

## ARTICLES OF CONSTITUTION

### ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of the Church shall be Christ  
Community Church of Beatrice, Nebraska.

### ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Church shall be to glorify  
God by edification of believers through Bible  
study; prayer, worship, fellowship and service  
so that believers might be trained for ministry  
and souls might be added to the Church of  
Jesus Christ.

### ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH

#### A. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe the scriptures, including both the  
Old and New Testaments, to be the verbally  
inspired Word of God, written by men in God's  
control, inerrant and infallible in the original  
manuscripts and it is our sole and final  
authority in faith and life, (2 Timothy 3:15-17;  
2 Peter 1:20-21; Psalms 19:7-9).

#### B. ONE TRIUNE GOD

We believe there is only one true and living  
God, eternally existing and manifesting  
Himself in three persons revealed in the

scriptures as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These three are distinct and co-equal, yet one in essence, (2 Corinthians 13:14; Matthew 3:11-17; 28:19).

## 1. GOD THE FATHER

We believe in God the Father, perfect in holiness, infinite in wisdom and measureless in power. We rejoice that He concerns Himself mercifully in the affairs of men, that He hears and answers prayer, and that He saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ, (John 5:19-24; 16:23-27; Ephesians 1:3-14).

## 2. GOD THE SON

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, born of a virgin, wholly God and wholly man, sinless in His life, who atoned for the sins of the world by His death on the cross. We believe in His bodily resurrection, His ascension into heaven, His high priestly intercession for His people, and His personal, visible, premillennial return to the world according to His promise, (Matthew 1:18-25; Acts 1:11; 1

Corinthians 15:3-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Hebrews 7:23-38).

### 3. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the divine person who convicts the world of sin: that He brings new life to those who are spiritually dead: that He baptizes (or places) all believers into the one true Church, which is the Body of Christ: that He indwells them permanently, seals them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon them fills (controls) those who are yielding to Him, (John 3:3-8; 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 14:16-17; Ephesians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 5:18).

### C. THE CONDITION OF MAN

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, in innocence and without sin. But in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became spiritually dead and alienated from God. Man of himself is incapable of remedying his lost and depraved condition, (Genesis 1:26; 3:1-24; Romans 3:10-18; 5:12; Ephesians 2:1-3).

### D. SALVATION

We believe that salvation is the gift of God's grace. It cannot be gained by meritorious works, but is freely bestowed upon all that put their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ at Calvary. All who so trust the Savior are forgiven of their sins and born into the family of God by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, (Ephesians 2:8-9; 1:7; John 1:12).

#### E. SECURITY, ASSURANCE, AND RESPONSIBILITY

We believe that all the saved, those in whom God has accomplished His transforming work of Grace, are kept by His power and are, thus, secure in Christ forever. It is their privilege to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation. However, this assurance is not the occasion for sin, for God in holiness cannot tolerate persistent sin in His children, and in infinite love He corrects them. True faith in Christ is expressed by a fruitful, God-pleasing life, (John 10:27-29; Romans 8:29-39; 1 John 5:13; Hebrews 12:6; Matthew 7:20; James 2:20).

#### F. THE CHURCH

We believe that the true Church, called in scripture the Body of Christ, is a spiritual organism into which every person who has trusted Jesus Christ for salvation in this present age has been baptized by the Holy Spirit. The scripture also teaches the

establishment and continuance of local Churches, groups of redeemed individuals joined together for worship, instruction, fellowship and service, (Ephesians 1:22; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Acts 2:42; 13:1-2).

#### G. ORDINANCES

We believe in observing the ordinances of the Lord's Supper, which is a symbolic representation of our Savior's suffering and death. We further believe that baptism by immersion be administered following confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as a symbol of spiritual regeneration, (Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-28; Acts 8:26-39; 16:30-33; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

#### H. THE RAPTURE AND SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the personal, imminent coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for the rapture of His Church, and His subsequent premillennial return to earth to establish His Kingdom, (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:1-6).

#### I. THE ETERNAL STATE

We believe that at death the souls of those who have trusted Christ for salvation pass immediately into His presence and there

remain in conscious bliss until the resurrection of the body at His coming for the Church, when soul and body reunited shall be associated with Him forever in glory. We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain after death in conscious misery until the final judgment of the great white throne at the close of the millennium, when soul and body reunited shall be cast into the lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to be separated from God forever in conscious punishment. (Luke 16:19-26; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 20:11-15; 1 Corinthians 15:41-42).

#### ARTICLE IV. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

##### A. QUALIFICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this organization shall consist of those who give clear evidence of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and follow the Lord's command to be baptized. Primary emphasis is upon a personal, vital relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord.

##### B. PROCEDURE FOR MEMBERSHIP

Any person desiring to unite with this Church shall be interviewed by the official board and give written assent to the Articles of Constitution. Upon unanimous approval of

the official board, the individual will be received into the membership of the Church at a regular service. A youngster under legal age (18) would be required to sign again upon reaching legal age.

