

# Trinity Bible Church Bylaws

Adopted 05.21.23

## Preamble

Trinity Bible Church (hereafter “Church”) is an autonomous, baptistic local Church with Christ Jesus as the Chief Shepherd and elders as under-shepherds who oversee this Church. While the Church enjoys a number of affiliations, the membership of the Church under the leadership of the elders and Lordship of Christ retains the right of exclusive self-governance.

This Church exists to be a God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Spirit-driven Church of disciples who seek to make disciple-making disciples of Jesus Christ in obedience to his Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20). The Church’s priorities in ministry seek to be grounded in making Jesus Christ known and savingly believed. Through Word and Spirit, the Church will worship the triune God (Eccl 12:13; John 4:23–24), build-up the members (1 Cor 14:26; Eph 4:15–16; 2 Pet 3:18), and serve all of God’s image bearers in loving deed and in truth as ambassadors of Jesus Christ (Matt 10:40–42; 1 Cor 5:20; 1 John 3:16–18).

This Church was established in 1968 and is a non-profit charitable corporation organized under the laws of the State of Arizona, and operates exclusively for religious, charitable, and educational purposes. The Church is a non-profit religious organization exempt from federal income tax as provided by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and such other laws as may be applicable. The Church conducts all activities in a manner consistent with its non-profit status and the foregoing purpose. The Church’s principal location and place of worship is in Maricopa County, at 3420 West Peoria Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85029.

## Article 1: Statement of Faith

### The Bible

We believe the Bible is God’s inspired, inerrant, infallible Word, which serves as our final authority in faith and practice, and is true in all that it affirms and is sufficient to lead every person to find salvation and live a joyful life that pleases God in every way. It is the supreme standard by which all human conduct, beliefs, and opinions should be evaluated.

### God

We believe in one infinite and personal God, the holy, just, self-existent, boundless, good, loving Creator and Sustainer of all things eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each equal in power and glory. He has made himself known in creation and throughout history in mighty acts and through his Word—Jesus Christ being that Word incarnate. His purposes are always accomplished.

### Jesus Christ

We believe in the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, who took on human nature when the Holy Spirit overshadowed the virgin Mary causing her to conceive and give birth to Jesus Christ, who uniquely was both

fully God and fully man.

We believe Jesus Christ redeemed sinners from God's infinite and just penalty against sin by obeying God's law in every way, dying for our sins on the cross, satisfying God's wrath by the blood of his atoning death, crediting believers with his righteousness, and proclaiming the surety of our salvation with his physical resurrection from the dead. Jesus Christ is humanity's sole hope for salvation.

We believe Jesus ascended to heaven, remaining both fully God and fully man, where he now sits at the right hand of God interceding for believers forever, from which he will return bodily to judge the living and the dead.

## **Holy Spirit**

We believe the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, convicts the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment and that he regenerates, indwells, and seals all believers until the Day of the Lord.

We believe the Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures and guides Christians toward the truth of God's Word. The duty and privilege of every Christian is to be filled with and led by the Holy Spirit.

We believe the Holy Spirit, sanctifies believers, from regeneration to glorification, transforming them into the image of Christ, by leading them to put sin to death and live by faith in God, making them partakers of his holiness.

We believe the Holy Spirit gives individual Christians diverse gifts for the common good of the church.

## **Satan**

We believe that Satan is a personal being. He is the enemy of God, the accuser, and tempter, of God's people, and the deceiver of all men. Christians should not fear Satan but resist him knowing he is God's defeated enemy, not equal, destined along with all those who follow him to eternal punishment in the lake of fire.

## **Mankind**

We believe God created Adam and Eve "very good" as the only creatures in his own image and likeness, both male and female, innocent and fully able to worship, glorify, and enjoy God, exercising dominion over the earth as stewards.

## **Gender and Sexuality**

We believe God created both sexes, male and female, equal in dignity and value with complementary roles both in the home and in the church.

We believe God designed marriage to unite one man and one woman in a lifelong, joyful covenant of love to display the profound mystery of Christ and his church.

We believe God gifts some individuals with singleness that they may serve him more freely without the cares that come with marriage and its attendant responsibilities.

We believe God created sex for marriage, and all sexual activity outside of marriage is sin.

## **The Fall**

We believe Adam's intentional disobedience of God's command initiated mankind's rebellion against God. Therefore all mankind became sinners by nature and by choice. Mankind is subsequently inclined toward evil, alienated from God, and stands judged without defense or excuse. Adam's Fall subjected relationships to brokenness and creation to corruption.

