

CLIFTON PARK COMMUNITY CHURCH
CONSTITUTION 2008

PREAMBLE:

By God's grace, we, the members of Clifton Park Community Church, desiring to follow a pattern of worship and conduct consistent with the Scriptures, ordain and establish the following articles of this constitution to which we voluntarily submit ourselves.

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of this church shall be Clifton Park Community Church (CPCC).

ARTICLE II: FOUNDATION AND PURPOSE

- 1) CPCC exists by the grace of God for the glory of God.
- 2) The foundation of this church is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Head of the Church.
- 3) This church is dependent upon the ministry and gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- 4) This church affirms its belief that the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments (the Bible) are God's Holy Word. The Bible, in its original autographs, is inerrant and infallible. This constitution and by-laws are subordinate to God's Word, the Bible, in everything. The Bible is the authority for our faith (what we are to believe) and our practice (how we are to live before God and man). Therefore, in conformance with God's Holy Word and in light of the historic, reformed confessions of faith:
 - a) the essential tenets of what we believe have been set forth in The Statement of Faith of CPCC

The Statement of Faith

Clifton Park Community Church
Revised & Adopted in 1994

The following statement does not in any way replace the Scriptures or claim to be an exhaustive statement of the teachings of Scripture. It is meant to be a summary of the foundational doctrines held to and confessed by this body of Christian believers.

The Bible

We believe in the full inspiration, inerrancy, authority and sufficiency of the sixty-six books that make up the Old and New Testaments. We believe that the Bible is accurate in all that it teaches, and is our only authority in all matters of doctrine and practice.

The Godhead

We believe that there is One True and Living God who has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that the

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Three Persons within the sacred Godhead are equal in their Divine perfections and perfectly harmonious in the executions of their distinct offices. We believe that God is Eternal, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Unchanging, Holy, Just, Faithful, Patient, Merciful, Loving, Gracious, and who is the Creator and Sustainer of the heavens and the earth. We believe that God is absolutely perfect and sovereign in all that He does. We believe that God reveals His wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

The Lord Jesus Christ

We believe in the pre-existence, full Divinity and Perfect Humanity of Christ. We believe in His virgin birth, His sinless life, His death on the cross for sinners, His literal physical resurrection from the dead, His ascension to the right hand of God and in His second coming in power and great glory.

The Holy Spirit

We believe in the full Divinity and Personality of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit witnesses of Christ and convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment. The Spirit of God indwells all true Christian believers and empowers them to serve the Lord with the gifts that He has sovereignty given to each.

Man

We believe that man was created sinless in the image of God. But man transgressed the commandment of God and fell into sin. Since man's fall into sin all men and women born into this world are born in a state of sin and are under the wrath of God. We believe that man is totally depraved in that all his faculties are tainted by sin and that he has no inherent desire to love and please God. Apart from the regenerating grace of God and faith in Christ men are eternally lost.

Salvation

We believe that salvation from beginning to end is of the Lord. Long before the universe was created God the Father sovereignty and graciously devised a plan to save a vast multitude of people that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language. The Son agreed to come into the world as the representative of His people and to die on the cross shedding His precious blood as a sacrifice of atonement for sinners. The Holy Spirit applies to sinners the work of Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. We believe that sinners are regenerated by the Holy Spirit and granted the faith to believe in Christ.

All those who repent of their sins and believe in Christ are justified and have peace with God. We believe that all those whom God justifies He will sanctify, and those whom He sanctifies He will also glorify.

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We believe that all those who are saved will cultivate a life of holiness, loving God and delighting to do His will as revealed in the Scriptures. We see this desire as the inevitable “fruits” of salvation. Anyone who claims to be saved but continues to habitually practice sin is evidencing the fact that they were never the children of God.

The Church

We believe that the Church is the body of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the church and every true Christian believer is a member of His body. The will of Christ as revealed in the Word of God (the Bible) is the final and only authority in the church in all matters of faith and practice.

We believe that Christ has entrusted to His church the responsibility of making disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that He has commanded.

We believe that Christian baptism is an ordinance of the church, commanded by Christ.

We believe that the Lord’s Supper (Communion) is a New Covenant ordinance of the church established by Christ as a Proclamation of the Lord’s death until He comes. Whenever Christian believers come together to eat the bread and to drink the cup they partake of Christ by faith, remembering Him who gave His body, shed His blood and rose again for their justification. We believe that the Lord’s Supper is to be kept by all believers until the return of Christ.

We believe that Christ has given pastor/teachers to His church to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body might be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

The Last Things

We believe in the Second Coming of Christ, the final judgment of the world, the everlasting happiness of the redeemed of the Lord in heaven, and in the everlasting torment of the wicked and unbelieving in the lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

Practice

We believe that the teaching contained in this Confession of Faith will be central to a person’s beliefs and practice. We believe that it would be inconsistent to hold to this Confession of Faith truly without also living a life that conforms in practice to its content.

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- b) the principles for the practice of our faith with one another are set forth in The Church Covenant of CPCC.

Our Church Covenant
Clifton Park Community Church

It is commanded of us to “Love the Lord our God, with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength.” Our Lord also commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

(Deuteronomy 6:4ff, 10:12, 30:6, Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 22:37–40, Mark 12:29–31, Luke 10:27ff)

Therefore . . .

We covenant ourselves to follow the example of Jesus revealed to us in the Scriptures, learning from one another and the leaders of this church as we all follow Christ.

