

Constitution and Bylaws of Tulakes Covenant Fellowship

Article One: Name, Address, and Classification

1.1: Name- The legal and official name of this local church (hereafter referred to as “the church”) is Tulakes Covenant Fellowship, inc, (hereafter referred to as TCF) when referring to its total function as an instrument of Almighty God on earth, or it its meeting in general congregation.

1.2: Address- The Principal address of the church is 6715 NW 50th St, Bethany, OK, 73008.

1.3: Classification- This corporation is a religious corporation, organized as a not-for-profit entity, and its duration is perpetual. The status of the organization may be amended by the church leadership as needed.

Article Two: Vision, Mission, and Identity

2.1: Vision- To see the OKC Metro saturated with the Gospel of Christ’s kingdom in accordance with Christ’s vision in Acts 1:8..

2.2: Mission- On Christ’s authority and knowing that He goes with us, we are sent to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that He has commanded us. (Matthew 28:18-20).

2.3: Core Convictions

Christ-centered- We strive to keep Christ at the center of all that we do. “Eyes on Jesus.”
Convergence- We practice the convergence of Word and Spirit in the life and ministry of our church.

Canonical- We believe the Holy Scriptures (the historical 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books) are the inerrant and inspired Word of God delivered through the Holy Spirit to His Church through the Apostles. The Bible takes primacy in all matters of preaching, teaching, doctrine, discernment, and discipleship within the Church.

Credal- We affirm the historic Christian creeds from the first six ecumenical councils as wonderful summaries of ancient Gospel truth delivered to us by Christ through His Apostles. They are to be respected and consulted but not elevated above Scripture.

Confessional- We firmly confess Jesus Christ to be God in the flesh who lived, died, rose, ascended, and is coming again according to the Scriptures. We use the Philadelphia Confession of Faith (1742) and our church statement of faith to flesh out doctrinal distinctives for us.

Continuationist- We believe the Holy Spirit continues to move in His church as He always has in accordance with the commands of Scripture regarding spiritual gifts and the ministry of the Church.

Complementarian- We believe that the Lord has ordained sacred and specific roles for men and women which compliment rather than compete with one another.

Comprehensive– We believe that the Gospel of Jesus heals the whole person: heart, soul, mind, and body. We seek to honor Christ therefore in every way.

Article Three: Affiliations

3.1: Baptist Networks- TCF has elected to partner with the Metro Baptist Network locally (headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK) and Oklahoma Baptists regionally (headquartered in Oklahoma City, OK), and the SBC headquartered in Nashville, TN.

3.2: KMUSA- TCF has elected to partner with with Kingdom Ministries USA (headquartered in Novato, CA)

3.3: Convergence Church Network- TCF has elected to partner with the Convergence Church Network (headquartered in OKC, OK) as a network of like-minded churches pursuing Word and Spirit ministry together.

3.4: Independence- TCF is an independent congregation. All partnerships are voluntary and may be added to and/or amended by the church as necessary. TCF is lead by the Elders of TCF. Our Elders have a shared responsibility to reflect our distinctive and Biblical, relational, and corporate agreement in the leadership of the church, which includes the Senior Pastor. No outside entity shall have any administrative authority within this organization. Our leaders do, however, seek regular counsel and care for church related issues as well as personal and family life

Article Four: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

This Constitution and Bylaws may be altered or amended by a proposal of the Board of Directors/Elders and ratified by a congregational vote of members of the church body at any time deemed necessary. Any member of the church may suggest changes to the Constitution and Bylaws by submitting said change directly to the Board of Directors/Elders

Bylaws

Article One: Membership

1.1: Definitions- A member of TCF is a baptized and believing Christian who has agreed to partner with this local expression of the Universal Church of Jesus Christ by adhering to the qualifications listed below in section 1.2 of these Bylaws.

1. Members of TCF qualify to participate in regular membership activities such as worship services, small group meetings, congregational meetings, and educational seminars/classes.
2. Membership in TCF shall always be a voluntary act on the part of the member. A move on the part of an individual to become a member begins when said individual requests it.

