



# TWINCITY

## **Statement of Faith**

Adopted September 9, 2007

## **Bylaws**

Adopted September 9, 2007  
Revised & Adopted August 28, 2016

## **Statement on Marriage, Gender, & Sexuality**

Revised & Adopted May 17, 2015

## **Membership Covenant**

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# Statement of Faith

## *The Holy Scriptures*

We teach that the Bible is God's written revelation to man, and thus the sixty-six books of the Bible given to us by the Holy Spirit constitute the plenary (inspired equally in all parts) Word of God (1 Corinthians 2:7-14; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that the Word of God is an objective, propositional (contains definite, objective statements) revelation (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13), verbally inspired in every word, absolutely inerrant in the original documents, infallible, and God-breathed (Psalm 19:7-9; 2 Timothy 3:16).

We teach that the Bible constitutes the only infallible rule of faith and practice. God communicates with His people through the Scriptures (Psalm 119:89; Matthew 5:18; 24:35; John 10:35; 16:12-13; 17:17; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that God "breathed out" His written Word by a process of dual authorship. The holy Spirit, by inspiring human authors, through their individual personalities and different styles of writing, they composed and recorded God's Word to man (2 Peter 1:20-21; 3:15-16).

We teach that, whereas there may be several applications of any given passage of Scripture, there is but one interpretation. The meaning of Scripture is to be found as one diligently applies the literal, grammatical-historical method of interpretation under the illumination of the Holy Spirit (John 16:12-15; 1 Corinthians 2:7-15). It is the responsibility of believers to ascertain carefully the true intent and meaning of Scripture, recognizing that proper application is binding on all generations (2 Timothy 2:15). Yet the truth of Scripture stands in judgment of men; never do men stand in judgment of it (Hebrews 4:12). Since God's Word is sufficient for "life and godliness" (Psalm 19; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Peter 1:3-4), the church's ministry is based upon Scripture without the integration of psychology or worldly philosophy (Colossians 2:8).

## *God*

We teach that there is one living and true God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5-7; 1 Corinthians 8:4) an infinite, all-knowing Spirit (Psalm 90:2; John 4:24), perfect in all His attributes (Matthew 5:48), one in essence (Deuteronomy 6:4), eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14) - each equally deserving worship and obedience (John 20:28; cf. John 17:5 with Isaiah 42:8; Acts 7:51; Ephesians 4:30). God is completely sovereign in all matters (Psalm 115:3; Job 42:2).

### *God the Father*

We teach that God the Father, the first person of the Trinity, orders and disposes all things according to His own purpose and grace (1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 1:5-6, 11). We hold to a literal interpretation of creation as presented in Genesis, chapters one and two, and therefore believe God is the creator of all things (Genesis 1:1-31; Acts 17:24; Ephesians 3:9). As the only absolute and omnipotent ruler in the universe, He is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption (Genesis 1:1; Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 45:22; Romans 11:36; Colossians 1:16; 1 Timothy 4:10). His fatherhood involves both His designation within the Trinity and His relationship with mankind. As Creator, He is Father to all men (Ephesians 4:6; Acts 17:28-29), but He is spiritual Father only to believers (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:18). He has decreed for His own glory all things that come to pass (Ephesians 1:11-12, 14). He continually directs and governs all creatures and events (1 Chronicles 29:11). In His sovereignty He is neither author nor approver of sin (Habakkuk 1:13; James 1:13), nor does He abridge the accountability of moral, intelligent creatures (1 Peter 1:17; Romans 1:20; Romans 2:15-16). He has graciously chosen from eternity past those whom He would have as His own (Ephesians 1:4-6); He saves from sin all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (John 3:16); He adopts as His own all those who come to Him (John 1:12; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 12:5-9).

### *God the Son*

We teach that Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, possesses all the divine excellencies, and in these He is coequal, consubstantial, and coeternal with the Father (John 10:30; 14:9, 10).

We teach that God the Father created according to His own will, through His Son, Jesus Christ, by whom all things continue in existence and in operation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:2).

We teach that in the incarnation (God becoming man) Christ surrendered only the prerogatives of deity but nothing of the divine essence, either in degree or kind. In His incarnation, the eternally existing second person of the Trinity accepted all the essential characteristics of humanity and so became the God-man (Philippians 2:5-8; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that Jesus Christ represents humanity and deity in indivisible oneness (Micah 5:2; John 5:23; 14:9-10; Colossians 2:9).

We teach that our Lord Jesus Christ was virgin born (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23,25; Luke 1:26-35); that He was God incarnate (John 1:1, 14); and that the purpose of the incarnation was to reveal God, redeem men, and rule over God's kingdom (Psalm 2:7-9; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:29; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 7:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19).

We teach that the actual and particular atonement by our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished the redemption of His own through the shedding of His blood in His sacrificial death on the cross, and that His death was voluntary, vicarious, substitutionary, propitiatory (appeased God's wrath on behalf of the elect), and redemptive (Matthew 1:21; John 10:15; Romans 3:24-25; 5:8; Colossians 1:20-22; 1 Timothy 4:10; 1 Peter 2:24).

We teach that on the basis of the efficacy of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the believing sinner is freed from the punishment, the penalty, the power, and one day the very presence of sin; and that he is declared righteous, given eternal life, and placed into the family of God (John 17:3; Romans 3:25-26; 5:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).

We teach that our justification is made sure by His literal, physical resurrection from the dead and that He is now ascended to the right hand of the Father, where He now mediates as our Advocate and High Priest (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:38-39; Acts 2:30-31; 7:55-56; Romans 4:25; 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-15; 7:25; 9:24; 10:12; 1 John 2:1).

We teach that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave, God confirmed the deity of His Son and gave proof that God has accepted the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross. Jesus' bodily resurrection is also the guarantee of a future resurrection life for all believers (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Romans 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:20,23).

We teach that Jesus Christ will receive the church, which is His body, unto Himself at the end of this age and, returning in power and glory, will establish His millennial kingdom on earth (Acts 1:9-11; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 19 and 20).

