

# REDEEMER CHURCH

THE BASICS  
Created November 2010  
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## **I. NAME**

The name of this congregation is Redeemer Church. We are a non-profit corporation of the State of Oklahoma. This church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of denominational control. Recognizing, however, the universal communion of followers of Christ and the benefit of a wider association, this church is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention in its national, state, and local expressions.

## **II. THE PURPOSES OF REDEEMER CHURCH ARE:**

A. Redeemer exists to glorify God as we center on the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it redeems all of life –our families; our community; our world.

- \* To value and teach the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as told by Scripture and as displayed by those whose faith is in Him.

- \* To value the family of God created by adoption through the work of Jesus; expressed simply in a household of faith as central and the most influential presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the future generation; in the gathering of the family of God in the local church and ultimately in the family of God in the universal church.

- \* To live in community and honest fellowship to our neighbors, our culture, and our city as partakers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- \* To live on mission to love our neighbors, our communities, our nation, our world as witnesses to the redemptive Gospel of Jesus Christ.

B. We will seek to accomplish our vision through various ministries including but not limited to: gathering in communal worship services of celebration, administration of the Lord's supper and baptism, intimate prayer and discussion in community groups, in-depth study and discipleship of the radical life of a follower of Christ, counseling and support services, various community services, shelters for people in need, and other initiatives as deemed necessary by the governing body.

## **III. ARTICLES OF FAITH:**

The doctrinal outlook of the corporation is reflected in the following statements:

A. WE BELIEVE GOD WROTE THE BIBLE THROUGH MEN WITHOUT ERROR. The Old and New Testaments, in their entirety, constitute the written Word of God and are without error in the original manuscripts. They were written by men, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore fully authoritative in all matters for the follower of Christ.

B. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS ETERNALLY IN TRINITY: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT. There is one God, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, love, justice, goodness, and truth, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who desires that we should know Him intimately and live a life of fulfillment through the pursuit of His glory.

C. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SECOND PERSON OF THE TRINITY WHO BECAME A MAN, LIVED A SINLESS LIFE, DIED ON A CROSS, WAS BURIED, AND ROSE BODILY FROM THE GRAVE TO REDEEM SINFUL HUMANITY. He is True God of True God, begotten, not made. He became human, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and made His dwelling among us, living a full life without sin. His perfect life and death on the cross provide the only atonement that satisfies the righteous requirements of God for the sinner. The death of Jesus Christ fully and finally paid for sin, and was redemptive, substitutionary, and efficacious. The historic fact of Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead testifies powerfully to His deity, and is itself humanity's ultimate hope. Jesus Christ will make a personal and imminent return to the earth; this return is a sanctifying "hope" having vital bearing on the life of every Christian.

D. WE BELIEVE THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE SUPERNATURAL AGENT IN SALVATION, BAPTIZING ALL CHRISTIANS INTO THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH AT CONVERSION, INDWELLING AND SEALING THEM UNTIL THE DAY OF CHRIST'S RETURN. The Holy Spirit bears persuasive testimony to the realities of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is the personal, divine third member of the Godhead. He convicts the world of sin and its consequences; He brings repentance and faith to the believer; He indwells the believer with the radical life of Jesus Christ; He gives gifts to every believer for mutual service within the body of Christ; He unites each believer in the Body of Christ and seals them in that relationship; He bears the fruit of Christian character in the lives of every believer; He guides, instructs, and empowers the believer for godly living and service. He is worshipped with the Father and the Son.

E. WE BELIEVE ALL HUMANS ARE SINFUL AND IN NEED OF SALVATION. SALVATION IS THE GIFT OF GOD BROUGHT TO HUMANS BY GRACE ALONE, AND RECEIVED BY PERSONAL FAITH IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. A TRUE CHRISTIAN WILL BE KEPT BY GOD'S POWER FOREVER. God has created every person in the image of God, but we have fallen into sin, and are therefore lost; only through the regeneration by the Holy Spirit can we obtain salvation and spiritual life. All humans are sinners and face the judgment of God. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and only those who place faith in Jesus Christ and initiate a relationship with God on the basis of the work of Christ are delivered from the wrath of God toward sin required by His holy character. Those who receive Jesus Christ by faith are said by Holy Scripture to be justified, regenerated, redeemed, and adopted into the divine family as co-heirs with Christ of all the blessings of the Godhead. We proclaim that all persons must consciously repent of their sins and confess that Jesus Christ is Savior and Lord.

F. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD HAS CREATED ALL HUMANS IN HIS IMAGE. HE HAS CREATED THEM UNIQUELY FEMALE AND MALE. All humans are created in God's image; therefore all human life is sacred. In creating humans as male and female, God communicated His image in harmonious interpersonal relationships, equality of personhood and importance and a distinction in role and authority.

G. WE BELIEVE THAT THE CHURCH IS A SPIRITUAL ORGANISM MADE UP OF ALL BELIEVERS EVERYWHERE FOR ALL TIME. All Christians in all times and in all places have been united into a single body by an operation of God. This resultant union is called the Body of Christ, the Universal Church.

H. WE BELIEVE IN THE AUTONOMY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND RECOGNIZE BELIEVERS BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER. Christ commanded that all Christians band together in assembly for instruction, worship, service, and fellowship. These assemblies are called local churches. As a local church, Redeemer embraces the rich and vibrant traditions of the Universal Church. Only those who are members of the Universal Church shall be eligible for membership in the local church. Baptism of believers by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only two ordinances to be observed by the local church in the present age. These ordinances are not to be regarded as means of salvation.

I. WE BELIEVE THAT JESUS WILL RETURN TO EARTH TO JUDGE ALL PEOPLE AND TO RULE AND REIGN WITH HIS SAINTS FOREVER. All people will be resurrected to give account of their lives before God. The believer in Christ will be resurrected to everlasting blessedness and joy in the presence of God. The unbeliever will be resurrected to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment.

J We subscribe to the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 as a useful document and larger general statement of faith with scriptural references.

K. We hold these truths in humble conviction.

#### **IV. GOVERNMENT:**

A. The government of Redeemer Church is vested in its members who have chosen to delegate day-to-day operation and decision-making authority to a board of our pastors. This decision-making board is known as the Council of Elders.

B. The Council of Elders is composed of both paid and unpaid elders/pastors who follow the leading of Jesus who is the Senior Pastor of Redeemer (1 Peter 5:1–4).

C. QUALIFICATIONS To be considered as an elder, a man must have been called by God into leadership at Redeemer (Acts 20:28) and be a man of the highest Christian character according to the qualifications of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9).

1. Relation to God

- a. A man – masculine leader
- b. Above reproach – reputation of gospel character
- c. Able to teach – effective Bible communicator

d. Not a new convert – mature Christian

2. Relation to Family

- a. Husband of one wife – one-woman man, sexually pure
- b. Pastors and Shepherds his children
- c. Manages family well – provides for, leads, organizes, loves

3. Relation to Self

- a. Temperate – mentally and emotionally stable

- b. Self-controlled – disciplined life of sound decision-making
  - c. Not given to drunkenness – without addictions
  - d. Not a lover of money – financially content and upright
4. Relation to Others
- a. Respectable – worth following and imitating
  - b. Hospitable – welcomes strangers, especially non-Christians for evangelism
  - c. Not violent – even-tempered
  - d. Gentle – kind, gracious, loving
  - e. Not contentious – peaceable, not quarrelsome/divisive
  - f. Good reputation with outsiders – respected by non-Christians

## **V. MEMBERSHIP IN THE CONGREGATION**

A. Membership shall be based upon (all of the below):

1. A confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior, and the public testimony of believer's baptism.
2. Demonstrate a desire to accept the leadership of the Holy Spirit in:
  - living a holy life,
  - participating actively in ministry in the church,
  - giving regularly to Redeemer Church and other ministry causes,
  - and living an evangelistic lifestyle.
3. All members are expected to annually renew their commit to service in partnership with other members of Redeemer through the review and prayerful consideration of the Member Covenant of Redeemer (See, Section VI below – Membership Covenant).
4. Members uphold the fundamental doctrines of Redeemer, participate in its core passions, and regularly pray for and fellowship with the believers in the church.

