

TRUTH BIBLE CHURCH INC.

RENSSELAER, INDIANA

CONSTITUTION

This is the Constitution of the Truth Bible Church Inc., Rensselaer, Indiana.

ARTICLES

Article I – Church Name

The name of this church shall be “Truth Bible Church Inc.” and for the purposes of this document may be referred to as “Truth Bible Church” or “TBC”.

Article II – Purpose Statement

Truth Bible Church exists to glorify God as a family of believers by leading people in a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.

A growing relationship with Jesus Christ...

- Begins as people are lovingly confronted with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and receive Him by faith.
- Continues as people are publicly identified with Christ and His Church
- Is expressed as people grow in their obedience to His teaching, are equipped to serve in His church and world and empowered to love one another.

Article III – Statement of Faith

- I. The Scriptures – We believe the Holy Scriptures (the Bible) to be the very Word of God, the product of the breath of God and thus verbally inspired in all parts. Therefore, the Bible is without error as originally given by God. The Bible is altogether sufficient in itself as our only infallible rule of faith and practice. In addition, it is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.
II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:19-21
- II. God – We believe in the one Triune God who is personal, spirit, sovereign, perfect, infinite and eternal in His Being. He is also wisdom, power, love and holiness. God is separate from and above the world as its Creator and still present everywhere as sustainer of the world. He is self-existing and self-revealing in three distinct persons

– the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, each of whom is to be honored and worshipped equally as true God.

Mark 12:29, Psalms 104, John 5:23-26, I Corinthians 8:6, Revelation 4:11

- III. The Father – We believe in the Father, the first person of the Triune God, who orders all things according to His own purpose and grace and who continually upholds, directs, and governs all creatures and event for His own glory. His Fatherhood is fundamental to His divine being. He is the Father of all people as their Creator. He is uniquely the Father to our Lord Jesus Christ as well as to all who believe in Him. He has appointed His Son to judge humanity and will one day hold us accountable to His standard.
Isaiah 64:8, Malachi 2:10, Matthew 5:45, 48, John 1:12, Acts 17:31, Romans 8:14-17, 15:6, II Corinthians 1:3, 11:31, Galatians 3:36, 4:4, Ephesians 1:3, 2:18-19, 4:6, I Peter 1:3, I John 3:1
- IV. The Son – We believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the second person of the Triune God. Without any essential change in His divine person, He became man by the miracle of the virgin birth, thus to continue forever as both true God and true man. He was tested as we are, yet without sin. As the perfect Lamb of God He gave Himself in death upon the cross, bearing there the sin of the world, suffering its full penalty of divine wrath in our stead. He rose from the dead and was glorified in the same body in which He suffered and died. As our High Priest He ascended into heaven, there to appear before the face of God as our Advocate and Intercessor.
John 1:1, Matthew 1:23, Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 4:15, Galatians 3:13, John 20:25-28, I John 2:1
- V. The Holy Spirit – We believe in the Holy Spirit who is the third person of the Triune God. The Holy Spirit is the divine agent in creation, revelation and redemption. He convicts the world of sin, restrains evil and regenerates those who believe. He indwells, baptizes, seals, empowers, guides, teaches, and sanctifies all who become the children of God through Christ.
Acts 5:3,4, I Corinthians 2:10, John 16:8-11, I Corinthians 6:11-19
- VI. Man – We believe in the creation and fall of man, that he was directly created by God and was not in any sense the product of animal ancestry. Man was made in the divine image. He sinned through his personal disobedience to the revealed will of God and brought physical and spiritual death to the entire race. Man is universally sinful in both nature and practice, alienated from the life and family of God and has no possible means of recovery or salvation within himself.
Genesis 1:26-28, Genesis 3:1-24, Romans 5:12, Ephesians 4, Romans 1:18
- VII. Salvation – We believe in salvation by grace through faith. Salvation is the free gift of God, neither merited nor secured in part or in whole by any virtue or work of man, but received only by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Christ all

believers presently and personally possess a host of blessings: the gift of eternal life, a perfect righteousness, sonship in the family of God as well as deliverance and security from all condemnation. Further, in Christ, the believer possesses every spiritual resource needed for life and godliness and the divine guarantee that they shall never perish.

