



REDEEMER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

CHURCH COVENANT

EST 2016

Redeemer Fellowship Church exists to be a gathering place for the body of believers in Evansville, IN to worship God, hear the Word of God preached, disciple one another, and send one another out to share the gospel with the lost. The Apostle Paul defines the nature of the church in Ephesians 2:19-22, "So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you are also being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit." Paul does not define the church as merely a physical structure or social club. Rather, he clearly states a church is a *community of saints put together by God* as His dwelling place in the Spirit. God's Word provides a blueprint to the proper structure of a church.

". . . In him you are also being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit."

It is our desire to be a healthy church built on Christ as the cornerstone. We believe the gospel calls us to a Christ-centered church method. As such, we value Christ above all things. He determines what is important, not us. The gospel of Christ is central in all that we say and do and in how we conduct ourselves as His Bride, the Church. A church's values communicate their identity. Everything a church does will project what it values.

Our values as a church are Christ, Character, Community, and Commission.

- **Christ** - Everything that Redeemer does should reflect Christ. He receives the glory from our actions.
- **Character** - A collection of people, who are transformed and filled by the Holy Spirit, results in Christ-centered character.
- **Community** - Christ said the world will know Him by our love for one another. Our unity as one people in Christ exposes the culture around us to the beauty of the gospel.
- **Commission** - Christ commissioned His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations. A church which is Christ-centered is driven to fulfill Christ's commission by reflecting Christ and following His command to share the gospel with those who have not heard- both locally and abroad.



OUR VALUES

Redeemer Fellowship Church is a group of diverse Christians, who share a common identity in Jesus Christ. We desire to glorify God and proclaim His gospel throughout Evansville and to the ends of the earth.

OUR MISSION

Mission Statement

REDEEMER EXISTS TO LEAVE A LEGACY OF FAITH BY LOVING PEOPLE AND ENGAGING OUR CULTURE TO THE GLORY OF GOD.

God has called Redeemer Fellowship Church to a particular place and mission on the west side of Evansville, IN.

“... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,”

Our mission is to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Eph 4:12). Because of this, it is our hope to see every saint that attends Redeemer Fellowship Church grow to maturity in Christ and use their God-given gifts for the glory of God and the edification of His Church.

God has not only called us to spur one another on to love and good works, but to humbly teach the gospel to people and celebrate their reconciliation with their eternal Father. He has also called us to engage the issues that take place within the culture, city, and world around us with the gospel of Christ. Jesus came not only to redeem people, but to give *everlasting hope in the conflicts of our age*. We look forward to the day when Jesus establishes His kingdom and makes all things new.

OUR BELIEFS

BASED ON THE BAPTIST FAITH AND MESSAGE 2000 &
THE GOSPEL COALITION CONFESSION

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible, made up of Old and New Testaments, was written by men who were divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit. It is God's revelation of Himself to man and is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible book of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.

GOD

We believe in one God, eternally existent in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—one in being, essence, and nature. All three persons of the Trinity are equal and hold the same attributes. God is the Creator of the universe. He has always existed, without change and without beginning or end. He is wise, holy, absolute, loving, gracious, merciful, forgiving, compassionate, and just.

JESUS

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is truly man and truly God. We believe that Jesus accomplished our redemption through His perfect life, His death on the cross in our place, and His physical resurrection from the dead. We believe that Christ ascended into heaven and is now seated at the right hand of the Father where He intercedes on our behalf. We believe one day Jesus will return to judge all humanity and establish His kingdom on Earth. He will rule and reign forever.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the agent in conversion and baptizes all Christians into the universal Church. Upon conversion, the Holy Spirit indwells believers and seals them until Christ's return.

HUMANITY

We believe that God has created all humans in His image and He has created them uniquely male and female. Since all humans are created in God's image, all human life is sacred.

We believe that humanity was originally innocent of sin, but man's original parents, Adam and Eve, sinned against God. Through Adam, we have inherited this disease of sin and all human beings are now corrupt by nature, enslaved, and dead in sin. As a result, we are unable to please God or come to God apart from His grace.

SALVATION

We believe that all of humanity is sinful and needs salvation. We believe salvation is a gift of God. Salvation is brought to humans through Grace alone and is received through personal faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is not temporary and cannot be lost. A true Christian is kept forever by God's power.



OUR VISION

A VISION IS THE IDEAL FUTURE OF AN ORGANIZATION. WE AIM TO ACCOMPLISH A UNIQUE VISION.

OUR VISION IS TO BE THE BEST TRAINING GROUND FOR KINGDOM IMPACT.