#### C. DUTIES OF THE MEMBERSHIP

The member, by his attendance, (1) accepts the privileges of local Church affiliation, (2) submits himself to the official board leadership and loving discipline, and (3) accepts the responsibility of exercising his gifts for the benefit of the Church.

#### D. DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS

God has placed the responsibility upon each believer to judge himself. If we fail to do this, our brethren in the local Church are given this responsibility and we will be disciplined by the Lord (1 Corinthians 11:31-32). According to the scripture, (1 Corinthians 5:12-13; Romans 2:1-3; Matthew 7:1-5) we are not to judge those outside the Church (unbelievers). It is imperative that in disciplinary actions we follow scriptural guidelines, lest we be guilty of hypocrisy or of falling into the same sins. Obviously, discipline is for specific sins and not differences in opinions, (1 Corinthians 5:1, 11-13; 1 Timothy 5:19-21; 2 Thessalonians 3:14). We believe the scripture teaches us to use the following procedure in restoring a fellow

member: (Matthew 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1; Hebrews 12:15).

1. The person who is aware of the offense is to be the first person to prayerfully confront a sinning member.
2. If the sinning member refuses to deal with the problem, the first person is to take a "witness" for a second meeting, one of which should be a board member.
3. If the sinning member still refuses to deal with the problem, then it is to be brought before the official board, which shall bring the matter to the attention of the members of the Church by general announcement. If the individual refuses to listen even to the Church, at this time all individuals attending the Church are to break fellowship with the sinning member. The purpose of breaking fellowship is to prayerfully restore the individual. (Note: the specific sin need not be mentioned unless it has been so decided by the official board.) These steps must be taken in the above order. All must be done with the attitude of love and prayer, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, with the goal of restoration in mind. Gentleness and spiritual alertness are very

important in the above process (Galatians 6:1-2). If at any point in the process the sinning member repents the individual should immediately be welcomed and affirmed in love by those involved. If the matter has been resolved, fellowship is to be restored (2 Corinthians 2:6-8, 11).

#### E. DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS

1. Any member in good standing desiring to withdraw from the membership of this church may be granted a letter of standing. Any member uniting with another Church may be dropped from the membership of this Church.

2. Any member absent from the Church services for six months without satisfactory reasons may, at the discretion of the official board, have his name removed from the membership following written notification. Upon written notification to the individual the congregation shall be informed on all membership dismissals.

### ARTICLE V. CHURCH GOVERNMENT

#### A. OFFICERS

## 1. THE HEAD

Jesus Christ is the singular sovereign head of the Church, which is His body. He is the first and chief officer of the Church.

## 2. THE ELDERS

a. Elders, otherwise known as Pastors and Overseers, are the chief human leadership officers in the Church.

### b. RESPONSIBILITIES

#### (1) GENERAL

(a) Elders are responsible to shepherd and oversee the Church in such a way as to fulfill the desires of the Head.

(b) Elders are responsible to shepherd and oversee the Church in such a way as to bring the Church individually and collectively to maturity in Jesus Christ.

#### (2) SPECIFIC

Elders are responsible for the Pastoral care of the Church which ministry includes training, leadership, feeding, protecting, caring, comforting the sick and afflicted, praying, teaching, admonishing, exhorting, disciplining, warning and providing an example.

c. QUALIFICATIONS

An Elder must evidence the qualifications prescribed for that office in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

d. SELECTION OF ELDERS

- (1) Nominations for Elder are to be submitted to the existing Elder board by any member of the church.
- (2) The nominee will be required to fill out a self-evaluation.
- (3) Upon unanimous approval of the Elder board, the

nominee will be presented to the Church family for consideration. Each nominee must be confirmed by a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation at its annual business meeting.

- (4) Candidates will be required to be members for one year.

e. TERM OF OFFICE

Four reasons may account for the discontinuation of any Elder's leadership role: death; geographical departure; personal desire, in which case he is expected to confer openly with the Elders; and disqualification, in which case discipline will be administered by the other Elders and the congregation in the prescribed manner of I Timothy 5:19-25. The term of office shall be for three years. He may be nominated again by the rest of the Elder board, subject to the nominating and election procedures already stated.

f. NUMBER

In the absence of any specific biblical direction on the number of Elders in a local Church, four considerations will be determinative: plurality, no fewer than three plus Senior Pastor; qualification; personal desire; and Church need. In the case that the minimum number of Elders is not obtained, an initial leadership board consisting of Elders and Deacons will make decisions.

g. ORGANIZATION

Positionally, the Elders will operate in equality. Functionally, they will organize themselves to include a chairman, a vice-chairman and a secretary. The relationship between Elders and Deacons will be as follows: The Elders will be responsible for laying out general policies, goals and procedures. The Deacons will be responsible for carrying out their ministries within this framework, making decisions as needed. Care should be taken that the Elders not become

overextended into the administrative responsibilities of the Deacons and neglect the ministry of the Word and prayer.

h. VACANCIES

Vacancies may be filled by following the above procedure and calling a special Church business meeting. This meeting must be announced two weeks in advance both in the Church bulletin and from the pulpit, with the name or names of the nominee.

