

The Constitution and Bylaws of Trinity Church of Loudoun

Preamble

Since it pleased Almighty God, by his Holy Spirit, to call some of his servants to unite here in Loudoun County, VA under the name Trinity Church of Loudoun to worship God and to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the members of Trinity Church of Loudoun adopt this constitution and bylaws as our articles of governance, to be interpreted at all times to reflect the character of Jesus Christ and bring him glory, as revealed in the Holy Bible and articulated in the statement of faith and covenant of this church.

Constitution

Article 1 Name

1.1 The name of this corporation shall be Trinity Church of Loudoun

Article 2 Purpose

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

2.2. This church glorifies God by loving him and obeying his commands through worshipping him; equipping the saints through Bible instruction and study; proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ through preaching and personal evangelism, and any other means consistent with the teachings of the Bible; encouraging, supporting, and participating in local, domestic, and international missions work; administering the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper; encouraging biblical fellowship among believers; serving other individuals, families, and churches by providing for physical, emotional, and spiritual needs; and encouraging fellow churches to biblical faithfulness and purity.

Article 3 – Affiliation

3.1. Trinity Church of Loudoun operates as an independent church with its own governance structure. To further its purposes, however, the church may affiliate with any like-minded churches, associations, or denominations.

3.2. As a corporation, Trinity Church of Loudoun is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3), Internal Revenue Code.

Bylaws

Article 4 - Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications

4.1.1. To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, has been baptized in obedience to Christ following his or her regeneration, agrees to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith, and promises to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant.

4.1.2. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership candidacy. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence as the elders deem appropriate.

Section 2 - Admission

4.2.1. To be admitted into church membership, candidates shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a simple majority vote of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the members.

4.2.2. Upon admission, all candidates, except for candidates for associate membership, shall relinquish their membership in any other churches.

Section 3 - Duties and Privileges

4.3.1. In accordance with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in life of the church, by regularly attending its Lord's Day meetings; faithfully observing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper; submitting to its discipline and instruction; attending its members' meetings; voting on the church's governing documents and all other matters submitted to the congregation at members' meetings; contributing to the church's ministry with the gifts, time, and resources each has received from God.

4.3.2. Only members shall lead the ministries of the church; non-members may serve on an ad hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Nevertheless, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

4.3.3. No member of this church, nor any officer, nor any member of the board of directors shall by virtue of such membership, office, or position, incur or be subject to personal liability to any extent for any indebtedness, obligations, acts, or omissions of this church corporation.

Section 4 – Associate Members

4.4.1. Students and others temporarily residing in the area may apply for associate membership. Qualifications and admission procedures are identical to those for full membership as set out above, except that home church membership must be retained.

4.4.2. Duties and privileges of associate members are the same as for other members except that (a) when absent from the area 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 vote or stand for any office.

4.4.3. Termination of associate membership as a disciplinary measure will be as it is for other members, except that the elders shall also notify the pastor or elders of the home church of that termination.

Section 5 - Church Discipline

4.5.1. Church discipline is the process of correcting sin in the life of the congregation and its members. This can mean anything from correcting sin through a private word of admonition all the way to any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties as embodied in the Church Covenant or the Constitution and Bylaws, or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, being subject to church discipline according to the instructions found in Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 5:19-20; 1 Corinthians 5:4-5, which can result in admonition, removal from office, and excommunication.

4.5.2. If private efforts are taken to bring about the member's repentance and reconciliation, yet are unsuccessful, or if private efforts are deemed inappropriate in light of the circumstances, one or more members or elders shall bring the matter to the attention of the elder board. The elders shall review and investigate the matter. After prayer and deliberation, the elders may (a) dismiss the matter, (b) take disciplinary action (other than termination of membership, which may only be effected by a vote of the members), or (c) submit the matter (with or without a recommendation for action) to the members at a regular or special meeting for either consideration or a decision. If the elders fail or refuse to act on the matter, the members may bring it up for consideration or a vote at a special members' meeting.

4.5.3. Members who have been excommunicated by the church shall be restored to full membership privileges according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8 when their conduct is judged by the elders and a vote of the membership to be in accordance with the Statement of Faith, Church Covenant, and biblical repentance.

