

# Constitution and By-Laws



## ARTICLE I

### Name and Purpose

#### I. Name:

The name of this congregation shall be called Kirkwood Church.

#### II. Guidelines and Purposes:

##### A. Guidelines:

1. To establish an intimate relationship with God.
2. To build a strong fellowship with each other.
3. To proclaim the Good News to all.

##### B. Purposes:

To worship the Triune God, who is the Creator, and the One who is sovereign over the entire universe. To study and learn in order to obey the teachings of God and build the church based upon the Holy Scripture. Wholeheartedly endeavor and contribute to the work of proclaiming the Good News of salvation of Jesus Christ in accordance with the teaching of Matthew 28:19-20. Build unity and fellowship with fellow churches as well as Christians in order to strengthen one another's faith in Jesus Christ our Savior.

#### III. Dogma:

- A. This Church only recognizes the Old and New Testament as the Word of God without exception. The Old and New Testament is categorically the only foundation for the Christian's faith.



- B. We believe and accept Jesus Christ as the head of the Church, and each member recognizes that He is the Author and Perfecter of faith (Hebrews 12:2), and Redeemer of all mankind.

## **ARTICLE II**

### Administration and Regulations for Joining the Church

#### I. Administration

This Church operates as an independent and autonomous church under the authority of Christ. The Church's authority of administration is set apart and based on the foundation of Scripture. This church has the authority to make decisions regarding acceptance of a member as well as the method and qualifications of membership.

This church is built on the model of a democracy, and the authority of the Church belongs to all of the members in accordance with the qualifications as written in this Constitution. The Church willingly welcomes constructive ideas to build and edify fellow churches of the same faith.

#### II. Method for Joining the Church

Any person can become a member of the Church and can become a member according to the requirements below:

- A. Confirm his or her faith and be baptized according to the guidelines in this constitution or convey his or her faith and undergo study of the basic precepts faith class prior to baptism.
- B. A person desiring to become a member of the Church must be present regularly during worship services for a minimum of the last three (3) previous months.

#### III. Rights of the Member

##### A. Contribute Ideas

1. The member has the right to submit ideas and contribute to the collective work of the Church with an attitude that is constructive, loving, and has the church's benefit in mind.
2. The Church does not accept a divisive or incendiary attitude nor one that creates chaos within the Church.



3. Ideas or comments may be sent via mail or email to the Board of Pastors or the Leadership Board. Only correspondence with the signature (if by regular mail) and name and address of the sender clearly displayed will be accepted. The time limit allotted for a response to such correspondence is thirty (30) days. Anonymous letters are not honored and will not receive a response.

**B. Elections and Nominations**

1. Regular members 18 years or older have the right to vote in all elections regarding the issues presented before the church.
2. All regular members have the right to nominate him or herself for any position of the church in accordance with the guidelines written in this Constitution.

**C. Organize and plan or participate in the ceremonies within the church.**

Of note: No alcohol or beer of any form may be brought into the church.

All regular members have the right to participate in the ceremonies by the Church's sponsor below:

1. The right to have a funeral
  - a. Member has the right to have a funeral according to the Church's traditions
  - b. A member has the right to organize have a funeral according to the traditions of the church for a relative (who was a believer) of that member upon request.
2. The right to organize a wedding ceremony (between one man and one woman) if the couple meets the qualifications below:
  - a. Either the groom or the bride is a member of this Church
  - b. Both persons must be Christians and have been baptized according to the tradition of the Christian church
  - c. The couple must complete a marriage counseling course as designated by the pastor
  - d. Both persons have not had sexual relations with each other
  - e. The church will not conduct wedding ceremonies for divorced persons.
  - f. The church may conduct wedding ceremonies for persons who are a widow or widower.



3. The right to dedicate a child to the Lord if they meet the two (2) following qualifications:
  - a. The father or mother is a regular member of the Church
  - b. The parents must follow the guidelines regarding the dedication of a child as designated by the pastor.

