

Constitution and Bylaws of Cross Community Church, Poteau, Oklahoma

- I. Preamble – This Constitution and these Bylaws are intended to
 - A. preserve and secure the principles of our faith;
 - B. preserve the liberties of each individual member of the church;
 - C. ensure freedom of action of independence from any religious body or organization;
and
 - D. provide for orderly conduct of internal affairs, in dealing with others, and of governing church members.
- II. Name, plan of operation, and location – The name of this church shall be Cross Community Church—also referred to as CCC. The name was changed from Immanuel Baptist Church during a special business meeting by a quorum of the membership on May 20, 2012 (see Amendment to the Constitution section). CCC is a not-for-profit, religious corporation located in Poteau, Oklahoma, and Pocola, Oklahoma. CCC shall operate under the laws of the State of Oklahoma and shall be incorporated as Cross Community Church, Inc., pursuant to Articles of Incorporation that are filed with the Oklahoma Secretary of State and the Office of the Register of Deeds, LeFlore County, Oklahoma. CCC shall be affiliated with the LeFlore Baptist Association, the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, and the Southern Baptist Convention.
- III. Purpose – The mission of CCC is to lead all people to become fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.
- IV. Articles of Faith
 - A. The Word of God is enclosed in both the Old and New Testaments. Both are inspired by God—in whole and in part. They are error-free in the original writings and are the supreme authority of faith and practice for the believer in Jesus Christ. Scripture is to serve as the final authority on all issues relating to faith and practice. There is only one true interpretation of any Biblical passage with different practical applications (Psalm 119:160; II Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12).
 - B. There is one living and true God who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. God is one in essence while existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Godhead possesses precisely the same nature and attributes, each functions differently in respect to God’s purposes and dealings with man (Deuteronomy 4:39; 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; John 1:1, 14; 5:21-23; Acts 5: 3-4).

- C. The first person of the Trinity orders and directs all things according to His own purpose, pleasure, and grace. The Father is sovereign in creation, providence, and redemption. He has decreed all things that come to pass for His own glory. He graciously involves Himself in the affairs of men; hears and answers prayer; and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ (I Chronicles 29:11; Psalm 103:19; Matthew 6:9; John 5:19-24; Ephesians 1:3-6).
- D. The second person of the Trinity is both the eternal Son of God and virgin-born Son of Man: Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. Having led a sinless life, He satisfied the Father's justice concerning sin with His substitutionary death. His body was resurrected, He physically ascended to the Father, and He will visibly return to earth to establish His earthly kingdom (John 1:14-18; Acts 1:11; Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 2:16-18; Revelation 20:11-15).
- E. The third person of the Trinity executes the will of God in the world of men. It is the Holy Spirit who applies the salvation that Jesus Christ secured through His death on the cross. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers believers to live lifestyles pleasing to God and endows believers with special gifts that equip them to accomplish distinct ministries which were planned beforehand by God the Father (John 1:15-16; 3:1-8; 15:4-15; 16:7-11; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 5:16-25; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18-21).
- F. Man was directly created by God in the image of God to enjoy His fellowship and to fulfill God's will on earth. Through the first humans, Adam and Eve, humanity sinned by a voluntary act of personal disobedience to the will of God; as a result, all people are spiritually dead and subject to the certainty of physical death. The fall of humanity was a non-repeatable historical fact—the effects of which are transmitted to all persons, each of whom is born with a sinful nature and sins habitually in thought, word, and deed (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; 3:3-4; Romans 1:18-32; 3:10-23; Ephesians 2:1-3).
- G. Jesus Christ died for our sins as the only sufficient, substitutionary sacrifice. All who believe in Him are declared justified by the Father on the grounds of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. All who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by grace through faith have been regenerated by and baptized in the Holy Spirit. They thereby become the children of God forever and members of the one true Church—the universal Body of Christ. This salvation will result in righteous living and good works as the believer submits his or her life to the control of the Holy Spirit who directs the life of the believer in harmony with the Word of God (John 1:12; 3:16; 5:24; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 3:21-26; 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-10; Titus 3:4-7; Hebrews 10:10-12; 1 John 5:11-13).
- H. Those whom Christ has saved and that the Spirit indwells, though still sinful, will indeed continue in their sanctification (being made holy) and will never lose their salvation (John 17:12; Philippians 1:6; Hebrews 10:23; 12:2).

