

# Community Bible Church Constitution

## ARTICLE I - Name

The name of this fellowship shall be the Community Bible Church/Community Fellowship, Inc.

## ARTICLE II - Purpose & Affiliations

### Section 1. Purpose

- To WORSHIP God in spirit and in truth,
- To RECEIVE instruction in His Word,
- To SHARE our lives with one another in love, and
- To COMMUNICATE our faith to the world.

### Section 2. Affiliations

- (a) Non-denominational. This church shall be independent of denominational controls. However, the church shall welcome the privilege of fellowshiping with other churches of like precious faith.
- (b) Associations. The church may affiliate with an association of churches as long as it retains the right to withdraw at any time and no section of this Constitution is violated or compromised in spirit or in deed.

## ARTICLE III - Doctrinal Statement

In subscribing to this doctrinal statement, we by no means set aside or undervalue any of the Scriptures, but we deem this statement necessary to sound doctrine. The Scripture references quoted to support the following doctrines are not exhaustive on the subjects.

### Section 1. Scripture

- (a) Inspiration and authority. We believe in the verbal plenary inspiration by God of all Scripture (the Bible) in the original manuscripts. Both the individual words and the full text are inspired. We believe in God's sovereign superintendence over the transmission of the Scriptures from the original manuscripts to the present time, so that no change of any doctrine has occurred. The canon of Scripture (Old and New Testaments) has been completed and nothing can be added to or subtracted from it. Since the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God and cannot be broken,

they shall be the authority in all questions of faith and practice. (Psalm 119; [John 10:35](#); [Romans 15:4](#); [II Timothy 3:15-17](#); [Hebrews 1:1](#); [I Peter 1:10-12](#); [II Peter 1:19-21](#); [Revelation 22:18,19](#))

(b) Interpretation. We believe the Bible is best understood: (1) by giving its words and statements their normal, historical, and grammatical meanings as determined by their use in the original languages and cultures; (2) by realizing there is a literal meaning behind each figure of speech, symbol, allegory, and type; (3) when no passage is interpreted so as to contradict any other passage; (4) when each passage is interpreted to have one literal meaning while having more than one application; (5) when the Old Testament is studied in the light of New Testament fulfillment; and (6) in a dispensational framework. (A dispensation is a particular way of God's administering His rule over the world as He progressively works out His purpose in world history.)

## **Section 2. Trinity**

We believe in one God, Who exists eternally in three equal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one in essence but distinct in person and function. ([Genesis 1:26](#); [3:22](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4](#); [Matthew 28:19](#); [Luke 3:21,22](#); [John 1:1,2](#); [Acts 5:3,4](#); [II Corinthians 13:14](#); [Ephesians 4:4-6](#); [I Peter 1:1,2](#))

## **Section 3. God the Father**

We believe in God the Father, that perfect, spiritual, personal Being who is the Creator, Lord, and Judge over all that exists. While He is unfathomable, He has revealed Himself in creation, His Word, and His Son. ([Deuteronomy 32:3,4](#); [Isaiah 44:6](#); [John 4:24](#); [I Timothy 6:15,16](#); [Hebrews 1:1-3](#))

He is self-existent ([Exodus 3:14](#)), self-sufficient ([John 5:26](#)), eternal and infinite ([Psalms 9:7](#); [90:2](#)), unchangeable ([Malachi 3:6](#); [James 1:17](#)), holy and righteous ([Isaiah 6:1-7](#); [I Peter 1:15,16](#)), good and loving ([Exodus 34:6,7](#); [I John 4:16](#)), true ([Psalm 31:5](#); [Titus 1:2](#)), just ([Psalm 97:2](#); [Jeremiah 32:17-19](#)), sovereign and almighty ([Job 23:13](#); [Psalm 93](#)), all-knowing and wise ([Job 12:13](#); [Psalm 139](#)), and present everywhere ([Psalm 139:7-12](#); [Jeremiah 23:23-24](#); [Acts 17:24-28](#)).

