

Proposed Constitution and By-Laws.
These changes will be voted on January 15, 2017 at the Annual Church Meeting.

Constitution and By-Laws

**CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
SIMONTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
SIMONTON, TEXAS
(with proposed revisions, August 2016)**

PREAMBLE

As believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, we now unite together in the bonds of Christian fellowship to establish this church and do ordain and establish this Constitution and By-Laws, to which we voluntarily subscribe on this nineteenth day of January in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-nine.

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church shall be SIMONTON COMMUNITY CHURCH, SIMONTON, TEXAS. It shall not be an affiliate of any church. It shall be incorporated as a non-profit organization under the laws of the State of Texas.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

Our purpose shall be to maintain a well-located and easily accessible center of Bible teaching, and there to endeavor:

1. To lead men and women, boys and girls, to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. {John 14:6}
2. To instruct believers from the Word of God, leading them through a spiritual life into an active, working faith which may be applied to daily living for the glory of God; and to this end, to pray and counsel together one with another. {II Timothy 3:16-17}
3. To maintain a keen missionary vision for the furtherance of the Gospel on mission fields at home and abroad; one with another; and to support missionary efforts. {Acts 1:8}
4. To establish Bible classes and Sunday School as the Lord shall lead. {I Timothy 1:5}

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ARTICLE III: DOCTRINE

SECTION 1: THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe both Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God, infallible, God-breathed, inerrant in the original writings, and the supreme and final authority of faith and practice. {Psalm 19:7-11, Proverbs 30:5-6, Isaiah 40:8, II Timothy 3:16-17}

SECTION 2: THE GODHEAD

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), identical in nature, equal in power and glory, and possessing the same attributes and perfections. {Genesis 1:1, Matthew 28:19, Mark 1:9-11}

SECTION 3: THE TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God, but that in Adam's sin the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and is and shall remain essentially and unchangeably depraved apart from divine grace. {Genesis 1:26-27, Genesis 3:17-19, John 1:5-10, John 3:36, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23}

SECTION 4: THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God in order that He might reveal God, fulfill prophecy, and redeem man. To this end He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of a Virgin, thus receiving a human body and a sinless nature. {Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 1:22-25, Hebrews 4:14-15, I John 5:9-12} We believe that He accomplished our redemption through his death on the cross as a substitutionary sacrifice, and that this redemption is made sure to us by His actual physical resurrection from among the dead. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is now in heaven, exalted at the right hand of God, where He now fulfills His High Priestly ministry as Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate for His people. {Matthew 20:18-19, Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:19, I Corinthians 15:3-4, Ephesians 1:20-23, I Peter 2:6-10}

SECTION 5: THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He also in this present age regenerates believers in Christ, baptizes them unto the day of redemption, bestows spiritual gifts upon each one, and fills those who are dependent upon Him. {John 14:16-17, John 16:7-15, Acts 1:8, I Corinthians 12:1-7, I Corinthians 2:12, Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 1:13}

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SECTION 6: SALVATION

We believe that salvation is the gift of God, brought to man by grace, and received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose precious blood was shed for the forgiveness of our sins. {Matthew 26:28, John 3:16, Acts 4:12, Romans 5:8-11, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9} We believe the Scriptures teach that regeneration, or the new birth, is that change wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, by which a new nature and spiritual life not before possessed, are imparted, and the person becomes a new creation in Christ Jesus. {John 3:3-8, II Corinthians 5:17}

SECTION 7: THE KEEPING POWER OF GOD

We believe that all who truly receive Christ as Savior are kept by the power of God secure forever and shall never perish, this being vouchsafed by the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. {John 10:27-30, John 11:25-26, Ephesians 1:13, I Peter 1:3-5}

SECTION 8: THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BELIEVER

We believe that all believers should seek to live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Lord and Savior, and that separation from sinful pleasures and practices is commanded of God. {Proverbs 3:7-8, Romans 12:1-2, I Corinthians 3:17-20, Galatians 6:7-8, Ephesians 4:29-30} We believe that it is the obligation of every believer to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scriptures and to seek that the Gospel be proclaimed to all the world. {Matthew 5:13-14, Matthew 24:14, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8} We believe that it is the responsibility of all believers to remember the work of the Lord in prayer and active participation, and to support it with their means as the Lord has prospered them. {Leviticus 27:30, Malachi 3:8-11, Luke 6:38, Galatians 6:10}

SECTION 9: THE CHURCH

We believe that the Church, which had its beginnings on the day of Pentecost, is the Body and Bride of Christ, and is a spiritual organism made up of all born again persons, irrespective of their affiliation with Christian organizations. {Acts 2:1-4, Acts 2:37-47, Romans 12:3-5, Ephesians 5:23-27} We believe that it is the responsibility of each believer, as a member of this spiritual organism, to affiliate with a local organization as a testimony of his relationship to Christ, for his own edification and growth, for fellowship with others of like-mind, and to further the evangelization of the lost. {Ephesians 4:11-16, Hebrews 12:28} We believe that Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, and that every local church has the right under Christ to decide and govern its own affairs. {Acts 20:28, Colossians 1:18, Hebrews 2:17}