We teach that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one who will judge all mankind (John 5:22-23);

- a. Believers (1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10)
- b. Living inhabitants of the earth at His glorious return (Matthew 25:31-46)
- c. Unbelieving dead at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:11-15)

As the mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5), the head of His body the church (Ephesians 1:22; 5:23; Colossians 1:18), and the coming universal King who will reign on the throne of David (Isaiah 9:6; Luke 1:31-33), He is the final judge of all who fail to place their trust in Him as Lord and Savior (Matthew 25:14-46; Acts 17:30-31).

### *God the Holy Spirit*

We teach that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, eternal, underived, possessing all the attributes of personality and deity including intellect (1 Corinthians 2:10-13), emotions (Ephesians 4:30), will (1 Corinthians 12:11), eternity (Hebrews 9:14), omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-10), omniscience (Isaiah 40:13-14), omnipotence (Romans 15:13), and truthfulness (John 16:13). In all the divine attributes He is coequal and consubstantial

with the Father and the Son (Matthew 28: 19; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13: 14; and Jeremiah 31:31-34 with Hebrews 10: 15-17).

We teach that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to execute the divine will with relation to all mankind. We recognize His sovereign activity in creation (Genesis 1:2), the incarnation (Matthew 1:18), the written revelation (2 Peter 1:20-21), the work of salvation (John 3:5-7) and the resurrection (Romans 1:4; 8:11).

We teach that a unique work of the Holy Spirit in this age began at Pentecost when He came from the Father as promised by Christ (John 14:16-17; 15:26; Acts 2:1-4; 41-47) to initiate and complete the building of the body of Christ, which is His church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The broad scope of His divine activity includes convicting the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ and transforming believers into the image of Christ (John 16:7-9; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 2:22).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the supernatural and sovereign agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12: 13). The Holy Spirit also indwells, sanctifies, instructs, empowers them for service, and seals them unto the day of redemption (John 16:7-15; Romans 8:9; 15:16; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

We teach that the Holy Spirit is the divine teacher who guided the apostles and prophets into all truth as they committed to writing God's revelation, the Bible. Every believer possesses the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit from the moment of salvation, and it is the duty of all those born of the Spirit to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit (John 16:13; Romans 8:9; Ephesians 5:18; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:20, 27).

We teach that the Holy Spirit administers spiritual gifts to the church. The Holy Spirit glorifies neither Himself nor His gifts by ostentatious displays, but He does glorify Christ by implementing His work of redeeming the lost and building up believers in the most holy faith (John 16:13-14; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

We teach, in this respect, that God the Holy Spirit is sovereign in the bestowing of all His gifts for the perfecting of the saints today and that speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles in the beginning days of the church were for the purpose of pointing to and authenticating the apostles as revealers of divine truth, and were never intended to be characteristic of the lives of believers today (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 13:8-10; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12; Hebrews 2:1-4).

### *Man*

We teach that man was directly and immediately created by God in His image and likeness. Man was created free of sin with a rational nature, intelligence, volition, self-determination, and moral responsibility to God (Genesis 1:26-31; 2:4-3 :24; James 3:9).

We teach that God's intention in the creation of man was that man should glorify God, enjoy God's fellowship, live his life in the will of God, and by this accomplish God's purpose for man in the world (Psalm 15; 73:25-26, 28; Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4: 11).

We teach that in Adam's sin of disobedience to the revealed will and Word of God, man lost his innocence; incurred the penalty of spiritual and physical death; became subject to the wrath of God; and became inherently corrupt and utterly incapable of choosing or doing that which is acceptable to God apart from divine grace. With no recuperative powers to enable him to recover himself, man is hopelessly lost. Man's salvation is thereby wholly of God's grace through the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-19; John 3:36; Romans 3:23; 6:23; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 2:1-3; 8-9; Colossians 1:13-14; 1 Timothy 2:13-14; 1 John 1:8).

We teach that because all men were in Adam, a nature corrupted by Adam's sin has been transmitted to all men of all ages, Jesus Christ being the only exception. All men are thus sinners by nature, by choice, and by divine declaration (Psalm 14:1-3; Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 3:9-18, 23; 5:10-12).

### *Salvation*

We teach that salvation is wholly of God by grace on the basis of redemption by Jesus Christ, the merit of His shed blood, through faith alone and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Peter 1:18-19). We affirm the historic Doctrines of Grace.

### *Election*

We teach that election is the act of God by which, before the foundation of the world, He chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates and saves (John 3: 1-8; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:4-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 2:10; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:1-2).

We teach that sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Isaiah 55:6-7; Ezekiel 18:32; 33:11) and trust Christ as Savior and Lord (John 3:16-19, 36; 5:40; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 2:6).

We teach that the unmerited favor that God grants to totally depraved sinners is not related to any initiative of their own part nor to God's anticipation of what they might do by their own will, but is solely of His sovereign grace and mercy (Romans 9: 10-18; Ephesians 1:4-7; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that election should not be looked upon as based merely on abstract sovereignty. God is truly sovereign but He exercises this sovereignty in harmony with

His other attributes, especially His omniscience, justice, holiness, wisdom, grace, and love (Romans 11:33-36). This sovereignty will always exalt the will of God in a manner totally consistent with His character as revealed in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:25-28; 2 Timothy 1:9).

We teach that the biblical position on election does not minimize a believer's responsibility to evangelize, but rather intensifies that privilege (Romans 10:14; 2 Timothy 2:10). We teach that sovereign election on God's part (Ephesians 1:4, 11; John 6:44; 15:16; Acts 13:48; Romans 9:18), and man's responsibility to repent and believe the gospel (Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 23:37; Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 2:1; 3:9), are both taught in Scripture.

### *Regeneration*

We teach that regeneration is a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit by which the divine nature and divine life are given (John 3:3-7; Titus 3:5). It is instantaneous and is accomplished solely by the power of the Holy Spirit through the instrumentality of the Word of God (John 5:24), when the repentant sinner, as enabled by the Holy Spirit, responds in faith to the divine provision of salvation. Genuine regeneration is manifested by fruits worthy of repentance as demonstrated in righteous attitudes and conduct. Good works will be its proper evidence and fruit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:10), and will be experienced to the extent that the believer submits to the control of the Holy Spirit in his life through faith in the Word of God (Ephesians 5:17-21; Philippians 2:12b; Colossians 3:16; 2 Peter 1:4-10).