## **Section 4. God the Son**

We believe Jesus Christ exists as God from eternity past. He flawlessly expresses God's nature and will. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, and was fully man, yet without sin. While retaining all of the attributes of deity, He humbled Himself as a son to serve the Father's redemptive plan. Thus, He died on a cross, was buried, resurrected, and exalted as Lord at the Father's right. ([John 1](#); [I Corinthians 15:3-8](#); [Philippians 2:1-11](#); [Colossians 1:13-20](#); [Hebrews 1](#))

## **Section 5. God the Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, coequal and coexistent with God. He convicts of sin, regenerates, bears witness, guides, teaches, and empowers us to live a godly life. All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and baptized into the Body of Christ. We believe the New

Testament distinguishes between being baptized with the Spirit (which is a work of the Spirit taking place only at conversion) and being filled with the Spirit (which is a daily yielding to the control of the Spirit). ([John 14:16,17](#); [16:8](#); [Acts 5:3,4](#); [I Corinthians 3:16](#); [Romans 8:9](#); [Ephesians 4:30](#); [5:18](#))

## **Section 6. Fall and redemption of man**

We believe all men, in Adam, were made in the image of God. However, Adam's original sin (his act of willful disobedience) caused spiritual death, which is separation from God. Since he was mankind's representative, the consequence of his sin was passed on to the entire human race. It is only through the shed blood of Jesus Christ in His substitutionary death for fallen man that we can be saved from spiritual death and reconciled to fellowship with God. ([Genesis 2:17](#); [John 3:3,16,36](#); [Acts 20:28](#); [Romans 3:23-28](#); [5:8,12](#); [6:23](#); [11:4-6](#); [Galatians 2:16-21](#)); [Ephesians 1:7](#); [2:8,9](#); [Colossians 1:14](#); [Titus 3:5](#); [Hebrews 9:22-28](#); [1 Peter 1:18,19](#))

## **Section 7. Salvation from man's perspective**

We believe salvation is an act of God's grace, delivering individuals from the penalty and dominion of sin. Each person is required to respond to God by the exercise of faith in the merits of Christ's death and resurrection. The ultimate state of salvation will be realized at the return of Christ, when the believer will be wholly conformed to Him. ([Ephesians 2:8,9](#); [Titus 3:5-7](#); [Romans 3:23](#); [6:23](#); [5:8](#); [10:9,10,13](#); [John 3:16,17](#); [I John 5:13](#))

## **Section 8. Security and assurance of the believer**

We believe all that God ever required of any sinner was fulfilled in and by Jesus Christ. This is the only basis of the believer's security, which was irrevocably established by God when He placed us in Christ. Therefore, a true believer can never lose his salvation. Moreover, assurance is the result of choosing daily to rest in God's promises. ([John 3:16](#); [5:24](#); [10:28,29](#); [Hebrews 7:25](#); [12:6-11](#); [II Timothy 1:12](#); [Romans 8:33-39](#); [Philippians 1:6](#); [II Corinthians 1:21,22](#); [Ephesians 1:12-14](#))

## **Section 9. Spiritual gifts**

We believe that spiritual gifts are particular supernatural abilities given by God for service. The Holy Spirit is sovereign in His selection and bestowal of gifts to every believer for the benefit of the whole Church. We believe some gifts were temporary, given for the foundation of the Church: apostles, prophets (foretellers), miracles, healings, tongues and their interpretation. ([Ephesians 4:7-16](#); [Romans 12:3-8](#); [I Corinthians](#), chapters 12-14; [Hebrews 2:3,4](#); [I Peter 4:10,11](#))

## **Section 10. Christian (personal) growth**

We believe that one of the Christian's primary goals on Earth is to mature into Christ-likeness. This is a lifelong process in which God changes our character. While our growth is the work of the Holy Spirit, God

does require us to respond with obedience to Him in the pursuit of Godliness. (I Corinthians 3:6,7; II Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:22,23; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 1:6; 2:12,13; II Peter 1:1-8; 3:18)

Several primary avenues through which God causes growth are: (a) submission to the Lordship of Christ (Romans 8:11-13), (b) consistent intake and application of the Scriptures (II Timothy 3:15-17), (c) prayer and dependence upon God (Colossians 4:2), and (d) regular fellowship with other believers (Hebrews 10:24,25).

