

Constitution of the **LAKE TAPPS COMMUNITY CHURCH**

"Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40)
"Let all things be done in love." (1 Corinthians 16:14)
"Let all be done for the strengthening of the church." (1 Corinthians 14:26)
"Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus." (Colossians 3:17)

PREAMBLE

The name of this organization shall be Lake Tapps Community Church.

Lake Tapps Community Church is a Christ-centered, non-denominational church affiliated with Village Missions.

We, the members of this church, do ordain and establish the following Articles to which we voluntarily submit ourselves:

ARTICLE I STATEMENT OF FAITH

The Bible, as the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God, is the standard for all we believe and do. The Elders have the responsibility to determine the Bible's meaning and application as it applies to Lake Tapps Community Church.

Section 1 THE SCRIPTURES:

We believe in the complete verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, including both Old and New Testaments, by which we understand that the Holy Spirit not only inspired the thoughts of the writers but also formulated the very word structure into which the thoughts were cast in the original documents (1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21).

Section 2 THE GODHEAD:

We believe in one God, in three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

Section 3 MAN'S CREATION AND FALL:

We believe that humanity was created in the image and likeness of God.

We believe God creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image of God.

Because humanity has been created in the image of God, all human life is sacred. We affirm the infinite value of pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death.

We believe God has ordained marriage to unite one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union (Genesis 2:18-25).

We believe that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sin nature and consequent alienation from God and came under judicial sentence of death (Genesis 1:25,27; Romans 3:22,23; Ephesians 2:12; Romans 5:12).

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest and the use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Section 4 THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST:

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man, without ceasing to be God, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross as a propitiatory and substitutionary sacrifice, and that our redemption is made sure to us by His resurrection from the dead (John 1:1,2,14; Luke 1:35; Romans 3:24,25; 1 Peter 1:3,5).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven exalted at the right hand of God where as High Priest for His people He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor and Advocate (Hebrews 9:24; 7:24,25; Romans 8:35; 1 John 2:1,2).

We believe in the personal bodily return of Jesus Christ according to the Scriptures, and that this will occur before He returns to the earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom (1 Thessalonians 4:13,18; Zechariah 14:4,11; Revelation 20:6).

Section 5 THE HOLY SPIRIT:

We believe that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, in the present age indwells all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, baptizes them into the body of Christ, seals them unto the day of redemption, empowers believers for witnessing, equips them with spiritual gifts for service, and that every believer is commanded of God to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are mindful of the cautions in Scripture regarding the use of "sign gifts," especially as it relates to public worship (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:12,14; 1 Corinthians 14; Ephesians 1:13,14; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 5:18,20).

Section 6 SALVATION:

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that this faith is manifested in works pleasing to God (Ephesians 2:18,20; Titus 2:11,14). All who so trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins — past, present, and future — and born again into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3; Ephesians 2:8-9; 1:7; John 1:12).

Section 7 THE CHURCH:

We believe that Christ is the head of Lake Tapps Community Church, and of the full body of born again believers, which is the body and bride of Christ. The Church is a spiritual organism made up of all the born again believers in this age irrespective of their affiliation with Christian organizations (Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:23,25-27; 1 Corinthians 12:12,13).

Section 8 THE FINAL STATE:

We believe that the condition and retribution of the lost and the salvation and blessedness of the saved are conscious and everlasting (Mark 9:43,48; Revelation 20:15; 22:3-5,11).

ARTICLE II OUR PURPOSE

The Lake Tapps Community Church family is committed to honoring God by introducing people to Jesus Christ, helping them grow in the faith, and equipping them to reach others.

ARTICLE III ORDINANCES

The following ordinances shall be observed by this church:

Section 1 BAPTISM:

The ordinance of Baptism shall be administered under the supervision of the Elders.

Section 2 COMMUNION:

The Lord's Supper shall be observed at least one Sunday each month, under the supervision of the Elders and shall be open to all born again believers.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 CHURCH MEMBERS:

All who are born again and attend Lake Tapps Community Church are recognized as the church, the body of Christ, the Body, the flock, and the congregation. Membership in a local church, however, is a confession before God and men of a living commitment to a group of believers. As such it is a commitment of responsibility for and to the other members of the church.

The governance of Lake Tapps Community Church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, shall be vested in its members and administered by the Elders and the Church Council.

Section 2 ADMISSION OF MEMBERS:

- A. To be a member of Lake Tapps Community Church one must be born again by the Spirit of God having personally received Christ as his/her Savior, be in substantial agreement with the Statement of Faith and Constitution and without reservation sign the "Membership Covenant."
- B. Candidates for church membership may apply for membership by completing a membership application. The Elders will interview the applicant with regard to his/her spiritual life.