### *Justification*

We teach that justification before God is an act of God (Romans 8:33) by which He declares man righteous. This righteousness is apart from any virtue or work of man (Romans 3:20; 4:6) and involves the imputation (credit to one's account) of our sins to Christ (Colossians 2:14; 1 Peter 2:24) and the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us (Romans 5:17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21). By this means God is both 'just, and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus' (Romans 3:26).

### *Sanctification*

We teach that every believer is sanctified (set apart) unto God at the moment of justification and is therefore declared to be holy and identified as a saint. This sanctification is instantaneous and should not be confused with progressive sanctification. (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 30; 6:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 2:11; 3:1; 10:10, 14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:2).

We teach that there is also, by the work of the Holy Spirit, a progressive sanctification by which the lifestyle of the believer is brought into increasing conformity to Christ-likeness. The Holy Spirit enables the believer to obey the Word of God and, through

faith, grow in holiness and conformity to the will of God. The believer is commanded to "put off" the old lifestyle, and with a renewed mind, "put on" the new lifestyle (John 17:17, 19; Romans 6:1-22; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 3; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 5:23).

In this respect, we teach that every saved person is involved in a daily conflict - the new creation in Christ doing battle against the selfish desires of the flesh - but adequate provision is made for victory through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The struggle against the flesh nevertheless stays with the believer all through this earthly life and is never completely ended (Romans 6-7; Galatians 5:16-25; Philippians 3:12; Colossians 3:9-10; James 1:14-15; 1 Peter 1:14-16; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 3:5-9).

### *Security*

We teach that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power, will persevere in their love for Christ, and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 5:24; 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 5:9-10; 8:1, 31-39; 1 Corinthians 1:4-8; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 7:25; 13:5; 1 Peter 1:3-5; Jude 24).

We teach that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word, which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion for sinful living and carnality (Romans 6:15-22; 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13, 25-26; Titus 2:11-14).

### *Separation*

We teach that separation from sin is clearly called for throughout the Old and New Testaments, and that the Scriptures clearly indicate that in the last days apostasy and worldliness shall increase (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5).

We teach that out of deep gratitude for the undeserved grace of God granted to us and because our glorious God is so worthy of our total consecration, all the saved should live in such a manner as to demonstrate our adoring love to God and so as not to bring reproach upon our Lord and Savior. We also teach that separation from apostasy, and worldly and sinful practices, is commanded of us by God (Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; 1 John 2:15-17; 2 John 9-11).

We teach that believers should be separated unto our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; Hebrews 12:1-2) and affirm that as the Christian walks in the Spirit, the Spirit's fruit will be exemplified in his life (Romans 12:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 12:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:1-10; Galatians 5:22, 23).



## *The Church*

We teach that all who place their faith in Jesus Christ are immediately placed by the Holy Spirit into one united spiritual body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:12-13), the bride of Christ (2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8), of which Christ is the head (Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; Colossians 1:18).

We teach that the formation of the church, the body of Christ, began on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 38-47) and will be completed at the coming of Christ for His own (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

We teach that the church is thus a unique spiritual organism designed by Christ, made up of all born-again believers in this present age (Ephesians 2:11-3:6). The church is a mystery not revealed until this age (Ephesians 3:1-6; 5:32), and though distinct from ethnic Israel, members of the New Testament church are the spiritual descendants of Abraham (Romans 4:1, 11; Galatians 3:6-7).

We teach that the establishment and continuity of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts 14:23, 27; 20:17, 28; Galatians 1:2; Philippians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1) and that the members of the one spiritual body are directed to associate themselves together in local assemblies (1 Corinthians 11:18-20; Hebrews 10:25).

We teach that the one supreme authority for the church is Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18) and that church leadership, gifts, order, discipline, and worship are all appointed through His sovereignty as founded in the Scriptures. The biblically designated leaders serving under Christ and over the assembly are elders (also referred to in Scripture as bishops, pastors, and pastor-teachers (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11)). Both the elders, as well as the deacons who assist them, must meet biblical qualifications (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).

We teach that these leaders (elders) rule as servants of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 1 Timothy 5:17-22) and, under the authority of the Scriptures, direct the church. The congregation is to submit to their leadership (Hebrews 13:7, 17), while everyone (including leaders) is to likewise submit to one another in the fear of God (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5).

We teach the importance of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:2), mutual accountability of all believers to each other (Matthew 18:5-14), as well as the need for the discipline of sinning members of the congregation in accordance with the standards of Scripture with the goal of restoration (Matthew 18:15-22; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15; 1 Timothy 1:19-20; Titus 1:10-16).

We teach the autonomy of the local church (Acts 6:3; 15:22-25; 1 Corinthians 16:3). We teach that it is Scriptural for Bible-believing churches to cooperate with each other for the

presentation of propagation of the faith. Each local church should be the sole judge of the measure and method of its cooperation (Acts 15: 19-31; 1 Corinthians 16:1).

We teach that the purpose of the church is to glorify God (Ephesians 3:21) by building itself up in the faith (Ephesians 4:13-16), by instruction of the Word (2 Timothy 2:2, 15; 3:16-17), by fellowship (Acts 2:46-47; 1 John 1:3), by keeping the ordinances (Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34) and by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world (Matthew 28: 19; Acts 1:8; 2:42).

We teach the calling of all saints to the work of service (1 Corinthians 15:58; Ephesians 4: 12; Revelation 22: 12).