4.5.4. The purposes of such discipline should be:

- For the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual; See Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; 1 Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; 1 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; 1 Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1–5; 2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14–15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1:22.
- For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them; See Proverbs 13:20; Romans 15:14; 1 Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians

3:16; 1 Thessalonians 5:14 [NB: this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; 1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24–25.

- For the purity of the church as a whole;
See 1 Corinthians 5:6–7; 2 Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; 2 John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21:2.
- For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians;
See Proverbs 28:7; Matthew 5:13–16; John 13:35; Acts 5:1–14; Ephesians 5:11; 1 Timothy 3:7; 2 Peter 2:2; 1 John 3:10.
- Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character.
See Deuteronomy 5:11; 1 Kings 11:2; 2 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; 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; 1 Peter 2:12.

Section 6 - Termination

4.6.1. The church shall recognize the termination of a person's membership following his or her death or apostasy, and may do so following his or her voluntary resignation with intent to join another gospel-preaching church.

4.6.2. The church shall have authority to refuse a member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with church discipline, or for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent.

4.6.3. A member shall be removed from membership as a matter of church discipline ordinarily, but not necessarily, upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 5 - Worship Services and Meetings

Section 1 - Worship Services

5.1.1. The church shall meet together for public worship each Lord's Day, and at other times throughout the week as the church may determine.

Section 2 - Members' Meetings

5.2.1. Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend members' meetings and vote on such matters as may be submitted to a vote.

5.2.2. In every meeting together, members shall act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5.2.3. The church shall hold a regular members' meeting at least quarterly, without displacing the regular gathering of the church on the Lord's Day.

5.2.4. The church, duly assembled in a members' meeting, shall be responsible to: elect and remove elders, deacons/deaconesses, and other officers; receive applicants into membership; recognize that membership has been terminated by death, apostasy, or voluntary resignation; exercise church discipline; approve an annual budget; hear reports from the elders and, from time to time, the various deacons/deaconesses; and, take any other action it deems necessary or desirable.

5.2.5. The elders, whenever they deem it necessary, or within thirty days of receiving a written request signed by ten percent of the membership, shall call a special members' meeting.

5.2.6. No members' meeting shall be held unless the date, time, and place of the meeting has been announced at every public meeting of the church for at least a week immediately before the members' meeting in question.

5.2.7. An elder designated by the board of elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings, but shall have no vote, unless the members are equally divided on a question.

5.2.8. Members' meetings shall proceed in reasonable order, and the members present shall constitute a quorum to do business. Motions shall be adopted by a majority vote of the members present and voting on the question, except on matters otherwise provided for in this constitution.

Article 6 - Government

Section 1 - Offices

6.1.1. The biblical offices in the church shall be elders, and deacons, but final earthly authority is vested in the assembled congregation. In addition, our church recognizes the administrative positions under this constitution of clerk and treasurer, who need not be elders or deacons. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 - Elders

6.2.1. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church.

6.2.2. The board of elders shall be composed of men who satisfy the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

6.2.3. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and 1 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.

6.2.4. 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 and other ceremonies including funerals and weddings, 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, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions.

6.2.5. Annually, after consulting with the deacons, deaconesses, and members of the church, the elders shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially called meeting and moved to a vote on the budget as a whole at the following members’ meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders.

6.2.6. No elder may hold the office of deacon during his tenure.

6.2.7. Elders shall be recognized as follows: The elders may present the name of a nominee (or nominees) to the church at any regular members' meeting. For at least a month, the church shall consider whether the nominee is (or nominees are) qualified. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible before the vote. Once at least a month has passed, the elders may move the nomination(s) to a vote at a regular members' meeting. The members shall vote on nominees one at a time. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee immediately shall become an elder who receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on his nomination. In due haste after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart all such newly approved elders.

6.2.8. With the exception of the preaching elder (also called the lead pastor) and associate pastors, elders shall be reaffirmed by vote of the church triennially, and having served two consecutive three-year terms, shall not be eligible for reelection for one year. Neither a lead pastor nor an associate pastor shall be subject to any term limit.

