

CHURCH CONSTITUTION and BY-LAWS

THE CHRIST OUR LIGHT CHURCH

Los Santos, San Andreas

ARTICLE I. Name

The name of this corporation shall be THE CHRIST OUR LIGHT CHURCH of Los Santos, San Andreas

ARTICLE II. Purpose

The purpose of this church shall be the advancement of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. It shall seek to attain this end through the public worship of God, the preaching of the Gospel, consistent Christian living by its members, personal evangelism, missionary endeavor, and Christian education.

ARTICLE III. Policy

The government of this church shall be in the body which comprises its membership. It shall, however, maintain affiliation and cooperation with the Fundamental Baptist Church of the San Andreas Region and the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship International.

ARTICLE IV. Doctrine

This church recognizes the New Testament as the all-sufficient basis of doctrine and practice. As a summary of principles for Christian conduct among its members, it adopts the following church covenant commonly accepted by Baptist churches:

CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our savior, and on this profession of faith, having been baptized in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, heaven's angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the Gospel to all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to faithfully educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drink as a beverage, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful to secure it without delay according to the rule of the Savior.

We moreover engage that, when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with another gospel church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE V. Membership

Definition

The fellowship of this church shall consist of members and friends.

Members of the fellowship are those who have confessed Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, have adopted the views of faith and principles of the church covenant, and have followed the Lord's example of baptism by immersion. Members are received through one of four ways: a 1st time salvation and baptism experience at this church, restoration from the church inactive list on recommendation of the Pastor and Diaconate Board, transfer by letter of good standing from another church, which holds the same denomination as Christ our Light, or by their statement of a salvation experience and evidence of baptism from another denominational church that practices baptism by immersion. No person shall be denied membership in this church because of racial or cultural background.

Friends are those persons who desire to share in the ministry of the church but either does not wish to be baptized by immersion or hold formal membership. Friends shall have all the privilege of members except they may not:

- a.) Serve on the Church Board, Pulpit Committee, or hold any elected church office.
- b.) Vote on matters of:
 - Doctrine
 - Selection or dismissal of a pastor
 - Purchase or disposal of real property
 - Acceptance of new members into the fellowship
- c.) Represent the church as a delegate to a denominational meeting.

Admittance to the fellowship

Persons desiring to be received into the fellowship of this church may make their intentions known during the invitation time in any public service. A unanimous vote of members present is necessary for approval and a nay vote will require further investigation by the Pastor and Diaconate Board and a report given to the Fellowship before acceptance. When statistical information is required for reporting purposes, the membership figure will be reported as defined above.

Separation from the fellowship

Membership may be terminated, **suspended**, or **restricted** by a majority vote of the congregation because of: Note: All five categories below require a majority vote of the congregation at a business meeting to be put into effect.

- A letter of transfer request from another Baptist church or Gospel believing church, Members in good standing will be granted a letter of transfer to another Baptist church or a letter of notification of removal from our roster will sent to all other churches.
- Letter requesting the removal of their membership from an active member.
- Death
- Suspension – should any member become an offense to the church by reason of immoral or unchristian conduct, the church may suspend his/her membership but only after faithful effort by the Pastor and Church Board to affect repentance and restoration. Members placed on this list will be sent a letter informing them of pending action and given opportunity to respond.
- Inactivity – annually, the Pastor and Church Board shall review the church roster in December for the purpose of reviewing attendance at worship services. Their recommendations are to be presented at the annual meeting in January. A member shall be considered inactive if he/she has not attended services at least 4 times in that church year unless prevented by age, sickness, or disease. Members placed on this list will also be sent a letter informing them of the pending action and given opportunity to respond.

ARTICLE VI. Pastor

Section 1. Duties

The pastor shall be responsible for the spiritual interests of the church and organize and direct its strength for the best possible service. He shall be an ex-officio, voting member of all church boards and committees, except the Pulpit Committee. He shall be responsible to plan, develop and lead all services in conjunction with the Diaconate Board. He also has the responsibility to be administrative supervisor over the church staff.

Section 2. Call

The vote to call a pastor shall be at a special meeting called for this purpose. Notice of the meeting shall be read from the pulpit on 2 successive Sundays and sent a letter to the entire Fellowship. Only 1 candidate at a time is to be considered for the position. A $\frac{3}{4}$ affirmative vote of active members present and voting by written ballot shall be necessary to extend a call. 25% of the active roster shall constitute a quorum. Terms of the accepted call shall be in writing and signed by the candidate, with 1 copy given to the new pastor and 1 copy filed by the Church Board.

