

# Covenant & Constitution

## Christian Community Church of Mars

This church shall be known as Christian Community Church of Mars, Pennsylvania.

### Church Covenant

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and, on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, and the relief of the poor, and the spreading of the gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions, to spiritually educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in all our behavior; and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation and mindful of the commandments of our Savior to secure it without delay.

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**Constitution**

**Article I: Membership**

Section 1:

Local church membership is not directly ordained of God but rather of man. Organization is required to fulfill the laws of our state and is therefore indirectly ordained, since we are directed to obey civil authorities. Therefore, the membership of Christian Community Church shall consist of persons who have:

- A. Personally received Jesus Christ as their Savior.
- B. Agreed to the church covenant, doctrinal statement, and constitution. Any difference or disagreement must be discussed with the Eldership prior to acceptance into membership.
- C. Given testimony of salvation and of their faith in Jesus Christ to the Elders and have been examined by the Elders according to the preceding requirements.

Section 2: Transfer of membership from other churches:

Any member of another church may be received into the membership of the church upon satisfactory compliance with section 1 and a receipt of a letter of transfer from their previous church. A public statement of faith will be accepted if a letter from the previous church cannot be obtained. If the previous church is not of like faith, the conditions for membership under section 1 must be met.

Section 3:

We believe it is also the solemn responsibility of each believer to remember the Elders who have the rule over them, observing their manner of living, following their example of faith, and obeying them and recognizing their authority as ones who constantly guard the believers' spiritual welfare and who must give an account of this to the Lord. Members are expected to live a consistent and consecrate Christian life. Church discipline shall be administered by the Eldership according to the Scriptures.

Section 4:

Any member whose whereabouts remain unknown for a period of a year; or has willfully neglected their duties and obligations as prescribed in the church covenant, having been addressed by the Eldership according to the Scriptures, will be removed from the formal membership roll. It is the Elders responsibility to maintain accurate records of formal membership.

Section 5:

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All involved in teaching ministries shall be approved by the Elders and shall agree to abide by the teachings and doctrine of the church and not teach contrary to them.

**Article II: Elders and Deacons**

Section 1: Elders

- A. Office: The official oversight body of the local church, which is open to all males of the congregation who meet Scripture's qualifications and have a Spirit-imparted desire to jointly oversee the spiritual welfare of God's household.

Term of office: The office of an Elder is considered a lifetime office to be held as long as the individual meets the qualifications of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 and is mentally and physically able to function according to the demands of the office. Since this is not a term office and continued service places great demands upon the individual, an Elder may find it necessary to request release from active duty for a period of time because of personal needs that do not compromise his qualifications as an Elder. If such a need occurs, the Elder can request such relief from the Eldership.

- B. Duties: It is the calling and solemn responsibility of each Elder to guard the doctrine of the church, feed the flock, being a willing overseer and example, and to love, teach, encourage, comfort, reprove, and pray for each believer, including the other Elders. We believe that, when necessary, it is the duty of the Elders together to discipline believers in the local flock, including each other, in accordance with the Scriptures. We believe that true godly love for the believers is essential to eldership. We believe that an Elder who rules diligently teaching with the Word of God, is to be accounted worthy of financial support by the local church. It is also the responsibility of the Elders to oversee and administrate the missionary outreach of the church.

- C. Qualifications:

1. He must desire to be an Elder.
2. He must be examined by the Elders to determine if he meets the qualifications of I Timothy 3: 1-7, 10a, and Titus 1:6-9.
3. Appointment:
  - a. Elders shall be appointed by the present church Elders. The Elder must be a member and in agreement with the doctrinal statement, constitution, and covenant of Christian Community Church.
  - b. The names of the appointee shall be presented to the congregation at least four weeks prior to their appointment.

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- c. If any believer has an objection to the appointee, it must be based upon a failure of his meeting the qualifications of the above Scriptures.

D. Pastor/Teacher

We understand that the creation of a special Pastor/Teacher position is a man-made one. However, because of our culture and society, we believe that this position is necessary to the welfare of the local church.

The Pastor/Teacher will have the primary responsibility of the ministry of the Word at church services, and will be responsible for coordinating both internal and external communications for the church.

The Pastor/Teacher is one of the co-equal Elders, having no special authority over the other Elders.

E. Bringing in a Pastor/Teacher from outside the church membership.

- 1. This will be the responsibility of the Elders, as led by the Holy Spirit.
- 2. He must be qualified according to Article II, Section 1 of the constitution. Any apparent lack of qualification shall be scripturally addressed as soon as possible, prior to appointment.
- 3. He must be in agreement with the doctrinal statement, constitution, and covenant of Christian Community Church of Mars.
- 4. Upon acceptance of the position of Pastor/Teacher and compliance with Article I, Section 1: Membership, he becomes a member and Elder of Christian Community Church.
- 5. The individual must present the following references:
  - a. Reference of Pastor/Teacher
    - i. Personal
    - ii. Professional
    - iii. Academic
    - iv. Previous work
  - b. These letters of reference are to include both the strengths and weaknesses of the individual.
- 6. He must demonstrate a burden for the people of Christian Community Church of Mars.