Section 3 REMOVAL FROM MEMBERSHIP:

- A. Upon request any member asking to be removed from membership will be given a letter acknowledging their removal from membership.
- B. Members who are absent from regular worship services for the space of nine months may be removed from membership or placed on the "inactive members" roll at the discretion of the Elders. Members who are non-resident and desire to maintain their membership may request this from the Elders. If the request is granted, they will be placed on the "inactive members" roll.

Section 4 VOTING PRIVILEGES:

Voting privileges shall be extended to all active members 18 years of age and over.

Section 5 ERRING MEMBERS:

If a member is living contrary to the pattern of Christian behavior as given in Scripture and in the Membership Covenant and is unresponsive to the discipline of the Elders, he/she will be removed from membership.

ARTICLE V CHURCH GOVERNANCE

Section 1 GOVERNING BODIES:

Recognizing Christ as the Head of the church and accountable to the members of Lake Tapps Community Church, the church will be led by TWO governing bodies: 1) the Elders, and 2) the Church Council.

Affirmed annually by the membership and in alignment with the Lake Tapps Community Church Statement of Purpose, the Elders and the Church Council shall necessarily serve together in humility, cooperation, and collaboration in order to effectively lead and care for the church.

In addition, the Elders and the Church Council, together, shall constitute the Board of Trustees of this church and shall be entrusted with such responsibilities as civil law assigns. They shall be the legal church representatives in buying and selling of all church property but shall not purchase real estate or incur any debt without the approval of the membership.

A. Elders:

Led by the Senior Pastor, the primary focus of the Elders will be to oversee the spiritual needs of the Body of Christ at Lake Tapps Community Church. Affirmed by the members, they will provide the pastoral oversight as those God has raised up to shepherd the flock (1 Peter 5:2) and give an account for souls (Hebrews 13:17). The Elders will be responsible for:

1. **Doctrine** – Elders are to spiritually feed, care for, and protect the flock (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Timothy 3:5). As such, Elders are responsible to teach sound doctrine and refute false teaching (Titus 1:9). They must be able and willing to participate in the teaching ministry of the church such that the members are equipped and the Body is built up (Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Timothy 3:2).
2. **Discipleship** – Elders are to engage in the life of the church Body with the intention of baptizing believers, making disciples, and teaching them to observe the Word of God (Matthew 28:19-20). They are to replicate themselves as followers of Christ and live as examples before the church Body (1 Peter 5:3). They are to train others to lead and to teach in the church (2 Timothy 2:1-2). They are to ensure the Body is equipped and building itself up towards Christian maturity (Ephesians 4:12-13).
3. **Direction** – Elders are responsible to lead and manage the local church (1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Timothy 3:4-5), as those who will give an account (Hebrews 13:17). They are to ensure that the direction of the church is consistent with its stated Purpose and Statement of Faith. In so doing, they also ensure that the assets and resources of the church are properly stewarded (1 Peter 5:5) as to support the ministries of the church.
4. **Discipline** – For the restoration of wayward church members, for the protection of the church Body, and for the glory of God's Name, as occasion arises Elders must administer in love and humility the process of church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20, Galatians 6:1-4, Titus 3:10, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15, 1 Timothy 5:17-25, 1 Corinthians 5,; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11, and Romans 16:17.

B. The Church Council:

Under the direction of the Elders, the primary focus of the Church Council will be to provide oversight for the operational needs of the Body of Christ at Lake Tapps Community Church.

Affirmed by the members to lead, the Church Council will ensure: 1) that ministries to the church, the community, and missionaries are carried out, and 2) that the finances and physical assets of the church are managed and stewarded appropriately.

Responsibilities of the Church Council will include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. They shall be responsible for all church property and may use designated funds for maintenance or improvements.
2. They shall exercise supervision and control of the general operation of the church, its programs, and its ministries.
3. They shall decide on suggestions and recommendations to be presented at the church business meetings.
4. They shall decide on the use of the church buildings for unscheduled meetings by organizations within or outside the church.
5. They shall oversee all financial stewardship, including the use of general funds and compensation packages.

There shall be no fewer than five (5) serving on the Church Council. Included in the Church Council's regular meetings will be the Senior Pastor, at least one other Elder, and representatives from church ministries as deemed necessary.

The following positions, in accordance with civil law, will be filled by a member of the Church Council:

1. Chairman – Elected by the Church Council, and affirmed by the Elders, the Chairman will preside over all meetings of the Church Council and have overall accountability for the effective ministry of the Church Council. In addition, the Chairman of the Church Council, or his designated alternate, shall preside as moderator of all church member meetings.
2. Treasurer – The Treasurer is responsible to receive, deposit and disperse all monies received by the church. The Treasurer is responsible for keeping the church's general ledger and financial records and will prepare related forms and reports as necessary.

