



redemptionhill
C H U R C H

Constitution & Bylaws of Redemption Hill Church

(Revised June 25, 2023)

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CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF REDEMPTION HILL CHURCH

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Constitution and Bylaws of Redemption Hill Church

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(Bylaws and doctrinal statement revised and approved June 25, 2023)

PREAMBLE

Resting our faith fully in the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, believing that the Bible is God's revealed truth and authority for our lives, committed to biblical virtues and absolutes, and supporting the historic Baptist distinctives, we unite ourselves as a family of immersed believers and adopt the following Doctrinal Statement, Covenant, Constitution and Bylaws for our government, plan of worship and service.

The following assumptions have been made in preparing these documents:

1. The Bible gives general administrative guidelines within which we seek to operate. We seek to be thoroughly biblical in our approach, but understand that there is room for flexibility, creativity and purposeful change in structures and procedures as we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is our final authority and governs all issues of our ministry.
2. These documents are tools to help us reach our goals. They are not ends in themselves.
3. These documents cannot be written in such a way as to preclude all interpretive questions and problems. Submission to and cooperation with the Holy Spirit is required to resolve problems and maintain unity.
4. The doctrinal statement is written to express our basic beliefs and to distinguish us as a Baptist church. Not all the beliefs stated affect one's view of salvation, but we recognize the changing social and religious environments which cause us to clarify or defend in greater detail those beliefs which distinguish us. We therefore recognize this doctrinal statement may need amplification in the future.

The Constitution

Article I *Name, Purpose, Polity, Affiliation*

Section 1. Name

This corporation will be known as Whittier Hills Baptist Church dba Redemption Hill Church (abbreviated RHC for this document).

Section 2. Purpose

See our North Star Document for purpose, priorities, and values. Our purpose is to bring glory to God. As an assembly of believers in Jesus Christ we will gather regularly to worship God, teach, equip and shepherd believers, penetrate our community and world with the gospel of Jesus Christ and send forth others with our support and prayers to do likewise.

Section 3. Polity

The government of this church is vested in its members. Christ is the head of His body, the Church. He has expressed His will for His body in the Scriptures. Therefore, the Bible is our final authority in all matters of doctrine and church life. The Bible entrusts the leadership of the Church, under Christ, who is the chief shepherd, to Elders, His undershepherds. The church membership is to identify those of its members who are qualified to serve as Elders. Once these men have been confirmed, the authority of the church membership shall be considered to reside with the Elders except for: changing the Constitution; dismissing or calling the Lead Pastor; confirmation of Elders; acquiring or disposing of church real property or incurring certain indebtedness in the corporate name; approval of the Annual Church Budgets; and any other items the Elders may deem necessary to bring to the membership (I Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5, I Peter 5:1-2).

Section 4. Affiliation and Cooperation

We will cooperate with other associations who share our faith, provided that partnership advances God's purpose and does not conflict with biblical revelation and commitments we make in these documents.

Article II *Statement of Faith*

God

We believe in one holy, loving, and sovereign God, Creator of all things, who exists eternally in three equally divine Persons: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each divine Person shares the same nature and attributes and is equally worthy of worship, honor, and obedience.

Scripture

We believe that the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, is God's word to us through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

Humanity

God created Adam and Eve—man and woman—in his image: good, righteous, and with the purpose of glorifying him, enjoying him, and carrying out his will on earth. Adam and Eve sinned and incurred physical and spiritual death. While still faintly reflecting the image of God, all human beings—in union with Adam—are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath and condemnation. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled, and renewed.

Jesus Christ

We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, God incarnate, fully God and fully human, two natures in one Person. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate, Lord and Judge. He is the only mediator between God and humanity, and through Him every believer may approach God directly.

Salvation

We believe that salvation is completely the work of God apart from any human merit. As Savior, Jesus Christ paid the penalty for sin, conquered death, and freed us from the power of sin and Satan by His substitutionary death and resurrection. By faith in Him alone a lost sinner is forgiven of his sins, made a child of God forever, and given all that he needs for spiritual life, including direct access to God and the gift of the Spirit, who brings to completion the work of Christ in us.

The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a person and is fully God, worthy of worship and honor. He was actively involved in the work of creation, the writing of Scripture, and Jesus's earthly ministry. He regenerates believers, brings us into union with Christ, and incorporates us into the family of God, the body of Christ. He also indwells, enlightens, guides, empowers, and transforms believers for Christlike living and service.

