

For from Him and through Him
and to Him are all things.
To Him be the glory forever.
Amen.

Romans 11:36

COVENANT

Reformed Baptist Church

CONSTITUTION

COVENANT

Reformed Baptist Church

Submitted by the Elders and Deacons
of
Covenant Reformed Baptist Church

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ARTICLE I. Name

The name of this church shall be

COVENANT REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH
of Warrenton, Virginia

ARTICLE II. Purpose

The purpose of this church is to glorify the God of the Scriptures in promoting His worship, by exalting the Son, equipping the saints, and evangelizing sinners. To this end we are committed to proclaiming the whole counsel of God, especially His glorious Gospel of Grace in Jesus Christ throughout the world and to defending the "faith once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3)

ARTICLE III. Articles of Faith

While we hold tenaciously to the inerrant, infallible and sufficient Word of God as found in the sixty-six books of the Bible (this being our final source of faith and practice), we embrace and adopt the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 as a faithful expression of the doctrine taught in the Scriptures. (See Appendix for clarifications on LBC 1689)

ARTICLE IV. Church Covenant

By the grace of God we have been led to repent of our sin and believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. We have confessed our faith and been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Now, therefore, in the presence of God and by His grace, we joyfully and solemnly enter into a holy covenant with the members of Covenant Reformed Baptist Church.

We engage to walk together in Christian love through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Unless providentially hindered, we will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but faithfully attend the church's meetings for worship, prayer, study, and fellowship, and will use our spiritual gifts for the common good.

We pledge to faithfully participate in the ordinances of the church, and endeavor after unity of mind in doctrine. We will both submit to the church's discipline upon ourselves and lovingly assume our responsibility to participate in the discipline of other members, as taught in Scripture.

We will contribute cheerfully and regularly to this church for its general ministry and expenses, the relief of the poor, the cause of reformation and revival, and the spread of the Gospel throughout all nations.

We will strive by God's grace and power to live as Christ in the world; and denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we will seek to fulfill our calling to lead a holy life and to be salt and light.

We will be just and honest in our dealings and faithful in our responsibilities and commitments.

We will abide by the standards of sexual purity, ethical integrity, and spiritual fidelity as taught in the Bible.

We will reject all heretical beliefs and practices, using Scripture as our final authority.

We purpose to watch over one another in brotherly love, to remember one another in prayer, to help one another in sickness and distress, and to cultivate Christian compassion and courtesy.

Believing that the pursuit of peace with others and personal holiness accompany true faith in Christ, we will be slow to take offense, always eager to seek the reconciliation Christ commands, and will work to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

We resolve to practice personal and family worship, to train our children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, and to seek the salvation of our family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances, and of all the world.

We promise that if, in the providence of God, we leave this church we will diligently seek to unite with

another church where we can continue to carry out the spirit and principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE V. Membership

Section 1 - Qualifications

Any person who professes repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, who has been baptized (immersed) upon profession of his faith, and who has read and expresses agreement with the Confession of Faith, Church Covenant and the Constitution of this Church shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2 - Admission of Members

The Elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. The applicant shall meet with the Elders in order that they may ascertain his or her Christian experience, doctrinal beliefs, and serious intent to wholeheartedly support the total ministry of this church.

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the Elders for admission and accepted by vote of the members at any regular Sunday meeting. The names of the applicants for membership shall be announced at all Sunday morning worship services of the church beginning at least two weeks prior to the vote. The congregation shall then receive the applicant into membership by a three-fourths majority vote.

Section 3 - Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time and material resources each has received from God. Only those who are members of this congregation shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the Elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation.

It is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote. All persons who are accepted as members, shall be entitled to vote in person (but not by proxy) provided the member is 18 years of age or older.

Section 4 - On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should only be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed.

The process of such discipline should be carried out to fulfill the following principles:

For the repentance, reconciliation and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15:5; 29:15; I Corinthians 4:14; Ephesians 6:4; I 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; I Corinthians 5:5; Galatians 6:1-5; II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15; I 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; I Corinthians 5:11; 15:33; Colossians 3:16; I Thessalonians 5:14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:11; Hebrews 10:24-25),

For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5:6-7; II Corinthians 13:10; Ephesians 5:27; II John 1:10; 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 5:10-14; Ephesians 5:11; I Timothy 3:7; II Peter 2:2; I John 3:10),

For the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5:11; I Kings 11:2; II 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; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 1:4; 5:27; I Peter 2:12).

