

**THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS  
FOR  
CHRIST CHAPEL, INC.  
(Revised 02/04/09)**

**PREAMBLE**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

We, the members of the Board of Trustees of Christ Chapel, Inc., desiring to manifest that inner unity which we have with one another in the common confession, defense, and maintenance of our faith, and in joint efforts with the Body of Christ join together for our Christian stewardship in every area of life to extend the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. We, therefore, unite in the adoption of the Constitution hereunto following:

**ARTICLE I – THE CHURCH**

**SECTION I – Defined:**

The Church is a divine institution composed of all true believers who have truly repented of sins and received Christ as Savior. The “born again” constitute the Body of Christ.

**SECTION II – Purpose:**

Christ Chapel, Inc., exists for the purpose of converting the unbeliever to Christ, to evangelize and to mature believers in Christ, to preach and teach the Bible as the Word of God, to be a body of believers willing and able to worship the Savior in Spirit and Truth, and to be involved in missions at home and abroad.

**ARTICLE II – MEMBERSHIP**

The Corporation shall have only nonvoting members. The members shall be prohibited from participating in the governance of the Corporation or voting in any way.

**SECTION I – Members.**

Any person who believes on and has accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior, who is endeavoring to follow Him in his daily life, and who subscribes substantially to the Statement of Faith shall be eligible for membership.

**SECTION II – Qualifications:**

If the Lord Jesus leads you to unite with this fellowship, we shall require you to affirm your acceptance of this covenant of membership.

- A. “Realizing my guilt before God, I have confessed my sins to Him, and received the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior.” (Romans 3:23; 6:32; John 1:12)
- B. “I trust in the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God to keep me and to guide and lead me in the ways of holy living.” (John 14:26; Timothy 3:16; Romans 8:1-4)
- C. “I do believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion for every Christian and will, therefore, seek this for my life.” (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)

- D. "I accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God and my final authority in all matters of faith and practice."
- E. "I recognize my responsibility of obedience to the Word in the giving of tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8-10; 2 Corinthians 9:7)
- F. "I recognize my responsibility to be regular in my attendance at the services of the Church and at the Holy Communion." (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 11:26)

### **SECTION III – Discipline of Members:**

All cases of disorderly conduct or heretical doctrine opposed to the Church's life and faith shall be brought to the Board of Elders in the steps set forth in Matthew 18:15-18. If the disciplined person gives evidence of repentance and confession, they shall be restored. (2 Corinthians 2:6-8)

### **SECTION IV – Termination of Membership:**

- A. By death;
- B. By transfer – members in good standing may request change of membership to another congregation;
- C. By expulsion – those who hold false and heretical doctrine or who live inconsistently with the Christian profession or who disturb the unity and peace of the Church may be expelled. (2 Thessalonians 3:6-11; 1 Corinthians 5:11);
- D. After a review of giving records for any twelve month period, any member that has not made a contribution will be removed from the active membership roll and placed on the inactive member roll.

## **ARTICLE III – GOVERNMENT**

### **SECTION I – Spiritual Headship:**

Christ Chapel, Inc., acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its head; the Holy Scriptures as the infallible guide in matters of faith, Church order, and discipline; and the Holy Spirit as her Teacher. (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 2:10)

### **SECTION II – Board of Directors (Board of Elders):**

- A. The government of Christ Chapel is vested in her Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as Board of Elders). This Board is composed of the Senior Pastor as Chairman, and no less than three (3) and no more than twelve (12) other members. The first three (3) members of the Board will be selected by the Senior Pastor, and thereafter the entire Board shall elect other Elders as God shall direct. This election must be by unanimous consent. The termination of an Elder shall be determined by the Board itself; requiring unanimous consent. The founding pastor shall have perpetual membership on the Board of Elders at his discretion.
- B. The duties of the Elders are as follows:
  - 1. To have executive authority in all spiritual matters

2. An Elder shall care for the spiritual condition of the Church, visit the people in their homes, anoint and lay hands on the sick (James 5:14), and share in the teaching and discipline of the Word of God.
3. The Board of Elders shall organize the church, its ministries, and satellite churches around four (4) basic areas:
  - a. education
  - b. evangelism
  - c. missions
  - d. worship

The Board of Elders shall oversee in each of these four (4) areas.