The Church

We believe that the true church consists of all those who have placed their faith in Christ alone for salvation. The true church is manifested in local churches. The purpose of the church is to glorify God by building up its members in the faith, by teaching and practicing the Word, by fellowship, by keeping the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), by advancing and communicating the gospel to the entire world, and by being His worshipping people now and forever.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are commanded by the Lord Jesus himself as ongoing practices for the good of his church. They are both meant for believers only: baptism symbolizing a visible testimony of our faith and our entrance into the new covenant community, the Lord's Supper regularly pointing us to our covenant relationship with God through Christ. Together they are simultaneously God's pledge to us, a reminder of Christ's work, our public vows of submission to the once crucified and now resurrected Christ, and anticipations of his return and of the consummation of all things.

The Christian Life

We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. We are saved by grace, and this grace moves us toward joyful obedience to all of Jesus's commands. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially.

Christians are thus called to make every effort to grow in Christlikeness and to engage in God's redemptive mission in the world.

Christ's Return and the Christian Hope

We believe in the pre-millennial bodily return of Jesus Christ. The time of his return is known only to God. After Jesus returns, he will raise the dead bodily and judge the whole world—assigning unbelievers to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and believers to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth.

The Relationship between Church and State

Recognizing the God-ordained institution of human governments, we believe that each local church is self-governing in function and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority. We further believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life and that each one should be free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience.

Marriage, Sexuality, and Gender

We believe that marriage refers to the exclusive union, instituted by God, of one biological man and one biological woman joined as husband and wife. According to Scripture, sexual intimacy of any kind is to occur only between a man and woman married to each other. All sexual activity outside of marriage is prohibited.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, incest, use of pornography, or pedophilia, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that gender and biological sex are inseparable, and affirming a gender different than one's biological sex, or any attempt to change one's sex, is sinful and offensive to God in that it violates God's good creational design.

We believe that in order to preserve the unity, purity, and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by the church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage, Sexuality, and Gender, and conduct themselves accordingly.

Biblical Authority

The statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our faith. The Bible itself, as the inspired and inerrant Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, church practice, and all human conduct, is the chief and ultimate source of all that we believe. For purposes of church doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Elders are the church's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

Historic Distinctives of Baptists

- The Bible is the final authority for faith and practice
- The priesthood of all believers
- Two symbolic ordinances, believer's baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper
- Local church autonomy
- Separation of church and state

Bylaws

Article I *Membership*

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

All who have professed faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, publicly evidenced this faith through believer's baptism, have expressed their intention to live according to the will of God as revealed in the Bible, and are willing to submit to the authority of the church in matters of spiritual life and discipline may become a member of RHC.

Section 2. Admission to the Membership

The Elders will establish procedures which ensure that those who desire to unite with RHC are informed of our beliefs, practices, and ministries. Furthermore, the Elders will establish a process to ascertain an applicant's testimony of faith, baptism, and ministry interests. All applicants must be in agreement with the Statement of Faith, comply with all the church's procedures, and meet all prerequisites as established by the Elders. The Elders shall determine if the membership requirements have been met. The Elders will recommend potential members at a business meeting for approval by the membership (two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting required).

Section 3. Termination of Membership

- a. Request of a letter from another church: Any active member in good standing may have another church of like faith and practice with whom they are seeking membership request a letter of recommendation from RHC.
- b. Personal request: A member may request in writing that his name be removed from the roll, in which case no letter will be issued.
- c. Death
- d. Inaction: When a member does not attend church services and support the ministry as a contributor of record, for one year, they automatically become inactive and forfeit the privileges of membership. The Elders will attempt to make contact with the individual by phone or through their address of record and may waive their inactive status at a subsequent Elders' meeting.
- e. Discipline: Sadly, some believers are overtaken by sin (Gal. 6:1) and forsake their obedient lifestyle. Action to restore such members will be initiated by the Elders in accordance with the biblical process (Mt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-5; 1 Tim. 5:19-20). When repentance is absent and/or there is refusal to make confession and enter a restoration process, the Elders may recommend termination of membership.

Elders may terminate membership for all the above reasons except in the case of discipline, which requires a two-thirds majority of members present and voting. A disciplined member will be advised in advance of the action, and the vote will be taken by secret ballot.