## **Section 11. Love**

We believe that love is both a command and a Holy Spirit-produced virtue. Love is a conscious act of the will to meet the true need of others without regard to personal reward. Therefore, the Spirit-filled believer will yield to this God-given love rather than to the demands of the sinful nature. (John 13:34,35; I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:22; I John 2:7-11; 3:10-18; 4:12,17-21)

## **Section 12. Personal separation**

We believe, as followers of Christ's example, that we are to live in the world, but not be pressed into the world's sinful mold. Sin is unbelief, expressed in fleshly lusts, greedy desires, and pride. While sinless perfection is not possible in this life, the ministry of the indwelling Spirit in concert with the Scriptures will progressively purify us. Therefore, we seek to be separate from sin in every thought, word, deed, and association. (John 17:14-17; Titus 2:12; II Corinthians 6:14,17; 7:1; I John 2:15,16; Matthew 6:24; James 4:4,5; Ephesians 5:1-5; I Corinthians 5:9-11)

## **Section 13. Marriage**

We believe marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. We believe that sexual intimacy is a wonderful gift of God that is only to be expressed between one man and one woman (as genetically defined), within the love and bonds of marriage.

We believe that any form of sexual intimacy outside of marriage is both immoral and a perversion of God's gift. Furthermore, we believe that any form of sexual immorality such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography, cohabitation (regardless of the age of the individuals involved), and any attempt to change one's gender is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function, unity, and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly whether at church, home, or in the community. (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:21-33, I Corinthians 7:35; Hebrews 13:4; Leviticus 18:1-30; Proverbs 6:32; I Corinthians 6:18; Romans 1:26-27; I Thessalonians 4:3-8; Leviticus 18-20; Romans 1).

(Voted and passed by a two thirds majority of the members present on January 31, 2016)

## **Section 14. Family**

We believe that the family, a God-given institution, is the foundational unit of society, second in importance only to one's personal relationship with God. The husband is to love, provide for, spiritually lead, and protect his wife. She is to respect and submit to him, and be a helpmate. Children, in turn, are to respect, honor, and obey their parents, because this pleases God and brings His blessing.

Children belong to God, but are entrusted to parents, who are responsible for their training in all areas. In order to produce many godly generations, parental training must develop their faith, build strong character, and instill a knowledge and understanding of the truth. Parents are to protect their children from physical, social, mental, and spiritual harm as much as possible, and provide a wholesome environment to nurture their children's growth. ([Genesis 2:18-25](#); [Deuteronomy 6:6-9](#); [Proverb 22:6,15](#); [Ephesians 5:22-6:4](#); [I Timothy 5:8](#); [I Peter 3:1-7](#); [I Peter 1:5-7](#))

## **Section 15. Civil government**

We believe that government is ordained by God. Its responsibility is to maintain order and provide protection by encouraging right living and punishing evildoers. The Christian's responsibility is to obey its laws, pray for its leaders, and influence its decisions from without or from within. When governmental laws require us to disobey God's higher laws, as clearly taught in the Scriptures, we will use the right of appeal, and as a last resort we will "obey God rather than men." ([Genesis 9:6](#); [Titus 3:1](#); [I Peter 2:13-17](#); [Daniel 4:17](#); [John 19:11](#); [Acts 4:19](#); [5:29](#); Romans 13)

## **Section 16. The Church**

We believe the Church is the spiritual body of Christ. He is its head and gives it life. It is composed of all who have trusted the blood of Christ for salvation. The local church, an expression of that body, is formed as a means of worship, fellowship, teaching, and witnessing. ([Matthew 16:18](#); [Colossians 1:18](#); [Ephesians 1:22,23](#); [2:11-22](#); [5:24](#); [Acts 2:42](#); [Hebrews 10:24,25](#))

## **Section 17. Ordinances**

We believe in two ordinances, neither of which confers salvation upon the participant, but which are performed after salvation in obedience to the Lord.

