

CONSTITUTION OF THE BERKELEY COVENANT CHURCH

Articles:

- I. Name.
- II. Affiliation.
- III. Confession of Faith.
- IV. Purpose.
- V. Membership.
- VI. Officers.
- VII. Board of Elders.
- VIII. Congregational Business Meetings.
- IX. Property.
- X. Amendments.

See also the bylaws.

PREAMBLE

(A Historical Statement from the Preamble of the Constitution and Bylaws of The Evangelical Covenant Church as of 1988)

The Evangelical Covenant Church has its roots in historical Christianity as it emerged in the Protestant Reformation, in the biblical instruction of the Lutheran State Church of Sweden, and in the great spiritual awakenings of the nineteenth century. These three influences have in large measure shaped its development and are to be borne in mind in seeking to understand its distinctive spirit.

The Covenant Church adheres to the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation regarding the Holy Scriptures, the Old and New Testament, as the Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct. It has traditionally valued the historic confessions of the Christian church, particularly the Apostles' Creed, while at the same time it has emphasized the sovereignty of the Word over all creedal interpretations. It has especially cherished the pietistic restatement of the doctrine of justification by faith as basic to its dual task of evangelism and Christian nurture, the New Testament emphasis upon personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, the reality of a fellowship of believers which recognizes but transcends theological differences, and the belief in baptism and the Lord's Supper

as divinely ordained sacraments of the church.... The principle of personal freedom, so highly esteemed by the Covenant, is to be distinguished from the individualism that disregards the centrality of the Word of God and mutual responsibilities and disciplines of the spiritual community.

This document, which is in harmony with the above preamble, is the constitution and bylaws of the Berkeley Covenant Church of Berkeley, California.

ARTICLE I. Name.

The name of this church shall be the Berkeley Covenant Church of Berkeley, California, Inc.

ARTICLE II. Affiliation.

This church is affiliated with The Evangelical Covenant Church and its Pacific Southwest Conference and is pledged to work in harmony with the denomination and its decisions and to support its program, policies, and institutions.

ARTICLE III. Confession of Faith.

This church believes that the Bible, the sacred writings of the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God and the only perfect authority and guide for Christian faith, doctrine, and life.

ARTICLE IV. Purpose.

The purpose of this church is to unite Christians in fellowship for spiritual development, for the winning of persons to Christ, and for the propagation of the gospel of Jesus Christ through Christian education, home and world mission, and the institutions conducted by The Evangelical Covenant Church and its local regional conferences. In order to achieve this purpose, this church, in the unity of the Spirit, shall use the gifts that God has given it and the means of grace which God has placed at its disposal: the Word of God, Baptism, and Holy Communion.

ARTICLE V. Membership.

Membership in the church is granted on application to those who through faith in God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have been born anew to a living hope, have been

baptized according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to live a Christian life, and promise to support the total ministry of the church and to share its fellowship and obligations.

ARTICLE VI. Officers.

The officers of the church shall be a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary and a treasurer.

Deleted: man

Deleted: man

ARTICLE VII. Board of Elders.

Section 1. The general administration of the church shall be vested in a body known as the Board of Elders. If circumstances of law requires action(s) by "trustees," the Board of Elders shall be known as "the Board of Trustees" and the members of it as "trustees." The Board of Elders shall also serve as a diaconate to supervise the spiritual life of the church.

Section 2. The Board of Elders shall consist of the officers of the church (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary) and three (3) or more other members as specified in the bylaws. The pastor shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Elders.

Deleted: man

Deleted: man

Deleted: ,

Deleted: six (6)

Deleted: , and the president of Covenant Women.

Section 3. The Board of Elders shall organize itself in a manner specified in the bylaws.

ARTICLE VIII. Congregational Business Meetings.

Section 1. Regular congregational business meetings shall be held three times a year, separated by at least two (2) months. The business year shall be from July 1 through June 30. The last regular business meeting will serve as the Annual Business Meeting and shall be held as near the end of the year as feasible. At the Annual Meeting, election to positions on the Board of Elders for the ensuing year shall be conducted by secret ballot. The church budget shall also be submitted at this meeting.

Deleted: quarterly

Deleted: quarterly

At the following meeting, the first congregational business meeting of the year, written reports shall be submitted by the pastor and by each ministry chair of the church. Audited financial reports shall be submitted by the treasurer for the church and each of its organizations at this time.

Deleted: progress

Deleted: administrative task force

Section 2. Notice of all business meetings shall be publicized on not less than two consecutive Sunday mornings prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE IX. Property.

In the event of schism within the church, from which we earnestly pray God to spare us, the title of all church property, real or personal, shall remain with the group that abides by this constitution, as determined by the executive board of the Pacific Southwest Conference. In the event of dissolution, the property and all assets of the church shall become and be the property of The Evangelical Covenant Church and the Pacific Southwest Conference.

ARTICLE X. Amendments.

Amendments in harmony with this constitution, and not in conflict with Covenant principles and policies, may be adopted and by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting in an annual meeting of the church, providing the proposed amendment was presented in written form at the preceding regular congregational business meeting. When this church receives appropriation aid from the regional conference and/or the denomination through subsidy or loans, proposed amendments must also be approved by the regional conference board and the executive secretary of the Covenant Home Missions.

Deleted: quarterly