Section 4. Responsibilities of Members

Each member is expected to seek continued growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Bible; to be faithful and systematic in the generous investment of time, gifts, abilities, and resources; to preserve the unity of the Spirit within the congregation in both its doctrine and practice; and to submit voluntarily to the designated leaders of the church. If, after consultation with the Elders, any members are unable to live in harmony with the beliefs and practices of RHC, they agree to quietly remove themselves and refrain from cultivating conflict and disruption.

ARTICLE II *Church Government*

Section 1. Members of the church

Authority ultimately resides in the members of the congregation and is exercised in their formal meetings. By this Constitution and Bylaws they exercise their right of final determination and also delegate authority for the orderly administration of their affairs.

Section 2. Lead Pastor

Qualifications

The Lead Pastor will be the primary leader, teacher, shepherd and guide of the church. He will perform all of the biblical duties of the pastoral office. He shall meet the requirements of I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. The Lead Pastor shall be a qualified minister, a man of true Christian experience and established character who conscientiously and with no mental reservation subscribes to the Statement of Faith of the Church.

Duties

The Lead Pastor shall serve for an indefinite period of time. He shall be a voting member of the Board of Elders and, by virtue of this office, shall be an ex-officio member of all organized groups. His duties will be specified in his call to serve, based upon his gifts, experience and the current needs of the church. The Lead Pastor shall be responsible for the direction and supervision of the pastoral staff and all church employees. He will partner with the elders in establishing positions, titles, duties, qualifications, and compensation, if any, for each staff member. The Lead Pastor is responsible for the hiring and termination of all staff. Hiring and termination of staff Pastors shall be done with the concurrence of the Board of Elders. A newly called Lead Pastor shall assess and evaluate existing pastoral staff and make changes as he feels necessary with the concurrence of the Board of Elders. Any alteration of the budget for additional staff shall require congregational approval once the Elders have agreed on a budget to present to the congregation. In the event there is no Lead Pastor, the Board of Elders, by consensus, may hire or terminate ministerial and support staff members.

Vacancy

In the instance of a vacancy in the role of the Lead Pastor, the Board of Elders will initiate a process to seek a qualified candidate. The Elders will recommend a candidate to the congregation, followed by opportunities for the congregation to meet the candidate and his family. No vote will be taken for at least two weeks following the recommendation. A

minimum two-thirds majority of members present and voting is required to extend a call. The vote will be by secret ballot.

Discipline

The Lead Pastor may resign or his services may be terminated by the church with a minimum of 30 days prior written notice. If there is question about the congregation's support of the Lead Pastor, upon approval of two-thirds of the Elders they will request a vote of confidence from the membership. They must provide at least two weeks written notice of a congregational meeting for this purpose. A simple majority of members present and voting will sustain the Pastor. If the majority vote to remove the Pastor, notice of termination will be provided to him. If the Elders confirm sinful behavior on the part of the Lead Pastor that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-8; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, they may act to immediately remove the Pastor from all privileges, responsibilities, and duties, pending a vote of the membership to affirm their action. If he chooses, the Lead Pastor will be given opportunity to address the charges before the vote is taken.

Section 3. Other Ministerial Staff

Staff Pastors and Ministry Directors serve for indefinite terms which may be terminated by either party with a minimum of 30 days written notice. While budgetary considerations are approved by the membership, the hiring, supervision, and termination of ministry staff are the direct responsibility of the Lead Pastor, with ultimate approval lying with the Elders. If the Elders confirm sinful behavior on the part of any ministerial staff that is disqualifying according to 1 Timothy 3:1-8; 5:19-20, and Titus 1:5-9, it is sufficient cause for immediate termination.

Section 4. Board of Elders

The Elders will work alongside the pastoral staff to oversee the affairs of the church. Together they will establish the church's mission and vision, and develop necessary ministries and policies to implement them.

The Elders are the Board of Directors of the corporation. They will elect from their members a Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer as corporate officers to preside at general church business meetings.

- a. Chairman: The Chairman is the chief executive officer of the corporation for legal purposes. He leads the meetings of the Elders, sets the agenda, and cooperates with the staff to lead the development and implementation of RHC's mission, vision, and strategic plans.
- b. Secretary: The Secretary is responsible to keep accurate records of the deliberations and action of the Elders.
- c. Treasurer: The Treasurer serves as the chief financial officer of the corporation. He is responsible to oversee the processes for receiving, recording, and disbursing of all church funds, and for maintaining the records of all church accounts; to assist in the preparation of the annual church budget; to ensure conformity to budgetary requirements and generally accepted accounting and reporting practices; to regularly report the financial condition of RHC to the Elders; to advise the Elders on financial

matters; and to serve in partnership with staff, the Finance Manager, Deacon, or other contracted financial services who will assist him in his duties.

