

Constitution

Article 1 - The Name

The name of this local church shall be “Faith Community Church” (FCC) and we will meet in New Richmond, WI.

Article 2 - The Purpose

We make disciples who plant the church

Article 3 - The Church

The Scriptures speak of the church of Jesus Christ in two primary ways. One is the universal Church consisting of everyone who has been born again by the Spirit. The second is the local, tangible expression of the church. A local church is to embody the spiritual characteristics of a community of Christ-followers while growing in the values of Christ’s Kingdom. We enter into covenant as an expression of necessary and willing interdependence and accountability to one another for the glory of Christ. It is our delight to invite all who may, by God’s grace, be part of His family and who are compelled by the purpose God has given FCC, to become part of this local church.

Article 4 - Criteria for Entering into Covenant Relationship

FCC gladly offers the opportunity to enter into covenant relationship to anyone who:

1. Has personally received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
2. Has been baptized.
3. Has completed the requirement of Covenant Orientation.
4. Will actively share in the mission of Faith Community Church as guided by the Elder Council.

Covenant Relationship will be required to hold any church office described in this constitution.

Individuals 18 years of age or under, who desire to enter into covenant relationship, must receive the written consent of their parents or legal guardian.

FCC will also recognize a designation of Missional Covenant Relationship for those who may be serving the Kingdom of Christ in another part of the world. A signed Missional Covenant will be used to indicate a shared desire for Missional Covenant Relationship. This will be a non-voting relationship requiring Elder Council oversight and approval.

Article 5 - Procedure for Entering into Covenant Relationship

It is the desire of FCC to uphold biblical principles of commitment to Christ and His body, the church. Covenant relationship may shall be entered enter through the following procedure:

1. Completion of 6 months of regular attendance (at least twice per month) in FCC corporate worship gatherings.
2. Completion of Covenant Orientation. From time to time, orientation will be offered to provide teaching on the FCC statement of faith, vision, expectations, and principles of church government.
3. Personal Interviews. Following orientation, individuals desiring covenant relationship shall meet with an elder or appointed leader to verbalize their personal testimony, to determine the integrity of their faith, and desire to be committed to FCC as a local body of believers.
4. Signed Statement of Covenant. A signed Statement of Covenant shall be used as an instrument to affirm an individual's desire for covenant relationship and to serve as a formal record.
5. A public profession of covenant relationship at a regularly scheduled corporate gathering.

Article 6 - Role of those in Covenant Relationship

Those who enter covenant relationship are committing to the following:

1. Protect the unity of FCC by living in submission to Jesus Christ, the truth of God's Word, those God has raised up as leaders, and one another at FCC.
2. Pursue spiritual growth and a servant heart through mutual accountability, correction, and commitment, and gathering together on the Lord's day for worship.
3. Embrace a personal role as an ambassador of Jesus Christ to invite others into the life of Christ and His church while expressing genuine care for all others who are part of this local church family.
4. Actively grow in generosity to share in the life and mission of FCC through prayer, service, financial stewardship, and godly love.
5. The elders have the responsibility and authority to lead, encourage, correct and recommend for removal from covenant relationship.

A. Duties of Membership

1. Members shall be expected to participate actively in the life of the church by regularly attending its Lord's Day worship; Hebrews 10:24-25
2. By faithfully observing its ordinances, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
3. By submitting to the teaching of God's word and accountability of the congregation; Hebrews 12:7-8, 11; Proverbs 13:18; Romans 15:4
4. By attending, when possible, its Covenant Member Meetings. Acts 15

B. Removal From Membership

1. The church shall be informed of the termination of a Person's Membership following his or her death, or may do so following his or her voluntary resignation or joining with another church.
2. The church shall have authority to exercise discipline over its Members, which may involve excluding from its Membership any Member consistently neglectful of members duties, or guilty of scandalous conduct by which the reputation of Christ or His church is dishonored. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.
3. The church shall have authority to refuse a Member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, if it is an attempt to avoid church discipline, or for any other reason the church deems necessary or prudent.
4. A Member shall be removed from Membership as a matter of church discipline upon the recommendation of the Elders and the subsequent agreement of at least two-thirds of the Members present and voting on the question at any Members' Meeting.