4. Each Board of Elders meeting will be called by the Senior Pastor or by two-thirds (2/3) of its members upon written request to the Senior Pastor.
5. The Board of Elders may terminate the Senior Pastor upon written notice after unanimous consent of the remaining Board of Elders. The Board of Elders will determine a timeframe for separation from Christ Chapel, Inc., and the duties to be performed by the Senior Pastor during such period. The Senior Pastor will not retain any governing authority.
6. The Board of Elders shall have total authority in the selection of a new Senior Pastor should that position be vacant for any reason. They can, at their discretion, appoint a Pastoral Selection Committee to help in the process of selecting candidates for Senior Pastor. Should the Board of Elders appoint an interim Senior Pastor, the interim Senior Pastor cannot be a candidate for the vacant Senior Pastor position unless the Board of Elders agree otherwise with unanimous consent. There shall be no congregational vote to select or approve a new Senior Pastor.

### **SECTION III – Qualifications for Elders:**

- A. An Elder shall be mature in faith and “blameless in character” so as to be an example to the Church in purity of doctrine, in holiness of life, and in faithfulness of service, as found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-10.
- B. An Elder must be a “born again” believer, living victoriously in the faith he possesses. (John 3:3; Romans 8:2)
- C. An Elder must be pursuing the discipline of discipleship, including daily Bible reading and prayer. (2 Timothy 2:15)
- D. An Elder must be filled with the Spirit. The Elder must have experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 5:18; Acts 1:8)
- E. An Elder must subscribe to the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Board of Elders.
- F. An Elder must be a qualified member of Christ Chapel, Inc.
- G. An Elder must be liberated from the habit of using tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
- H. No one practicing a homosexual lifestyle may serve as an Elder.

### **SECTION IV - Elder Leave of Absence**

From time to time it may be necessary for an Elder to lay down his responsibilities for a period of time. This action would not involve removal from the Board of Elders but a "Leave of Absence" for a determined amount of time.

- A. Voluntary Leave of Absence: This is for health reasons or for temporary circumstances determined by the Board of Elders that prevent him from fulfilling his Elder responsibilities for a period of time.

Voluntary Leave of Absence shall be:

1. By request of the Elder;
  2. For a determined period of time requested by the Elder;
  3. Initiated by a request in writing from the Senior Pastor;
  4. Activated by notification to the Senior Pastor in writing.
- B. Involuntary Leave of Absence: This is for reasons or circumstances which need attention, in his family, personal life, or spiritual life. Such situations left unattended would impair the Elder's ability to fulfill his oversight duties effectively and could lead to disqualification of his Elder role if not properly and promptly addressed. The motive of this Leave of Absence is protective for the Elder and his family so that they can respond to the situation free from continuing Elder responsibilities and public scrutiny.

Involuntary Leave of Absence shall be:

1. Initiated because of situations which involve:
  - i. Illegal, immoral, or repeated unChrist-like behavior by the spouse or children of the Elder which has public implications;
  - ii. Marriage or family trauma related to the Elder that recurs over a period of time;
  - iii. Other matters which might be out of the Elder's direct control but affect his reputation or character such as financial problems, business problems, etc.;
2. For a minimum of 90 days with review of all matters at the end of 90 days to determine progress and an appropriate time to resume Elder duties;
3. With a return recommended by the Senior Pastor to the Board of Elders with a determined time for responsibilities to be resumed;

#### **SECTION V – Removal of Elders**

The Board of Elders may remove an Elder at any time, without good cause. This shall be done by unanimous consent of the remaining Elders.