- (a) Water baptism. Spiritual baptism occurs at the moment of one's salvation (see Section 5. God the Holy Spirit). Water baptism, by immersion, is a symbolic and commemorative act. It identifies one with Christ's redemptive death, for it speaks of the believer's death to the old life of sin. It also identifies one with Christ's resurrection, in that it symbolizes the believer's new life in Christ. ([Matthew 28:18-20](#); [Acts 8:34-40](#); [16:30-33](#))

- (b) The Lord's Supper (communion). This taking of the bread and cup commemorates the death of Christ, symbolizing His broken body and shed blood. It is a time of self-examination, consecration, and renewal of obedience to the Lord. ([Matthew 26:26-29](#); [I Corinthians 10:16-22](#); [11:1-34](#))

## Section 18. Giving

We believe that, because of the gracious work of God in our lives, we love Him in return. This results in, not only giving ourselves to Him, but also cheerfully giving our money to support His work and meet human needs, both here and around the world. Thus, giving is one joyful aspect of our worship. Each believer is to give willingly and not under compulsion, with liberality, each according to his own ability, as the Lord has prospered him. ([Matthew 6:1-4](#); [19-21](#); [Mark 12:41-44](#); [Luke 6:38](#); [I Corinthians 16:2](#); [II Corinthians 8,9](#); [Hebrews 13:15,16](#))

## Section 19. Future events

We believe that the following events will take place in the indicated order beginning at the close of the present church age:

- (a) Rapture. The Church will be caught up to meet Christ in the clouds and will be taken to heaven with Him. This event could happen suddenly at any time. ([I Corinthians 15:51-58](#); [I Thessalonians 4:13-18](#); [Titus 2:13](#))
- (b) Judgment seat of Christ. Believers' works will be evaluated, and rewards will be dispensed or lost. Neither punishment nor loss of salvation will be involved. ([Romans 14:12](#); [I Corinthians 3:12-15](#); [II Corinthians 5:10](#))
- (c) Tribulation. A seven-year period during which those left on the Earth will be subjected to great anguish and affliction due to the outpouring of God's wrath. ([Isaiah 63:3-6](#); [Daniel 9:24-27](#); [Matthew 25:4-28](#); [Revelation 6:1-17](#))
- (d) Second advent of Christ. Christ will return to the Earth in power and glory to establish His millennial kingdom. Satan will be bound; faithful Israel will be gathered and regenerated; Old Testament and Tribulation saints will be resurrected; and nations of the world will be judged. ([Zechariah 14:1-7](#); [Matthew 24:24-31](#); [25:31-46](#); [Revelation 19:11-20:3](#))
- (e) Millennium. A thousand-year reign of Christ on Earth. It will be characterized by peace, joy, justice, full knowledge of God, and prosperity. ([Isaiah 11](#); [Hebrews 8:8-12](#); [Revelation 20:1-7](#))
- (f) Satan's final revolt. At the end of the millennium God will release Satan who will then gather all rebellious people on the Earth to fight God. However, God will kill them all with fire and throw Satan into Hell, where he will stay for eternity. ([Revelation 20:7-10](#))
- (g) Great white throne judgment. All unsaved souls will be brought before Christ, judged according to their works, and thrown into Hell to suffer forever. ([Psalm 9:17](#); [Daniel 7:9, 10](#); [Acts 10:42](#); [Revelation 20:11-15](#))

- (h) Destruction and recreation of heavens and Earth. God will melt the elements of the Earth and surrounding heavens with intense heat, and then fashion a new Earth and new heavens. ([Isaiah 65:17](#); [Matthew 24:35](#); [II Peter 3:10-13](#); [Revelation 21:1](#))
- (i) Eternal state of believers. All saved souls will live with God forever rejoicing, serving, and praising God. ([Revelation 21, 22](#); [Hebrews 12:22-24](#))

## ARTICLE IV - Church Government

### Section 1. Elders

(a) Purpose. The elders are the governing body of Community Bible Church. They shall have the authority over spiritual matters and the authority to transact all business, with the following exceptions, which require a vote by the membership:

- (1) Election of officers
- (2) Final confirmation of an elder or a deacon
- (3) Amendment of this Constitution

Throughout this Constitution the term elders refers to this governing body. The pastor and associate pastor(s) are also elders, but with additional duties.