- I. All who have been regenerated by the Holy Spirit belong to the one true universal Church and are directed by the Scriptures to associate with local, visible churches. The local church is the only Scriptural representation of Christ's universal Church and consists only of regenerated believers. The purpose of the church is to lead people to Christ, mature them in the faith, and equip them for personal ministry.
- J. Two ordinances have been committed to the local church. These are ordinances to be observed by the church in its present age. They are, however, not to be regarded as means for man's salvation (Matthew 3:13-17; 16:13-28; 26:26-30; 28:18-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-47; 4:1-16; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16, 21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12; Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:11-13; Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 Peter 5:1-3). These two ordinances are Scriptural baptism and the Lord's Supper.
1. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior; the believer's death to sin and the burial of the old life; and the believer's resurrection—he or she walks in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Baptism is a testimony to his or her faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.
 2. The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby born-again believers, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.
- K. God will, in His own time and in His own way, bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their rewards and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord (Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27, 30, 36, 44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40, 48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28, 35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1 ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-2:12; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7 ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13).
- L. The family is as described in the *Baptist Faith and Message* of 2000 (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6, 15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15, 17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4;

Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8; 14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7).

1. God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His Church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to Biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.
 2. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the Church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper.
 3. Children, from the moment of conception, are blessings and a heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to be the primary disciplers of their children and, as such, are to teach their children Biblical values; lead them through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline; and make choices based on Biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.
- V. Government – The government of CCC is vested in its members. The membership retains unto itself the right of self-government in all phases of its life and organization not delegated specifically to the body of Elders. It recognizes the need for mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches. This church will cooperate with and mutually work with LeFlore Baptist Association, Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, and the Southern Baptist Convention.
- VI. Dissolution – In the event of dissolution of the church, all of its assets and property of every nature and description whatsoever shall be distributed at the direction of the Elders to a non-profit Christian organization within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- VII. Amendment – Any proposed amendment to this Constitution or the Bylaws shall be presented in writing to the Elder body for consideration. The Elders may then present the amendment to the church body at least one month before a regular or special church business meeting. Approval or disapproval shall be by simple majority vote of the voting members of the church who are present at the business meeting.

Bylaws

- I. Membership – We acknowledge that all who have been regenerated by Christ belong to the one true universal Church; however, each local congregation of the body of Christ has the right to determine qualifications for membership in that local body. As a result, the Elders of CCC have determined to call believers into meaningful, committed membership (hereafter referred to as “covenant membership”) based on the standards set forth in the *Membership Covenant*.
- A. Qualifications – Individuals of twelve years of age or older may present themselves for covenant membership upon making a profession of personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Each potential new member shall
1. submit a written statement of his or her faith in Christ and his or her intent, with God’s help, to pursue a life that will bring glory to God;
 2. be Scripturally baptized by immersion;
 3. agree to the Articles of Faith and governance of CCC;
 4. attend a class or event describing covenant membership at CCC;
 5. join a Community Group; and
 6. enter into a covenant relationship with this church by signing the *Membership Covenant*.
- B. Continuation of covenant membership – Membership in this church shall be continued annually when a member reaffirms his or her commitment to walk in covenant relationship with this church by participating in an annual membership review.
- C. Termination – The separation process shall follow that laid out in Scripture. By applying for and accepting covenant membership in this church, all members submit themselves to the care and correction of the Elders and, by signing the *Membership Covenant*, agree not to resign from this membership in an attempt to avoid such care and correction. The Elders will make reasonable attempts to counsel members for restoration prior to any action of dismissal. There are two types of separation from covenant membership at CCC:
1. Voluntary termination of membership – This type of termination is available to any member in good standing upon written request by that member. Where appropriate, upon request, a member may be granted a letter of transfer to the evangelical church of his or her choice. The Elders may reinstate voluntarily

terminated members upon satisfactory fulfillment of the new-member process and approval.

2. Forced termination – It is the responsibility of the Elders, as described in Acts 20:28, to “be on guard for themselves and all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” Shepherding includes both the care and correction of the sheep. As a consequence, the Elders may separate a member of the flock from membership for
 - a. departure from previously expressed agreement with the CCC Articles of Faith;
 - b. conduct that mars the testimony of the Church or evidences a continued unrepentant departure from Biblical morality;
 - c. manifestation of disinterest and/or inactivity in the life of the church; or
 - d. other reasons as set forth in the Scriptures.