Christ is the Supreme Head of the Church, assisting and defending Her from all assaults, errors, troubles, and persecutions. God's Word establishes the offices that humbly serve the body with love, patience, and faithfulness. Everything that is spoken or done by an elder or teacher must be judged solely in light of the words of Christ the Lord. The Bible lays out two defined roles that should lead and serve the church. These church-appointed offices are the **Eldership** and the **Deaconship**. Each are indispensable to the health of the church.

Elders share among each other the responsibility to lead, shepherd, teach, and protect the church. They act as humble stewards to their King and faithful servants to their congregation. They are men who are qualified to govern, equip, serve, and build up Christ's Church. Each Elder brings a unique set of gifts and abilities to meet the needs of the church. They are all of equal rank and authority, and one does not have a higher standing over the others. Elders lead as one team, in unison, with distinctions in abilities and strengths which help determine areas of responsibility and authority.

Deacons, who are individuals full of the Spirit and wisdom, are tasked to serve the basic needs of the church. Their focus is to serve and meet the temporal demands of the Body; this frees the Elders to focus their efforts on prayer and the ministry of God's Word. Additionally, Deacons serve the body by helping to preserve unity among the people. In Acts, we see the first displays of this office. The Apostles tell the church to choose seven men from among them who can help serve the church so they (the Apostles) could devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Deacons and Elders perform two distinct roles that together preserve the Bride of Christ. Neither the office of Deacon nor the office of Elder is more important than the other. Both are indispensable to the life and health of the Church. If the Deacons struggle in their roles, then the church and the Elders struggle. If the Elders struggle in their roles, then the church and the Deacons struggle. Thus, it is absolutely essential for the Church to appoint qualified Elders and Deacons to faithfully execute their responsibilities in a manner worthy of Christ.



OUR
LEADERSHIP



Our views on

BAPTISM & LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism is a physical sign of a spiritual reality. Paul writes in Romans 6:1-4 that baptism symbolizes our spiritual death and burial with Christ and our spiritual resurrection with Him. We believe the Bible also instructs the Church to practice believers' baptism. Requiring all members to be baptized after saving faith states publicly that the individual's heart has been transformed by the Spirit of God and identifies that person as a new creation in Christ. Baptism, as expressed in the Scriptures, is by immersion, which is, therefore, the method of baptism practiced at Redeemer. Baptism by immersion means to dip someone completely under the water.

The Lord's Supper is a regular action of the Church, during worship, that expresses unity, fellowship, remembrance of Christ's sinless life and atoning death, proclamation of Christ's death, resurrection, and return. Additionally, it expresses confession of sin through self-examination. Continual repentance and belief are required for participation. If someone has shown an unrepentant heart or disbelief, he or she would be barred from the table of the Lord. At Redeemer, we also believe that the Lord's Supper is for members or those pursuing membership in a local church body.



CHURCH COVENANT

A covenant is an agreement between two parties. It is the way a community expresses their commitment to one another. The Redeemer Fellowship Church Covenant is the document that is signed and affirmed by all members detailing what we believe, how we will conduct ourselves both publicly and privately, and is the standard by which we hold each other accountable.

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (Jn 13:34)

I Covenant to Gather.

My faith in Christ will be evident through my regular participation in: corporate worship services, members meetings, growth groups, outreach events, fellowship events, etc. (Psalm 119:97, 105; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 10:23-25).

I Covenant to Grow.

I will be devoted to gathering with other members of Redeemer for the purpose of encouragement, discipleship, accountability, and growing in maturity in Christ. I will also endeavor to maintain a close relationship with the Lord through regular personal Bible reading, prayer, fellowship and practice of the other spiritual disciplines. (1 Tim. 4:16, 2 Tim. 2:15, 1 Thess. 5:17, Acts 2:42, 46).

I Covenant to Go.

I agree to come alongside the community of Redeemer Fellowship Church as we faithfully carry out the Great Commission in Evansville, Indiana, and to the ends of the earth. I recognize that this will be accomplished through prayer, sharing the Gospel with those around me, and, if possible, by going to the nations. If I cannot go, I agree to support those who go with prayer and with other means as the Lord allows. (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14-15).

I Covenant to Give.

I will strive to properly manage the resources God has given me including: my time, body, gifts and talents, attitudes, finances, and possessions. This includes regular and consistent giving to Redeemer that is sacrificial and cheerful in order to support the ministry and expenses of Redeemer, to relieve the poor, and to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world. I also agree to invest my time through my spiritual gifts. (Proverbs 3:9-10, Romans 12:1-8, Galatians 5:13, Galatians 5:22-26, Ephesians 4:1-16, Ephesians 5:15-18, 1 Corinthians 12:7-31, 1 Corinthians 16:2, 2 Corinthians 8-9, 2 Corinthians 8:3, 1 Peter 4:10-11).