We teach that the church is the unique instrument that God uses to accomplish His purpose in the world. To that end, He gives the church spiritual gifts. First, He gives men chosen for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12). Second, He also gives spiritual abilities to each member of the body of Christ (Romans 12:5-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

We teach that two ordinances have been committed to the local church: water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion) (Matthew 28:19; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34). Believer's baptism is the solemn and beautiful testimony picturing the cleansing from sin and proclaiming commitment to Christ, and though baptism itself does not save, it is an act of obedience following conversion (Acts 2:41; Acts 3:19; 8:12, 36-38; 10:47-48; 16:30-33; 1 Corinthians 1:15-17; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5). Baptism by immersion best pictures the cleansing from sin through the work of Christ and identification with Him (Matthew 3:16; Acts 8:38-39; Titus 3:5).

We teach that the Lord's Supper (Communion) is the commemoration and proclamation of His death until He comes, and should be always preceded by solemn self-examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-32). We also teach that whereas the elements of communion are only representative of the flesh and blood of Christ, the Lord's Supper is nevertheless a unique time of fellowship of Christ with His people as they celebrate the new covenant in His blood (1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25).

### *Angels*

#### *Holy Angels*

We teach that angels are created beings and are therefore not to be worshipped. Although presently they are a higher order of creation than man, they are created to serve God and to worship Him (Luke 2:9-14; Hebrews 1:6-7, 13-14; 2:6-7; Revelation 5:11-14; 19:10; 22:8-9).

### *Fallen Angels*

We teach that Satan is a created angel and the author of sin. He incurred the judgment of God by rebelling against his Creator (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19), by taking numerous angels with him in his fall (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 12:1-14), and by introducing sin into the human race through the temptation and fall of man (Genesis 3:1-15).

We teach that Satan is the open and declared enemy of God and man (Isaiah 14:13-14; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 12:9-10), the prince of this world who has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:15; Romans 16:20) and that he shall be eternally punished in the lake of fire (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:11-19; Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

# Bylaws

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### **Article I NAME**

This local expression of the body of Christ shall be called Twin City Bible Church, referred to herein as 'the church' or 'TCBC.' The name may be changed by the Elders with approval by a majority vote of the members present at a specially called Members Meeting.

### **Article II LIMITATIONS**

These Bylaws of the church are subordinate to the 66 books of the Old and the New Testaments, referred to herein as the 'Scriptures.'

### **Article III PURPOSE**

Twin City Bible Church (TCBC) is a local group of baptized believers whose purpose is to glorify God by proclaiming and living in obedience to the truth of Scripture. We will seek to fulfill this purpose by:

- Magnifying Jesus Christ through personal and public worship (Romans 15:6)
- Edifying others through service, fellowship, prayer, and teaching (Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7)
- Equipping the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12)
- Making disciples through the proclamation of the gospel, and through the teaching of the Word of God (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Keeping our lives pure (Ephesians 5:26, 27) through personal examination (1 Corinthians 11:28-31) and public accountability (Matthew 18:15-20)
- Observing the Lord's Supper and baptism (1 Corinthians 11:23-24; Matthew 28:19-20)

Twin City Bible Church will operate exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes within the classification of legal charities, and no part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of any individual; and no substantial part of the activities of the organization, or any receipt of its funds, shall be utilized for any other purpose except those mentioned above. All civil affairs pertaining to property and other temporal matters will be handled as required by the proper governing authorities.

The church shall not have or issue shares of stock, and no dividends shall be paid. No part of the income or assets of the church shall be distributed to any member or officer without a process of full consideration as determined by the Elders. The church is prohibited from lending money to guarantee the obligation of a member or officer of the church. No member or officer of the church has any vested right, interest in or privilege to the assets, property, functions, or activities of the church. The church may contract in due course, for reasonable consideration, with its members or officers without violating this provision subject to the church's then current Conflict of Interest policy.

### **Article IV LOCATION OF OFFICE**

The *registered* office of the church shall be located within Winston-Salem, North Carolina at such address as the Elders of the church shall determine. The Board of Elders, with confirmation by a majority vote of the members, may change the address of the

registered office from time to time, upon filing the appropriate statement with state officials.

## **Article V MEMBERSHIP**

### **Section 1. Purpose**

Membership in TCBC is identifying with and committing to the ministry of this local body. Membership is a public confirmation of a believer's desire to glorify the Lord through service in the body and through mutual accountability.

### **Section 2. Prerequisites**

The following prerequisites must be met for membership at Twin City Bible Church:

1. Salvation - Individuals desiring to become members of TCBC must present a verbal and written testimony of their saving faith in Christ.
2. Baptism - Believer's baptism is a public testimony to an individual's identification with Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41). Individuals must be baptized as believers prior to (or in conjunction with) joining (Matthew 28: 19). TCBC baptizes by immersion those at least 16 years old who give credible testimony to the reality of salvation.
3. Statement of Faith - Individuals seeking membership must assent to the Statement of Faith. By assenting to the Statement of Faith, a person pursuing membership understands that these are the doctrines that TCBC teaches, and that no one may knowingly cause confusion or division in the body by teaching doctrines contrary to the Statement of Faith.
4. Membership Covenant - All potential members of TCBC are asked to read and affirm the membership covenant, thereby agreeing to support the policies and beliefs of this body; they must express a willingness to use their gifts for the edification of the body; they must agree to regularly gather together (1 Corinthians 11 :20; Hebrews 10:25); they must agree to be held accountable by the members of TCBC (Hebrews 13: 17); and they must agree to submit to the loving leadership of the Elders.
5. Age - Individuals must be at least 16 years old to join TCBC and enjoy the privileges associated with membership.

### **Section 3. Process for Joining**

The following process should be followed by persons desiring membership at TCBC (in any order):

- Complete the membership class (or classes).
- Read the Statement of Faith, Bylaws, Membership Covenant, Statement on Marriage & Gender, along with any additional material required by the Elders.
- Complete and submit the membership application to a staff pastor or Elder.
- Participate in a membership interview with an Elder or someone designated by the Elders.

The Elders will communicate in advance to the congregation the names of those desiring to join. After this communication, individuals who have completed the membership process will be presented to the congregation at a regularly scheduled worship service as a public affirmation of their agreement with the membership covenant and to be welcomed into the body.