II. Church officers – All church officers must be covenant members of the church in good standing.

A. Elders

1. The qualifications for an Elder shall be consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9. His training, skills, and experiences are needed in this area of leadership. CCC shall have a minimum of three.
2. The responsibilities of the Elder body generally fall into areas involving administration, shepherding, preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, and guiding the church to grow and fulfill its purposes. Specifically, these responsibilities include the following:
 - a. Elders and the Senior Pastor shall work as a team to provide Biblical leadership for the church.
 - b. When the need arises, individual Elders will be disciplined by the Elder body.
 - c. Elders will not act individually but as a group and cannot make any governing decisions outside of the Elder body.
 - d. The Elder body is entrusted by the church to approve or disapprove all financial transactions dealing with day-to-day operations and maintenance. All major financial transactions that are equal to or more than ten percent (10%) of the total budget will be brought before the church for a vote at regular or special business meetings.
 - e. Except for the hiring or termination of the Senior Pastor, the Elder body is entrusted by the church to approve or disapprove the hiring or termination of all paid and unpaid church staff.
 - f. Any Elder may be an ex-officio member of all church task teams or committees, including the Pastor Selection Committee.

- g. Elders may be asked to speak in the Pastor's absence or assist the Pastor, if needed, in securing pulpit supply.
- h. The Elder body shall hold in trust the property of the church.
- i. The signing of any and all legal documents involving the sale, mortgage, purchase, or lease of church property or any other legal documents shall be subject to a vote of approval by the Elder body and must be signed by a designated representative of the Elder body.
- j. Elders shall elect officers for and from the Elder body consisting of a chairman, vice chairman, and a secretary; these officers shall hold office until such time as a vacancy occurs or until a majority of the Elders decide otherwise.

3. Call

- a. New Elders shall be chosen and called whenever the current Elders see the need.
- b. The Elder body will interview potential candidates and make final recommendations to the church.
- c. The approval vote for a potential Elder shall take place at a special business meeting; notice of at least one full week shall be given to the members.
- d. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the present voting members of CCC will be necessary for confirmation.

- 4. Terms of service – An Elder shall serve until the relationship is terminated by personal request or the recommendation of the Elder body. Approval of termination shall be by a simple majority vote of the church during a specially called business meeting.

B. Senior Pastor

- 1. The qualifications for the Senior Pastor shall be the same as Elders consistent with those listed in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
- 2. The Senior Pastor will serve as an Elder.
- 3. The responsibilities of the Senior Pastor generally fall into the areas of preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, leading, and guiding the vision of the church to grow and fulfill its purposes. Specifically, these responsibilities include the following:
 - a. The Senior Pastor is to oversee the church staff and the day-to-day operations of the church in cooperation with the Elders.
 - b. He shall lead and encourage the church and all leaders of the church in performing their tasks.

- c. The Senior Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all church operation and decision-making groups as well as any committees except the Senior Pastor Selection Committee.
- d. Vacancy
 - i. A Pastor Selection Committee shall be appointed by the Elders to seek out a suitable Senior Pastor. This committee's recommendation will serve as the official nomination to be brought before the church for a vote.
 - ii. The Pastor Selection Committee will recommend only one candidate at a time.
 - iii. The Senior Pastor's election shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Notice of at least one full week shall be given to the members.
 - iv. An affirmative vote of three-fourths (3/4) of the present voting members of CCC will be necessary for confirmation.

4. Terms of service

- a. The chosen Senior Pastor shall serve until the relationship is terminated either by his written notice submitted to the Elder body or by a decision of the Elder body.
- b. In either case, all pastoral duties will cease at a date determined by the Elders.
- c. If the Elders have terminated the relationship:
 - i. The Senior Pastor may within ten (10) days appeal the termination by the Elder body to the covenant membership of the church.
 - ii. The Elders must call a special business meeting within thirty (30) days of the appeal where three-fourths (3/4) of the covenant members present may vote to retain the Senior Pastor.
 - iii. If the Senior Pastor is terminated, he will automatically be removed from all other offices at CCC.

C. Church staff

1. The Elders in cooperation with the Senior Pastor shall employ or call staff as they see need.
2. Church staff consists of all paid employees, including Pastors and Elders, who are involved in the day-to-day operations of the church.
3. Staff members shall be employed by CCC under the direction of the Senior Pastor.
4. A written job description will be prepared when the need for church staff is determined.