Romans 3:24, Titus 3:5, John 3:16, I John 5:13, II Peter 1:3

- VIII. Satan – We believe in the existence of Satan. We further believe that he was originally created a perfect and holy being but through pride and unlawful ambition he rebelled against God, thus becoming completely corrupt in character. Satan is the adversary of God and His people and the leader of all evil angels and spirits, the deceiver and god of this present world. His powers are supernaturally great but limited by the purposes of God who overrules all of his wicked devices for good. Finally, we believe that Satan was defeated at the cross, thereby making certain his final doom.
Ezekiel 28:13-17, John 8:44, Revelation 12:9-11, Matthew 12:24-26, John 16:11, Ephesians 6:12-18
- IX. The Church – We believe in the One True Church, the body and bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. He began to build the Church on the day of Pentecost and will complete it at His Second Coming. The Holy Spirit baptizes all true believers of the present age into the church. Members of this spiritual body should assemble themselves together in local churches, consisting of professed believers associated by a covenant of faith. The believers should meet for purposes of worship, prayer, fellowship, evangelism, giving, teaching, united testimony and the observance of the two New Testament ordinances. Those ordinances are baptism by water, as a public testimony of faith, and the Lord's Supper, a commemoration of the death of Christ. Ephesians 4:4, Acts 2:41-47, I Corinthians 12:12-13, Hebrews 10:25, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:26-39, I Corinthians 11:23-28, I Timothy 3
- X. Eschatology – We believe in the Second Coming of Christ. His return will be personal, visible and glorious; our blessed hope. The time of His return has not revealed but is always imminent.
Acts 1:11, Titus 2:11-13, I Thessalonians 4:16-18, II Peter 3:12, Revelation 20:11-15
- XI. Life After Death and Eternal Judgements – We believe in future life, bodily resurrection and eternal judgement. The spirits of believers, upon their death, go to be with Christ in heaven where they abide in joyful fellowship with Him until their bodies are raised from the grave. The spirits of the unrighteous, upon their death, go into Hades, where they are kept under punishment until the final day of judgement. At that time their bodies shall be resurrected and they shall be judged, condemned and cast into the place of final and everlasting punishment, the lake of fire.

Philippians 1:21-23, I Corinthians 15:35-58, II Peter 2:9, Luke 16:19-31, Revelation 20:11-15

- XII. Distinctive Living – We believe that, as children of God and citizens of heaven, distinctive and holy living honoring the Lord Jesus Christ should characterize the life of every believer and local assembly. We do not believe that salvation is obtained through these things, but that they are proper evidence or fruit of our salvation. While acknowledging the ongoing daily struggle every believer has with sin, we ought nonetheless seek to spur one another to love and good works. We do this by speaking the truth in love and through our example of sacrificial and holy living in accord with God's Word. Furthermore, we commit ourselves to biblically confronting unrepentant sin for the purpose of maintaining a membership that evidences distinctive living for the glory of God.
II Corinthians 6:14-18, I Thessalonians 5:22, Ephesians 5:3-11, Colossians 3:1-10, Romans 16:17-18, II Thessalonians 3:6, 14, II Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 2:1-4, Galatians 6:10, Matthew 5:44, Romans 12:18, Hebrews 10:24-25, I Corinthians 5:2
- XIII. Spiritual Gifts – We believe the Spirit manifests His power in the church today by giving each believer spiritual gifts for the common good. There are many kinds of spiritual gifts, with each of them to be used in submission to the Bible and for the purpose of building up the body of Christ.
I Corinthians 12-14, Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-16
- XIV. Men and Women – We believe that Adam and Eve were created in God's image, equal before God as persons and distinct and complementary in their sexuality. As part of the goodness of God's creation, each of us should joyfully embrace and express the biological sex we were created as, whether male or female. Sexual intercourse is reserved for marriage, which is between one man and one woman only. Marriage ought not to be within the boundaries of family relationships forbidden by the Word; Christians should seek to only marry other Christians. A husband is the head of his wife and should humbly lead and sacrificially love her as Christ loves the church, cherishing her and nourishing her spiritually. A wife should intelligently submit to her husband as to the Lord, respecting him and encouraging his leadership. Men and women have equal value and dignity before God and share equally in the blessings of salvation; nevertheless, some governing and teaching roles with the church are restricted to men.
I Corinthians 14:34-36, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-19, I Peter 3:1-7, Titus 2:5, Genesis 1-3, I Timothy 2:11,12, I Corinthians 7:2, Ephesians 5:3, Hebrews 13:4, Matthew 5:28, I Timothy 1:10, II Corinthians 6:14, Leviticus 18

These Articles of Faith do not exhaust the content of our creed, which is the whole Word of God. They are not intended as a limit to the Word of God. We do believe that, insofar as these

articles extend, they are a true presentation of sound doctrine as taught in the Bible and therefore binding upon us as Christian believers.

