the completion of, a process of church discipline, any right of resignation afforded such member under South Carolina law shall be respected; provided, the church shall be entitled, following such resignation, to continue to treat such person as a member for purposes of conducting or completing such discipline process.

Section 6. Residing Non-members

Students temporarily residing in the Rock Hill area, and others who may have unconventional circumstances, who are members of an evangelical church may request to complete the membership process with hopes of being received as a Residing Non-member. Qualifications are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that home church membership must be retained. A letter of commendation will be sought from the applicant's home church. Duties and privileges of Residing Non-members are the same as for other members except that: (a) when absent from the Rock Hill area for extended periods of time they are released from the responsibility to attend our church services; (b) while they will be encouraged to participate in members' meetings they will not be eligible to stand for any office or to vote. Termination of recognition as Residing Non-members as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for other members, except that the elders shall notify the pastor or elders of the home church of that termination. Residing Non-members will normally cease to be recognized as such immediately upon the ending of the period of temporary residence in the Rock Hill area. Decisions about who may or may not have circumstances which merit one to be a Residing Non-member will be made by the elders.

ARTICLE 4: Meetings

Section 1. Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, and may also be held throughout the week as the church determines. In unconventional circumstances, and as deemed necessary by the elders, worship services may also be designated for church business and voting that would conventionally be carried out in members' meetings.

Section 2. Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. There shall be a regular members' meeting at least every other month, at a time separate and apart from a public worship service as agreed upon by the membership.

An elder designated by the elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.

Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present. Unless otherwise provided herein, any action of the church requiring a vote of members shall be adopted upon approval by a majority of members present at the meeting of members held to consider such matter.

At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met. Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of ten percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of such request. Any member may make a motion at any regular or special members' meeting; however, such motion shall be tabled until the following members' meeting, in order to allow the elders and other church members time to review such motion. Notice of any such motion shall be communicated to church members within two weeks after such motion is first made.

ARTICLE 5: Officers

Section 1. Summary

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

Section 2. Elders

The elders shall ordinarily be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6 and I Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially. After an elder (other than the lead pastor, each associate pastor, and each assistant pastor), has served two consecutive three-year terms, he may only be re-elected to the office of elder after an interval of at least one year; provided, during the first nine years following the adoption of this constitution by the church, this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the lead pastor. An elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two or more members having reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed shall express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:17-21. Any elder may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any regular or special members' meeting of the church, provided such meeting is called in accordance with the applicable provisions of this Constitution.

The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders are further responsible to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share the fundamental convictions of this church as set forth in the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant.

The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The membership shall approve all candidates to fill the positions of lead pastor, associate pastor

and assistant pastor, subject to the requirements of Article 6. The scope and approval of the job description for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

Section 3. The Lead Pastor

The lead pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2 above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 5, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 3. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in this constitution. In the absence or incapacity, or from time to time pursuant to the delegation, of the lead pastor, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 4. Associate Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of associate.

An associate pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2, above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall not be subject to the triennial reaffirmation or to the term limitation set out in Article 5, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 4. He shall assist the lead pastor in the performance of his regular duties and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor, or as set forth in this constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the congregation.

In the absence or incapacity of the lead pastor for defined periods of time (such as sabbatical or illness), the associate pastor(s) shall assume responsibility for his duties under the oversight of the elders.

Section 5. Assistant Pastors

The church may call additional pastors whose relationship to the lead pastor is that of assistant.

An assistant pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder described in Section 2 above, and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching.

His call shall be subject to the triennial reaffirmation and term limitation set out in Article

5, Section 2, for elders. His call shall be defined as per Article 6, Section 5

He shall assist the lead pastor and associate pastor(s) in the performance of their regular duties, and shall perform any other duties as usually pertain to the office of pastor. The elders shall define the responsibilities of each assistant pastor.

Section 6. Other Staff

The lead pastor may hire additional staff to assist with pastoral ministry. These shall not be pastors, though they may be recognized as elders should they be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation, in accordance with Article 5, Section 2.

The lead pastor shall assign the responsibilities of such other church staff. They shall serve at the will of the lead pastor for a term of one year, though that term may be extended with the approval of the elders.

Section 7. Deacons & Deaconesses

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3: 8–13 and Acts 6: 1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons and deaconesses. They shall be elected by the congregation to one term lasting for a maximum of two years and may be re-elected for a second consecutive term. After a second term, they may only be elected to another term after an interval of one year. Deacons and deaconesses shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

The deacons and deaconesses, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions, teams, or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

Section 8. Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church.

The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve for a term of one year.

In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk during such period of absence or incapacity.

The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members upon request.

Section 9. Treasurer

The treasurer, who shall not be a paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and other applicable assets of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting; provided, this responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church.