Membership may be terminated as an act of church discipline at the recommendation of the Elders by a three-fourths majority vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members.

A member who willfully, without good reason, absents himself or herself from Sunday services for more than 6 months shall be removed from the rolls of the church.

ARTICLE VI. Church Polity

Section 1 - Congregation

Under the authority of Jesus Christ and the Word of God, the congregation of the church is the final authority within this local church. This authority is normally exercised through the election of officers to govern the church. However, the vote of the membership of this church at a properly called meeting, as provided in this constitution, shall be required to effect the following actions:

- a) Accept members into the church,
- b) Elect officers of the church,
- c) Discipline members by dismissing them and discipline officers by removing them from office,
- d) Approve annual budgets of the church, authorize any expenditure of the funds of the church when such expenditure is not covered by an approved budget and approve any transactions regarding real property,
- e) Accept, reject or otherwise dispose of any matter submitted to the membership of the church by the Council of the Elders or raised by motion at a members meeting,
- f) Adopt, amend or repeal the constitution of this church,
- g) Approve the call, job description and initial salary of Vocational Pastors and Ministers,
- h) To affiliate or discontinue affiliation with any denomination, convention or association.

Section 2 - Church Offices

The offices of the church shall be Elder and Deacon.

Section 3 - Council of the Elders (Elders)

The leadership of the church shall be vested in the Council of the Elders who are responsible for governing the church, teaching the Word and tending the flock of God in this church. The Elders shall be equal in authority but may be specialized in function.

Section 4 - Deacons

To ensure that the Elders are able to focus their primary attention on the ministry of the Word, prayer, and oversight of the church, Deacons shall receive ministry task assignments from the Elders. These tasks will concentrate on meeting the practical needs of the fellowship.

ARTICLE VII. Meetings

Section 1 - Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day and may be held throughout the week as the Elders determine.

Section 2 - Members' Meetings

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.

There shall be an annual members' meeting, at which officers are elected (Article VIII, Section 1), and a budget approved by the membership, no more than three nor less than one month prior to the start of the fiscal year. The fiscal year will commence on January 1.

An Elder designated by the Council of the Elders shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. In the absence or incapacity of the moderator, these duties shall be performed by another Elder designated by the Council of the Elders. The Elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members or committees.

Meetings shall be run according to Robert's Rules of Order. On any matter that is brought to vote a three-fourths vote is needed for it to pass (unless this constitution specifies otherwise). Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast.

Special members' meetings may be called as required by the Council of the Elders or at the written request, submitted to the Council of the Elders, by any 10% of the voting members. All 10% of the petitioning members must meet with the Council of the Elders in person to discuss the purpose of the request before the special meeting is called. The date, time and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church beginning at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII. Officers

Section 1 - Summary

The Biblical offices in the church are Elders and Deacons.

Section 2 - Elders

The Council of the Elders shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of Elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. A majority of the active Eldership shall be composed of church members not in the regular pay of the church, and no Elder shall hold the office of Deacon during his tenure.

The Elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6; 20:28 and I 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.

The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Elders. The term of office for an Elder is three years.

An Elder's term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members (1 Timothy

5:19) with reason to believe that an Elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the Council of the Elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Timothy 5:17-21. Any of the Elders may be dismissed by a three-fourths majority vote of the members at any members' meeting of the church.

The Elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, oversee the work of the Deacons and appointed church administrative positions and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, approve membership letters of transfer, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church and mobilize the church for world missions. The Elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions.

The Elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The Elders may also propose paid staff positions, and the Elders shall present a job description for each paid position to the membership for approval. The membership may approve all candidates to fill such paid positions or may delegate this responsibility, on a position-by-position basis, to the Elders, Deacons or other staff members. The Elders shall examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions.

The Elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to the Deacons or other staff members.

At the annual members' meeting, the Chairman of the Council of the Elders shall present a written affirmation to the church membership. This document will officially state the Elders' agreement with the Confession of Faith of Covenant Reformed Baptist Church.