### **ARTICLE IV – ARTICLES OF FAITH**

#### **SECTION I – The Triune God:**

We believe that there is but one (1) living and true God (Isaiah 8:20; Matthew 24:35; John 12:48), everlasting without body or parts, infinite and unchangeable in power, wisdom, holiness, and love (Isaiah 6:3; James 1:17). He is the Creator, Sovereign, Ruler, and Sustainer of all things whether visible or invisible (1 Peter 4:19; Psalms 103:19; Hebrews 1:3). In the divine unity of His Godhead there exists eternally three (3) persons of one substance, power, and perfection: GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, and GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT (Matthew 3:16-17, 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14).

**SECTION II – Scriptures:**

We believe in the Holy Scripture as the inspired Word of God and, therefore, without error in its original form (2 Timothy 3:16). We believe the Scriptures are the final authority in all matters of teaching, preaching, and correction in the Church.

**SECTION III – Jesus Christ:**

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Word of the Father (John 1:1), the second person of the Holy Trinity, the eternally begotten Son, of one (1) substance with the Father and by the divine conception of the Holy Spirit was born of the virgin Mary (Luke 1:27, 35; Matthew 1:20) so that two (2) whole and perfect natures (Godhead and manhood) were joined together in one (1) person, whereof Christ is very God and man (John 1:14; 3:16; Matthew 16:13). He was sinless (1 John 3:5) in His life, died a vicarious death, was buried and resurrected to be the sacrifice for all men. He ascended into heaven (Acts 1:11) and now sits at the right hand of God (1 John 2:1).

We believe in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; salvation by faith (Ephesians 1:8-9) in this atoning work. We believe that in ATONEMENT Jesus died to redeem humanity from sin and sickness. Not only is there salvation for the spirit and soul, but also healing for the body (Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; James 5:14-16).

**SECTION IV – The Holy Spirit:**

We believe in the third person of the Triune Godhead, of one (1) substance with the Father and the Son. It is His ministry to glorify Jesus (John 16:14), convict the world of sin (John 16:7-8), regenerate those who repent and believe (John 3:7-8), and sanctify and empower the believer for godly living and service (Romans 15:16; Acts 1:8). We believe the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” is distinct from, and subsequent to, the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17, 10:44-46, 11:14-16, 15:7-9). With the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” there is an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:38-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43), a consecrated life to God (Romans 12:1-2), and a holy life (Hebrews 12:14). We encourage every Spirit-filled believer to move to the fullness of a “devotional” prayer language of praying in tongues (Acts 2:1-4, 10:45-46, 19:6).

**SECTION V – The Church:**

We believe that the Church is commanded by Jesus Christ, her risen and ascended Head, to evangelize worldwide (Matthew 28:19) and to edify the “Body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12), and that every “born again” (John 3:3) believer is a part of this body.

**SECTION VI – Ordinances of the Church:**

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted the ordinances of Baptism (Matthew 28:19) and Holy Communion (Matthew 26:26-19). We believe that Water Baptism is only to be administered upon profession of faith in Christ (Acts 2:38-41) by immersion, thereby declaring allegiance to Jesus as Lord. Holy Communion consisting of the elements, the bread and fruit of the vine, is the symbolic expression of our sharing the divine nature of Christ (2 Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26), and a celebration of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26).

**SECTION VII – The Future State:**

We believe in the imminent, bodily, visible, and personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1:11; John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:33) to translate His Church and subsequently to return with His Church to reign over the earth (Psalms 2; Zachariah 14; Isaiah 11), to reign over His millennium kingdom (Revelation 22:5), and to judge the wicked and Satan (Revelation 19:20, 20:10-15).

There will be the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the unsaved (1 Corinthians 15:16-17, 42-44). There will be eternal life in Heaven for the saved (John 14:2-3) where they will be in the immediate presence of God (Revelation 22:3-4). There will be eternal death and punishment for the unsaved in Hell, the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15).

#### **SECTION VIII – Faith and Culture**

- A. We believe a marriage is the union of one man and one woman.
- B. We do not believe in same sex marriages and have never believed in same sex marriages. This conviction is based upon our understanding of Scripture and is a matter of our deepest conviction. This being so, no one on our staff will ever perform a same sex marriage and none of the facilities of Christ Chapel will ever be used to perform such a marriage or to hold any gatherings to celebrate such a marriage in any way.
- C. We believe in the sanctity of human life. We believe life begins at conception. Therefore, abortion by any means is murder, and is therefore condemned.