MEMBERSHIP COVENANT

1. I am a Christian who has been saved from my sins by the grace of Jesus Christ. I have been baptized to give testimony of my identification with the body of Christ and obedience to the Scriptures.

2. I agree that I am in harmony with the Redeemer Statement of Faith and will express to the eldership areas of doctrine where I do not agree. I covenant not to publicly or privately ridicule, seek to undermine, or create division, regarding the doctrine of Redeemer. (Hebrews 13:7, 17; Ephesians 4:1-3, 1 Tim. 4:6, 1 Tim. 6:20, Proverbs 6:16-19).

3. I will seek to honor God by building up and encouraging the body of believers at Redeemer—refraining from speaking or acting in a manner that would harm the reputation or well-being of God's church and/or its individual members. (1 Pet. 4:15, 1 Thess. 5:11, Eph. 4:29).

4. I will submit myself to the leadership of Redeemer (Hebrews 13:17) and to the

discipline of the congregation (private or public) in those cases where it is deemed biblically necessary by the pastors (Matthew 18:15-20), hereby giving informed consent that public discipline may be instituted to any member of Redeemer.

5. I covenant to submit to the authority of the Scriptures as the final arbiter on all issues (Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). God enabling me, I will strive to consider my commitment to this Membership Covenant on a yearly basis. I understand that it is an evaluative tool, as well as an affirmation of my continuing conviction and purpose. My responsibility will be to notify the Redeemer leadership if, at any time, I can no longer commit to this covenant, or if I have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding Redeemer Fellowship.

Signature: _____

Date: _____



OUR CONSTITUTION

REDEEMER FELLOWSHIP CHURCH



ON MEETINGS

Section 1 – Worship Meetings

Worship services shall be held each Lord's Day, and may be held throughout the week as the church determines.

Section 2 – Members' Meetings

In every meeting together, members shall act in the spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. There shall be a regular members' meeting at least quarterly, at some time apart from a public worship service agreed upon by the membership. An elder, or member designated by the elders, shall preside as moderator at all members' meetings of the church. The elders shall see that the stated meetings of the church are regularly held and that required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members. Provided all constitutional provisions for notification have been met, a quorum shall be understood to be met by those members present. All votes shall be tallied based on the number of votes cast by members present.

A budget shall be approved by the membership at a members' meeting not more than three months after the start of the fiscal year. Prior to this approval and subject to the elders' discretion, expenditures may continue at the prior year's level. At any regular or special members' meeting, officers may be elected and positions filled as needed, so long as all relevant constitutional requirements have been met. Special members' meetings may be called as required by the elders, or at the written request, submitted to the elders, of five percent of the voting membership. The date, time, and purpose of any special meeting shall be announced at all public services of the church within two weeks preceding the meeting. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.



ON MEMBERS

Section 1 – Qualifications

To qualify for membership in this church, a person must be a believer in Jesus Christ who gives evidence of regeneration, who has been baptized, in obedience to Christ, following his or her regeneration, and who wholeheartedly believes in the Christian faith as revealed in the Bible. Each member must agree to submit to the teaching of Scripture as expressed in the Statement of Faith and must promise to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. The elders shall be responsible for determining each person's qualification for membership. In making this determination, they may rely on a person's profession of faith, or such other evidence, as the elders deem appropriate.

Section 2 – Admission of Members

To be admitted into church membership, applicants shall be recommended by the elders for admission and accepted by a 2/3rds majority vote of the members at any regular or special meeting of the members, and shall, at that point, relinquish their membership in other churches.

Section 3 – Duties and Privileges of Membership

In accord with the duties enumerated in the Church Covenant, each member shall be privileged and expected to participate in and contribute to the ministry and life of the church, consistent with God's leading and with the gifts, time, and material resources each has received from God. Only those who are members of this congregation shall be entitled to serve in the ministries of the church; non-members may serve on an ad-hoc basis with the approval of the elders. Notwithstanding, non-members may serve the church for purposes of administration and professional consultation. Under Christ, this congregation is governed by its members. Therefore, it is the privilege and responsibility of members to attend all members' meetings and vote on the election of officers, on decisions regarding membership status, and on such other matters as may be submitted to a vote.

Section 4 – On Church Discipline

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and the example of Scripture. Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, removal from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18:15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3:14–15; 1 Timothy 5:19–20 ; 1 Corinthians 5:4–5).