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SECTION 10: THE PERSONALITY OF SATAN

We believe that Satan is a person who is the declared enemy of both God and man; he is the Devil, the Evil One, and the Accuser of the brethren. {Luke 10:18, John 8:44, John 10:10, I Peter 5:8, Revelation 20:10}

SECTION 11: BLESSED HOPE

We believe in the personal, imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ in the air to take His church to be forever with Himself to share His glory. This Blessed Hope set before us in Scripture involves the resurrection of the dead in Christ and the translation of those of His own who are alive and remain unto His coming. {I Corinthians 15:51-58, I Thessalonians 4:14-18}

SECTION 12: THE TRIBULATION AND SECOND COMING

We believe in the second coming of Christ according to the prophecies. {John 14:1-3, I Thessalonians 5:1-2, Hebrews 9:27-28, Revelation 19:11-16}

SECTION 13: ETERNAL STATE

We believe in the resurrection of the dead, life hereafter, and the association of the faithful with Christ everlasting. {John 11:25-26, I Corinthians 9:25}

SECTION 14: CHURCH ORDINANCES

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of water baptism and the Lord's Supper, to be observed until His return, not as a means of obtaining salvation, but as evidence of obedience. {Matthew 3:13-17, Matthew 26:26-29, Romans 6:3-5, I Corinthians 11:23-26}

SECTION 15: MARRIAGE

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. {Genesis 1:26-27}

We believe in the Biblical definition of marriage as only between one man and one woman united in a covenant agreement before God. The Bible is the sole authority on issues for marriage, the family, and sexual relationships that should only take place within the bounds of marriage. We also believe that marriage is illustrative of the relationship between Christ and the Church. {Genesis 2:21-24, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Ephesians 5:22-33, Hebrews 13:4}

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Therefore, Simonton Community Church will only recognize marriages between a biological man and a biological woman. The pastors and staff of Simonton Community Church shall only participate in weddings and solemnize marriages between one man and one woman, and the facilities and property of Simonton Community Church shall only host weddings between one man and one woman.

SECTION 16: THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

We believe that all human life is sacred and created by God in His image. Human life is of inestimable worth in all its dimensions, including pre-born babies, the aged, the physically or mentally challenged, and every other stage or condition from conception through natural death. We believe we are called to defend, protect and value all human life. {Psalm 139}

SECTION 17: FINAL AUTHORITY FOR MATTERS OF BELIEF AND CONDUCT

We believe this Doctrine does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, and the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of Simonton Community Church's faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our Senior Pastor is the final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

ARTICLE IV: COVENANT

“Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, 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; to promote its prosperity and spirituality, to sustain its worship; to contribute to the support of the ministry and spread the gospel throughout the world.” “We also engage to maintain family devotion; to educate our children in sound Christian doctrine; to seek the salvation of our acquaintances; walk circumspectly in the world and be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.”

ARTICLE V: GOVERNMENT

The government of this church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in the body of believers who compose it, whose majority vote shall be final. The authority of elected or appointed officials of this church shall be derived from the Articles of this Constitution, or by resolution of the members at a duly called business meeting.

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SECTION 1: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Administration of church affairs shall be conducted by the duly elected members of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is the ruling board of the Church and shall be seven in number. Trustees shall be elected and installed for a three year term by a majority vote at the regular Annual General Membership meeting. The Board of Trustees shall be directly responsible to the congregation and shall report thereto regarding actions taken, as well as to submit for information and/or approval plans and goals for the future. The Board of Trustees shall be the interpreters of this Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1: GENERAL

Subject to the divine guidance of our Lord Jesus Christ, this church reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members and the conditions of such membership.

SECTION 2: QUALIFICATIONS

Any person may offer themselves as a candidate for membership in this church.

SECTION 3: ADMISSION PROCEDURE

Any person requesting membership shall be interviewed and approved by the Senior Pastor. Prospective members must appear before the congregation and respond affirmatively to the following questions: a. Do you publicly acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? b. Have you read and do you agree with the Constitution and By-Laws of this church?

SECTION 4: MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES

Every member, age 18 and above, shall have the right to vote at all elections on matters submitted to the church in business meetings. Members are eligible to serve in any elected church position for which he or she meets the qualifications.

SECTION 5: TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Members shall be removed from the church roll for the following reasons:

a. Death. b. Joining another church. c. By personal written request of the member.

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ARTICLE VII: PROPERTY

SECTION 1: TITLE

The church may buy, own and operate such property as is essential and necessary to comply with the avowed purposes stated in Article II of this Constitution. Such property is held in trust by the Board of Trustees. Control of the property and funds held by this church shall remain with the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 2: FACILITY USE

The church's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of church members. The church desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of the Body of Christ and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice. {Colossians 3:17}

Facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the church's faith or moral teachings, which are summarized in, among other places, the church's Constitution and By-Laws. {2 Corinthians 6:14; I Thessalonians 5:22}

This policy applies to all church grounds and facilities, because the church sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. The Senior Pastor and/or the Board of Trustees will make the final decision concerning the use of church grounds and facilities.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

~~SECTION 1: AMENDMENTS OF THE CONSTITUTION~~

Amendments of the Constitution may be made at any ~~Annual~~ General Membership Meeting, upon the unanimous recommendation of the Board of Trustees, and a required three-fourths majority vote of qualified voting members present. Notice of intent to amend shall be made public at least thirty days before such meeting by the Board of Trustees. The proposed amendment shall be read, discussed if desired and a copy made available to each member to study during the interim period. The passed amendment shall become effective immediately unless otherwise specified. Amendments to the By-Laws may be made by a majority of the Board and a majority vote of the members.