(b) General Qualifications. They must: be above reproach; be the husband of only one wife; not be given to questionable habits, such as alcohol, drugs, etc.; manage their own household well; keep their children under control; have a good reputation with those outside the church; and, not be controlled by the love of money ([I Timothy 3](#); [Titus 1](#); [Acts 6:3](#)). They must also be: church members; unanimously chosen by the elders; and approved by a three-quarters majority of the church membership.

(c) Specific Qualifications. Qualifications include those listed in paragraph (b) plus the following: They must be righteous men who demonstrate God's call to do His work, and not be recent converts. They must be temperate, gentle, prudent, sensible, respectable, hospitable, kind to all, self-controlled, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, patient when wronged, uncontentious, just, and devout. They must be able to teach, to exhort in sound doctrine, and to refute those who contradict God's Word. Their children must believe and not be unruly. ([I Timothy 3](#); [II Timothy 2](#); [Titus 1](#); [James 5](#).)

(d) Elders.

(1) Duties. They shall:

- (i) Administer the ordinances;
- (ii) Oversee the deacons, all boards, committees, ministries, and officers of the church;
- (iii) Set goals for the church;
- (iv) Minister to the needs of the saints;

- (v) Select a pastoral candidate when needed; and,
- (vi) Examine candidates for church membership.

(2) Selection and Termination.

- (i) Candidates for eldership shall be identified, examined, and recommended by the elders prior to their confirmation by the membership.
- (ii) No limiting number shall be set for elders.
- (iii) The elders shall serve as long as they remain qualified, committed, and desirous of serving (unless otherwise agreed upon at the time of election).

(e) Pastor.

(1) Duties.

- (i) He is responsible for teaching the Word of God so as to disciple the people to maturity in Christ and develop able men into leadership.
- (ii) He is to love the people by patiently exhorting, discipling, and counseling them using sound doctrine.
- (iii) He is to lead a ministry of prayer for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the congregation.
- (iv) He will also direct the outreach of the congregation. ([I Timothy 2:1](#); [II Timothy 2:2, 4:15](#); [James 5:13-15](#); [Titus 2:1](#); [I Peter 5:1-5](#); [Ephesians 6:18](#))
- (v) He shall: moderate (or appoint a moderator for) the elders and congregational meetings. In his absence, the elders shall appoint a temporary moderator.
- (vi) He shall also oversee the whole church, attend any committee or organizational meeting desired;
- (vii) He shall confide in and keep the elders informed about his ministry, visiting speakers, and general plans;
- (viii) He shall perform the duties of an elder; and,
- (ix) He shall obtain the prior consent of the elders before making significant time commitments outside the church.

(2) Selection and Termination.

- (i) Prior to his appointment the elders shall thoroughly examine him concerning: the above qualifications; his agreement with the doctrinal statement within this Constitution; his pastoral philosophy; his education and training; and his general background.
- (ii) The pastor is deemed a church member upon election, and he shall serve as long as he remains qualified, committed, and desirous of serving (unless otherwise agreed upon at the time of election).

(iii) He may terminate his ministry with a sixty day notice. The elders may declare the pulpit vacant, provided a ninety day notice has been given the pastor. However, in the case of grievous sin, the elders shall immediately terminate the pastor's ministry with thirty days pay.

(f) Associate Pastor(s)

(1) Duties.

(i) Paragraphs (e) Pastor, (1) Duties, (i), (ii), (viii), and (ix) also apply.

(ii) He shall assist the pastor in any area needed, and particularly shall be responsible for those specific duties assigned by the elders.

(iii) He shall confide in and keep the pastor informed about his ministry and specific plans.

(2) Selection and Termination.

(i) Paragraphs (e) Pastor, (2) Selection and Termination, (i) and (ii) also apply.