CON OFFICERS

Section 1 - Elders

The elders shall be comprised of men who satisfy the qualifications for the office of elder set forth in I Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. No elder shall hold the office of deacon during his tenure. Subject to the will of the congregation, the elders shall oversee the ministry and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1–6 and I Peter 5:1–4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God’s flock. The church shall recognize men gifted and willing to serve in this calling, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections. These men shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as elders. This recognition shall be reaffirmed by the church triennially. An elder’s term of office may be terminated by resignation or by dismissal. Any two members with reason to believe that an elder should be dismissed should express such concern to the elders and, if need be, to the congregation. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18:15–17 and I Timothy 5:17–21. Any of the elders may be dismissed by a two-thirds vote of the members at any members’ meeting of the church. The elders shall take particular responsibility to examine and instruct prospective members, examine and recommend all prospective candidates for offices and positions, oversee the work of the deacons and appointed church agents and committees, conduct worship services, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion, equip the membership for the work of the ministry, encourage sound doctrine and practice, admonish and correct error, oversee the process of church discipline, coordinate and promote the ministries of the church, and mobilize the church for world missions. The elders are further to ensure that all who minister the Word to the congregation, including outside speakers, share our fundamental convictions. The elders may establish ministry positions or committees to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities. The elders may also propose funding for new paid staff positions. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position. The elders shall have primary responsibility for the employment, supervision, and evaluation of staff members. This responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to another staff member.

Each year the elders, after consultation with the finance committee, shall present to the church an itemized budget. This budget shall be presented for discussion at a specially-called budget meeting and called up for a vote at the following members’ meeting. No money shall be solicited by or on behalf of the church or any of its ministries without the approval of the elders. The elders shall elect a chairman of elders’ meetings and shall also elect one of their number to serve as moderator of members’ meetings. For purposes of compliance with the non-profit corporation laws of the State of Indiana, the elders shall elect one of their number to serve as the president of the corporation.



Cont'd OFFICERS

Section 2- Deacons and Deaconesses

The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7. The church shall recognize, in accordance with the constitutional provisions on elections, men and women who are giving of themselves in service to the church, and who possess particular gifts of service. These members shall be received as gifts of Christ to His church and set apart as deacons and deaconesses. They shall be elected to one term lasting for a maximum of three years and may only be elected to another term after one year. Deacons and deaconesses shall care for the temporal needs of members, attend to the accommodations for public worship, and encourage and support those able to help others and those with gifts of administration. The deacons and deaconesses shall receive, hold, and disburse a fund for benevolence, reporting on its use to the elders at their request, and reporting to the church its total receipts and total disbursements only. The deacons and deaconesses, with the agreement of the elders, may establish unpaid administrative positions or committees of members to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the church.

Section 3 – Clerk

It shall be the duty of the clerk to record the minutes of all regular and special members' meetings of the church, to preserve an accurate roll of the membership, and to render reports as requested by the pastor, the elders, the deacons, or the church. The clerk shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year. In the absence or incapacity of the clerk, the elders shall appoint a member to perform the duties of the church clerk. For purposes of compliance with the non-profit corporation laws of the State of Indiana, the clerk shall serve as the secretary of the corporation. The church clerk shall ensure that dated copies of the most recent revision of this constitution shall be available for all church members.

Section 4 – Treasurer

If the church does not have a paid staff member to fulfill the duties and responsibilities as laid out in this section, then the church can appoint a member to the position of Treasurer. The treasurer, who shall not be an active elder, deacon, or paid church staff member, shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in such banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate. The treasurer shall also be responsible for presenting regular reports of the account balances, revenues and expenses of the church at each members' meeting. The responsibility may be delegated with the approval of the elders. The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements are kept in books belonging to the church, and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds belonging to the church are appropriately handled by any officer, employee, or agent of the church. The treasurer shall render to the elders annually, or whenever they may require it, an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the church. The treasurer shall be nominated by the elders and elected by the congregation to serve a term of one year.



OFFICERS ELECTION

Section 1 – Principles

The process for church elections shall be interpreted and carried out to fulfill the following principles: Substantial prayer, both individually and corporately, should be an integral part of the election process; Nominations should proceed with the support of the elders; All candidates for church office should be treated with the grace, kindness, and honesty appropriate in evaluating fellow members; The election process shall express that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration that is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Section 2 – Election of Officers

The election of officers shall be held at a members' meeting of the church. Names of nominees to serve as elders, deacons, clerk, or treasurer shall be presented by the elders at the previous members' meeting (providing that previous meeting occurred at least eight weeks prior), and the election shall proceed as directed by the moderator. The elders should seek recommendations and involvement from the general membership in the nomination process. Any member with reason to believe that a nominated candidate is unqualified for an office should express such concern to the elders. Members intending to speak in opposition to a candidate should express their objection to the elders as far in advance as possible before the relevant church members' meeting. The moderator shall declare elected all men receiving a 75% majority of all votes cast for the office of elder. For all other offices, the moderator shall declare elected all persons receiving a simple majority of all votes cast; abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. The persons elected shall assume their respective offices upon election, unless another date has been specifically designated.