**D. Termination of the rights of a member**

The rights of a member are terminated for the following reasons:

1. The member passes away
2. The member requests his or her membership be transferred to another church.
3. The member is excommunicated
4. The member requests termination of his or her membership or has become a member of another church

**E. Excommunication**

In the occurrence that a member has actions that lead the Church into a dilemma or difficult circumstances, such as actions that are contradictory to the church's ethics, or actions that are not consistent with Christian conduct, or those that renounce the basic doctrines of the church, the Leadership Board has the duty to resolve the issue according to the Scripture in Matthew 18:15-20.

The excommunication of a member is necessary after:

1. The member has not repented after the pastor has continually counseled, given guidance, and prayed for the member.
2. The Leadership Board has had personal and confidential meetings with the member in order to try wholeheartedly to persuade him or her unto repentance without success.
3. The Leadership Board with the agreement of the majority of the members of the church (a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of members of the church) in a special meeting agree (with a minimum of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the vote) to excommunicate the member.

The Church may reinstate the membership of a member who has been excommunicated upon request of that former member after he or she appears before the Leadership Board. After the Leadership Board has recognized that the former member has demonstrated repentance, the Leadership Board may



elect to reinstate the rights of membership to that former member with a majority of the vote exceeding  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Leadership Board.

These are the methods of last resort of the Church after diligently reminding those members who have stumble in faith with the purpose of helping them. The Church must always have an attitude of dealing with each other by means that guide and encourage each other in the ways of salvation rather than judgment.

### **ARTICLE III**

#### Ministries within the Church and Committees

##### I. Functions within the Church

###### A. Board of Pastors

1. The Board of Pastors is comprised of individuals who are:
  - a. Ordained as a pastor
  - b. Recommended to the Church by The Pastor Search Committee as a candidate for pastor.
  - c. Recognized by the Church as filled with the Holy Spirit (by a 75% majority vote of members present).
  - d. Holds to the same dogma and vision as that of Kirkwood Church.
2. Discipline and Dismissal of a pastor within Board of Pastors
  - a. With regards to sin: please refer to Article II, Part E regarding excommunication based on the Scripture in Matthew 18:15-20
  - b. In the event that a pastor must be dismissed because of both of the following conditions below, the Church must be in agreement with at least 75% vote of members present.
    - i. If the pastor does not agree to resign after agreement of the majority of the remaining pastors in the Board of Pastors
    - ii. If the pastor does not agree to resign after the agreement of the majority of the Leadership Board (which is comprised of Board of Pastors and Board of Deacons).



3. Duties of the Board of Pastors

- a. Fulfill the duties and ministries which he has been delegated
- b. Work together with the Board of Deacons to determine the direction and strategies for church growth and contribute to the work of carrying out those plans
- c. Leading, preaching, teaching, visiting, following up, and keeping watch over the church.
- d. Be accountable to one another within the Board of Pastors regarding their duties and obligations.
- e. Be accountable to one another within the Board of Deacons regarding their duties and obligations.

4. Chair of the Board of Pastors

- a. The Chair of the Board of Pastors shall be elected by Church with a term of two (2) years during the Church's annual general assembly.
- b. There shall be no limit of terms for the Chair of the Board of Pastors.
- c. Responsibilities of the Chair of the Board of Pastors: The Chair of the Board of Pastors has the responsibility to delegate and oversee the ministry of the members of the Board of Pastors.

B. Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall be elected and instated by the Church during the Church's annual general assembly.

1. The right to make a nomination: Any member 18 years or older has the right to nominate another member as a candidate for upcoming Board of Deacons.
2. The right to nominate oneself and become a nominee: Any member 18 years or older who has attended the church continuously for the last 6 previous months without lapse may self nominate and or be nominated as a candidate for the upcoming Board of Deacons.
3. The number of candidates who are instated as deacons is equal to the number of deacons determined by the Church and those who receive the highest number of votes. (e.g. if we have 20 candidates but need only 10 deacons, the 10 candidates who have the highest number of votes shall be instated as deacons.)
4. The term for deacons is 2 years.



5. The deacon shall work in conjunction with the pastors within the Board of Pastors keeping a spirit of unity in the fellowship of the Church.
6. The qualifications of to be voted into the Board of Deacons are men who are in accordance to Acts 6:1-6 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
7. The Church shall determine the number of deacons according to the Church's needs.
8. A deacon shall no longer hold his position as deacon if there is agreement by 2/3 vote of the remaining members of the Leadership Board and subsequent approval by a 2/3 majority vote of the members of the Church.