Section 2. Terms of office

The pastoral term shall be for an indefinite term. A termination request may be generated by either the pastor of the church and concluded by mutual agreement. The pastor may terminate his tenure in office by submitting a written letter of resignation to the church and giving sixty (60) days notice. The church may terminate the call with sixty (60) days notice or 60 days severance pay. This termination effort is to be decided at a specially called meeting by the Church Board after a 2 week notice has been posted and a letter sent to each family notifying them of the proposed action. The Church Board must call this meeting within 2 months of the receipt of a petition signed by 12 active members calling for dismissal of the pastor. A majority of written votes is necessary to terminate provided that the 25% of active membership minimum is met to constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VII. Church Board

Section 1. Purpose

There shall be an Executive Church Board composed of the pastor, the elected church officers and the Pulpit Committee; thus forming a group representing the entire scope of church ministry. The Executive Church Board shall serve as the unifying and coordinating body between the Fellowship and all boards of the church and are subject to the will of the church.

Section 2. Duties

- The Executive Church Board shall intake, execute, or act upon all matters of business not falling within the province of any other Board or committee.
- It shall consider, compose, and make recommendation at a scheduled or called meeting on any business that requires action of the church.
- It may delegate matters to boards or committees that require additional detail for further study and a future report.
- It shall diligently attempt to mediate any conflicts between the boards or committees.

Section 3. Procedure

- John Hughes shall serve as chairperson and be responsible to prepare an agenda.
- The Senior Pastor shall serve as Secretary and keep and distribute minutes. A copy of the minutes, complete with recommendations, is presented at quarterly business meetings.
- The Council will meet bi-monthly except in the month of the quarterly business meetings.

ARTICLE VII. Church Meetings

Worship

Meetings for worship shall be held regularly on Sunday at 1:30 P.M. and on other such special days and times as designated by the pastor and Diaconate Board. Communion shall be observed regularly, with the frequency to be determined by the Senior Pastor and the Church Board.

Business Meetings

Annual

The annual business meeting of the church shall be held, following the worship service, on the 3rd Sunday in January each year. All officers, boards, and committees are required to submit a written report of their activities for the previous year at this meeting. The proposed operating budget shall be explained and voted on for adoption at this meeting. The installation of officers and board members, elected at the 3rd quarterly business meeting, shall be the concluding act of this meeting. Notice of this meeting shall be publicly given and announced for at least 2 successive Sundays prior to the meeting date.

Quarterly

Quarterly business meetings of the Fellowship are to be held on the 3rd Sunday of April, July, and October following the worship service. Written activity reports shall be submitted by all officers, boards, and committees.

Special

A special business meeting may be called by the Senior Pastor, the Church Board, or any Board of the church. A meeting **must** be called if the Senior Pastor upon written request of any 10 active members of the Fellowship. Notice of this meeting must be given from the pulpit on the Sunday preceding the meeting, along with the purpose of the meeting.

Any business meeting pertaining to the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of church property shall be announced from the pulpit on 2 successive Sundays, along with written notice sent to all active members, at least 2 weeks prior to the date of the meeting. The vote taken shall be by written ballot.

Quorums

Unless otherwise prescribed, quorum shall be as follows:

- 1) Annual Business Meeting – twenty (20) active members of the Fellowship
- 2) All other business meetings – twelve (12) active members of the Fellowship
- 3) Meetings called for the purchase, sale, or encumbrance of church property – twenty (20) active members of legal age
- 4) Constitution revision or adoption – twenty (20) active members of the Fellowship

Voting

- 1) Voting shall be by voice vote unless otherwise required by this document.
- 2) Members have the right to vote on all church business matters.
- 3) Friends may vote as defined in Article V.

ARTICLE VIII. By-Laws

- I.) The recognized church year shall be the calendar year – January 1 through December 31.
- II.) Ordinances – The accepted ordinances observed by the church are a) baptism by immersion and b) The Lord’s Supper.
- III.) Property usage – All church property usage requests may, upon the approval of the Trustee Board, be granted. The property usage sheet is to be filled out and initialed when taken and returned. There is no charge for usage by members, but donations are accepted from non-members.
- IV.) Marriage and Sexuality:
- We believe that the term *marriage* has only one meaning and that is marriage is sanctioned by God and is intended to join one man and one woman in a single exclusive union, as delineated in the Scripture.
 - We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.
 - We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, or any disagreement with or attempt to change one’s sex is sinful and offensive to God.
 - We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to our church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serves as volunteers, shall abide by and agree to this statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.
 - We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.
 - We believe that every person **must be afforded** compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with scripture or the doctrines of this church.

ARTICLE IX. Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those active members present and voting at any regular or called business meetings of the church, provided the proposed amendments have been publicized in the church bulletin and announced from the pulpit for at least two (2) weeks preceding the meeting. The vote shall be by paper ballot and the quorum shall be twenty (20) active members.

ARTICLE X. Enactment

A quorum of twenty (20) active members is necessary to consider a vote on this document. A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those active members present and voting is necessary to adopt and enact this constitution and by-laws. Upon adoption, all present officers shall serve the remainder of their present terms under the old document before being required to serve under the revised document.

Adopted by the Christ our Light Congregation on July 15, 2017.