Section 3 - The Senior Pastor

The Senior Pastor is an Elder and shall be the Chairman of the Council of the Elders. He shall perform the duties of an Elder described in Section 2 above, but shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. His call shall not be subject to the term limitation set out in Article VIII, Section 2 for Elders.

He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper and perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office, or as set forth in the constitution.

In the absence or incapacity of the Senior Pastor, the Elders shall assume responsibility for his duties, any of which can be delegated.

Section 4 - Deacons

The office of Deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men who are giving of themselves in service to the church, who possess gifts of leadership and who are called to further service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as Deacons. The term of office for a Deacon is three years.

To ensure that the Elders are able to focus their primary attention on the ministry of the Word, prayer, and oversight of the church, Deacons shall receive ministry task assignments from the Elders. These tasks will concentrate on meeting the practical needs of the fellowship.

Each Deacon shall present an itemized budget of their assigned ministry task to the Council of the Elders and church Treasurer at least two months preceding the annual members' meeting. With the approval

of the Council of the Elders the proposed budget shall be presented to the church at least one month preceding the annual members' meeting. This budget shall be presented for discussion at that time and called up for a vote at the annual 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.

The Deacons, with the agreement the Council of the Elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or ministry groups to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

ARTICLE IX. Administrative Positions

Section 1 - Summary

The administrative positions under this constitution are Clerk, Treasurer and Trustee. All persons holding these positions must be members prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section 2 - Clerk

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership and to render reports as requested by the Elders, or the church. The church Clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members. The Clerk shall be appointed by the Council of the Elders to serve a term of two years.

Section 3 - Treasurer

The Treasurer, who shall not be an active Elder, Deacon or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions or depositories as appropriate. 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 render to the Elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer shall be responsible for posting quarterly reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church, for the members to review. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Council of the Elders to serve a term of two years.

Section 4 - Trustees

A Trustee, who shall not be an active Elder, or paid church staff member shall serve as legal representative for the church. They shall hold in trust the church property. Upon a specific vote of the church authorizing each action, they shall have the power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any church property. When the signatures of trustees are required, they shall sign legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or rental of property, or other legal documents related to church-approved matters. They shall be responsible for seeing that an audit is conducted annually. Trustees shall be appointed by the Council of the Elders to serve a term of two years.

ARTICLE X. Elections

Section 1- Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles:

- a) Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process,

- b) Nominations should proceed with the support of the Elders,
- c) All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members,
- d) The election process shall express a spirit of mutual trust, openness and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 - Selection of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as Elders and Deacons shall be presented by the Council of the Elders and made known to the church at least one month prior to voting. The Elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process.

Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the Elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the Elders at least two weeks prior to the relevant church members' meeting.

The moderator (Article VII, Section 2) shall declare elected all persons receiving a three-fourths majority of all votes cast for any office.

The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated. Elections for officers may occur during the course of the year at any special members' meeting, upon recommendation of the Elders.

Section 3 - Calling of the Senior Pastor

In the calling of any man to this position, the same basic process of calling an Elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Senior Pastor, and before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the Elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Confession of Faith, Church Covenant and Constitution. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as Senior Pastor must be given at least two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a special members' meeting. His call shall not be subject to the term limitation set out in Article VIII, Section 2 for Elders.

Section 4 - Calling of Vocational Pastor

In the calling of any man to the position of a Vocational Pastor (Associate Pastor, etc.), the same basic process of calling an Elder must be followed. In addition, however, the church must be given adequate opportunity to assess the preaching gifts of any potential Vocational Pastor, and before being asked to express its judgment, must receive assurance from the Elders that, having interviewed the man concerned, they are in no doubt as to his wholehearted assent to the Confession of Faith, Church Covenant and Constitution. Notice of the nomination of a man to be elected to membership and called as a Vocational Pastor must be given at least two Sunday morning services following the nomination, prior to the vote at a special members' meeting. His call shall not be subject to the term limitation set out in Article VIII, Section 2 for Elders.

ARTICLE XI - Initial Start-up Procedures

The initially nominated candidates for the office of Elders will be presented by the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process (Article IX - Section 2).