Article 8 - Elders

A. Qualifications

Elders and nominees for Elder shall be men of demonstrable godly character, above reproach in public and private, and committed to shepherding the flock of God and to teaching and guarding sound doctrine, as expressed in the Faith Community Church Statement of Faith and Elder position papers. Elders and nominees will exemplify the Biblical characteristics of elder overseers in I Timothy 3:17, Titus 1:5-9 and I Peter 5:14.

B. Responsibilities

The fundamental responsibility of the Elders is to devote themselves to prayer and the Word. The Elders are responsible for governing the Church as godly servant leaders. They must teach the Word and tend the flock of God in this Church. Their duties include but are not limited to:

1. Examining prospective members and candidates for baptism.
2. To examine and recommend candidates for all offices and positions;
3. Overseeing the process of Church discipline.
4. Overseeing the work of the Deacons and appointed Church ministries
5. Oversee the ordinances, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper.
6. Equipping the membership of the Church for the work of the ministry.
7. Teaching the whole counsel of God both formally and informally.
8. Preserving the mission and doctrine of the church and correcting error

9. Overseeing and promoting the ministries of the Church
10. Mobilizing the Church for world mission.
11. Review and prepare the annual budget.
12. To take any other action necessary and proper for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the church.

C. Composition

The Elder Council shall be composed of Staff and Non-Staff Elders. Staff Elders are men who receive financial compensation from the Church as they fulfill God's call to the specific ministries of the Word, prayer and shepherding the flock. Staff Elders will not vote on issues that pose a conflict of interest (e.g. staff pay raises).

Non-Staff Elders are men recommended by the Council of Elders and called by the Church who serve voluntarily without financial support from the Church as they fulfill God's call to the specific ministries of the Word, prayer and shepherding the flock. A majority of the Elders shall be laymen, that is, church members not in the regular pay of the church. In accordance with 1 Timothy 2:12 and 3:2.

D. Appointment

1. Prospective elders shall be nominated by the Elder board. (Members of the congregation are encouraged to make suggestions to the Elder Board of whom they believe would make a biblically qualified Elder.)
2. If the individual expresses interest in becoming an Elder, and affirms their biblical qualification for the position, they will be interviewed by the Elder Board or a representative of the Elder Board.
3. At the conclusion of the interview, if the man is approved to move forward, he will serve as an Elder Intern for no less than six months, during which time he will not be a voting member. The intern will be assigned to serve alongside one of the elders who will coach, guide, evaluate and encourage him.
4. At any point during those six months, either the Elder Candidate or the Elder Board by a majority vote can withdraw the candidacy.
5. At the conclusion of six months, the Elder Board will announce their nomination and recommendation of the Elder Candidate to the congregation and give members an opportunity to meet with and examine the Elder Candidate. Members are invited to bring any outstanding concerns to the attention of the Elder Board.
6. The Elders will call for a vote of affirmation no less than two successive weekends after the initial announcement. Notice shall also be given by mail (electronic or otherwise) to the resident membership at least one week before the meeting. Elders require a majority vote to be approved.

E. Organization

The Council of Elders shall organize itself however it determines to be best to achieve the mission of the Church. The Council shall annually select its Chairman from among its Non-Staff Elders. The Council of Elders will meet at least monthly and will consist of a quorum which is at least one half of the Non-Staff elders plus at least one half of the Staff Elders, except for matters on which only Non-Staff Elders are entitled to vote, in which case a majority of the Non-Staff elders shall constitute a quorum.