#### **Section 4. Miscellaneous Guidelines**

- Members seeking to withdraw their membership from TCBC are requested to meet with an Elder to personally communicate this intent.
- Members who are absent from services for an unusual length of time are encouraged to notify church leaders of any difficulties. If a member is absent from services for two months or more, the Elders will seek to shepherd the absentee member through any problem or address any special circumstances (e.g. sickness, schooling, work, military). In the case of extended absences, membership voting privileges may be suspended for the individual. At the discretion of the Elders, the absentee member may be released from the membership roll of the church if absent two months or more.
- In certain cases, even though attendance requirements are met, a lack of fulfillment of the membership covenant may reach a level where the Elders may determine that removal of an individual from membership is necessary.
- The Elders, if they deem it appropriate, may approve the reinstatement of an individual who has been removed from membership.
- Erring church members (i.e., those in unrepentant sin) will be dealt with according to the four-step process of church discipline found in Matthew 18.
- TCBC appreciates letters from other churches, but does not recognize these as substitutes for the membership process.

### **Article VI CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS**

#### **Section 1. Weekly Services**

TCBC holds services on Sunday (the Lord's Day), and any other day deemed beneficial to the needs of the body.

#### **Section 2. Members Meetings**

##### **2.1. Annual Meetings**

The church will hold an annual Members Meeting for the purpose of providing financial and ministry reports, approval of the budget, or other appropriate business. Time and place shall be announced from the pulpit, and/or in written format at least one week prior to the meeting date.

##### **2.2. Special Meetings**

Special meetings shall be called by the Elders and announced to the church membership. Only subjects approved by the Elders will be discussed at these meetings. Unless circumstances require otherwise, members will be notified at least one week in advance of any called special meeting.



### **2.3. Decisions**

A congregational quorum shall consist of forty percent of all voting members. Once a quorum has been established, a simple majority of votes cast is required to approve a motion, unless otherwise indicated in these Bylaws. Within the confines of the Bylaws and as deemed appropriate by the Elders, the meetings shall be conducted in an orderly manner as befits a follower of Christ.

### **2.4. Required Votes**

A vote by the members is required for approval of the annual budget (simple majority of the members voting), confirmation of new elders (a two-thirds vote of the members voting), hiring of a senior pastor (two-thirds vote of the members voting), and large capital expenses outside the budget or designated funds (two-thirds vote of the members voting).

## **Article VII CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

Church discipline shall be carried out as set forth by Christ in Matthew 18.

## **Article VIII GOVERNMENT**

### **Section 1. Authority**

This church acknowledges only the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head; the Holy Scriptures as the only infallible guide in matters of faith, church order, and discipline; the Holy Spirit as its Teacher; and is neither accountable to nor under the jurisdiction or supervision of any other ecclesiastical body. The provisions of Article VIII, Section 1 shall not be abridged by any vote of the membership.

### **Section 2. Elders**

#### **2.1. Powers**

Subject to the limitations of these Bylaws, all the activities and affairs of TCBC shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Elders, who are responsible for the shepherding and the spiritual oversight of the membership (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13: 17). This church can thrive only as decisions are made in conformity to the Word of God, and as each member (including leadership) submits in love to one another under the authority of Christ as the head of the body (2 Timothy 3:16; Ephesians 4:15, 16; 5:21).

#### **2.2. Priorities of the Board of Elders**

The following are the priorities of the Board of Elders:

- To live holy lives as an example to the congregation (Hebrews 13:7)
- To rule the church of God with a servant attitude (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-3)
- To feed (i.e., teach) and lead the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 5: 17)
- To facilitate the ministries of the people (Ephesians 4: 11, 12)
- To warn and protect the flock as a shepherd who loves and cares for the affairs of the sheep (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 1:3, 4)
- To pray and study (Acts 6:4; 2 Timothy 2:15)
- To be free from self-interest (1 Thessalonians 2:5-6)

### **2.3. Number**

The number of biblically qualified Elders serving on the Elder Board will be determined by the shepherding needs of the body. Elders should be added as necessary to properly shepherd an increase in the flock. In the event a sufficient number of qualified men is not available to serve as Elders, the church will seek counsel when needed from the Elder Board of a like-minded church.

### **2.4. Equality**

All Elders are equally responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church, regardless of the position they hold in the utilization of their particular gifts. Those Elders with greater teaching giftedness, however, will carry the greatest responsibility for the teaching of the body. Staff Elders are expected to be responsible for oversight of most of the day-to-day operations of the church.

### **2.5. Selection**

Candidates being considered for the office of Elder shall be carefully examined by the Board of Elders as to their desire and qualifications (see Section 2.6), and their support of the Bylaws, Statement of Faith, and any other documents or policies created by the Elder Board.

The following steps are the process by which the Board of Elders evaluates a man to discern God's hand upon his life and to discern his qualifications for leadership:

1. Consideration - The Board of Elders must agree that a man who desires to be an Elder has the potential for leadership. This step of consideration may be initiated by the Elders or the nominee (1 Timothy 3:1).
2. Demonstration - Through the *Elder in Training* ministry (the details of which will be determined by the Elders), the Elders will evaluate a candidate's biblical qualifications, giftedness, spiritual maturity, and leadership skills (1 Timothy 3:1-7). In addition, the Elders will evaluate his time availability, his support of the present staff and Elders, and his pursuit of unity in the body. The congregation will be notified within six months of a man's entrance into the *Elder in Training* process.