D. Deacons

1. Deacons shall be elected for life and may among themselves determine the best way to serve the church (e.g., rotational basis or no rotation at all).
2. Qualifications
 - a. Deacons must meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - b. A Deacon shall demonstrate a servant's heart and be an exemplary Christian testimony in private, family, and public life; he must be a committed Christian and a supporter and promoter of the church faith, practice, programs, and ministries.
3. Election
 - a. When the need for more Deacons occurs, the Chairman of the Deacons shall work with the Deacon body and the Elders to prayerfully identify and select potential Deacon candidates.
 - b. The Deacon body will then interview and work with possible candidates to confirm their call as Deacons.
 - c. A list of qualified candidates shall then be presented to the Elder body for approval.
4. Duties
 - a. Elected Deacons shall elect their own chairman for one year of service.
 - b. Deacons serve in a ministry of cooperation, encouragement, and counsel with the Elders concerning the progress and welfare of the church.
 - c. Deacons assist the Elders in ministering to the members by implementing a Deacon ministry plan.
 - d. Deacons assist the Elders when necessary for the sake of their ministry of the Word and Prayer.
 - e. Deacons assist the Elders in administering the church ordinances.

E. Moderator

1. The church Moderator may be an Elder, Pastor, Deacon, staff member, or a lay leader appointed by the Elders to this position.
2. The Moderator shall preside at all regular and specially-called business meetings of the church.
3. In the absence of the Moderator, an Elder or the Chairman of Deacons shall preside over the regular and special business meetings of the church.

4. The person presiding over a special business meeting shall ensure that a quorum is present and that at least one Elder is in attendance.

F. Clerk

1. The Clerk shall be appointed by the Elders and responsible for keeping an accurate record of all business meeting transactions of the church.
2. He or she shall keep a register of the names and addresses of the covenant members with dates of members' admissions to and dismissals from the church family and members' deaths.
3. All Clerk responsibilities may be delegated by the Elders.

G. Treasurer

1. The church Treasurer shall be appointed by the Elders as the custodian of all monies of the church and shall disburse these monies by checks as authorized by the Elders.
2. He or she shall keep, at all times, an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements and shall render a monthly and annually written report of this account to the Elders.
3. He or she shall be responsible for seeing that the offerings are properly received, counted, and deposited in the proper church bank account.
4. He or she shall properly record the names of all contributors and their offerings.
5. He or she shall be responsible for preparing for mailing a quarterly or annual record of contributions to donors.
6. All Treasurer responsibilities may be delegated by the Elders.

III. Church committees/teams

- A. The Elders may appoint committees or teams as needed for successfully accomplishing the mission and purposes of the church.
- B. All committees or teams shall have a minimum of three (3) members with one of the members serving as the chairperson who reports to the Elders.
- C. The chairperson shall submit budget requests to the Elders.
- D. The committees or teams will exist only as long as is needed for the accomplishment of the task at hand then disband when completed.

IV. Church meetings

A. Annual business meeting

1. The annual business meeting shall be held in December.
2. The agenda shall be circulated or made known to the church one week prior to the business meeting.
3. Should there be any unusual matter of interest to be brought before the annual meeting, notice shall be given to the membership a minimum of one week prior to that meeting.

B. Special business meeting

1. A special business meeting may be called by a majority of the Elders to consider urgent matters of significant nature beyond the scope of the Elder office.
2. Notice shall be given to the membership a minimum of one week prior to that meeting.

C. Quorum – The quorum consists of at least one-third (1/3) of the covenant members of CCC with at least one Elder in attendance.

D. Parliamentary rules – *Robert's Rules of Order* (newly revised edition) is adopted as the authority for parliamentary rules of procedure for all meetings that demand voting of the church members unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or the Bylaws.

V. Church discipline

A. Should any differences arise among covenant members, the aggrieved member shall follow the procedure given by our Lord in Matthew 18:15-17.

B. Should any case of gross breach of relationship or public scandal occur, the Elders shall endeavor to resolve the conflict. Should these efforts fail after following the process laid out in Scripture and diligently pursuing the member with opportunities for encouragement, admonishment, repentance, restoration, and reconciliation, membership may be terminated at CCC at the discretion of the Elders.

C. A person whose membership has been terminated for any offense may be restored by the Elder body upon evidence of the person's repentance and reformation.

Ratified by action of the church in its business meeting on _____(date).

Moderator: _____

Church: Cross Community Church

Revised: July 9, 2019

Amendment to the Constitution

Following an Elder recommendation, a quorum of members of Immanuel Baptist Church voted to change the name of Immanuel Baptist Church to Cross Community Church during a special business meeting on May 20, 2012. As of September 9, 2012, Immanuel Baptist Church and all subsequent campuses shall be known as Cross Community Church.