B. The process of joining Redeemer will be an (1) opportunity to review and ask questions about these documents, (2) a membership conversation with a pastor, and (3) presentation to the congregation.

C. Voting Privileges: Membership in this church shall not vest in any member any proprietary rights in Redeemer, but shall entitle the member to vote at a meeting of the members on those matters specifically set forth in the Bylaws or that the Council of Elders chooses to submit to the church membership for affirmation and approval. In such cases, voting privileges are restricted to members who are:

1. In good standing
2. At least 18 years of age

All matters shall be determined by a majority vote unless otherwise specified by the constitution and by-laws.

D. Watchcare Membership – Watchcare members are persons who submit themselves to the teaching and discipline of Redeemer Church and are expected to actively serve. At the same time, watchcare members may not vote in membership meetings or serve in the office or elder. There are two situations in which watchcare membership may be appropriate:

1. Persons who are currently members of other churches, yet through a

- temporary relocation have routinely been in attendance at Redeemer, may find watchcare membership to be the most fitting step (for example, college students temporarily studying in Norman).
2. Persons who were baptized as infants and cannot in good conscience submit to believer's baptism by immersion can be considered for watchcare membership on a case-by-case basis.

E. Termination of Membership: Members shall be removed from the roll for the following reasons:

1. Death.
2. Transfer of Membership to another church
3. Voluntary Withdrawal of Membership
4. Dismissal by Church Discipline

F. Restoration of Members: Members who are dismissed may be restored by the Council of Elders according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8.

## **VI. Member Covenant**

I commit to be a member of the Redeemer Church family. (Ruth 1:16) What this means is that by the power of the Holy Spirit, I covenant the following:

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, in obedience to the Scriptures. (Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 3:21, Ephesians 4:4-7, Acts 2:38)
2. I will endeavor to continue in the faith and hope of the gospel by which I have been saved, maintaining an ongoing relationship with my Lord and Savior through the practice of spiritual disciplines such as engaging with the Word, prayer, and fellowship. (Colossians 1:23, Philipians 2:12-13)
3. I have read and understand the content of the "Redeemer Basics" doctrinal statement which contains the statement of faith and bylaws of the church. And I agree to not be divisive regarding its teaching and content, but to strive always to maintain the unity and peace of not only Redeemer Church, but the Universal Church. (John 17:11, Ephesians 4:1-6)
4. Specifically, I commit to seeking gospel-centered friendships. (Proverbs 17:17) This means that I commit to engage with others in a way that is rooted in the sacrificial love of Christ. I will strive to obey all the commands of God, upholding what Scripture teaches about how we are to treat one another as members of His body, how we are to speak to and about one another, and how we are to engage in repentance and forgiveness with one another. (Philipians 2:1-11, Colossians 3:8-17, Ephesians 4:17-5:2)
5. Because that is not always easy in a fallen world, I submit myself to the biblical procedures of church discipline, both formal and informal, the authority of church leadership, and the final authority of Scripture as arbiter on all matters, so that we as a

body may be corrected, trained, encouraged, and built up in righteousness. (Matthew 18:15-17, Galatians 6:1-5, Hebrews 13:7&17, 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

6. I understand that covenanting with Redeemer Church means that I embrace its vision and values, and will actively attempt to live them out in my everyday life. (Colossians 3:17, 1 John 3:16-18)

7. I understand that God has provided his Spirit to each of us for the advancement of the gospel and for the building up of the Church, here at Redeemer, in our community, and around the world. I therefore commit to stewarding well all that God has entrusted to me: gifts, passions, time, talent, finances, possessions, etc. (Ephesians 5:15-17, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 12:4-31, Proverbs 3:9-10, 1 Peter 4:10-11)

8. I commit to regularly participate and joyfully (2 Corinthians 9:6-7) contribute to the life of Redeemer Church – through serving , engaging in the community and contributing to the financial needs of the church. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, Acts 2:42-47, Hebrews 10:23-25)

9. I understand that this covenant is a statement of my hope and commitment and that it is meant to be evaluated on a yearly basis as an affirmation of my continuing commitment and conviction. I will 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.