Each Elder must be male (1 Timothy 3:2; though women are gifted by God to serve in various roles in the church, He has clearly stated in His Word that the office of Elder is limited to men), and meet the qualifications described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. He shall manifest growth in the following characteristics:

- Blameless (above reproach) as a steward of God (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6, 7)
- A one-woman man (i.e., if married, faithful to his wife; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)
- Self-controlled (sober, vigilant, moderate, self-restrained) (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

- Sober-minded (prudent) (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
  - Of good behavior (orderly, respectable) (1 Timothy 3:2)
  - Given to hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)
  - Apt to teach (exhort believers and refute false teaching) (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9)
  - Not addicted to wine; not a drunkard (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
  - Not violent (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
  - Patient (moderate, forbearing, gentle) (1 Timothy 3:3)
  - Not a brawler (not argumentative, not soon angry or quick-tempered) (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
  - Not covetous (not a lover of money) (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)
  - Rules well his own house (which embodies proper relationships with all family members in his household as well as the responsible financial management of his family's needs) (1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 1:6; 1 Timothy 5:8)
  - His children must willingly follow his leadership, not accused of rebellion to God (Titus 1:6)
  - Not a novice (not a new convert, has demonstrated growth) (1 Timothy 3:6)
  - Has a good reputation with outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
  - A lover of good (men and things) (Titus 1:8)
  - Just (Titus 1:8)
  - Holy (devout)(Titus 1:8)
3. Presentation - After an adequate evaluation has been completed, and if the Elders are in agreement as to the individual's capability of serving as an Elder, the congregation will be notified. Once the Elders have considered any additional insight provided by the congregation, the Elders will present the candidate to the church body for affirmation (by a two-thirds vote of those members voting at an official meeting) as one whom God has qualified for leadership. Any prospective Elders presented to the congregation for affirmation will be voted on individually by secret ballot.

Elders may be staff Elders (staff Pastors employed by the church); or they may be non-staff Elders ('lay Elders' not employed by the church). Each non-staff member of the Board of Elders must have been a member of TCBC for at least one year. Staff Pastors will be hired with the understanding that they may not automatically be selected to serve on the Elder Board. The exception to this guideline is the Senior Pastor, who will always be expected to serve on the Board. All prospective staff Pastors must nevertheless meet the qualifications for Elders. The Elders presently serving will determine when any given staff Pastor will be nominated to serve on the Elder Board.

## **2.6. Accountability**

Elder accountability is first and foremost unto God (Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5:1-5). It is mandatory, however, that the Elders be accountable to one another and to the

congregation. If an Elder is in a pattern of unrepentant sin, the primary goal should always be spiritual restoration (Galatians 6: 1-5). In situations where the erring Elder has rendered himself disqualified, the Board of Elders will require his resignation. Accountability between Elders and before the people must always be consistent with Matthew 18:15ff and 1 Timothy 5:19.

### **2.7. Meetings**

The Board of Elders will determine the dates, agenda, and frequency of all their meetings. If a church member desires to attend an Elders' meeting, he/she must notify the Chairman of the Board. The Elders may still reserve a part of any Elders' meeting for confidential business.

### **2.8. Decisions of the Board of Elders**

The Board of Elders will function according to a principle of unanimity. Decisions shall be reached after prayerful consideration only by consensus of the Board of Elders in a spirit of humility with each Elder regarding one another before himself. This humility will be expressed at times in the willingness to defer to the majority viewpoint of the Board.

- In cases of normal business, a quorum consists of a majority of Elders participating in the meetings. However, Elders not present should be notified as soon as possible of decisions, and strong objections will warrant reconsideration of decisions.
- Whenever the matter to be considered concerns large capital expenditures (those not in budget and those not involving designated funds), affirmation of an Elder, selection of a new staff person, sending of a missionary, approval of the yearly budget, or the amendment to or modification of the Bylaws or the Statement of Faith, a quorum shall consist of all the members of the Board of Elders, whether voting in person, or by email/telephone.
- In calling a staff Pastor, the Board of Elders shall serve as the search team. In addition, the Board of Elders may designate other church members to be a part of this team.
- The Board of Elders may dismiss a staff Pastor (for reasons other than disqualification as in Section 2.6), or other church employees, if its decision is unanimous. In cases when this decision involves a staff member who has family members on the Elder Board, those family members will be required to refrain from voting on this issue.

### **2.9. Elder-appointed Membership Teams**

To promote efficient handling of church business, the Board of Elders may appoint various teams from within TCBC membership. The teams may exist for a specific time period as directed by the Board of Elders. Some teams may be long-standing (e.g. Finance Team, Building & Grounds Team, Missions Team; other teams may be short-term (e.g. special events). These teams shall perform tasks solely in accordance with the

duties and with the powers specifically delegated by the Board of Elders. The general functions of the teams shall be the following:

- To bring recommendations to the Board of Elders concerning ministries
- To provide a wider base of counsel to the Board of Elders in their general oversight of specific ministries

#### **2.10. Offices**

A Chairman, Vice-chairman and Secretary shall be chosen by the Board of Elders. These officers will serve one-year terms. No limit is set to the number of terms any given Elder may serve in one of these three offices.

#### **2.11. Terms**

All Elders are allowed to serve as long as they desire the office, are biblically qualified, are physically and mentally able, are affirmed in their role by the entire Elder Board, and can give the required time.

- Any Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically or mentally incapacitated, if he becomes spiritually disqualified as outlined in Section 2.6, or if his inability to serve is established by the remainder of the entire Board of Elders.
- Any Elder may resign effective upon giving written notice to the Chairman or the Vice-chairman of the Board of Elders. However, a temporary absence from the Board may be requested and granted by the Board of Elders upon review of the circumstances surrounding the request.

#### **2.12. Selection of Deacons**

The Board of Elders shall select Deacons as delineated in Article VIII Section 5.

### **Section 3. Staff Pastors**

#### **3.1. Qualifications**

Staff Pastors must meet the qualifications set forth in Article VIII, Section 2.5 and must clearly possess a heart for shepherding people (I Peter 5:1-4), along with the necessary giftedness to fulfill his ministry responsibilities.

#### **3.2. Responsibilities**

The primary task of a Pastor is the 'equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry' (Ephesians 4:11-12). Along with the task of equipping, the Pastors will be responsible with the Elders for the spiritual welfare of the congregation. The Elder Board will determine the specific job descriptions of all individual staff Pastors.

#### **3.3. Term**

The term of a staff Pastor is for an indefinite period of time. Dismissal shall be in accordance with Article VIII, Section 2.8 and, except in cases in which the man is rendered disqualified, should carry a thirty-day notice. A Pastor shall give a thirty-day notice prior to his resignation.