(ii) He may terminate his ministry with a thirty day written notice. The elders may declare his office vacant, provided a sixty day written notice has been given to him. However, in the case of grievous sin, the associate pastor's ministry shall be terminated immediately with thirty days pay.

## Section 2. Deacons.

(a) Purpose. To oversee the stewardship of the church properties and to demonstrate God's love by ministering to the temporal needs of the local body of Christ.

(b) Qualifications. Qualifications include those listed in Section 1 Elders (b) General Qualifications plus the following: They must be men acknowledged as mature in character and faith having demonstrated such dependability and loyalty in various activities in the church. (Acts 6; I Timothy 3.)

(c) Duties.

(1) They shall handle those matters delegated to them by the elders as outlined in their ministry description.

(2) The chairman of the deacons shall attend the elders meetings also, but shall not have a vote.

(d) Selection and Termination.

(1) Candidates for deaconship shall be identified, examined, and recommended by the elders prior to their confirmation by the membership.

(2) No limiting number shall be set for deacons.

(3) The deacons shall serve as long as they remain qualified, committed, and desirous of serving (unless otherwise agreed upon at the time of election).

### **Section 3. Elders and Deacons Meetings**

- (a) Elders meetings and deacons meetings are to be held separately except when it is deemed necessary to hold joint meetings.
- (b) Meetings for prayer and discussion shall be held at least bimonthly, but preferably monthly.
- (c) Meetings shall be open to any interested church member, except when a closed session is deemed necessary.
- (d) When parliamentary law is questioned, Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.
- (e) Fifty-one percent of the respective body's members shall constitute a quorum. Only those in good standing are eligible to vote.
- (f) All decisions of the respective bodies must be based on a unanimous vote, except for that to remove an elder. A deacon may be removed only by the decision of the elders.
- (g) The elders and deacons shall inform the church members of their enactments.

## **ARTICLE V - Officers**

### **Section 1. Definition.**

The officers of the church shall include the clerk, the treasurers, the committee chairmen or coordinators.

### **Section 2. Qualifications.**

All officers shall have the appropriate abilities, high character, a good testimony, and a desire to serve in this capacity.

### **Section 3. Responsibilities**

A description of the specific responsibilities of each officer shall be maintained by the elders, and shall be revised as necessary.

### **Section 4. Elections**

- (a) A nominating committee shall be appointed by the elders no less than two months before the annual business meeting. It shall consist of one elder, one deacon, two additional church members, and the pastor. The elders shall promptly inform the congregation of the formation of this committee and the nominating process.
- (b) Any church member in good standing may nominate a person for office by submitting the name in writing to the nominating committee no later than one month before the annual business meeting.

- (c) The nominating committee shall then present their list of nominees to the elders for approval before posting it for the congregation. If necessary, the elders will narrow the list to one nominee for each office.
- (d) The approved list of nominees shall then be posted in conspicuous places within the church for at least two Sundays before the annual business meeting.
- (e) At the annual business meeting a voice vote is sufficient to elect the list of nominees.

## **Section 5. Filling midterm vacancies**

The elders may appoint individuals to fill any vacant office for the remainder of the term.

## **Section 6. Removal from office.**

Any officer no longer meeting the qualifications in section 2, shall be voted out of office by the elders.

# **ARTICLE VI - Business Meetings**

## **Section 1. Scheduling and notices**

The annual business meeting shall be held in November or such other date as the elders shall set. Additional business meetings may be called by the elders. The meeting date and proposed agenda shall be announced at the Sunday services and at least five days in advance.

## **Section 2. Agenda**

The agenda of the annual business meeting shall include the receiving of annual reports, the election of officers, the confirmation of any new elders or deacons and the transaction of any general business.

## **Section 3. Eligible voters, parliamentary law, and quorum**

- (a) Business meetings are open to the entire congregation; however, only members as defined in Article VIII are eligible to vote.
- (b) When parliamentary law is questioned, Robert's Rules of Order shall be followed.
- (c) Fifty-one percent of the members shall constitute a quorum.
- (d) Decisions shall be made by a simple majority, except when the elders or this Constitution require a higher percentage.