Duties

- a. Willingly lead the Redemption Hill church family by our consistent and growing example of godly character and life; and by faithfully attending to each of the five key responsibilities laid on us by God's word: ministry of the word, ministry of prayer, equipping others for ministry, shepherding people in godliness, and humbly exercising authority on Christ's behalf.
- b. Model the character and leadership qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 & Titus 1:5-9 as we serve the congregation and fellow Elders.
- c. Abide by the Constitution and Bylaws of RHC, the Elder Expectations and Benchmarks, and the policies as established by the Elder board.
- d. Guard the unity of the Elder team—resolving differences quickly and in a biblical manner, praying for and seeking the best for other team members, and graciously supporting all group decisions.
- e. Actively build a leadership culture of encouragement, gracious truth-telling, constructive dialogue and debate, and Spirit-led decision making.
- f. Faithfully steward our call as Elders with an attentive mind, a responsive heart, and a sensitivity to God's leading and direction.

Qualifications and Term of Office

Biological male members of the congregation who meet the character and leadership qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are eligible to serve as Elders. Terms of service are three years with approximately one-third being elected each year. Two consecutive terms may be served, with congregational approval required for each term. Upon completion of two full elective terms, at least one year is required before re-election to the Elders. Mid-year vacancies to all elected offices may be filled by appointment of the Elders until the next annual election. Time served as an appointed member does not count toward term limits.

The Lead Pastor and staff Pastors are considered elders throughout their ministry. They will serve as voting members of the Elders throughout their ministry on a rotating basis, per the requirements below, except in matters that pertain to themselves and if their inclusion would increase the number of staff Elders to more than 49% of the total number of Elders. Other staff may be invited by the Elders to participate in their meetings in a non-voting capacity. There must be a minimum of two staff, and three non-staff Elders and a maximum of 12. The members of the Elder Board, by action of their election, determine the size of the Elders for that election cycle. An Elder may be removed from office by recommendation of two-thirds of the Elders to the congregation and a two-thirds majority affirmation of members present and voting. A quorum for business sessions of the Elders requires at least 60% of the Elders, of which at least 51% are non-staff elders that have been elected from the congregation.

Section 5. Deacons

Deacons comprise a second level of church leadership who are appointed by and accountable to assist the Elders and staff Pastors. Biological male and female members of the congregation who meet the character and leadership qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 are eligible to serve as Deacons. Deacons will be selected by the appropriate ministry head and confirmed by the Elders. Deacon positions may be added or withdrawn by the Elders at any time dependent upon existing needs. There are no term limits for Deacons. However, an annual reaffirmation process, as determined by the Elders, shall occur to confirm Deacons are willing to continue to serve.

Section 6. Commissions

As ministry needs dictate, the Board of Elders may appoint directors of specific ministries and establish other commissions, committees, task forces, or teams to assist the Elders in implementing the mission of the church. For all such ministries, commissions, committees, task forces or teams, the Board of Elders will appoint their members; establish their qualifications, duties, authority, and accountability relationships; and determine their tenure.

ARTICLE III *Meetings*

Section 1. Worship Services

Regular services for worship and instruction will be held weekly and at such times as will best facilitate the mission and ministry of the church and needs of the community. The schedule will be set by the Elders and include regular celebration of believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Section 2. Business Meetings

Annual Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting shall be held prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. The time and place shall be determined by the Board of Elders, and prior notice shall be given to members. The budget must be approved by the members of the church prior to the start of the new fiscal year.

Notice of Meetings

Notice of all business meetings shall be made public and published for two regularly scheduled services of the church, at least one of which is on a Sunday. At least one week's time must elapse between the first notice and the meeting. Any slate of nominees shall be posted 14 days prior to the business meeting.

Special Business Meetings

The Board of Elders shall call special business meetings of the congregation as needed. At least 10 days' notice will be given with at least one announcement at the previous weekend's services shall be required for any special business meeting. Announcement of special meetings shall also include the stated purpose of the meeting, and the agenda will be limited to that purpose.