#### **Section 4. Non-staff Elders**

The non-staff Elders, in addition to their other biblical duties, are responsible for facilitating discussion of, and pro-active determination of, salary, benefit packages (i.e., health insurance, pension plans, vacation), and other financial issues related to the staff and church employees. In the event that there is less than two non-staff Elders, these issues will be determined by the currently serving non-staff Elder along with a team of deacons selected by the Elders.

The church is to have at least two non-staff Elders serving on the Board of Elders at all times. It is understood that this goal can only be reached if there are biblically qualified men to serve in this role.

#### **Section 5. Deacons**

##### **5.1. Purpose**

The role of Deacons shall be one of support to the Elders, furtherance of unity in the body, and protection of the church's mission. Deacons are to emulate our Lord's example of humble, loving service.

Deacons will serve in the ministries most needed to maintain the health of the body, as determined by the Elders.

##### **5.2. Qualifications**

A Deacon must have been a member of TCBC for a minimum of one year, faithful to the membership covenant, supportive of the Elders, and have the following characteristics (1 Timothy 3:8-13):

- grave (respectful)
- not double-tongued
- not given to wine
- not greedy
- holding forth the mystery of the faith
- pure in conscience
- tested and proven
- blameless
- (if male) a one-woman man
- rules well his own home

According to the original language of 1 Timothy 3: 11, women may be selected to serve as Deaconesses if they meet the character qualifications, and if the Elders affirm this role to be needed in the ministry of the church.

##### **5.3. Selection and Terms**

Deacons shall be selected by the Elders. Unless designated otherwise by the Elders, the term of office for a Deacon is to be one year with the possibility of being affirmed yearly for another term.

## **Section 6. Additional Church Staff**

Additional support staff may be hired at the discretion of the Board of Elders with consideration of the current budget.

## **Section 7. Conflict of Interest Policy**

### **7.1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to assist TCBC in identifying, disclosing, and resolving potential conflicts of interest. Members of the Elder Board, Staff & Deacons (referred to below as Individuals) serve TCBC and have a clear obligation to conduct all affairs of the Church in an upright and honest manner. Each individual should make necessary decisions, using good judgment and Christlike ethical and moral considerations, recognizing that *it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy* (1 Corinthians 4:2).

### **7.2. Specific Disclosure**

Individuals shall disclose fully the precise nature of their interest or involvement when participating in any transaction for the Church in which another party to the transaction includes: himself/herself, any family member or an organization with which the member, or his/her family, is affiliated.

### **7.3. General Disclosure**

Individuals shall disclose all relationships and business affiliations which may now, or in the future, potentially conflict with the interests of the Church or bring personal gain to them or their family, or business. Disclosure must be made if any Individual or a member of his/her family:

- Is an officer, director, trustee, partner, employee, or agent of an organization with which TCBC has business dealings;
- Is either the actual or beneficial owner of more than one percent (1%) of the voting stock or controlling interest of an organization with which TCBC has business dealings;
- Is a consultant for any such organization; or,
- Has any other direct or indirect dealings with an individual or organization from which he is materially or intangibly benefitted (e.g., through the receipt directly or indirectly of cash, gifts, favors, privileges, or other property or advantages).

### **7.4. Reporting of Disclosures**

Any individual who is uncertain about a conflict of interest in any matter shall disclose such possible conflict to the appropriate individual. Disclosure shall be made at the first knowledge of the transaction. All disclosures required by staff will be received by their supervising pastor or Elder who will report to the Elder board, and all disclosures as they apply to members of the Board of Elders shall be received by the entire Board.

### **7.5. Restraint on Participation**

Individuals who have a conflict of interest in any matter shall refrain from participating in the consideration of the proposed transaction. The person or persons involved will not vote on such matters. However, for special reasons, the Board may request information or interpretation from the person or persons involved.

### **7.6. Failure to Disclose**

Individuals are requested to comply with this Conflict of Interest Policy. Such compliance is a requirement for continued ministry involvement (as an Elder, Staff member, Deacon) or employment with TCBC and, further, knowing failure to disclose a potential conflict of interest could result in the discontinuance in said ministry role or termination of employment.

All decisions of the Elder Board, Staff & Deacons of TCBC are to be made solely on the basis of a desire to promote Jesus Christ through TCBC and its ministry, in accordance with our mission statement.

## **Article IX CHURCH RECORDS**

The church shall keep the following records:

1. Minutes of Elders' meetings
2. Agendas of the Annual Members Meeting
3. Agendas of special called meetings of the congregation
4. Rolls of the members in the congregation with the dates of their reception
5. Resolutions adopted by the Board of Elders
6. Appropriate accounting records
7. The Bylaws and all amendments to them currently in effect

A member shall be entitled to inspect any of the church records described above, provided the Board of Elders finds that the member has a legitimate purpose. This shall be done at a reasonable time and location, specified by the Board of Elders, and upon reasonable notice of at least five business days. The Board of Elders may limit access to any records that contain confidential information about a particular person or persons in accordance with North Carolina law.

## **Article X FINANCES**

### **Section 1. Support**

ICBC will be supported by the offerings of its people, who give as God prospers and according to His leading (2 Corinthians 9:6-7).

### **Section 2. Treasurer**

The church treasurer shall be appointed by the Board of Elders, shall be responsible for financial records, and shall provide periodic reports to the Board of Elders.

### **Section 3. Annual Budget**

The annual budget will be prepared by the Board of Elders based upon the financial information provided them by the church treasurer, prior to being submitted to the



members for approval (by simple majority vote). The proposed budget will be made available to the congregation a minimum of one week prior to the Members Meeting.

#### **Article XI TEACHERS**

All teachers in the ongoing ministries of the church must be members in good standing who are faithful to the membership covenant, who seek to be an example of godly character to others, and who strive to maintain unity in the body. In addition, all teachers must submit themselves to, and teach in accordance with, the Statement of Faith, Bylaws, and any other documents/statements created by the Elders.