Section 2: Deacons

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- A. Office: We believe that the office of Deacon was instituted by God for the purpose of meeting the physical needs of individual believers and the welfare of the local church in order that the Elders, in keeping with their responsibilities, might give more time to prayer and the ministry of the Word. We believe that the office of Deacon may be filled only by a man who demonstrates by his life a servant attitude to his fellow man and, in particular, the believers within the local church. We believe that the office of Deacon is a serving position, not a ruling position, therefore, the Deacons shall be accountable to the Elders.

Term of Office: The office of Deacon is considered a lifetime office to be held as long as the individual meets the qualifications of I Timothy 3 and is mentally and physically able to function according to the demands of the position of the office. Since this is not a term of office and continued service places great demands upon the individual, a Deacon may find it necessary to request release from active duty for a period of time because of personal needs that do not compromise his qualifications as a Deacon. If such a need occurs, the Deacon may request such a relief from the eldership.

- B. Duties: The New Testament intentionally lists no fixed duties for Deacons. As their name indicates, Deacons are willing servants who serve in whatever capacity they are needed. However, the primary focus of the Deacons' ministry shall be in meeting the physical needs of the people of the church. They adjust to meet the needs at hand, and receive their direction from the Elders.
- C. Qualifications:
1. A Deacon must be examined by the Elders to determine if he meets the qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13.
  2. Appointment:
    - a. Deacons shall be appointed by the church Elders. A Deacon must be a member and in agreement with the doctrinal statement, constitution, and covenant of Christian Community Church of Mars.
    - b. The names of the appointees shall be presented to the congregation at least four weeks prior to their appointment.
    - c. If any believer has an objection to the appointee, it must be based upon a failure of his meeting the qualifications of the above Scriptures.

### **Article III: Officers**

#### Section 1: All Elders and Deacons are Officers

All other officers must be members and shall be appointed by the Elders and accountable to them. Their appointments shall be reviewed annually after the annual business meeting.

#### Section 2: Financial Secretary

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The financial secretary shall keep records of all offerings made to the support of the church. He/she shall provide members, upon request, with a yearly statement of their giving.

Section 3: Treasurer

The treasurer shall be custodian of all monies contributed or otherwise related to the general or building funds. He/she will make disbursements upon approval of the Elders and keep all records of such disbursements.

Section 4: Recording Secretary

The recording secretary shall be responsible for recording and keeping minutes of all business meetings.

Section 5: Building Maintenance Coordinator

The building maintenance coordinator shall be responsible for supervising the general maintenance and routine upkeep of all church properties. These responsibilities shall include, but not be limited to, the following: church maintenance; grass cutting; and snow removal.

**Article IV: Meetings**

Section 1: Business Meetings

- A. All business meetings shall be conducted by the Elders.
- B. Annual meetings of the membership shall be held each year in January following the close of the fiscal year (defined as January 1 to December 31). The date shall be announced from the pulpit the hour at the hour of morning worship service on the two Sundays previous to the date of meeting.
- C. Voting: Each member, in good standing, 18 years of age or older shall be entitled to one vote. In good standing is interpreted to mean not under church discipline.
- D. Special meetings may be called by the Elders. Notice of the special meetings shall state the purpose for which it is called and shall be the only business considered at the meeting. It shall be announced from the pulpit at the hour of morning worship service upon two Sundays previous to the date of the meeting.

**Article V: Dissolution Clauses**

Section 1:

Should this church corporation cease to be a functioning organization, all monies and property shall be liquidated to pay any outstanding debts. The remainder is to be

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divided among the missionaries and institutions that are in the mission budget established the last full year of operation.

**Article VI: Amendments**

Section 1:

This Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting or any special meeting by those present and voting. Notice must be given of the proposed amendment(s) from the pulpit at the hour of morning worship service on the two preceding Sundays of the said meeting. The proposed amendment(s) must be printed and made available to the congregation at each of the two announcement Sundays and at the called meeting. Amendments may be passed by the unanimous approval of the Elders and a vote of 75% of the voting members present at the meeting.

**Article VII: Attachments**

Section 1:

This Constitution shall be construed as including the Church Covenant Statement and the Church Doctrinal Statement which are attached to this Constitution. Copies of all three documents shall be kept in the official church records maintained by the Elders.

Section 2:

Any changes to the Church Covenant Statement and the Church Doctrinal Statement must be made in the same manner as amendments to the Constitution: Article VI, Section 1.

*Revised October 28, 2007*