## **Salvation**

We believe that, apart from the grace of Jesus Christ, the whole of humanity stands justly condemned by God as rebellious sinners and therefore worthy of eternal punishment.

We believe that the salvation of sinners is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone, whom the Father sent to take upon himself our nature freely, yet without sin, to fulfill God's law and die in our place, and having risen bodily from the dead to sit enthroned in heaven as both Lord and Savior.

We believe that everyone who repents and believes the gospel stands justified before God not because of any human works but solely on the basis of the righteousness of Christ credited to the believer's account through faith in the Redeemer's death on our behalf, resulting in the pardon of sin and adoption as Children of God to eternal life.

## **The Church**

We believe Jesus Christ is the head of the universal church—the body and bride of Christ. It is made up of all the children of God throughout the ages.

We believe local churches are God's plan for glorifying himself by making disciples of all nations through the proclamation of the gospel. Local churches consist of elders, deacons, and members.

We believe that the local church is the proper context for observing the ordinances of baptism and communion, and practicing church discipline.

We believe that faithful church membership is the primary context for engaging in the "one anothers" of the Bible and exercising the spiritual gifts.

We believe Christians are commanded to be baptized by immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit upon repentance and credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

We believe Christians take part in communion with Christ and one another by eating the bread and drinking the cup in commemoration of their Savior's death on their behalf and their right relationship with God and faithful fellowship with other believers.

We believe the right exercise of church discipline is necessary to protect and promote the purity of the church.

## **The Future**

We believe Jesus will soon return bodily to conquer his enemies. God will create new heavens and a new earth where all of his children will dwell with him forever in glory.

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all people—the unsaved to a judgment of eternal conscious punishment in Hell and the saved to eternal life.

## Article 2: Church Covenant

All members of Trinity Bible Church consent to this Church Covenant. Relying on the leading and enabling of the Holy Spirit, we make a sincere commitment to strive consistently to:

1. Honor the Lord Jesus Christ as we apply the teachings of His Word to our own lives and seek to grow in His likeness.
2. Accept and love one another as God has loved us in Christ—sacrificially and without discrimination.
3. Show our love in warm, open friendliness and practical care for one another, sharing our real needs, our joys, and our sorrows.
4. Become personally involved with one another so that we build-up each other in spiritual understanding and growth toward Christian maturity.
5. Be considerate and kind to one another, slow to take offense and quick to forgive and to ask forgiveness.
6. Pray for and with one another, our Church, its leadership and staff, and our community.
7. Faithfully attend and support the services of our Church and help in its ministries according to our spiritual gifts and as we have opportunity.
8. Give regularly, generously, and cheerfully to the support of the Church, the relief of those in need, and the evangelizing of the world.
9. Be faithful in personal Bible reading and prayer, and in family devotions if applicable.
10. Bring up our children in the teaching and discipline of the Scriptures and to be examples to them of consistent Christian living.
11. Live in the world as responsible, godly citizens, people of integrity, whose lives are above reproach.
12. Preserve loyalty to biblical truth and promote unity and growth in our Church.
13. Be actively involved in sharing the gospel of Christ with others.

## Article 3: Government

The Bible speaks of the offices of the church as member, elder, and deacon with the governing authority and responsibility residing with the gathered members in conjunction with the leadership of the elders.

### Section 1: Membership

1. **The Membership.** The membership of Trinity Bible Church consists of every baptized believer who provides a credible profession of faith, and whose name appears on the Membership Roll after completing the Membership Process. Members will hold without mental reservation the doctrines of our Church as expressed in the Statement of Faith and strive to keep the commitments expressed in the Church Covenant. Only

members of Trinity Bible Church shall serve in the ministries of the Church. Children of members may serve under supervision.