3. There shall be only one class of members.

1.2: Qualifications for Membership:

- A. A member must have had a genuine experience of spiritual regeneration through faith in Jesus Christ, know Him as personal savior, submit to Him as Lord, and exhibit a desire to follow the Holy Spirit wherever He may lead.
- B. The individual member must agree to and endorse the Statement of Faith of TCF and accept this Constitution and Bylaws.
- C. The individual member must have been obedient to Scripture by having been baptized by immersion in water. The pastor(s) or eldership shall have the right and responsibility to review the validity of all baptisms.
- D. The individual member must have demonstrated commitment to TCF for at least three (3) months before being considered for membership. A person's sincerity in requesting membership is evidenced by the following.
 1. Regular attendance of worship services as able.
 2. Regular participation in some kind of ministry/service within the church.
 3. Regular financial support of NCF.
 4. Preservation of the unity and peace of the church fellowship.
 5. An attitude of cooperation with the church leadership (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17).
 6. A prospective member shall be approved by the eldership and ratified by current active members of the congregation.

1.3: Privileges of Membership

1. Members shall be eligible to participate in the ratification of new elders, new deacons, new church officers, and new members.
2. Members shall have the right to nominate prospective deacons to the Board of Elders/Directors.
3. Members shall have the opportunity to participate in the ratification of sales or purchases of church properties.
4. Members shall have the opportunity to participate in the ratification of the installation of a new Senior Pastor.
5. Members shall have the opportunity to participate in the ratification of a decision to dissolve the corporation.
6. Members shall have general voting rights at congregational meetings.
7. Members shall have the right to petition the Board of Elders/Directors regarding concerns and/or ideas related to the structure and daily function of the church.

1.4: Membership Meetings

1. **Regular meetings** are open for all members and include regularly scheduled worship services, small group meetings, or other gatherings/special meetings which may be sanctioned by the church Eldership.
2. **Annual meeting:** This shall be held during the month of January, weather permitting, at which time the members shall be informed of the status of church business deemed necessary by the pastor(s) or eldership. Written notice of the time and place for the annual meeting shall be given to each member at least ten (10) days before

the meeting occurs. Members may present questions or concerns to the Eldership during this meeting providing they have submitted their questions or concerns in writing prior to the meeting. Discussion of any concerns may take place at this meeting or be addressed at a later specified time. Roberts Rules of Order will be the standard for conducting the annual meeting. One half of the membership and a majority of the Eldership being present shall be considered a quorum for any voting that is necessary. If an item arises which requires membership voting, it is to be held by secret ballot, and the ballots shall be submitted to the Eldership for counting. Each individual member is entitled to one vote.

3. **Items** brought before the membership for ratification or affirmation shall be considered passed/approved by a majority of the membership's positive votes. Members unable to attend the annual meeting yet still desiring to affirm or speak an opinion on an issue may submit them by mail within 5 days after the meeting. Proxy votes must be accompanied by written authorization by the absentee member designating who will speak for him/her.

1.5: Becoming a Member- Upon completion of all membership requirements, the applicant should sign a "statement of membership" that they agree to be governed by the constitution and bylaws of TCF regarding matters of church life and agree with the Statement of Faith. Upon approval of the elders, their membership will be brought before the congregation for approval. Upon congregational approval, his or her name will then be added to the list of current members. This list will be reviewed and updated periodically by the Eldership to ensure that all members are in good standing according to the provision of TCF.

1.6: Removal from Membership

1. Any member may resign or withdraw from membership or attendance at any time by giving written notice to the pastors/elders or a person the pastors/elders may designate.
2. Forfeiture of membership: Members who shall, without good cause, absent themselves from the regular services of the church for a period of six (6) consecutive months or more, and/or who willfully ceases to contribute of their means, and/or ceases to be regularly involved in church activities may be removed from the membership list at the discretion of the Eldership or a reviewing panel designated by the Elders.
3. Church Discipline: Cause for removal of a member from the membership roles may be for any of the following reasons.
 - 3.a. A significant disagreement with or deviation from the Statement of Faith of TCF as set forth in this constitution.
 - 3.b. Continued lack of cooperation with the Eldership of the church, or disruption of the church so as to cause fellow believers to stumble in their walk with God, or to promote division.
 - 3.c. Continued immorality without a repentant attitude after confrontation by the pastors/elders or leadership designated by the Eldership.
4. Cause: If cause for removal is found in any member:
 - 4.a. The senior pastor or a designated elder will go to that person/persons privately to confront him/her in an effort to bring him/her to repentance and restoration. If

this attempt fails to correct the problem, two designated leaders will confront the person to call attention to the offense. If this fails to bring reconciliation, the Eldership has the responsibility to reveal the problem to other members of the church in writing at a time they deem appropriate. Upon hearing the matter, the church membership shall prayerfully appeal to the member to be reconciled. If the problem is not reconciled Within thirty (30) days, the Eldership may remove the person from the membership list and request that he/ she no longer attend services. This decision shall be ratified by a vote of the active church membership.