The Treasurer shall ensure that a monthly statement is prepared for each Church Council meeting and that a written financial statement is prepared for each Annual Members Meeting. In addition, the Treasurer shall also prepare the books for annual auditing.

The Treasurer will ensure ethical handling of all church funds, oversee management of church banking accounts, and will ensure that the church's finances are in accord with legal, ethical and biblical standards. The Treasurer will oversee all appointed ministry treasurers.

3. Clerk – The Clerk is responsible to keep minutes of all Church Council meetings and all members meetings.

Section 2 APPOINTMENT OF CHURCH LEADERS:

New Elders will be recommended by the Elders and affirmed by the membership at the Annual Members Meeting or at a special members meeting convened by the Elders.

New Church Council members may be recommended either by the Elders, the Church Council, or members. They will be affirmed by both the Elders as well as by the membership at the Annual Members Meeting or at a special members meeting convened by the Elders.

All actively serving Elders and Church Council members will be affirmed annually by the membership at the Annual Members Meeting.

Those serving as Elders or on the Church Council shall remain in their position until:

1. They voluntarily resign their position, or
2. They are removed from their position by a majority determination of the Elders, or
3. They are not affirmed by the membership.

A. Core Requirements:

Before someone can serve as an Elder or on the Church Council, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body in good standing. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

B. Qualifications of Elders:

Men who obey the call of God to shepherd the flock of God, and are willing to serve as Elders, will be members in good standing at Lake Tapps Community Church who:

- a) Evidence a gifting and calling on their lives to shepherd God's people (Romans 12:4-8).
- b) Desire the office of overseer (1 Timothy 3:1).
- c) Meet the biblical qualifications of an overseer (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9).
- d) By the grace of God, are prepared to be an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:3).

C. Qualifications for Members of the Church Council:

Men and women who are led by the Lord to practically minister to the church Body and to steward Lake Tapps Community Church material assets and are willing to serve on the Church Council will be members in good standing at Lake Tapps Community Church who:

- a) Evidence a gifting and calling on their lives to practically serve God's people (Romans 12:4-8).
- b) Desire to serve the Body by providing leadership in operational and stewardship aspects of church ministries.
- c) Are recognized by the congregation as people who are "of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6:3).
- d) Meet the biblical qualifications of a deacon or deaconess (1 Timothy 3:8-12).

ARTICLE VI OTHER ROLES AND COMMITTEES

Section 1 OVERVIEW:

The Elders or the Church Council may formally recognize individuals to act in specific roles within the church Body or on formally recognized committees in support of vital church ministries which are deemed necessary for the effective and orderly operation of the church.

Section 2 FORMAL MINISTRY ROLES:

The Elders may appoint men and women to serve in specific ministry roles deemed necessary to address needs within the church Body. Once appointed, oversight and support for their ministry will be provided by the Church Council.

Before a person can be appointed to a formal ministry role, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body in good standing. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

In addition, those serving in a formally recognized ministry role within the church Body must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon/deaconess (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).

Section 3 COMMITTEES:

The Church Council may appoint men and women to serve on formally recognized committees deemed necessary to guide ministries within the church Body. Oversight and support for these committees will be provided by the Church Council.

Before a person can be formally appointed to serve on a committee, they must have attended Lake Tapps Community Church for at least one year and be a member of the Body in good standing. The time requirement may be waived by unanimous vote of the Elders.

In addition, those serving on a church committee must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon/deaconess (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).

The following core committees, under the direction of the Church Council, shall be appointed annually by the Church Council.

A. Missions Committee:

The Missions Committee shall, at minimum, be comprised of at least one Elder, one deacon/deaconess, and one member in good standing. Other members with an interest in missions may be asked to serve on the committee with the approval of the Church Council.

Responsibilities:

1. To study, recommend and promote a comprehensive missionary program.
2. To direct all missions funds to be given to evangelical missionary endeavors.
3. To plan and execute special missionary conferences or other missions emphasis activities.

Committee recommendations will be implemented upon approval of the Church Council.

B. Building Committee:

The Building Committee shall, at minimum, be comprised of at least one Elder, one Deacon, and one member in good standing. Other members with an interest in the church facilities may be asked to serve on the committee with the approval of the Church Council.

Responsibilities:

1. To ensure the general maintenance and upkeep of church facilities and physical assets.
2. To study, recommend and facilitate any additions/remodeling projects.
3. To advise in properly directing all funds used for additions/remodeling projects.

Committee recommendations will be implemented upon approval of the Church Council.

C. Other Committees:

The Church Council may appoint any other committees or create other offices for the efficient operation of the church.

