

## **Sample Constitution Provisions**

### **Expressive Association**

In accordance with the teachings and commands of God and as set forth in the Bible, the church engages in expressive association to advocate the tenets and practices of the Christian faith and to glorify God through our faith, love, trust, conduct, and obedience.

### **Authority of the Bible**

We believe that the Bible is the living, holy and inspired Word of God; the Bible is the authority under which the church shall operate; and our policies, conduct, core values, actions, and teachings are to be consistent with the Bible and the Christian faith. We believe that the Church is called to be faithful to God's Word in all things.

### **Marriage**

Based upon God's Word as set forth in the Bible:

- A. We believe that marriage means only a marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union and covenant relationship.
- B. We believe that any other form of purported marriage is sinful and is spiritually and biblically forbidden. We believe that any relationship between men or between women in a purported same-sex marriage is contrary to God's Word and is sinful.
- C. We believe that any other teaching or definition of marriage is a rejection of and contrary to God and His Word.
- D. The Church shall not directly or indirectly, recognize, endorse, promote, or support any other concept, practice, or definition of marriage.

### **Marriage Ceremony and Facility Use**

Because of our beliefs on marriage as stated in the foregoing paragraph, we also believe that a wedding ceremony should be considered a religious service and reflective of our Christian beliefs. We further believe that:

- A. Neither the pastor, any pastoral staff, employees, or leaders of the Church shall officiate, perform, conduct, or participate in a marriage ceremony or related event or celebration other than a Christian marriage between a man and a woman.
- B. The premises and facilities of the Church shall not be used for any marriage ceremony or related event or celebration other than a Christian marriage between a man and a woman.
- C. For the purposes of this Constitution, "related event or ceremony" includes, but is not limited to, a reception, rehearsal, meal, celebration of the marriage or its anniversary.

## **Sexual Standards and Misconduct**

We believe that:

- A. God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other and that God forbids sexual relations or intimacy outside of the marriage of a man and a woman.
- B. The Bible declares that sexual misconduct is sinful and offensive to God. "Sexual misconduct" includes, but is not limited to, homosexual acts and behavior, sexual abuse, sexual harassment, sexual assault, incest, pornography, adultery and fornication.
- C. Attempting to lower God's sexual standards to society's preferences is an abomination in God's sight.

## **Values**

- A. We believe that the presence, employment, or appointment of any pastor, minister, leader, staff member, employee, or volunteer who engages in or publicly endorses, supports, or advocates in favor of any sexual misconduct or who shall officiate, perform, conduct, or participate in a marriage ceremony or related event or celebration other than a Christian marriage between a man and a woman and that the use of the Church premises, resources, and facilities for a purported marriage other than a Christian marriage between a man and a woman would:
  - 1) Significantly affect the Church's ability to advocate its viewpoints and beliefs;
  - 2) Be in derogation of the Church's expressive message;
  - 3) Be a significant burden upon the Church's right to oppose or disfavor what it believes to be sinful conduct; and
  - 4) Be detrimental to the preservation of the function and integrity of the Church and to providing a sound biblical role model to the Church members and the community
- B. We believe that homosexual conduct is inconsistent with the values embodied in the Church's core values and this Constitution and also with biblical standards. Therefore, we do not want to promote, endorse, or support in any way homosexual conduct as a legitimate and acceptable form of behavior or to be perceived in any way as promoting, endorsing, or supporting such conduct.

## **Love**

- A. We believe in the love and grace of God for all people and that God forgives repentant sinners. Unrepentant sexual misconduct and homosexual behavior are incompatible with Christian standards.
- B. As Christians, who are ourselves sinners redeemed by the grace of God, we must reach out to those persons who are struggling with homosexuality or other sexual misconduct, offering them the word of hope that is the Gospel to the end that they may experience true wholeness through the freeing, renewing grace of God in Jesus Christ.