- 4.b. The Eldership shall have the right/responsibility, if necessary, to hear witnesses involved with accusations against the offending party and set up a panel of elders to review options for reconciliation/restoration, or reinstatement of the offending party.
- 4.c. It is understood that church discipline be conducted under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and Scripture found in Matthew 18: 15-19, Romans 16:17-18, I Corinthians 5:11, Galatians 1:8-9, and Titus 3:10-11. It is understood that church discipline is done for the purpose of repentance and restoration of the offending party, for protection of the other members, and for preservation of the purity of Christ within His body.

1.7: Grievances- If any member should have a grievance against another member of the church, or against a policy of the church, or against an action of the church or its leadership, that member shall have the right to present his or her case before the Eldership either during a regular Church Board/Eldership meeting or during a special Eldership meeting as called by the church elders to hear the matter out. The Elders shall prayerfully consider the matter and render a decision with as much wisdom and knowledge as possible. In cases involving an accusation of abuse by an elder, an investigation team shall be assembled which shall include at least 60% outside parties, preferably from the Baptist Networks, KMUSA, and/or the Convergence Network.

Article Two: Church Government

2.1: The Headship of Christ- The government of the universal church as well as TCF shall be founded upon the Lordship and direction of the Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone in a position of authority and leadership shall continually and prayerfully seek His mind and will through His Spirit and the Word of God in all actions and decisions.

2.2: The Officers- The Officers of TCF shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer may be combined into the office of Secretary Treasurer and be filled by one person. The offices of President and Treasurer may not be held by the same person.

2.3: Vice President- The Office of Vice President of the Corporation is to be an elder and shall be appointed by the President of the Corporation and approved by the Eldership. His job will

be to fulfill the office of President of the Corporation should the office be vacated until it can be properly filled. Other duties for the Vice President may be prescribed by the President.

2.4: Secretary- The office of Secretary or Secretary/Treasurer is to be filled by an Elder. His duties include the keeping of minutes from all Eldership meetings and to sign corporate documents as needed. The person in this office shall maintain the corporate seal of TCF, and to perform other duties as prescribed by the President.

2.5: The Office/Position of Senior Pastor

The Job description of the Senior Pastor is:

1. The Senior Pastor shall be President/Senior Executive Officer of the TCF Corporation.
2. He shall provide the church with spiritual vision and purpose and be the primary spiritual director of the church. He guides the teaching ministries of the church.
3. He Shall preside over all meetings of the Elders unless he delegates that responsibility to another.
4. He shall make recommendations/appointments for new Elders, Deacons, and other church officers or leaders.
5. He shall be aware of and oversee the daily business responsibilities of TCF, giving leadership, and delegating leadership as needed.
6. He shall have general supervision for the entire church, and charge of all services, gatherings, and meetings.
7. He shall take responsibility for the discipleship, spiritual care, and leadership of the members of TCF.
8. He shall oversee the training of new Church Officers and/or employees as needed. He shall have a final say over the hiring and firing of paid employees.
9. He shall have final say over the designation of guest speakers, in house speakers, or anyone requesting to address the congregation.
10. He shall operate not as a unilateral or autonomous leader, but in concert with the Eldership of the church as major decisions are processed together under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. The Senior Pastor and the Elders should move together as one and thus provide an example of unity in plurality for the church body.

2.6: The Appointment of the Senior Pastor

1. The Elders shall seek a new pastor should a vacancy arise. They may seek one from within the group of Elders itself, or search for one from outside of TCF. The Elders may appoint or include other members or persons to a "pastoral search committee" should they deem it necessary to do so.
2. The resigning/retiring pastor may nominate a successor and recommend him to the Elders and congregation.
3. A new Senior Pastor must be affirmed by agreement of the Elders. The congregation will have the opportunity to ratify the appointment of the new pastor with a vote of at least 85% affirmative. If no agreement is reached, the Elders should reconsider their selection with a view towards greater unity.