Article IV – Bylaws of Truth Bible Church

I. Congregation

- A. Definitions – For the purposes of these bylaws, the congregation is that body of believers who are members of the church. Any member in good standing may vote. (For purposes of these bylaws, a member in good standing is one who is not under church discipline.)
- B. Initial Membership Requirements – Any individual who professes their faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and desires to join in the fellowship of believers at Truth Bible Church may become a member.
- C. Voting – The congregation has the responsibility of voting upon specific items of church business as brought before it by the elders. A vote by the congregation is a means for the congregation to express its affirmation of or disagreement with the elders' recommendation. The result of the vote is binding, but does not preclude the elders from bringing the issue to a subsequent vote by the congregation.

The congregation shall vote on the following matters:

- Partnering via regular financial or prayer support with mission organizations or with missionaries not sent from our church
- Annual church budget
- Total unbudgeted expenditures exceeding 5% of the annual budget in any fiscal year
- Sale, lease, or disposal of church property when the cumulative value of such property exceeds \$5,000 in any fiscal year
- Agreement to mortgage or encumber the church with debt
- Amendments to the constitution

At their discretion, the elders may also request that the congregation vote on other matters beyond those listed here.

In all church business meetings, 60% of the elders must be present in order to constitute a quorum for the purposes of acting with the authority of the whole congregation. A quorum must be present before a congregational vote may be taken. The elders may choose to extend the voting period to include the two preceding business days for the accommodation of members and for the purpose of constituting a

quorum. The passage of any matter requires that a simple majority of the votes cast by voting members be affirmative.

- D. Voluntary Removal – Should a member wish to be removed from church membership, the elders will seek to meet with him or her to understand the reason for his or her request. When a member seeks to join another church, a letter of standing to date will be sent upon request. This will also be seen as a request to have his or her name removed from Truth Bible Church membership. In either case, if the member is involved in a church discipline process, the request will be put on hold until that process is completed. The elders may bring requests for voluntary removal from church membership to the congregation at a regularly scheduled business meeting. Upon affirmative vote of the congregation, the member shall be removed from membership.
- E. Discipline – If any member should persist in conduct that is not becoming to a member of the body of Christ, the elders shall meet with the member according to Galatians 6:1, Matthew 18:15-18, I Corinthians 5:9-13, and II Corinthians 2:5-11. If the member continues a pattern of ungodly conduct, the elders may recommend, at a regularly scheduled business meeting, that he or she be removed from church membership under discipline. Upon affirmative vote of the congregation, the member shall be removed from membership and notified in writing of this disciplinary action.

II. Offices

There are two offices in the church: elder and deacons. The elders serve in a role similar to that of shepherds tending a flock of sheep, leading the body of believers placed into their trust, feeding them through the teaching of God's Word, and protecting them by standing for truth. Deacons assist the elders, serving the church in areas of ministry delegated to them by the elders.

III. Elders

- A. Definitions – Although elder and overseer are the most common terms for this office in the New Testament, pastor (meaning shepherd) represents well the office's function and all of these terms may be used interchangeably. Elders may serve in that capacity as employees of the church.

- B. Qualifications – Elders must be men who are above reproach in the eyes of the church and the community, and fully meet the scriptural qualifications given for elders in passages such as I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, and I Peter 5:1-3. They must also be in full agreement with the church Statement of Faith and be willing to abide by the church bylaws. Although some elders may not be able to serve full-time, all are expected to be willing and able to devote significant amounts of time and energy in the fulfillment of their responsibilities.
- C. Organization – The biblical model for church leadership calls for a plurality of godly, qualified men to jointly share the responsibility of leading the church. The actual number of elders will vary according to the needs of the church.

All elders are equal in authority, but the elders will choose one from among them who will serve as leader for the elders. Decisions made by the elders shall be understood to be by the elders as a collective body, acting either unanimously or in majority.

- D. Authority and Responsibilities – In obedience to and under the authority of Christ, the elders are responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church entrusted to their care. The elders are to pray, teach the Word of God, provide spiritual and organizational leadership, oversee the ministries of the church, and participate in the counseling and disciplining of members as needed. The elders will assign among themselves specific responsibilities such as preaching, counseling, and moderating church business meetings depending on their giftedness and availability, as they determine.

The elders shall act as the corporate officers of the church according to its articles of incorporation in the State of Indiana.

The hiring and dismissing of church staff other than elders shall be the responsibility of the elders. The elders shall define roles, responsibilities, and reporting structure of church staff. Partnerships via regular financial or prayer support with missions organizations or with missionaries sent from other churches shall be brought to the congregation for approval at the recommendation of the elders. The elders shall examine any member who desires to represent the church in missionary service. Should the elders determine that the member is qualified and that other appropriate criteria are satisfied, they will request the congregation to approve the sending of this member as a missionary of the church.