2. **The Membership Process.** Persons shall be received into membership after attending membership class(es), completing a membership interview with elders and/or staff, affirming the Church Membership Policy, being nominated by the elders, and being admitted into the Church by majority vote of the congregation present and voting at a Members' Meeting.
3. **Termination of Membership.** The congregation terminates a membership with a simple majority vote at a Members' Meeting based on one of the following grounds, understanding that, at the direction of the elders, the Church's administrative assistant will be responsible for revising the official Church Roll accordingly and, where applicable, sending notification on behalf of the Church to the former member:
  - a. Death of a member; or
  - b. Transfer of membership to a like-minded evangelical church; or
  - c. Voluntary resignation; or
  - d. Excommunication in accord with the terms of Clause 4 below.
4. **Discipline of Members.** The Church shall have authority to exercise corrective discipline over its Members, which may involve excluding from its Membership any Member consistently neglectful of the duties enumerated in Article 3, Section 1, Clause 1, or guilty of outward, unrepentant sin by which the reputation of Christ or His church is dishonored. Any such action shall be done in accordance with the instructions of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and those of the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, with the hope of repentance, restoration, and reconciliation. A disciplined member may be restored to church membership upon recommendation of the elders and a majority vote of the congregation present and voting at a Members' Meeting. The church shall have authority to refuse a Member's voluntary resignation or transfer of membership to another church, either for the purpose of proceeding with a process of church discipline, or for any other reason the Church deems necessary or prudent.
5. **Voting of Members.** Members may vote on matters presented by the elders at a Members' Meeting. Each present member is entitled to one vote, and a motion shall pass with three-fourths of members present and voting in favor unless otherwise specified in the Bylaws. Members shall vote on five referred areas:
  - a. Appointment of staff and non-staff elders and deacons
  - b. Membership admissions and terminations
  - c. Annual budgets and significant non-budgeted financial decisions (greater than 10% of annual budget) submitted by the elders
  - d. Changes to the Statement of Faith and Church Bylaws
  - e. Other church business as presented in Articles 5 and 7 of the bylaws.
6. **Meeting of Members.**
  - a. Regular Meetings. The Church meets every Sunday and at other times deemed appropriate to the Word-centered worship of God through reading, praying, singing, and preaching/teaching.
  - b. Members' Meetings. The Church will also gather regularly (at least once a year) for specially called meetings to receive a status update on significant issues in the life of the Church, vote on the appointment

of deacons and elders, approve the annual budget, vote to admit members and terminate memberships, and engage in other Church business initiated by the elders. Public notice of each such meeting shall be published at least two weeks prior to the meeting. These meetings shall be presided over by an elder accompanied by any or all elders or elder designees as necessary to conduct relevant Church business.

- c. All members in good standing of the Church are exhorted to vote on matters requiring a vote.
  - d. The presence of twenty-five percent of the Church's eligible voting membership shall constitute a quorum.
  - e. Public vote will be the standard form for polling. Secret ballot may be substituted as determined by the board of elders.
7. **Records.** The Church shall record and keep current an official Church Roll of active members. The Church Roll is the property of Trinity Bible Church and shall only be used with the consent of the elders.

## Section 2: Leadership

### A. Deacons

1. Deacons must meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:8–13 and will serve the Church in particular, practical roles according to the needs present to free the elders to teach and pray. The office of deacon does not exercise spiritual authority. The practical roles that deacons fill will be defined by the elders and can be changed as needed to support the ministry of the Church.
2. Deacon selection shall be as follows: The elder board will present the names of deacon nominees with the specific role of each at a Regular Meeting. The Church will consider each deacon nominee's fitness to serve as nominated. Any challenges to a candidate's qualification to serve should be raised to the attention of the elders. Following a due consideration period of at least two weeks, the elders may call the Church to vote to affirm the nominee to the deacon role at a Members' Meeting. A three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at the Members' Meeting will affirm a nominee as a deacon, which should be followed by public recognition as soon as practicable.
3. Deacons' roles may include caring for the sick or weak, caring for Church properties, benevolence, discipling children, preparing for the ordinances of baptism and communion, and other practical needs of the Church.
4. The elders may remove a deacon for cause or as may be determined appropriate based on the changing needs of the Church. A deacon may also voluntarily resign from the role. The elders may also appoint a person to fill a vacant deacon role until a replacement can be affirmed by the Church.
5. Deacons will be reaffirmed triennially by a three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.

### B. Elders

1. As an elder-led congregation, the board of elders oversees the ministry, resources, and facilities of the Church. In accord with 1 Timothy 2:12 and 3:2, only qualified men shall serve as elders. The board shall be comprised of no fewer than three men who meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:6–9. A majority of the members of the board of elders shall be laymen not paid regularly by the Church. In instances where elder(s) departing the board results in less than majority layman board composition, the board may continue to function, observing a one-year transition period, while seeking to identify and place new lay elders on the board. Subsequent additional one-year transition periods may be established as necessary by a vote of the

board and a progress report will be given to the congregation at the next Members' Meeting. No additional staff elders may be added to the elder board until a majority lay elder proportionality is reestablished, except as may be approved by the congregation.