~~SECTION 2: ARTICLES~~

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~~The following Articles may not be repealed or amended: Articles III; IV; V; and VIII Section 2; except by unanimous vote of the qualified voting members present at the time of consideration by the congregation.~~

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Members of the Board of Trustees include a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer. Their term of office will be one year and will be selected by a majority vote of the trustees, with the vote to be conducted immediately following the General Membership Meeting. The Chairman may not be elected to succeed himself for two consecutive terms of office. The entire Board of Trustees shall be installed before the congregation on the fourth Sunday of January of each year by confirming their adherence to the church covenant. The Board of Trustees shall hold monthly business meetings and shall act as a clearing house for proposed new business, church work, and problems. The Board shall assign suitable duties and projects to specific officers, members, and committees and shall see that such responsibilities are fulfilled. The Board of Trustees shall appoint the Senior Pastor by majority vote and the subsequent vote of a majority of the congregation present at a special meeting called for such a vote. The termination of the Senior Pastor may be effective at any time by a majority vote of the entire Board of Trustees and a subsequent vote of the majority of the congregation present at a special meeting called for such a vote.

ARTICLE II: STAFF

SECTION 1: SENIOR PASTOR

The Senior Pastor is responsible for leading the Congregation, the organizations and the Church staff to perform their tasks. He is the leader of the pastoral ministries of the Church. As such, he works with the Board of Trustees, the Congregation, and the Church staff to achieve its mission, to proclaim the gospel to believers and unbelievers, and to care for the Church's members and other persons in the community, while discipling believers to a closer walk with the Lord.

SECTION 2: CHURCH/MINISTERIAL STAFF

The Church/Ministerial staff shall be called and employed as the Board of Trustees determines the need. A job description shall be written and the position approved by majority vote of the Board of Trustees. The Senior Pastor is the chief administrative officer of the Church staff. He has primary responsibility for the hiring, direction, review, compensation and termination of all

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staff subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. The Board may hire or terminate any staff member by a six member vote, over the objection of the Pastor. In the event of a resignation, at least two weeks notice shall be given to the Church. Positions may be created or eliminated by decision of a majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION 3: AFFIRMATION OF CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

All employees of Simonton Community Church are required to sign a statement affirming that they agree with and will comply with the Constitution and By-Laws.

ARTICLE III: BUSINESS MEETINGS

SECTION 1: MEETINGS

An annual meeting of the general membership of the church will be held on the third Sunday of January of each year. Members of the Board of Trustees will be elected by majority vote to fill vacant positions. Special Meetings may be called by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees with no less than one week's public notice.

SECTION 2: QUORUM

A quorum shall consist of ten percent of the voting membership.

ARTICLE IV: CEMETERY COMMITTEE

SECTION 1: COMMITTEE

A permanent committee of three persons is created and will be known as the Simonton Community Church Cemetery Committee ("Committee").

SECTION 2: ELECTION OF MEMBERS

The members of the Committee must be members in good standing of Simonton Community Church and will be appointed by the Board of Trustees, one of whom must be a Trustee.

SECTION 3: TERM

The term of each person on the Committee will be for three years each with the initial Trustees to be appointed to staggered terms of one year, two years and three years. All subsequent Committee members will serve three year terms.

SECTION 4: POWER AND AUTHORITY

The Committee will have the power to sell and transfer cemetery plots including the powers and authority to set sales prices and transfer fees and to establish the rules and regulations of the

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Cemetery including any amendments to rules and regulations and otherwise be responsible for the operation, management and control of the Cemetery, subject, however, to the direction and control of the Board of Trustees of Simonton Community Church.

SECTION 5: REMOVAL

A Committee person may be removed by the affirmative vote of the Board of Trustees of Simonton Community Church.

SECTION 6: CEMETERY FUNDS

All Cemetery funds will be maintained in an account separate and apart from the general operating account of Simonton Community Church. The Chairman and Secretary of the Committee will have the right to sign checks and pay expenses (including capital expenses) of the Cemetery, subject to the control and authority of the Board of Trustees as may be expected from time to time.

SECTION 7: BUDGET

The Committee will prior to December 1 of each year establish a Budget which will be subject to the Board of Trustees of Simonton Community Church. The Budget will be deemed approved if the Board of Simonton Community Church has not disapproved or amended the Budget within thirty days of its submittal.

SECTION 8: AUTHORITY

The Committee will have the right to expend funds (i) based upon the Budget; (ii) to preserve and protect the integrity and security of the Cemetery in emergency situations; and (iii) in excess of the Budget by a factor of no greater than ten percent.