### **ARTICLE V – LICENSING AND ORDINATION OF MINISTERS**

#### **SECTION I – General:**

- A. The authority to license and ordain ministers rests with the Board of Elders of Christ Chapel, Inc.
- B. Each candidate for either licensing or ordination must be recommended by a member of the Board of Elders, then approved by a unanimous consent of the Board of Elders.
- C. The license to minister or ordination credentials may be revoked at any time by the unanimous consent of the Board of Elders for any valid cause such as:
  - 1. Any proven charge of moral turpitude.
  - 2. Promoting any heretical doctrine contrary to the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Board of Elders.
  - 3. Failing to pursue the ministry to which called.
  - 4. Living a lifestyle that is inconsistent with the Christian walk or with the call to ministry.
  - 5. Failing to maintain communications and contact with the Board of Elders.
  - 6. Refusing to submit to the Board of Elders for counsel and/or discipline.

#### **SECTION II – Licensing:**

- A. Licensing is for those who are called to ministry, but are not yet proved, and/or who do not have the need for the authority that goes with ordination to carry out their ministry.
- B. The licensee shall have the following authority:
  - 1. To preach the Gospel whenever and wherever opportunity presents itself.
  - 2. To conduct divine worship.

3. To administer baptism and communion, with the approval of the Board of Elders, when their ministry requires it.
4. To conduct funerals when required by their ministry.
5. To conduct wedding ceremonies with the specific permission of the Board of Elders in states where the law permits a licensed minister to perform weddings.

**SECTION III – Ordination:**

- A. Only those who, in the judgment of the Board of Elders, have been proved in the ministry and need the authority commensurate with ordination will be ordained.
- B. Normally, ministers will be ordained only after having been licensed for at least one year. However, the Board of Elders may make exceptions for those ministers who have already been proved and who are in a ministry which necessitates ordination.
- C. Ordination provides the following authority:
  1. To preach the Gospel whenever and wherever opportunity presents itself.
  2. To conduct divine worship services.
  3. To pastor a congregation, administer baptism and communion, perform weddings, funerals, and other services required by their ministry.

**SECTION IV – Questions to be Affirmed by Candidates for Licensing or Ordination:**

1. Have you been born again?
2. Have you experienced the Baptism of the Holy Spirit?
3. Do you know that God has called you to preach the Gospel?
4. Do you believe the Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God?
5. Do you have a disciplined life of prayer and Bible study?
6. Have you read the Constitution and By-Laws for Christ Chapel, Inc.? Do you fully subscribe to these By-Laws and to the Articles of Faith contained therein?
7. Do you acknowledge the scriptural authority of the Board of Elders to discipline in accordance with Matthew 18:15-18?
8. Are you free from bondage to alcohol, tobacco, and other addictive drugs?
9. Is your lifestyle consistent with the call to the ministry?
10. Is your spouse in agreement with your call to ministry?
11. What are you doing educationally to prepare yourself to fulfill your call?
12. Is your family life in scriptural order so as to allow you to minister effectively?
13. Will you minister under the directive covering of Christ Chapel, Inc., and the Board of Elders?

14. Do you agree to inform the Board of Elders of Christ Chapel, Inc., of any change in your life or ministry that could affect your qualifications for license or ordination under the provisions of its Constitution and By-Laws?