The elders shall prepare the annual church budget to be approved by the congregation. The elders shall not spend or obligate the church for expenses exceeding the limits defined in these bylaws, except for budgeted expenses and emergency repairs, without the approval of the congregation. They shall not have authority to sell, lease, give away, or dispose of church property, nor to mortgage or encumber the same with debt exceeding the limits defined in these bylaws, without the approval of the congregation.

The elders shall annually appoint members of the congregation to the positions of clerk/recording secretary and church treasurer. At the close of each fiscal year, an internal review shall be conducted. The elders shall appoint an external auditor to review or audit the church financial records at their discretion.

- E. Appointment – When the elders determine that an additional elder is needed, they will prayerfully and thoughtfully seek a qualified man to be considered for the office. This prospective elder must first be examined and unanimously approved by the current elders. Once approved, the name of the candidate shall be announced to the congregation for four Sundays before the congregation is asked to vote on the candidate. Should a member raise a concern regarding the candidate during that time, the elders shall investigate the matter, delaying the vote if necessary, and decide upon whether or not the candidate shall remain in consideration or removed from candidacy.

While the elders are to hold each other accountable continually, each elder shall be affirmed by the other elders on an annual basis for continued service. Among other things, this should be a time to examine the elder's continued qualification, full agreement with the Statement of Faith and ability to serve the Lord as an elder in the church.

In recognition that the responsibility of eldership is significant, it is expected and encouraged that, from time to time, an elder will take a leave from his duties for rest, renewal and growth. This sabbatical leave of absence will be planned and defined by the elders and does not remove the elder from office. At the end of the leave, the elder may return to his duties and responsibilities.

Elders may serve in this office until they resign or are removed. When resigning, elders should give a minimum notice of 30 days before ending their assigned duties. Once an elder has resigned, he may only become an elder again through the same process required of new elders.

- F. Removal – If a member has a concern over the continued qualification or beliefs of an elder (see section III. B.), it is his or her responsibility to bring it to the

attention of the other elders. If, in the spirit of I Timothy 5:19-20, the elders determine that one of their number no longer meets the qualifications of an elder, that elder shall be removed from office by congregational vote. Such a vote will take place after having been announced to the congregation for two Sundays prior to the vote.

IV. Deacons shall serve a term of three years. Deacons may be re-nominated to service successive terms as long as they meet the qualifications and there is a continued need for their service.

A. Leaving Office – Deacons may resign from their office by giving a minimum notice of 30 days before ending their assigned duties.

B. Removal – If the elders determine that a deacon is failing to live in a manner consistent with the biblical qualifications for deacons, he shall be removed from office by the elders.

V. Appointed Positions

A. Clerk/Recording Secretary – Duties of the clerk/recording secretary are to collect and archive records of all business meetings of the church. The clerk/recording secretary shall also maintain current and accurate membership records.

B. Church Treasurer – Duties of the church treasurer are to take responsibility for all contributions of the church and to disburse them as directed by the elders and congregation. The treasurer shall keep an accurate account of all receipts and expenditures and present a report at the annual business meeting. The treasurer shall submit all records to be audited as requested by the elders. Monthly reports are to be presented to the elders.

VI. Finances

A. Non-Profit Status – Truth Bible Church is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

B. Acquisition of Monies – This church shall be supported by the scriptural method of free-will offering. Any other appeals for funds shall be subject to the approval of the elders.

- C. Payment of Obligations – All current expenses of the church are to be paid by the treasurer when due.
- D. Dissolution – Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

VII. Meetings and Order

- A. Regular Meetings
 - 1. The church body shall meet each Sunday morning for corporate worship and at other designated times as determined by the elders.
 - 2. An annual budget approval meeting will be held each fiscal year.
- B. Special Business Meetings – Special meetings may be called by the elders or by the presentation of written petition to the elders. The meeting must be announced two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting. A petition must contain the signatures of at least 10% of the voting members of the church and be read with the meeting announcement. Should such matter arise which is deemed to be an emergency pertaining to the church, its members or its community, waiver of notice may be implemented to allow the meeting to occur as soon as possible.
- C. Fiscal Year – The fiscal year of the church shall begin on January 1 each year.
- D. Order – For each business session, the elders will designate a moderator who will guide all interaction and voting.

VIII. Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by congregational vote, providing the meeting has been announced and the proposed amendment has been made available to the congregation on two consecutive Sundays preceding the meeting.