#### C. Moderator of Leadership Board Meetings

The moderator of the meetings shall be the person designated from within the Leadership Board. The moderator shall gather and organize the agenda for each meeting.

The moderator of the meetings must work in a spirit of unity for the benefit of the Church. Therefore, the moderator needs to have love, patience, fairness, and a thorough understanding of the issues. The moderator must remind the members involved in the meeting to always express humility, courtesy, and a Christian attitude through their speech and manner. He shall convey points of disagreement but avoid hatred or anger in the Church. The moderator must listen to all ideas that are contributed, especially from those voices that few may pay attention to. In order to arrive at a final decision, the moderator of the meeting shall ask for a consensus of members by method of a vote. Subsequently, the moderator will proceed forth with a vote in a democratic manner, with a 2/3 majority of the vote representing a final collective decision. In the Leadership board meetings, a 3/4 quorum of the members of the Leadership board needs to be present to make all decisions regarding the Church.

The moderator must maintain an unbiased position. If the moderator wants to contribute an idea, he must present it as an individual, and not in the role as moderator of the meeting.

#### D. Trustee

In agreement of the Church, the Trustee has the authority to represent the Church in the signing of documents regarding the purchase, selling, or exchange of the Church property. The Trustee is elected by the Church according to the needs of the Church with the agreement of the majority of members.



## II. Leadership Board

The Leadership Board is comprised of the Board of Pastors and Board of Deacons

The term for the board of deacons is two (2) years. If a member of the Board of Deacons is absent for three (3) consecutive months in one year, the Chair of the Board of Deacons shall request that the member resign.

The Board of Deacons has three special committees that work in three different areas:

### A. The Chair of the Board of Deacons

1. Coordinate the structure and organization of the Church.
2. Represent the Church in an absence of the Board of Pastors
3. Announce and invite the Leadership Board to the periodic meetings.
4. The chair is responsible for preparing invitations for the ceremonies of the Church.

### B. Church Secretary

1. Collect and keep all paperwork and records pertaining to the property and operations of the Church.
2. Form and keep record books on Baptisms and member's contact information.
3. Prepare certificates for members following their baptism
4. Keep a bulletin of the minutes of the Leadership Board's meetings and Church's annual general assembly and present such bulletin before the church according to the request of the Leadership Board
5. Form and keep records of expenses of the Church.

### C. Treasurer and Treasury Board

The treasurer shall be Chair of the Treasury Board. Members of the Treasury Board shall be nominated by the Leadership Board. The number of member in the Treasury Board will be determined according to the needs of the church and approved by the Leadership Board.

The treasurer acts as an administrator and is responsible for Treasury Board, including delegating duties, and overseeing the tasks in Treasury Board in order to accomplish tasks in a timely manner.

The duties of the treasurer and the Treasury Board include:

1. Receipt of Offering:



- a. At minimum, two (2) members of the Treasury Board must be present to count, hold on to, and deposit the offering into the Church's bank account on a weekly basis.
- b. Form, keep, and clearly record the tithing amounts and offerings of individuals.
- c. Provide proof of individuals' tithes and offerings for the filing taxes at the end of the year.

## 2. Expenditures

- a. The Treasury Board may make payments that have been approved by the Leadership board or payments that are required on a monthly basis.
- b. Keep all receipts and records to facilitate review and audits. Any expenditures above a set limit require the approval of the Leadership Board by a 2/3 majority.
- c. Provide proof of income for the filing of taxes at the end of the year.

## 3. Audits

- a. Auditors may not belong to the Treasury Board or Leadership Board
- b. Auditors shall be chosen and approved by the Church

## 4. Presentation of the Finances

- a. Report the income and expenditures to the Leadership Board on a monthly basis
- b. Report and explain the finances to the church on a quarterly basis, and the total income and expenditures at the end of the year before the Church.
- c. Contribute ideas to the Leadership Board regarding issues pertaining to the finances. Propose annual budget. Follow up and alert Leadership Board of the financial status.
- d. Yearly records begin in January and end in December.
- e. Report the yearly budget to the Leadership Board and before the Church
- f. All financial records must be kept confidential

Members of the Board of Deacons not belonging to these special committees as described above will be assigned duties by the Leadership Board during each term.