2. A quorum for meetings of the elder board shall consist of a majority of the currently serving elders.
3. All decisions by vote of the elder board require agreement by a majority of the total number of currently serving elders.
4. Elder selection shall be as follows: elder candidates must be vetted regarding personal theological convictions by the lead pastor or his designee, then (along with his wife if married) meet with two elders and their wives, then attend an Elders' Meeting. The elders will then deliberate and determine by vote whether to proceed with putting the candidate forward as a nominee. The elders will present elder nominees to the congregation. The Church will consider each elder nominee's fitness to serve as nominated. Any challenges to a candidate's qualification to serve should be raised to the attention of the elders. Elders may remove a nominee from consideration upon the advice of members who provide just grounds for disqualification. Following a due consideration period of at least two weeks, the elders may call the Church to vote to affirm the nominee to the elder role at a Members' Meeting. A three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at the Members' Meeting will affirm a nominee as an elder, which should be followed by public recognition as soon as practicable.
5. Lay elders will be reaffirmed by the vote of the Church triennially.
6. An Elder may voluntarily suspend his active service as a voting member of the elder board for respite leave, with notice to the board. The elder board may authorize reinstatement to voting elder status for absences less than one year. Any voluntary suspension exceeding one year, or past three years from his last affirmation vote, requires a reaffirmation vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting on the question at a Members' Meeting.
7. Elders will not hold a deacon office during their tenure.
8. The elder board will choose from among themselves their Chairman, who shall not be a Staff Pastor, and other officers. In compliance with the corporation laws of Arizona, the chairman of the elders serves as the president of the corporation known as Trinity Bible Church.
9. Trinity Bible Church's Statement of Faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as 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 faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, the elder board is Trinity Bible Church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's application.
10. Following Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 5:17, Titus 1:5-9, James 5:14, and 1 Peter 5:1-4, elders are responsible for shepherding God's flock by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. They exercise particular authority in:
  - a. Protecting the doctrine and teaching of the Church;
  - b. Planning and overseeing worship services and other meetings;
  - c. Examining and instructing prospective members;
  - d. Overseeing the process of church discipline;

- e. Examining and overseeing candidates for all offices and positions (except when role is specifically delegated per written policy);
  - f. Overseeing the work of deacons and all other agents of the Church;
  - g. Hiring, overseeing, evaluating, and, when necessary, terminating paid staff;
  - h. Delegating durable power of attorney to persons unanimously approved by the elders as legal representatives in matters requiring specific expertise;
  - i. Establishing Policy as determined necessary for the administration of the Church. Each Policy shall become effective immediately on affirmative vote of the majority of currently serving elders, and shall be documented separately from the Bylaws;
  - j. Taking any other necessary and proper action for faithfully overseeing and shepherding the Church.
11. An elder can be removed from office without cause upon his own request in writing to the Church or for documented cause only upon the vote of three-fourths of the members present and voting on the question at a Members' Meeting and in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17 and 1 Timothy 5:17-21.
- a. An elder removed for cause may continue in membership with the Church if the cause for removal is non-disciplinary or as permitted in accordance with the Discipline of Members section of these Bylaws. This member may not be reinstated to the office of elder without the unanimous consent of the board of elders and a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.

### **C. Officers of the Board of Elders**

1. Chairman
2. Vice Chairman
3. Secretary
4. Treasurer

### **D. Lead Pastor**

1. The primary responsibility for preaching and teaching Scriptures in public meetings of the Church is given to the preaching elder, or Lead Pastor.
2. The process for selecting a Lead Pastor is as follows: The elders present the name of a nominee for this position to the Church at a Regular Meeting. The congregation will be given at least four weeks from that meeting to consider the nominee's preaching and teaching, history of pastoral care, and life. Any member who believes the candidate is unqualified bears the responsibility to express that concern to the elders. Following the consideration period, the elders may call the Church to vote to affirm the nominee to the Lead Pastor role at a Members' Meeting. A three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at the Members' Meeting will affirm a nominee as member, elder, and Lead Pastor, which should be followed by public recognition as soon as practicable.
3. The Lead Pastor will meet all of the qualifications and hold all of the rights and responsibilities of both a member and elder of the Church. His authority will be equal to the other elders.
4. The Lead Pastor serves as the first amongst equals on the elder board while also submitting to Christ, his brother elders, and the Church.

5. The Lead Pastor will not be subject to a reaffirmation vote or term limit.
6. The Lead Pastor may be removed from office at the recommendation of the elders with a three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.