F. Tenure

With the exception of the Staff-elders, Elders shall be reaffirmed by the church every three years. Elders having served two consecutive three-year terms shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

G. Removal

1. Resignation- Elders may resign their office at any time if they find they are no longer able to discharge the duties of the office.
2. Discipline- If, at any time, it is confirmed upon the evidence by two or three witnesses (1 Tim 5:19-20) an elder is involved in sin which would disqualify him from office according to 1 Tim 3 or Tit. 1, he will be publicly rebuked and removed from office as soon as the Elder Council is satisfied the charges are true. Any elder, who is removed from office due to sin, cannot be a candidate for any office until a process of restoration, guided by the elders, is completed. It is most critical that a meaningful relationship with the Lord, a godly lifestyle and the confidence of the church family be restored.

Article 9 - The Ministry Team (Deacons and Deaconesses)

The New Testament church identified the role of Deacon/Deaconess; We refer to the Deacon team as the Ministry Team.

1. The Ministry Team will be responsible to execute the vision and policies established by the elders.
2. The Ministry Team will be made up of a Pastor, as well as the leader of each specific branch of FCC.
3. Deacons and Deaconesses will be recommended by the by a member of Faith Community Church, then examined and approved by the Elder Council.
4. Commissioning of a Ministry Team member will require the agreement of the Elder Council.
5. Ministry Team nominees will be evaluated by the elders in light of 1 Tim. 3:8-12 as well as specific gifting necessary for their responsibilities as well as agreement and support of existing "Elder Position Papers". This process may be discontinued at any point by the candidate, or by unanimous agreement of the Elder Council.
6. If approved by the Elder Council, they will be presented before the congregation for a vote of affirmation in accordance with Acts 6:3. Deacons and Deaconesses require a majority vote to be appointed.

7. The newly called Ministry Team member will be announced to the church and commissioned for service by the Elder Council.

Tenure

Deacons and Deaconesses shall be reaffirmed by the church every three years. Having served two consecutive three-year terms, they shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

Removal

Deacons and Deaconesses may resign their office at any time if they find they are no longer able to discharge the duties of the office.

An individual's service as a Ministry Team member may be discontinued upon the recommendation of the Lead Pastor with the affirmation of the Elder Council.

If, at any time, it is confirmed that a Ministry Team member is involved in sin which would disqualify him/her from office according to 1 Tim 3:8-13, he/she will be publicly rebuked and removed from office as soon as the Elder Council is satisfied that the charges are true. Any Ministry Team member who is removed from office due to sin cannot be a candidate for any office until a process of restoration, guided by the elders, is completed. It is most critical that a meaningful relationship with the Lord, a godly lifestyle and the confidence of the church family be restored.

Article 10 - Selection and Role of Ministry Director

FCC recognizes a level of ministry leadership described as Ministry Director. The scope necessary for Ministry Director designation will include consideration of the number of people this role oversees, as well as the number and scope of ministries and ministry leaders included. Director designation will require approval by the Elder council. Ministry Directors will be recommended by a member of the Ministry Team to the Lead Pastor, then subject to examination and approval of the Ministry Team and Elder Council.

Article 11 - Selection and Role of Ministry Leader

FCC recognizes a level of ministry leadership described as Ministry Leader which will either serve directly under a Management Team member or Ministry Director. Ministry Leaders will oversee the function and alignment of a specific ministry of FCC.

Ministry Leaders will be recommended by a member of the Management Team or Ministry Director, then subject to examination and approval of the Management Team.

Article 12 - FCC Staff Members

In this context "staff" refers to those who receive financial compensation; or a volunteer who fulfills a specialized role that functions best as a member of the staff approved by the Elder Council. In accordance with New Testament principles of leadership, staff must not be selected solely on the basis of

performance or professional credentials. Rather, we acknowledge the following criteria for the selection of staff members:

1. A love for the Lord and the display of a growing God honoring lifestyle.
2. A specific commitment to the purpose, core values, and leadership of our church family.
3. Gifts, abilities, and credentials that qualify this individual for the ministry responsibilities, as well as a personal style that will strengthen and complement the ministry staff of FCC.