### III. Ministries and Ministry Leaders in the Church

These ministries will be established according to the needs of the church and approval of the Leadership Board. The ministry leaders shall be appointed by the Leadership Board with the approval of the Church. The Leadership Board will evaluate each of the ministries of the Church on and as needed basis, with a minimum of one (1) evaluation each year. The Leadership Board has the right to replace the ministry leaders of the individual ministries if necessary and with the subsequent approval of the Church. The ministry leaders are to work in conjunction with the Leadership Board.

#### A. Worship Ministry Leader

1. Prepare the music for the worship services
2. Form a committee to take care of decorating and preparing the sanctuary, sound system, etc. for the worship services.

#### B. Teaching and Training Ministry Leader

1. Organize the Sunday school classes of the Church for all age groups. Recruit and assign teachers to take care of each class.
2. Form a roll of the Sunday school members and collaborate with the instructors regarding visitation. Remind the Sunday school teachers to send cards to members who are absent from their Sunday school class.
3. Contact publishers to purchase educational materials for the Sunday school classes.
4. Collaborate with the Board of Pastors to organize training courses for the members.
5. Organize periodic meetings with the Sunday school teachers, and provide the necessary materials for teaching
6. Organize and encourage members to participate in the annual Bible contests
7. Work together with members of the Church building services to arrange, protect, and purchase furniture and equipment for the Sunday school rooms.
8. Report to the Leadership board monthly on the operations of the Sunday school classes.
9. Follow up on Bible study in cell groups.

#### C. Intercessory Ministry Leader

1. Organize revival prayer meetings for the Church within the week and report the issues that need intercession.
2. Organize prayer and fasting meetings for the Church.



**D. Evangelism Ministry Leader**

1. Organize discipleship and evangelism training courses to equip members.
2. Organize meetings for outreach and evangelism
3. Research and analyze methods to expand the Church's evangelism ministry and draw experience from evangelism meetings. Assist the Board of Pastors in planning and organizing outreach and evangelism programs.
4. Propose the purchase, printing, and plans for distributing tracts and evangelism literature.
5. Collaborate with the Board of Pastors to organize training sessions for the Church and outreach programs for the community.
6. Collaborate with Sound System Team and members responsible for recording and duplicating media of the weekly sermon and special programs of the Church.

**E. Maintenance and Building Services Leader**

1. Responsibilities include all activities to protect and maintain the church building, repair, and renovate up to usable condition.
2. Periodically inspect the Church's facilities.
3. Form a roll and remind persons who are responsible for cleaning the church on a monthly basis.
4. Form a security team for the inside and outside of the church campus.

**F. Church Activities Ministry Leader**

1. Organize gatherings to encourage fellowship including fellowship banquets, outdoor activities, picnics, camping, etc. for the Church.
2. Recruit and appoint persons to contribute to fellowship activities and Church banquets.
3. Organize retreats for all those who participate in Church's ministries.
4. Stimulate and encourage members to attend fellowship meetings with fellow churches, summer camps, and national Baptist Conventions.
5. Contact the coordinator of transportation regarding transport of persons to weekly services, important holiday services, outreach programs, camps and national Baptist conventions.

**G. Follow up Ministry Leader**

1. Form an Usher Committee; this committee has the responsibility for welcoming guests, asking guests to fill out information cards, and delivering this card to the pastor or person leading services in order to welcome the guests.



2. Form a roster of the Church's guests.
3. Form a roster of for visitation of guests for follow up and to report before the Leadership Board
4. Collaborate with Sunday school teachers to visit members who are absent from Sunday school classes.
5. Make note of the needs of individual families who have been visited in order to provide assistance in a timely manner.
6. Organize and form Social Committee according to geographical regions. This committee has the responsibility to assist the Church to implement its educational programs for families. Investigate the needs, plan, and implement the necessary programs to encourage assist single members, elders, etc.