6.2.9. A quorum of elders shall consist of three-fourths of the elders of the church.

6.2.10. An elder shall be removed from office upon the vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

Section 3 - Deacons

6.3.1. Particular service to the church shall be provided by deacons/deaconesses, who will vary in number depending on the needs of the church, and who shall satisfy the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

6.3.2. The deacons/deaconesses shall not meet together regularly as a body. Each diaconate position shall serve a particular need of the church, and shall be created or dissolved upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

6.3.3. Deacons/deaconesses shall be recognized as follows: The elders may present the name of a nominee (or nominees) to the church at any regular members' meeting. For at least a month, the church shall consider whether the nominee is (or nominees are) qualified. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible before the vote. Once at least a month has passed, the elders may move the nomination(s) to a vote at a regular members' meeting. The members shall vote on nominees one at a time. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and any nominee immediately shall become a deacon (or deaconess) who receives the approval of at least two-thirds of the members present and voting on his (or her) nomination. In due haste after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart all such newly approved deacons.

6.3.4. Deacons/deaconesses shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of three years and, after serving two consecutive terms, shall not be eligible for reelection for one year.

6.3.5. In keeping with the principles in Acts 6:1-6, deacons/deaconesses shall not exercise spiritual authority, but shall enable the elders to devote themselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word, work to maintain the unity of the church, and care for the physical needs of the church.

6.3.6. The church may recognize deacons/deaconesses to take responsibility to: care for the temporal needs of members; attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage, support, and mobilize those able to help others and those with gifts of administration.

6.3.7. The deacons and deaconesses shall receive, hold, and disburse, upon approval from two elders, a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church only its total receipts and total disbursements.

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

6.3.9. A deacon/deaconess may be removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and the later vote of a majority of the members present and voting on

the question at any members' meeting.

Article 7 - Pastoral Staff

Section 1 – The Parity of Elders

7.1.1. In the New Testament, the office of elder is given to exercise spiritual care, oversight, and authority over the local church. Elders are also called overseers (or bishops) and pastors, and all elders possess equal authority in their spiritual oversight of the church. However, it may be wise to bring some elders into the employ of the church so that they may devote more of their time to the work of ministry. Such elders are assigned the titles of Lead Pastor, Associate Pastor, and Assistant Pastor. These titles serve 1) to indicate the different roles of elders in the employ of the church and 2) to show the structure of supervision within the church's staff. Therefore, while the Biblical titles of elder and pastor are synonymous with respect to spiritual authority and responsibility, the title of 'pastor' in the following sections describes elders in the employ of the church in order more clearly to define their roles. A vote to call a man to serve in the position of Lead, Associate, or Assistant Pastor may be certified by the elders as an ordination to ministry at Trinity Church of Loudoun.

Section 2 - The Lead Pastor

7.2.1. Primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Scriptures in public meetings of the church will be vested in the lead pastor. If the lead pastor is absent or incapacitated, the elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which may be delegated to someone biblically qualified to perform such duties. The elders shall designate the lead pastor or another elder to serve as the president of the corporation, in accordance with the nonprofit corporation laws of Virginia.

7.2.2. The lead pastor shall be selected as follows: The elders shall present the name of one nominee to the position of preaching elder at a regular members meeting. For at least a month, the church shall consider the nominee's gifts in preaching and teaching, his commitment to minister personally to the members of this church, and his wholehearted assent to the statement of faith and church covenant. Any member intending to vote against a nominee should express his or her objection to at least one elder as early as possible before the vote. Once at least

a month has passed, the elders may move the nomination to a vote at a regular members' meeting. The moderator or his delegates shall count the votes, and if the nominee receives the approval of at least three-quarters of the members present and voting on his nomination, he shall immediately be the preaching elder (and, if he is not yet an elder and member, also an elder and member). In a reasonable time after the vote, the church shall publicly recognize and set apart the lead pastor.

7.2.3. The lead pastor shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of a church member. He shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the duties and responsibilities of an elder. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an elder and a preaching elder.