The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year. The elders may also, in their discretion, nominate an assistant treasurer to be elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.

Section 10. Compliance with South Carolina Law; Execution of Official Documents

For purposes of compliance with the nonprofit corporation laws of the state of South Carolina, this Constitution shall be deemed to constitute the bylaws of Pioneer Church. With respect to the governance of Pioneer Church as a nonprofit corporation incorporated under the laws of South Carolina, at all times (i) the body of elders then holding office shall constitute the Board of Directors of the Corporation, (ii) the Lead Pastor then holding office shall act as President of the Corporation, (iii) the Clerk then holding office shall act as Secretary of the Corporation, and (iv) the Treasurer then holding office shall act as Treasurer of the Corporation. The powers of the Board of Directors shall be limited to the powers granted in this Constitution to the body of elders, and the powers of the President, the Treasurer and the Secretary of the Corporation shall be limited to the powers granted in this Constitution to the Lead Pastor, the Treasurer and the Clerk, respectively.

Official documents of Pioneer Church may be executed by the Lead Pastor, in the capacity of President of the Corporation, by the Treasurer, in the capacity of Treasurer of the Corporation, and by the Clerk, in the capacity of Secretary of the Corporation. The execution by any of the foregoing of any legal document that would encumber, sell or purchase any real or personal property on behalf of Pioneer Church shall be subject to prior approval by the elders.

ARTICLE 6: Elections

Section 1. Principles

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

- Substantial prayer, both individual and corporate, should be an integral part of the nomination and election process;
- Nominations should proceed with the support and involvement of the elders;
- All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members;
- The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2. Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elder, deacon, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (provided that such previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator.

The elders shall seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting.

The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a two-thirds majority of all votes cast for the office of elder. Such vote shall be by secret ballot. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.

Section 3. Calling of the Lead Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of lead pastor requires that such man have been recognized and called by the congregation to the office of elder, according to the process described in Article 5, Section 2, and subject to the voting requirements described in Article 6, Section 2. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential lead pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as lead pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 4. Calling of Associate Pastor

The calling of any man to the position of associate pastor requires that such man have been recognized and called by the congregation to the office of elder, according to the process described in Article 5, Section 2, and subject to the voting requirements described in Article 6, Section 2. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential associate pastor and, before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Statement of Faith and the Church Covenant. Notice of the nomination of a man to be called as associate pastor (which shall include, if necessary, election to membership of him and his wife if he is married) must be given at two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a members' meeting.

Section 5. Calling of Assistant Pastor

The calling of any man to the position of assistant pastor requires that such man have been recognized and called by the congregation to the office of elder, according to the process described in Article 5, Section 2, and subject to the voting requirements described in Article 6, Section 2. Such a man may then be called by the elders to serve as assistant pastor with defined duties for a fixed period of time specified by the elders in the terms of his call.

ARTICLE 7: Indemnification

Section 1. Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person relating to the current or prior service of such person as an officer, employee, or agent of the church, the church shall provide indemnification against liability and costs incurred in defending against the claim if the elders determine that the person acted (a) in good faith, (b) with the care an ordinarily prudent person in a similar position would exercise under similar circumstances, and (c) in a manner the person reasonably believed to be in the best interest of the church, and the person had no reasonable cause to believe his or her conduct was unlawful. The church shall maintain insurance coverage with respect to such indemnification obligation.

Section 2. Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any current or former member who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful. The church shall maintain insurance coverage with respect to such indemnification obligation.

Section 3. Procedure

If a quorum of the elders is not available for an indemnification determination because of the number of elders seeking indemnification, the requisite determination may be made by the membership or by special legal counsel appointed by the membership.

ARTICLE 8: Dispute Resolution

Believing that the Bible commands Christians to make every effort to live at peace and to resolve disputes with each other in private or within the church (see, e.g., Matthew 18:15-20, I Corinthians 6:1-8), the church shall require its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically-based principles, without reliance on the secular courts. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage the use of biblically-based principles to resolve disputes between itself and those outside the church, whether Christian or non-Christian and whether individuals or corporate entities.

ARTICLE 9: Budget and Finances

Each year the elders, after consultation with the deacons, the deaconesses, and the membership, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following

members' meeting.

The budget shall be approved by the membership not more than three months after the start of each fiscal year. Prior to such approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the level of the prior fiscal year.

The fiscal year of the church shall be determined by the Treasurer subject to the approval of the elders.

No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

ARTICLE 10: Amendments

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

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing at the previous members' meeting, and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote; provided, in the case of any amendment of the immediately preceding paragraph, approval of the percentage of members stated therein shall be required.

The revised version of the church covenant or constitution shall be made available to all church members by the church clerk upon request.