#### H. Taskforces

1. Food Taskforce
2. Information Technology and Publications Taskforce
3. Sound System Taskforce

#### IV. Other Ministry Groups

##### A. Women's Group

A group leader will be elected each year to organize activities and prepare for food for fellowship meals, holidays, outreach programs, etc. Organize fellowship meetings for the women at least once a month. The Women's Group shall have choir practice to contribute to worship services. It will report to its activities to the Leadership Board.

##### B. Men's Group

A leader shall be elected each year to form a men's group to encourage fellowship among the men in the Church. Organize periodic activities. The Men's Group shall have choir practice to contribute to worship services. It will report its activities to the Leadership Board.

##### C. Young Adult and Youth Group

The leader of the young adult and youth shall be the mediator between the Leadership Board and his or her group. The leader shall have regular contact with the parents of the young adults and youth. The leader shall notify the Leadership Board of its activities and needs. The leader will motivate young adults in planning its activities and organize sporting activities for the young adults and youth.



D. Children and Toddlers

The leader shall instruct the children and toddlers on how to worship God according to Deuteronomy 6:4-9.

**ARTICLE IV**

Ceremonies and Observances

I. Baptism

The Church may hold baptisms for any person who has accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of their life through faith, those who publicly accept the Lord in the worship services, and those who commit themselves to Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Baptism must be done by immersion in water except for extenuating circumstances. The pastor will perform the baptism. A person who has accepted Christ but has not received baptism after a certain hiatus will be counseled again by the pastor or Leadership Board.

II. Communion

The Church will hold the communion the first Sunday of every month.

III. Ordination and Acceptance of a Pastor

The Church will perform the above ceremonies according to the traditions of the Southern Baptist Convention

IV. Commissioning by Laying on of Hands

The Church will perform the ceremony of commissioning by the laying on of hands for those who have been called by the Lord to a special ministry of the Church.

V. Weddings, Funerals, and the Dedication of Children, etc.

Members may request permission to organize the above ceremonies within the Church facilities. Absolutely no alcohol or beer may be brought into the church. All expenses must be taken care of by the host. The Leadership Board must be notified a minimum of two (2) weeks prior in order to allow preparation and announcement of the event, except in extenuating circumstances (such as funerals).



## ARTICLE V

### Amending of the Constitution

Official members of the Church may suggest amendments to this constitution. Suggestions for changes to this constitution may be brought forth during the Church's assemblies (whether annual or special). Any guidelines that need to be changed or suggestions for amendments to this constitution must be passes through the protocols below:

- I. They must be written and submitted to the Leadership Board prior to the meetings. The Leadership Board will present these suggestions for changes or amendments to the congregation if there is a consensus of the Leadership Board by a 2/3 majority vote.
- II. If the suggestions above do not pass by a 2/3 majority vote of the Leadership Board, the member making the suggestions has the right to oblige the Leadership Board to present the suggestions before the Church if he or she has support of 25% of the Church by way of petition.
- III. Changes to this constitution must pass with the approval of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the votes during the Church's general assembly.

## ARTICLE VI

### Operations and Dissolution of the Church

The Church has been established and operates with the primary goal of building unity through worship of the Lord, as well as encouraging spiritual growth and increasing the number of believers. The Church shall not operate in self-serving, self-seeking manner to earn money or take bribes.

The Church promises to use the church property for religiously oriented activities. If there is a suspension of the Church because of decline or other critical conditions, all the property belonging to the Church will be transferred or distributed to another church, or transferred to another legitimate denominational convention or association.

In the event that the Church has borrowed money of members in the collective work of the Church and there is a transfer of the church property to another entity, the Church has the obligation to pay the members back in full by withdrawal of a portion of the Church's account to repay the members prior to transfer of the Church property to another group.



## Constitution & By-Laws

*M. L. Quigley*

Below are the signatures of all those who are involved in preparing the Church Constitution. This constitution has been approved and accepted by a vote of 90% of Church members.



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Diem Nguyen

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Khoa Vo

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Hoa Trinh

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Danny Tai Tran

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Tung Truong

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Trung Le

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