Staff members serve as role models for other believers. Therefore, spiritual qualifications and lifestyle are of the utmost importance.

The Lead Pastor shall be responsible for the oversight of staffing. Staff selection and dismissal, when necessary, will require the affirmation of the Elder Council. Each staff member will be accountable to one supervisor. The roles and job descriptions for staff members require approval of their immediate supervisor and the Lead Pastor. Salaries shall be determined annually by the Elder Council.

Article 13 - The Role of the Lead Pastor

Consistent with the New Testament teaching regarding spiritual gifts, it is evident that the Lead Pastor, like any other follower of Christ, is uniquely gifted and should seek to serve within his gift area. (Eph. 4:11ff; 1 Cor. 12) He is to teach and exhort by precept and by example. As a teacher he must stress both the understanding and the application of God's Word. His goal, through insightful and accurate proclamation of the Word of God, is to help bring people to maturity of faith for the work of ministry.

In addition to his shepherding role as an elder, the Lead Pastor is called to be the primary vision caster of Christ's purpose for FCC, faithfully teach the Word of God and provide management oversight.

The Lead Pastor should maintain a proper balance of prayer, teaching, shepherding and leadership. He should not be responsible to serve in areas unrelated to his primary function as a teaching elder.

Article 14 - Selection of the Lead Pastor

In the event of vacancy in the office of Lead Pastor, the elders shall be responsible to conduct a search for candidates to fill the position.

Once the elders have selected a candidate, evaluated and approved him according to the elder qualifications of 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1, he will be presented to the church as a nominee for the office of Lead Pastor and elder. No candidate may be presented to the church that has not first been closely evaluated and approved by the Elder Council. A suitable process of exposure and evaluation by the church will be developed by the Elder Council. At the conclusion of the church evaluation, a meeting will be called for the purpose of voting on a Lead Pastor. Notice will be given to the church family at least two weeks prior to this meeting. A 2/3 majority vote of those in covenant relationship, attending the meeting, will be required for approval and appointment. It should be understood that a church vote does not constitute a call from God but gives indication of a desire and willingness to follow the leadership of this man and affirms his role as an elder.

Article 15 - Property Acquisition and Disposition

The Elder Council is responsible to guide the process of property acquisition and disposition. Prior to making any legal agreement to purchase, sell or otherwise dispose of real property, the elders are required to present the proposal to those in covenant relationship at a meeting called for that purpose. A majority vote of those present will be required for approval of acquisition or disposition.

In the event God should lead Faith Community Church of New Richmond to disband, the Elder Council will present those in covenant relationship with a proposal to use any remaining assets to further the purpose of FCC in church planting. A majority vote of those present will be required to approve disbanding and donation of assets.

Article 16 - Procedure for Amendment

This document was drafted by faithful but fallible people. Should the Spirit of God point out the need to revise this document in any way, the Elder Council will present suggested revisions at a meeting called for that purpose. The church must be informed of the meeting at least two weeks prior to the event. A minimum of twenty-five percent of those in covenant relationship with this body must be present. Any changes must be approved by a two-thirds majority vote of those present.

Minor revisions, not effecting change in the theology, ministry philosophy or overall structure and government, shall be made at the discretion of the elders (i.e. grammar, clarification of ideas considered confusing, added Scriptural support, etc.)

Article 17 - Statement of Cooperation

In order to accomplish what Jesus has given us to do, we network with other churches of similar doctrine and objectives. This cooperation is determined by the Elder Council.

Article 18 - Indemnification

Section 1 - Mandatory Indemnification

If a legal claim or criminal allegation is made against a person because he or she is or was 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.

Section 2 - Permissive Indemnification

At the discretion of the elders, the church also may indemnify any person who acted in good faith and reasonably believed that his or her conduct was in the church's best interest and not unlawful.

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 determination may be made by the Ministry Team, or

by special legal counsel appointed by a majority vote of those in covenant relationship, at a meeting called for that purpose.

Revision History

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