**SECTION V – Commissioning and Ordination of Ministers of Pastoral Counseling**

- A. The authority to commission and ordain ministers of pastoral counseling rests with the Board of Elders of Christ Chapel, Inc.
- B. Each candidate for either commissioning or ordination must be recommended by a member of the Board of Elders, then approved by unanimous consent of the membership of the Board of Elders.
- C. The commission or ordination credentials may be revoked at any time by the unanimous consent of the Board of Elders for any valid cause such as:
1. Any proven charge of moral turpitude.
  2. Promoting any heretical doctrine contrary to the Articles of Faith as adopted by the Board of Elders.
  3. Failing to pursue the ministry to which called.
  4. Living a lifestyle that is inconsistent with the Christian walk or with the call to ministry.
  5. Violations of ethics for pastoral counselors.
  6. Failing to maintain contact with the Board of Elders.
  7. Refusing to submit to the Board of Elders.
  8. Failure to fulfill the continuing education requirements prescribed by Shoals Bible Institute.
  9. Failure to maintain membership in good standing with the National Christian Counselors Association (NCCA).
- D. Commissioning:
1. The commissioned Minister of Pastoral Counseling credential is issued to those who are performing pastoral counseling duties or are preparing to assume the responsibilities of an ordained minister in pastoral counseling.
  2. The commissioned Minister of Pastoral Counseling has the right to perform all the duties of a pastoral counselor under the supervision of another minister, pastor, or clinical supervisor.
  3. The commissioned Minister of Pastoral Counseling must have a clearly definable ministry and be endorsed by their pastor and three other Christians, and have demonstrated an anointing for counseling.
- E. Ordination:
1. The Minister of Pastoral Counseling ordination credential is issued to those with a clearly defined ministry of pastoral counseling.
  2. The candidate for ordination must be known by the Board of Elders, for a minimum of one year, or be recommended by others known by the Board of Elders.

3. The candidate for ordination as a Minister of Pastoral Counseling must be a member in good standing of the National Christian Counselors Association (NCCA).
4. The candidate for ordination must have the recommendation of his/her pastor and three other Christians.
5. The candidate for ordination as a Minister of Pastoral Counseling must undergo a character search and reputation verification before ordination.

## **ARTICLE VI – BOOKS AND RECORDS**

### **SECTION I – Inspection.**

- A. Any Elder may inspect all books and records of the Corporation required to be kept by the Bylaws.
- B. To meet the Internal Revenue Service requirements, any person may inspect the letter of non-profit status (Form 1023). This may be done at a reasonable time with prior notice.

## **ARTICLE VII – PROPERTY**

### **SECTION I – Contributions**

The Board of Elders has the authority to accept or, refuse on behalf of the church any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for any purpose of the church. In general, it is the intention of the Board of Elders to use all funds designated for specified purposes in the area for which they were designated. However, the Board of Elders reserve the right to redirect all funds including designated funds to areas of need. Designated funds will not be redirected without the advice and consent of the Board of Elders. Monies may be borrowed from one fund within the church and placed in another. No interest will be charged and monies are to be repaid as soon as possible.

### **SECTION II – Trustees**

The Trustees shall consist of the Board of Elders. All Church property and assets shall be in the name of Christ Chapel, Inc., and under the supervision of the Board of Elders. If this corporation is ever dissolved, the existing property and assets shall be donated to another Christian organization of like mind and purpose. This decision shall be made by the Board of Elders.

## **ARTICLE VIII – EMPLOYEES**

### **SECTION I – Hiring**

The Corporation adopts a non-discriminatory policy in connection with the hiring of staff personnel as regards race, sex, color, national or ethnic origin.

### **SECTION II – Salaries**

- A. The Senior Pastor's salary is set by the Board of Elders.
- B. Staff salaries are evaluated, and recommendations made, by the Financial Advisory Committee or the Board of Elders, and approved by the Senior Pastor.

**ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

These By-Laws may be revised or amended by unanimous consent of the Board of Elders at any regular business meeting.

KNOWN ALL MEN BY THESE PRESENTS, that we, the undersigned members of the Board of Directors (Elders) of Christ Chapel, Inc., do this 4<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009, hereby adopt the foregoing By-Laws which replace all previous versions of the By-Laws of Christ Chapel, Inc.

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E. M. Shell, Senior Pastor/Elder

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Michael R. Lee, Elder

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Euell T. White, Elder

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Leonard Durham, Elder

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James T. Hayes, Elder

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Wayne G. Stanley, Elder