# **ARTICLE VII - Teachers**

## **Section 1. Qualifications.**

All teachers shall have the appropriate abilities, good character, doctrinal agreement, a good testimony, and a desire to serve in this capacity.

## **Section 2. Responsibilities**

All teachers shall be responsible to: maintain their personal walk with God; maintain their family relationships; prepare and present their lesson; be ready to lead others to faith in Christ, or a deeper relationship with Him, pray for their students; support the doctrinal statement in this Constitution; maintain order in the classroom; and keep the necessary records.

## **Section 3. Appointment and removal**

The pastor, or an officer given such responsibility, shall have the power to appoint and remove teachers.

# **ARTICLE VIII - Membership**

## **Section 1. Prerequisites**

- (a) Candidates for membership must be born again (see section 7 of the doctrinal statement), as evidenced by their testimony and their Christ-honoring life.
- (b) Candidates must be willing to support the church with their prayers, time, talents, and gifts.
- (c) Candidates must be at least 18 years of age (except for associate members).

## **Section 2. Procedure to become member.**

- (a) Candidates for membership should indicate their desire to the pastor or an elder.
- (b) Candidates must become familiar with this Constitution.
- (c) Candidates must attend the membership classes when required by the membership committee.
- (d) Candidates must complete a written or oral statement to the membership committee which includes: personal data; a testimony of how they were saved; a statement of agreement with the doctrinal statement and willingness to abide by this Constitution.
- (e) After the membership committee's evaluation, their recommended list of candidates shall be submitted at the regular midweek prayer meeting, for comments from the congregation.
- (f) Candidates accepted by the membership committee shall be welcomed into membership during a Sunday morning service.

## **Section 3. Associate members**

- (a) Those younger than 18 years of age may become an associate member by following sections 1 and 2 of this article.

- (b) Throughout this Constitution, the word members also refers to associate members, unless specifically excepted.
- (c) Associate members may not vote.

#### **Section 4. Membership committee**

The membership committee shall consist of the pastor and the elders, and shall conduct membership classes periodically, for those persons who are interested in becoming members. The committee shall satisfy itself and the congregation that the character of the candidate is in accord with his testimony and that his testimony is genuine. It shall supply the names of those candidates it recommends for membership, for reading at the regular midweek prayer meeting. Upon acceptance by the congregation, it shall publicly receive the candidates as members during a Sunday morning service. The committee shall oversee the keeping of a membership roster.

#### **Section 5. Member responsibilities and privileges**

- (a) Members are expected to determine and exercise their spiritual gift(s) in the service of Christ through this church.
- (b) Members are expected to support this church with their finances and faithful prayers.
- (c) Members are to treat one another with a spirit of deference (respectful submission) (Romans 14).
- (d) Members are encouraged to obey Christ by submitting to water baptism.
- (e) Members may hold an office or become a teacher if appropriately selected.
- (f) Members (but not associate members) may vote on church matters which require a congregational vote.

#### **Section 6. Removal from membership**

- (a) The membership committee may remove from the membership roster the name of any member absent more than three months from the church services without a satisfactory reason. Members leaving the community for a time, but desiring to retain their membership, should so inform the membership committee.
- (b) In a disciplinary act, the elders may remove a person's name from membership (see Article X on discipline).

### **ARTICLE IX - Finances**

#### **Section 1. Authorized funds.**

- (a) The operating fund shall comprise all monies to be used for the normal functioning of the church.

- (b) The missions fund shall comprise all gifts intended for missions, whether or not they are designated for a particular mission. They shall be used for:
  - (1) Gifts to those speakers whose predominate purpose is furthering one or more missions;
  - (2) Gifts to approved missions who further the gospel outside of the activities of this church. Approved missions shall mean missionaries and organizations: whose doctrine is generally consistent with the doctrinal statement within this Constitution; who would not refuse members of this congregation to become a missionary for denominational reasons; whose principles and practices are above question; and, who have been approved by the missions committee and elders.
- (c) Any auxiliary fund(s) shall comprise those funds approved by the elders and collected for some specific project, such as a building addition.