Quorum

A simple majority of members present and voting will decide any action except as otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws. This vote shall be forwarded to the Board of Elders as a recommendation. The Board of Elders will then make the final decision on those matters except as otherwise specified in this Constitution and Bylaws. Any proposal to be presented at a meeting must first be presented in writing to the Elders for review.

Voting Rights

Only those active members 18 years old and above are eligible to vote.

ARTICLE IV *Miscellany*

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year of the church will be July 1 through June 30.

Section 2. Rules of Order

It is understood that the Bible is our final authority and that the biblical principles of unity, cooperation, and doing all things to the glory of Jesus Christ are the guiding concern. If procedural assistance is required, the latest edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* will be consulted.

Section 3. Minutes and Agenda

Minutes of church business meetings and Elders' meetings are the official records of the corporation. The church secretary of the Elders will maintain these records. Matters of a sensitive nature may be treated as confidential in the records. All other minutes of meetings, balance sheets, and budget reports are open to church members upon request. All other records are only available to church members with the permission of the Elders.

Section 4. Annual Budget

Elders will recommend a budget for approval by the membership prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. Once approved, the budget is not a mandate to spend, but provides reasonable parameters for fulfilling the ministry in the coming year. The Elders are authorized and responsible to conduct the affairs of the church within that budget and see that delegated budget managers also do so. The Elders are also authorized to establish, manage, and distribute designated funds which will advance the ministry of the church. The elder may also take action outside the budget if emergency conditions exist where the delay would likely cause material or irreparable loss, damage, or injury to people, property, or the welfare of the church, provided these expenses are reported to the congregation at the regular business meeting.

Section 5. Financial Review

A review of the church financial records will be conducted annually, in accordance with acceptable practices and by professionally qualified individuals external to RHC. Appropriate professionals will be approved by the Elders.

Section 6. Gifts

All financial gifts, equipment, physical property, land, or any other donation given to the church, or any of its ministries, becomes the sole possession of the church. Designated gifts may only be given to funds established by the Elders, and will be used for the purposes designated within legal limits. If a gift is given under unacceptable conditions or for unapproved purposes, we will seek an appropriate designation or attempt to return the gift to the donor.

Section 7. Financial Policy

Funding for the local and worldwide ministry of RHC will be obtained through the voluntary gifts of the members and friends of the church. All fundraisers are subject to approval by the Elders according to adopted policy. Funds for auxiliary or parachurch ministries may not be solicited without approval of the Elders.

Section 8. Property Rights

The assets of the church are irrevocably dedicated to evangelical religious or charitable purposes. No part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private persons (with the exception of pastoral residences of which the church shares ownership). Members of this church have no property rights and upon termination of their membership, they shall be entitled to no personal interest in the assets. If a division occurs in the church, the real property of the church belongs to those members present and eligible to vote at a properly called business meeting.

In the event of dissolution, liquidation, or abandonment of the corporation, its assets remaining after payment of, or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities of this corporation, will be distributed to another corporation with purposes similar to those identified in these bylaws.

ARTICLE V *Amendments*

Section 1. Proposal of Amendments

Any member may submit proposed amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws, along with the reasons and rationale, to the Board of Elders. The Board of Elders shall consider all such proposed amendments and may request the attendance of amendment advocates to

present their case. If a proposed amendment is approved by the Board of Elders it will be considered and voted on by the congregation according to guidance below in Section 2.

If a proposed amendment is rejected by the Board of Elders, the proposed amendment may be submitted to the church membership by the Board of Elders or by written appeal of ten or more members.

Section 2. Action on Amendments

This Constitution and Bylaws, except Article II (Statement of Faith) of the Constitution and Article V (Amendments) of the Bylaws, may be amended at any business meeting of the church by a two-thirds majority vote of members present and voting.

Article II of the Constitution and Article V of the Bylaws may be amended by a vote of eighty-five percent (85%) of the members present and voting.

In both cases the proposed amendment(s) shall be made public and published for two regularly scheduled services of the church, at least one of which is on a Sunday. At least one week's time must elapse between the first notice and the meeting. Voting shall be by secret ballot.

ARTICLE VI *Resolution*

Be it resolved that this Constitution and Bylaws, June 25, 2023 will serve as a complete repeal, revocation and cancellation of all previously existing Constitutions and Bylaws of Redemption Hill Church. Immediately upon approval, it will become the operating document of the church, with all adjustments phased into operation by January 1, 2024.