3. THE DEACONS

a. Deacons are official servers in the Church, ministering both to the Elders and to the congregation.

b. RESPONSIBILITIES

In the absence of a clearly defined biblical role, Deacons of Christ Community Church will serve in a twofold capacity: (1) supporting and assisting the Elders in such areas as to free them to shepherd and oversee the Church more efficiently and effectively.

(2) supporting and assisting the congregation in areas delegated to them by the Elders as needs arise.

c. QUALIFICATIONS

A Deacon must evidence the qualifications prescribed for that office in 1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13 (cf., Acts 6:3).

d. SELECTION

Selection of Deacons will follow the same procedure as Elders using a Deacon recommendation form and a Deacon self-evaluation. The Deacon will give testimony to the Church body covering: a) personal salvation, b) growth experience, c) service involvement, d) their contribution to the body as a Deacon.

e. TERM OF OFFICE

Deacons will serve a two-year term repeatable at the Elder's

and congregation's desire. Opportunity for evaluation will be given after every two years of service using step 3 of Deacon selection process. Otherwise, a deacon's official ministry may discontinue for like reasons and in like manner as an Elder's (Article V., Section 2e).

f. NUMBER

Qualification, personal desire, and Church need will determine the number of Deacons.

g. ORGANIZATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The relationship between Elders and Deacons will be as follows: the Elders will be responsible for laying out general policies, goals and procedures. The Deacons will be responsible for carrying out their ministries within this framework making decisions as

needed. Care should be taken that the Elders not become over-extended into the administrative responsibilities of the deacons and neglect the ministry of the Word and prayer.

## VI. SENIOR PASTOR

A. The pulpit committee, consisting of five people and two alternates, shall be selected by a combined committee of Elders and Deacons. One of these members shall be either an Elder or Deacon.

B. After screening candidates, the committee will select the best candidates to invite for candidating and interview with the elder board. Candidating should offer maximum exposure to the individual.

C. The Elder board will make their recommendation based on their time with the candidate and the congregation will call the Senior Pastor with a 3/4-majority vote.

D. Dismissal of the Senior Pastor.  
It shall be the prerogative of any Senior Pastor to dissolve the Pastoral relationship by giving at least one month written notice of such intention, or less if mutually agreed. The

board of Elders may initiate termination of any Senior Pastoral relationship by calling a board of Elders' meeting to consider the question. The decision to terminate the senior pastoral relationship shall be unanimous. The Senior Pastor shall be entitled to one month's salary after the date of termination, voluntary or involuntary, set by the board of Elders.

#### VII. DISCIPLINE OF LEADERSHIP

The discipline of Elders and Deacons shall follow the procedures as outlined in discipline of membership (Article IV, Section D). A charge or accusation brought against an Elder or Deacon is a serious matter, and shall be made privately to the board of Elders, who will hear the matter and make known what disciplinary action is required (1 Timothy 5:19-20; Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 14:19). At the discretion of the board of Elders immediate resignation or temporary suspension may be required during the period of restoration.

#### VIII. VOTING RIGHTS

All members, 18 years and over, shall decide by 3/4 majority vote (with the exception of constitution changes which would require 4/5 majority) the following items:

- A. The Calling of Senior Pastor
- B. Major real estate acquisitions and major building decisions
- C. Constitution changes
- D. Approve annual budget

## IX. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

A. Special meetings will be called as needed. These meetings will be given to discussing various matters relating to the entire Church, such as budget changes, new ministries, disciplinary actions, etc. Every effort will be made by the leadership to keep communication open.

B. All meetings requiring a vote of congregation will be announced for two Sundays in advance.

C. A Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Secretary and Assistant Secretary for congregational meetings shall be selected by the Elders. These offices will be for a term of one year.

## X. OFFICERS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES, DEPARTMENTS AND BY-LAWS:

Other officers, boards, committees, departments and by-laws may be developed by the Elders and Deacons as needed by the local Church. Guidelines for all areas not specifically mentioned in the constitution shall be included in a policy manual developed by the Elders. All committee personnel will be members of Christ Community Church.

## XI. AMENDMENTS

Suggestions for amending this constitution may be initiated and brought to the Elders by a member of the Church, a committee or the

Elders themselves. Upon the Elders' unanimous recommendation, the proposed amendment will be presented to the membership at a regular session, and a two-week period for discussion will be allowed thereafter. A 4/5 majority vote of the members present and voting at a specially called meeting will adopt and amend the constitution.

XII. APPENDIX--SEE DEACON, ELDER NOMINATION:  
EVALUATION AND SELF-EVALUATION  
QUESTIONNAIRES

CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH  
2727 Lincoln Blvd.  
Beatrice, Nebraska 68310

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