7.2.4. The lead pastor shall not be subject to any term limit.

7.2.5. The lead pastor shall be removed from office upon the vote of two-thirds of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions in Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21.

Section 3 - Associate Pastors

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

7.3.2. An associate pastor shall be elected in the same manner as the lead pastor. 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 the Constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the elders.

7.3.3. An associate pastor shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of a church member. He shall meet all the qualifications and hold all the rights and responsibilities of an elder. In terms of formal authority, there shall be no distinction between an elder and a preaching elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching, teaching and equipping.

7.3.4. An associate pastor shall not be subject to any term limit, and shall be removed from office in the same manner as the lead pastor.

Section 4 - Assistant Pastors

7.4.1. The church may select 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 and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall serve at the will of the elders for a term of not more than two years, though that term may be extended upon recommendation of the elders and approval of the Members at a duly convened members' meeting.

7.4.2. An assistant pastor shall be selected in the same manner as the lead pastor. 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, or as set forth in the Constitution, or which may be specifically assigned to him by the elders.

Section 5 - Pastoral Assistants

7.5.1. The Church may create or dissolve paid Pastoral Assistant positions to assist with pastoral ministry upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting. These individuals are not required to be elders, though they may be recognized as such should they be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation. Pastoral assistants shall serve under the supervision of the lead pastor for a term of one year, though that term may be extended upon the recommendation of the elders and the subsequent agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 8 - Administration

Section 1 - President

8.1.1. The elders' designee, whether the lead pastor or another elder, shall serve as president of the corporation, assuming all its responsibilities and other responsibilities delegated by the board of elders. The president shall have general

supervision and direction of the business and affairs of the church. The president shall recuse himself from any board discussion and vote regarding his duties, responsibilities, and compensation. The president or chairman of the board of elders shall execute any necessary documents on behalf of the church, except where that responsibility is expressly delegated by the board to some other officer or agent of the church.

Section 2 - Clerk

8.2.1. The clerk shall record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church. The clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation.

8.2.2. The clerk shall be a member of the church. The clerk shall not be an elder.

8.2.3. The clerk shall be selected to a renewable term of one year upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

8.2.4. The clerk may be removed from office by a majority vote of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Section 3 - Treasurer

8.3.1. The treasurer shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in the banks, financial institutions, or depositories held by the church. 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 provide to the elders at least once a year, or whenever the elders may require it, an account of all financial transactions since the last complete account and of the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall also present reports of the account balances, revenues, and expenses of the church at regular members' meetings.

8.3.2. The treasurer shall be selected to a renewable term of one year upon the recommendation of the elders and the later agreement of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

8.3.3. The treasurer shall be a member of the church. No elder or paid staff member of the church may serve as treasurer. No person shall serve more than three consecutive terms as treasurer.

8.3.4. The treasurer shall be removed from office upon the recommendation of the elders and the later vote of a majority of the members present and voting on the question at any members' meeting.

Article 9 - Amendments

9.1. The statement of faith or church covenant shall be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and the agreement of three-quarters of the members voting on the question at any regular members' meeting, provided the amendment was presented by the elders in writing at a previous regular members' meeting, and was announced at every public meeting of the church during the two weeks immediately before the vote.

9.2. This constitution shall be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and the agreement of two-thirds of the members voting on the question at any regular members' meeting, provided the amendment was presented by the elders in writing at a previous regular members' meeting, and was announced at every public meeting of the church during the two weeks immediately before the vote.

Article 10 - Dispute Resolution

10.1. 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 Christian church (see, e.g., Matt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 6:1-8), the church shall urge its members to resolve conflict among themselves according to biblically based principles, without resorting to the civil courts.

10.2. In the case of alleged criminal behavior, it may be appropriate to resolve conflict in the criminal courts, not least because such alleged criminal behavior may in some cases legally be required to be reported to the government authorities (see Romans 13:3-4.)

10.3. Consistent with its call to peacemaking, the church shall encourage members to use biblical principles and avoid lawsuits to resolve disputes among themselves and with those outside the church—including believers and unbelievers, and individuals and corporations. The elders may adopt policies and procedures to encourage the church to live up to these aspirations.