2.7: The Compensation of the Senior Pastor

The salary and housing allowance for the Senior Pastor shall be set by the Elders after prayerful consideration and review of the overall church financial condition. The Elders shall make a yearly review of the Pastor's compensation for the purpose of a cost of living or other appropriate raise. The Pastor shall be allowed vacation time throughout the year and time to attend meetings and seminars appropriate for the leadership of the church. As opportunities arise, the Pastor should be compensated with appropriate life and health assurance for his family, along with business mileage reimbursement at the current IRS allowance rate.

2.8: Removal of the Senior Pastor.

1. Death, physical incapacitation, or mental incapacitation may be all reasons for removal of a Senior Pastor.
2. The Senior Pastor may resign/retire at will by giving a thirty (30) day notice to the Elders of his intentions. A resignation letter written by the pastor is to be filed in the minutes records of the Elders.
3. The pastor may be removed by unanimous vote of the other Elders in the event of immorality, a radical departure from the TCF Statement of Faith, embezzlement of funds, or criminal activity. Before removal, a hearing with the church members must be carried out with church members allowed to voice their opinions and concerns. The proposition to remove a pastor by the elders must be ratified by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active church members.
4. Any charges against the Senior Pastor must be brought to the Elders where the pastor will have opportunity to respond to the charges. If no resolution of an offense can be reached, and there still exists credibility questions:
 - 4.a. The Elders, by agreement, may appoint someone from their own ranks to serve temporarily in his position until the problem is resolved.
 - 4.b. The congregational members are to be notified in writing and called to prayer.
5. If a senior pastor is terminated, the Elders carry the responsibility for deciding severance pay, recommendation letters, cancellation of benefits, etc.

2.9: Elders

TCF is Elder lead and congregationally affirmed. The Elders shall be considered the equivalent of the legal term "Board of Directors." The Elders may also be appropriately referred to as the "Eldership" of the church.

The New Testament promotes a plurality of leadership in local churches, The Elders of TCF shall carry the responsibility of being the governing body for spiritual direction of this local church. Elders may be added as necessary and approved by the existing Elders. The Senior Pastor shall be the "lead" or "head" Elder and preside over Elder meetings. The Sec/Treas of the Elders shall take minutes of the meetings and maintain them. One occupying the office of an elder shall occupy that office perpetually until his resignation or removal by the rest of the Elder. The Senior Pastor may set times for regular Elder meetings but the Elders shall meet no less than four times annually. A quorum for each meeting shall be a majority of the Elders. In case of necessity, an Elder meeting may be conducted via phone or video communications. Such a meeting is valid if a majority of the elders are able to be contacted.

2.10: Selection of Elders

New Elders shall be recommended by the Senior Pastor and affirmed by a majority of the existing Elders after a designated time of prayer and personal review of the life of the nominee. This decision shall be ratified by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active church members. Such a nomination may be made by writing a letter to each member stating the intentions and recommendations of the Elders for the new Elder. If there are issues of doubt that arise from the members, the Elders must prayerfully consider them. The Elders should endeavor to come to as much spiritual unity as possible before ordaining a new Elder. New Elders are to be publicly ordained and recognized before the congregation at a regular Sunday morning worship service.

2.11: The Qualifications of an Elder

1. One serving as an Elder must be a male that has been a member of TCF for at least one year. All Elders currently serving at the time of the unification of New Covenant Fellowship and Tulakes Baptist Church into this one body called Tulakes Covenant Fellowship shall be grandfathered in.
2. He must demonstrate a lifestyle consistent with the standards set down in I Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

2.12: The Removal of an Elder

Elders may be removed from office by any of the following:

1. Death, physical incapacitation, or mental incapacitation.
2. Voluntary resignation or retirement. A written resignation will be filed in the Elders' Meeting Minutes.
3. Radical departure from the Statement of Faith of TCF.
4. Immorality, criminal activity, or through church discipline by the other Elders. An elder may be removed when he ceases to qualify under the original qualifications by which he was appointed.
5. An Elder under church discipline is required to step down until the issues of the disciplinary action are resolved. At that time, the remaining Elders must decide whether or not reinstatement is appropriate.

Deacons may be appointed and removed as deemed necessary by a unanimous vote of the Elders and ratified by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active church members. Active church members may also propose a prospective deacon to the Elders. When seated in office, deacons are to be publicly recognized before the congregation. This can take place at a regular Sunday morning service. The length of their term of service will be determined by the Elders. There is no limit to the number of successive terms they may be appointed.