The Senior Pastor shall be granted the authority to appoint term limitations to the initially elected Elders

and Deacons. These terms of service, which will be no more than three years or less than one year, will be staggered in order to prevent the simultaneous expiration of terms of office. The initial Elders and Deacons will be all nominees elected within two years of the adoption of this Constitution.

ARTICLE XII. Amendments

The Confession of Faith, Church Covenant and Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a members' meeting, provided the amendment shall have been offered in writing one month preceding the members' meeting and shall have been announced from the pulpit at church services two successive Sundays prior to such vote.

I, the undersigned Clerk of Covenant Reformed Baptist Church of Warrenton, Virginia, certify the above constitution was adopted by the Congregation of Covenant Reformed Baptist Church of Warrenton on the _____ day of _____, 2004.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have here unto set my hand this _____ day of _____,

2004.

Clerk

AMENDMENT I

Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture. We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, polygamy, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the Biblical function and integrity of Covenant Reformed Baptist Church, and to provide a Biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all employees of the church, or who serve as officers or volunteers, shall abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

(Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24; 13:13; 19:5; Leviticus 18:22-24; 20:13; Matthew 19:5; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9; Ephesians 5:22-33)

AMENDMENT II

Marriage Policy

Due to the Biblical importance of marriage, Covenant Reformed Baptist Church adopts the following policy.

Clergy:

Only duly ordained clergy shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on Covenant Reformed Baptist Church property.

Clergy employed by Covenant Reformed Baptist Church shall be subject to dismissal and/or loss of ordination for officiating a non-Biblical marriage (to include an attempt to officiate a ceremony that involves homosexuality, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, polygamy, transgender).

Applicants:

Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a member of the clergy employed by Covenant Reformed Baptist Church, or to use the church facilities, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement on Marriage and Sexuality (Appendix 2 Church Constitution) and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

Premises:

Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by a member of the clergy.

Clergy officiating marriage ceremonies on church premises, whether or not employed by the church, shall affirm their agreement with the Statement on Marriage and Sexuality (Amendment I Church Constitution) and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.

The clergy assigned by Covenant Reformed Baptist Church to implement the procedures contained in this Marriage Policy may, in his sole discretion, decline to make church facilities available for, and/or decline to officiate at, a ceremony when, in his judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.

APPENDIX I

The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689

We make the following clarifications and additions to the London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689 and incorporate them into our Statement of Faith for Covenant Reformed Baptist Church:

Regarding Chapter 3, paragraph 3, about angels:

When the Confession states that “some men and angels are predestinated, or foreordained to eternal life through Jesus Christ,” it is not declaring that Jesus died to redeem some angels, but rather that those angels which did not fall, remained faithful because of God’s sovereign choice. Hebrews 2:14-16; 1 Timothy 5:21; 2 Peter 2:4; Rom. 9:22-24

Regarding Chapter 3, paragraph 4, about a fixed number of the elect:

We add: Romans 8:28-30; 11:25; 2 Timothy 2:10; Revelation 6:9-11.

Regarding Chapter 22, paragraph 8, about the Sabbath:

We believe that the Sabbath is to be kept holy and set apart to the Lord. We also realize that there are some who must work on Sunday out of necessity. We believe that the 4th commandment (to remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy) has not been set aside or vacated by the New Covenant, but rather is to be observed by “The Lord’s Day”, meaning the first day of the week. We also recognize that throughout history the observance of this day has been viewed in many different ways (as to what is allowable and what is not; what is commended and what is considered a violation of the 4th command). So while we do not set hard and fast rules, we encourage each individual and/or family to prayerfully consider how to spend this God-ordained Day in a manner that is in keeping with the spirit of the Day. Mark 2:23-3:5; Luke. 13:10-16; John 5:17, John 7:22-23; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10;

Regarding Chapter 25, paragraph 1, about Marriage:

We add “neither is it lawful for a man to marry a man nor a woman to marry a woman.” Genesis 13:13, 19:5; Leviticus 18:22-24, 20:13; Romans 1:26-28; 1 Corinthians 6:9

Regarding Chapter 26, paragraph 4, about the Pope:

We believe that any one person, any teaching or any form of church polity that is against Christ is in the spirit of antichrist. Whether or not a particular Pope becomes the Antichrist is yet to be seen. 1 John. 2:18, 19, 22; 4:2-3; 2 John 7; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:5.

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