## **Section 2. Financial policies**

- (a) Accurate records shall be kept of receipts to and disbursements from all funds.
- (b) The operating fund and the missions fund shall not be commingled.
- (c) The disbursement records from all funds shall be open for inspection to any regularly donating member; however, the receipt records for each individual donor shall be kept strictly confidential.
- (d) All required financial reports by the treasurer shall be either published and made available to the congregation or posted in a conspicuous place in or around the place of worship.
- (e) Freewill offerings shall be the primary means of supporting the church. The church shall not coerce people to give.
- (f) No activities shall be undertaken which solicit money from those outside this church.
- (g) The fiscal year for financial reporting shall be defined as from November 1st to October 31st.
- (h) The elders shall insure that all church salaries are reviewed during budget preparation.
- (i) The annual church budget shall be prepared by the budget committee (which is selected by the elders), approved by the elders, and submitted to the congregation at the annual business meeting.
- (j) The operating fund shall be disbursed within the limits of the budget. Any excess disbursements must be approved by the elders. The church shall not incur debt.
- (k) Congregational consent or advice for major expenditures may be sought at the church elders' discretion.
- (l) Each year during the missions conference the congregation may be collectively encouraged to individually participate in faith promise giving to the missions program of the church. No one shall be billed or publicly recognized concerning their faith promise or their donations.

## **ARTICLE X - Discipline**

When an offense occurs in the church a spirit-filled believer is prompted to confess and forsake any sin (I [John 1:9-10](#)). However, when sin is not personally dealt with, it will not only affect his fellowship with Christ, but also: the unity of the church ([Ephesians 4:3-5](#)); the ministry of the Holy Spirit ([Ephesians 4:30](#)); and the testimony of Christ ([Matthew 5:16](#); II [Peter 2:2](#)). At this point, in order to restore the offender and thus maintain the unity of the body, the following steps shall be taken:

- (a) The offended party shall meet privately with the offender and attempt to resolve the issue in a scriptural manner ([Matthew 18:15](#), [Ephesians 4:32](#));
- (b) If the first step is unsuccessful then the offended party shall take one or two spiritual persons to meet privately with the offender ([Matthew 18:16](#));
- (c) If the issue remains unresolved, the elders shall investigate and take appropriate action, which may even require removal of the offender from fellowship ([Matthew 18:17](#));
- (d) When the elders have determined that the offender has complied with their requirements, they shall forgive and restore him to fellowship ([Luke 15:1-7](#); [Galatians 6:1](#)). This does not necessarily mean that he will be immediately restored to the offices previously held.

## **ARTICLE XI - Amendments**

Proposed amendments must be recommended by the elders to the congregation at least two Sundays before a duly called business meeting. Passage of the amendment requires a two thirds majority vote of those members present.

## **ARTICLE XII - Dissolution Clause**

### **Section 1**

The Community Bible Church shall be considered dissolved if the original doctrines are altered as to change their meaning or intention.

### **Section 2**

That group of members which continues to hold the original doctrinal position will be considered the legal possessors of any and all properties and funds. This group has the right to dispose of any of the properties and funds or recognize the fellowship utilizing the properties and funds.

### **Section 3**

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any donor, member director, or officer of the corporation or any private individual and no donor, member, director officer of the corporation or any private individual shall be entitled to share in the distribution of any of the corporate assets. Upon dissolution, any assets of the corporation must be distributed to one or more organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as one exclusively organized for religious, charitable, scientific, literary or educational purposes.

**Amendment 1.** (Voted and passed by a two thirds majority of the members present on January 31, 2016)

The pastor of Community Bible Church shall perform no weddings or other related ceremonies for any wedding or ceremony not in compliance with the allowed weddings and ceremonies described in Article III, Section 13, of this Constitution. Furthermore, no Community Bible Church facilities or other resources may be used for any wedding, wedding-related event or activity, or other activities not in conformity with those weddings and/or related events described in Article III, Section 13, of this Constitution.

We do believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Romans 8). And we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior, attitudes, or speech directed towards any individual are to be repudiated and that are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Community Bible church (1 Peter 2:13-25; 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12).