2.14: Qualifications of Deacons/Deaconesses

1. Candidates put forth to serve as a Deacon or Deaconess must have been a member of TCF for at least 6 (six) months. All current actively serving deacons at the time of the unification of New Covenant Fellowship and Tulakes Baptist Church into Tulakes Covenant Fellowship shall be grandfathered in.
2. They must exhibit a life consistent with the standards of Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3:8-13.
3. They must exhibit a true servant's heart.

4. They must perform the duties assigned to them by the Elders and shall function in the ministry of helps to both the Elders and the church congregation.

2.15: Removal of Deacons/Deaconesses

1. Death or physical or mental incapacitation.
2. Voluntary resignation/retirement.
3. Radical departure from the Statement of Faith of TCF.
4. Immorality, criminal activity or through church discipline by the Elders. He/she may be removed when he ceases to qualify under the original qualifications by which he was appointed.
5. Repeated failure to perform the activities of the office after warnings by the Elders or Senior Pastor.
6. Completion of their term of service.

2.16: Other Offices

The Pastors and Elders shall appoint other officials for the church as the need arises. If they are paid employees, their salaries and compensation will be set by the Elders.

Article Three: Finances

3.1: TCF shall be financed by the tithes/freewill offerings of its members and those who choose to give. Other forms of income may come through donations of property, wills, transfers of property, grants or gifts from other organizations, etc.

The Senior Pastor will have ultimate responsibility for the financial condition of the church. The Treasurer (or Sec/Treas) of the Eldership will provide direct oversight for the financial accounting processes. He will have custody of the corporate funds and all securities held by the corporation and shall keep full accurate accounts of receipts and disbursements of money belonging to the corporation. The Treasurer shall disburse the funds of the corporation as may be authorized by the Eldership and maintain records of all financial activities.

The TCF Eldership shall decide where banking accounts will be maintained to include a general checking account in TCF's name. The nature of further investment accounts, savings accounts, mutual funds, etc., will be determined by the Eldership.

Bills and demands for money and notes of the corporation shall be paid by check and signed by the Treasurer or other designated check signer.

The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin the first day of January and end the last day of December each year.

Giving records shall be kept by the Treasurer or designated person and a written report of each family/individual's giving records will be mailed or emailed out to each by the end of January for each prior year.

Article Four: Rites of Ordination

Our Sovereign God can call and ordain someone for a specific service or position. The calling of a minister is not the result of title, rather a title is a result of the calling. Public Ordination is a statement of approval and recognition that one is called and gifted by God to perform a particular service.

Ordinations should be done publicly by those already in church government who are commissioned by God to recognize specific callings on specific people.

The Eldership, under the leadership of the Senior Pastor, may ordain those they feel God has directed them to ordain for the purpose of special ministry tasks such as planting new churches, or performing specialized ministry such as prison ministry.

The Eldership will decide whether the ordination is a permanent or temporary one. The Elders shall also retain the right to revoke Ordination papers for any reason.

Article Five: Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws

Amendments to this Constitution and Bylaws may be made by the ruling Eldership and ratified by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of active church members. Dissolution and rewriting of the Constitution and Bylaws may be made by the ruling Eldership and affirmed by the church members. Changes must be consistent with the TCF Articles of Incorporation and the Statement of Faith.

Article Six: Paid Employees

All paid employees or staff such as a church secretary, janitor, youth pastor, building maintenance personnel, etc, will have their salaries set and reviewed periodically by the Eldership. All salaries shall be paid in accordance with federal and state laws, having appropriate taxes withheld. The Elders will write and maintain appropriate job descriptions for each paid employee of the church.

Article Seven: Dissolution of the Corporation

7.1: Should the need for the dissolution of the TCF corporation ever become necessary, the decision shall be determined by the Eldership and ratified by the current participating members.

7.2: The property of TCF is irrevocably dedicated to charitable purposes and no part of our assets shall ever insure the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private persons. Upon the dissolution or winding up of this corporation, any remaining assets, after the payment of any debts and liabilities, shall be donated to the Metro Baptist Network and/or to KMUSA for church planting and missions efforts.

Article Eight: Conclusion

It is the sincere desire of the leadership of TCF to govern this local church in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. Our goal is to set aside our own personal desires and seek the Kingdom of God and continue the ministry of Jesus Christ.