ARTICLE VII SENIOR PASTOR

Section 1 QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES:

- A. The Senior Pastor is recognized as the spiritual leader of the church Body.
- B. He must meet the scriptural qualifications of an elder (see Article V, Section 2B).
- C. He must be in agreement with the Lake Tapps Community Church Statement of Faith and Statement of Purpose.
- D. He will recognize that Lake Tapps Community Church is a non-denominational church and shall be careful that secondary issues are not exalted and stressed to the dividing of the church family.
- E. The Senior Pastor will be an ex officio member of all committees.

Section 2 PROCEDURES FOR SELECTING A SENIOR PASTOR:

In the event Lake Tapps Community Church needs to replace its Senior Pastor, a Pulpit Committee will be formed comprised of members from the Elders, the Church Council, and the membership.

- A. To call a Pastor through Village Missions:
 - 1. The Pulpit Committee will notify the area representative of Village Missions stating our desire.
 - 2. They will discuss with Village Missions the needs of the church and any special considerations.
 - 3. The Pulpit Committee shall determine the appropriate process to evaluate a Village Missions candidate and arrange for the church membership to vote on acceptance of the candidate. Acceptance requires a 75% affirmative vote of members in good standing.
- B. To call a Pastor through a Pastoral Search Process:
 - 1. The Pulpit Committee will determine the process to search for, vet, and recommend a qualified candidate(s) to the church body.
 - 2. The Pulpit Committee shall properly arrange for the church membership to vote on the acceptance of said candidate. Acceptance requires a 75% affirmative vote of members in good standing.

Section 3 TERMINATION OF THE SENIOR PASTOR:

A Senior Pastor may be removed from his position upon:

- A. Evidence of violation of the spiritual qualifications given in Article VII, Sec 1, or a lifestyle contrary to the standard given in Article IV, Sec 5 for Erring Members.
- B. A 2/3 majority vote of the Elders is required to recommend removal of the Senior Pastor to the church membership. Acceptance of the recommendation to remove the Senior Pastor requires a 75% affirmative vote of members in good standing.

ARTICLE VIII ADDITIONAL MINISTRY STAFF

Section 1 OVERVIEW:

In order to support the work of the ministry at Lake Tapps Community Church, the Elders, in conjunction with the Church Council, may determine the need for additional staff positions to support the Senior Pastor in achieving the ministry goals of Lake Tapps Community Church.

These positions may include, but are not limited to, such roles as associate pastor, ministry director, assistant treasurer, office administrator, and other targeted ministry oversight positions as deemed necessary.

Section 2 QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES:

- A. Staff positions will be selected and hired by the Church Council under the direction of the Elders.
- B. These positions will report to the Senior Pastor or his designate.
- C. Those serving in staff positions must be marked by the biblical character qualities of a deacon/deaconess (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-11).
- D. Those in staff positions must be members in accordance with Article IV, Section 1.

Section 3 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT:

- A. The Church Council may terminate the employment of any staff member by a unanimous vote of the Church Council. If the vote to terminate employment is not unanimous the issue will be referred to the Elders.
- B. In the event of gross misconduct, someone in a staff position may be terminated by the Elders by a 2/3 majority vote of the Elders.

ARTICLE IX MEMBERS MEETINGS

Section 1 FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:

- A. An Annual Members Meeting shall be held in the month of January. The purpose of the Annual Meeting will be:
 - 1. To receive and approve annual financial and budget reports of officers and ministries of the church.
 - 2. To affirm membership support for those in leadership positions.
- B. Additional meetings may be scheduled by the Elders or the Church Council as needed.

Section 2 RULES GOVERNING MEETINGS:

- A. A simple majority vote of members present shall be sufficient to decide any matter presented unless otherwise provided for in this constitution.
- B. All Members Meetings shall be previously announced at a regular Worship Service.
- C. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the business procedure of this church.

ARTICLE X ORDAINING AND LICENSING

Section 1 ORDAINING:

- A. It shall be within the power of the church to ordain into the Gospel ministry those men whom God has called and equipped.
- B. The Elders and Church Council shall have the authority to call an ordination council for the proper examination of the candidate. Upon favorable report of the council, the Elders and Church Council shall arrange an ordination service and issue proper credentials.

Section 2 LICENSING:

- A. It shall be within the power of the church to issue an annual license for the Gospel ministry to those whom God has called and equipped.
- B. Said license shall be granted after unanimous approval by the Elders. It may be renewed by a unanimous vote of the Elders and Church Council.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority of eligible members present at any regular or special Members Meeting. Any proposed amendment shall be announced, posted and copies made available the two Sundays preceding the vote.

ARTICLE XII DISSOLUTION

In the event of dissolution, all accumulated assets of this corporation shall become the property of Village Missions.