#### **E. Other Staff Pastors**

1. The elders may hire other Staff Pastors for particular areas of responsibilities.
2. The process for selecting a Staff Pastor is as follows: Consistent with Article 3, Section 2, Clause B.1, the elders present the name of a nominee for this position to the Church at a Regular Meeting. The congregation will be given at least four weeks from that meeting to consider the nominee's character, gifts and abilities in the particular area of ministry to which he is being called. Any member who believes the candidate is unqualified, bears the responsibility to express that concern to the elders. Following the consideration period, the elders may call the Church to vote to affirm the nominee to the Staff Pastor role at a Members' Meeting. A three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at the Members' Meeting will affirm a nominee as member, elder, and Staff Pastor, which should be followed by public recognition as soon as practicable.
3. All Staff Pastors will meet all of the qualifications and hold all of the rights and responsibilities of both a member and elder of the Church. Their authority will be equal to that of the other elders.
4. All Staff Pastors will not be subject to a reaffirmation vote or term limit.
5. All Staff Pastors may be removed from office at the recommendation of the elders with a three-fourths vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.
6. Staff Pastors serve under the immediate supervision of the Lead Pastor.

#### **F. Personnel**

1. The board of elders may appoint pastoral assistants and other staff they deem appropriate. Each must become members along with their spouses and be in good standing. They will serve under the immediate direction of the Lead Pastor. Duties and responsibilities for each staff member shall be delineated in their respective employment packages.
2. Licensure as a minister of Trinity Bible Church shall be limited to those serving as Staff Pastors, assistant pastors, pastoral assistants, or elders, and shall be conferred or renewed annually by a recorded vote of the Board of Elders for each individual so licensed.

## **Article 4: Ministries**

1. The board of elders may determine, direct, or dissolve ministries (e.g., benevolence, age or other demographic, substance abuse, socio-cultural issues, etc.) at its prayerful discretion in accord with the Church's vision and mission stated in the above Preamble and Statement of Faith.
2. The Church's priorities in ministry seek to be grounded in making Jesus Christ known and savingly believed. Through Word and Spirit, the Church will worship the triune God (Eccl 12:13; John 4:23-24), build-up the members (1 Cor 14:26; Eph 4:15-16; 2 Peter 3:18), and serve all of God's image bearers in loving deed and in truth as ambassadors of Jesus Christ (Matt 10:40-42; 1 Cor 5:20; 1 John 3:16-18).

3. The Church may provide financial, service, or prayer support for domestic or international missionaries or ministries. Qualified candidates must be in agreement with the vision and mission of the Church as stated in these Bylaws. The Church may discontinue such support at the determination of the Elders. Refer to the Missions Policy for further details.

## **Article 5: Financial Standards**

### **A. Salaries and Compensation**

1. Non-staff elders serve in a voluntary capacity without compensation.
2. In accord with 1 Corinthians 9:7-8; Galatians 6:6; and 1 Timothy 5:17-18, the Church will compensate Staff Pastors with wages commensurate with their responsibilities considering availability of Church resources, contemporary cost of living expenses, and comparable salary structures.
3. All staff compensation packages, to include terms of employment, job description, salary and benefits, shall be determined by the board of elders. Compensation shall be disclosed at Members' Meetings in general budget terms rather than specific line items in order to preserve the privacy of the staff member.
4. All staff compensation shall be reviewed as a routine part of the budgeting process and necessary adjustments made upon a vote of the board of elders.
5. The board of elders may elect to offer an honorarium as compensation to an individual who is invited to preach or teach on a special occasion.
6. Upon resignation or dismissal of a Pastor or other staff member, the elders shall determine any terms of severance.

### **B. Financial Propriety**

1. No elder, deacon, or other member shall be authorized to borrow money or place a mortgage or lien on any of the Church's material possessions without prior express approval by a three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.
2. No real property belonging to the Church shall be sold without a three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting.
3. Upon a three-fourths approval vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting, the board of elders shall have the authority to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Church such notes, bonds, mortgages, or other instruments of indebtedness as shall be required to exercise the financial obligations of the Church.
4. No member shall solicit money or other support in the name of the Church or its ministries without the prior approval of the elders.

## **Article 6: Amendments to the Bylaws**

1. These Bylaws, including the Statement of Faith and Church Covenant, may be amended upon the recommendation of the elders and approval by a vote of three-fourths of members present and voting at a

Members' Meeting.

2. The amendment(s) to be considered shall be published at least four weeks prior to the vote.

## **Article 7: Dissolution of the Corporation**

If in the providence of God, it becomes necessary for this Church to be dissolved as an incorporated entity, the board of elders, with the majority vote of the members present and voting at a Members' Meeting, shall cause the assets of the Church to be transferred to another nonprofit corporation with purposes compatible with the mission of the Church as expressed in the above Preamble and Statement of Faith of Trinity Bible Church.