#### **Article XII MISSIONARIES**

All missionaries supported through the church shall affirm the Statement of Faith of the church and shall be approved by the Board of Elders. To help with these approvals, or oversight of the approved missionaries, the Board of Elders may appoint a Missions Team, which shall consist of at least one Elder, one Deacon, and members of the church body (the number of which shall be determined by the Board of Elders and which may vary from time to time).

#### **Article XIII LICENSING & ORDINATION**

##### **Section 1. Licensing**

A TCBC license, as recognized by the State, is issued by the Board of Elders. The purpose of the license is to allow a man who is not ordained to perform ecclesiastical duties and sacerdotal functions associated with the ministry (e.g. weddings, chaplaincy). The license indicates that he meets the qualifications of being a 'clergyman' in the eyes of the State.

##### **Section 2. Ordination**

Ordination by TCBC refers to the mutual recognition by the Board of Elders of a man's vocational call to the ministry of shepherding and teaching God's people, his preparation and training, and his ability and qualification to serve. The process by which a man will pursue and complete ordination will be determined by the Board of Elders. Ordination shall be conferred for life so long as the man continues to manifest the qualifications of the office and to support the TCBC Statement of Faith.

#### **Article XIV ORDINANCES**

##### **Section 1. Believer's Baptism**

See Article V, Section 2.

##### **Section 2. Lord's Supper**

All who have embraced Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who are genuinely seeking to walk in loving obedience with Him are welcome to participate in the communion service.

#### **Article XV WEDDINGS**

TCBC allows the church property to be used for weddings according to the official 'Wedding Policy' and in line with the church's 'Statement on Marriage and Gender.'

These policies affirm that God's intention for marriage is 'one man and one woman for life.' In addition, at least one of the primary participants (either the groom or the bride) must be a member of TCBC, the couple must be affirmed for marriage by the Elders, the couple must receive pre-marital counseling from someone approved by the Elders, and a TCBC elder or staff pastor must oversee the wedding ceremony.

**Article XVI DISSOLUTION**

Dissolution of TCBC shall be only by three-fourths vote of the voting membership at a special meeting called for that purpose. In the event of dissolution, the assets of TCBC will be distributed in accordance with a plan adopted by the Board of Elders and approved by the congregation (simple majority vote). No part of the assets of TCBC shall benefit any Pastor, Elder, Deacon, staff member, member, donor or private individual (except for required dissolution expenses). All assets must be distributed to one or more organizations whose purpose is consistent with that of TCBC.

**Article XVII AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to these Bylaws may be made by a two-thirds vote of the voting members in attendance at any Members Meeting. Proposed amendments must first be approved by the Board of Elders. Once proposed amendments have been approved by the Board of Elders, they must be made available to the membership at least two weeks in advance of the Members Meeting.

**Article XVIII ADOPTION OF BYLAWS**

Adoption of this Statement of Faith and these Bylaws shall be by a two-thirds vote of the members voting.

# Statement on Marriage, Gender, & Sexuality

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this statement is to clearly convey the beliefs of the elders, staff, and members of Twin City Bible Church regarding marriage and human sexuality, as defined in the Holy Bible.

## **Definition of Marriage:**

We believe God created the institution of marriage, and therefore He is the only One who has the right to define it. That one definition is found only in the Bible. We believe the Bible clearly teaches that marriage joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive one-flesh union and covenant relationship that is intended by God to last a lifetime. Marriage is God's pattern, revealing the unique relationship between Jesus Christ and His church. (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:3-9; Ephesians 5:31-32)

We believe the husband and the wife have equal dignity before God. Scripture also teaches that both husband and wife have distinct roles and responsibilities. The husband has the responsibilities to love, lead, provide for, and protect his wife. The wife has the responsibilities to graciously submit to her husband and his leadership and to be a suitable helper. (Genesis 2:18; Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Peter 3:1-7)

## **Human Sexuality:**

We believe sexual intimacy is a gift from God and is to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has prohibited any intimate sexual activity outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. (1 Corinthians 6:18)

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexuality, pedophilia, bestiality, or pornography, is a perversion of God's intention and is therefore sin and offensive to God. (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10). In addition, we believe any disagreement with, denial of, or attempt to alter one's gender, or one's God-intended heterosexual orientation, is likewise sin and offensive to God.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:9)

We believe that every person is made in the image of God and must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes are not in accord with Scripture. (Genesis 1:26-27; 1 John 4:7-8)

## **TCBC Marriage Policy:**

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all Twin City elders, deacons, members, staff, employees, and ministry volunteers should abide by and agree to the Twin City Bible Church Statement on Marriage, Gender, & Sexuality.

TCBC affirms that all weddings associated with this church, and any other related activities, celebrations, or ceremonies that occur on the TCBC campus, shall be for weddings which meet the biblical standards articulated in this document. Additionally, all pastors and church staff shall only participate in weddings that meet the biblical standards articulated in this document. Those who desire to conduct a marriage ceremony at Twin City Bible Church or for Twin City Bible Church members are subject to the review and approval of the elders at Twin City Bible Church.

# Membership Covenant

## *Responsibilities of New Members*

We are grateful that you have chosen to take this step of commitment and become a member of Twin City Bible Church. Church membership brings certain responsibilities. With the aid of the Holy Spirit, you are committing to:

- Being diligent to exercise self-control so that your lifestyle exhibits both true Christian love and personal holiness.
- Taking seriously your relationship to others in the body of Christ, striving to maintain unity, and doing all you can to stimulate love and good deeds in others as you seek to exercise your spiritual gifts in faithful service.
- Consistently contributing, as a good steward of God's blessings, such time, talent, and money, in the measure that God prospers you, so that our local and worldwide ministry of spreading the gospel may continue.
- Teaching biblical truth to your family and acquaintances, as God gives you opportunity, with a desire to see them come to trust Jesus Christ and be saved.
- Always being willing to both give and receive admonition and instruction with meekness and in love.
- Praying for the ministry here in this church, your brothers and sisters in Christ, and the lost that need the Savior.

## *Responsibility of the Congregation*

Will you, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, seek to love, encourage, teach, admonish, comfort, and exhort these new members, with a genuine desire to see each one grow in the knowledge of Christ and His Word?