(Philippians 3:17, Philippians 4:9, Hebrews 13:7)

We commit ourselves to be devoted to one another in brotherly love; loving one another deeply, fervently, sincerely from the heart, honoring one another above ourselves — loving one another as Jesus Christ loved us, demonstrating that God lives in us and that we are Christ’s disciples.

(Leviticus 19:18, Matthew 22:39, John 13:34-35, Romans 12:9–10, 1 Corinthians 13:1–13, 1 Peter 1:22, 1 John 4:11–12)

We resolve to peacefully build each other up to the benefit of the body of Christ, using the Word as we gather, counsel, teach, admonish, encourage, and praise God with one another.

(Romans 14:19, 15:14, Ephesians 4:12–13, 5:19, Colossians 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Hebrews 10:24–25)

We commit ourselves to practice tender kindness towards one another, bearing with one another, not sinning against or causing another to sin, not being judgmental but speaking the truth in love. We will be quick to seek reconciliation as we confess our sins, pray and forgive one another.

(Matthew 5:23–24, 18:15–20, Romans 14:13, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, James 5:16)

We will serve one another with fervent love and humility, not considering ourselves more important than others. We will use our spiritual gifts, cheerfully offer hospitality, carry one another’s burdens — serving each other as the Lord enables us through His Spirit to the praise and glory of God.

(John 13:14, Galatians 5:13, 6:2, Philippians 2:1–11, 1 Peter 4:8–11)

Sunday, June 25, 2006 AD

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ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1) Requirements for Membership

- a) Anyone desiring to join CPCC as a member,
 - i) Must profess to be a believer in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and give evidence of a life consistent with God's saving grace and submission to the authority of scripture.
 - ii) Must have been baptized and openly confess their union with Christ in His death resurrection and new life.
 - iii) Must accept and abide by constitution and by-Laws
 - iv) Must satisfy the elders as to their Christian character and experience.
 - v) Upon recommendation of the elders, a candidate, desiring to become a member, will be presented to the membership of CPCC for their vote of the individual's acceptance into the church as members.

2) Duties and Privileges of Membership

- a) Members are expected to regularly attend services on the Lord's Day and to share in the Lord's Communion table.
- b) Members should conscientiously seek to exhibit, in word and deed, the spirit of the church covenant.
- c) Members should support the propagation of the Gospel.
- d) Members are to recognize and submit to the elders whom the Lord has seen fit to place over them.
- e) A member in good standing is a member not under corrective discipline (not having received a letter from the elders indicating formal discipline action has been initiated).

3) Discipleship/Discipline

Church discipline takes two forms. Both formative and corrective discipline are to be carried out continuously.

- a) Formative discipline is the interaction of every member's gifts, graces, and fruit of the Spirit toward one another, under the shepherding of the elders, the ministry of the deacons, the instruction of the Word, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit to grow in holiness, godliness, and sanctification, as God has required.
- b) Corrective discipline is the biblical process of admonition and exhortation, as described in Matthew 5:23–24 and Matthew 18:15–17, intended to culminate in repentance from sin, the restoration and enriching of relationships in Christ, and the return to the practice of formative discipline

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4) Termination of Membership

Membership is terminated by the death of the member, voluntarily by letter, and within the process of corrective discipline as determined by the elders. Membership may also be terminated by action of the elders when a member has persistently over an extended period of time (one year) and without adequate reason been absent from the worship services of the church.

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNANCE

Under Christ this congregation is governed by its members through this constitution. Therefore, it is both the privilege and responsibility of each member to attend all member meetings and vote on those matters that may be presented from time to time. In addition to the offices as described, the church will also have a board of trustees, a treasurer, and paid church staff as may be required from time to time.

1) Officers

The biblical offices in the church are elder and deacon. These offices will be filled by men who must be members in good standing of this church.

a) Elders (all references to elders in this document refers to the then active members of the board).

i) The board of elders shall oversee the doctrine, ministry, and resources of the church. In keeping with the principles set forth in Acts 6:1-6; I Timothy 3:1-7 and I Peter 5:1-4, the elders shall devote their time to prayer, the ministry of the Word (by teaching and encouraging sound doctrine), and shepherding God's flock. The board of elders must consist of a plurality (at least three) with the actual number being determined by the needs of the church and by the call and qualifications of the men in the congregation.

ii) The pastor shall be an elder. He shall perform the duties of an elder and shall be recognized by the church as particularly gifted and called to the full-time ministry of preaching and teaching. He shall preach on the Lord's Day, administer the ordinances of baptism and communion and attend to other such duties as usually pertain to his calling.

iii) In the event of the pastor's absence or incapacity the remaining elders shall assume responsibility for the carrying out of his duties, any of which can be delegated.

b) Deacons (all references to deacons in this document refers to the then active members of the board).

i) The deacons shall advise and be ready to assist the elders in any service that supports and promotes the ministry of the word, new and existing ministries of the church, and the care of the members of the church.

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- ii) The office of deacon is described in I Timothy 3:8–13 and Acts 6:1–7 and The board of deacons shall consist of a plurality (at least three) with the actual number being determined by the needs of the church and by the call and qualification of the men in the congregation.

2) Trustees

- a) Trustees will consist of the members of the elder and deacon boards (Joint Board) excluding paid staff. They are responsible for all church property and in representing the church in all legal matters.
- b) They do not have the ability to enter into any lease, incur debt, or dispose of property in excess of \$1,500 (real or personal) without the consent of the membership as detailed in the church by-laws.
- c) They are limited in power as described in the New York State law that governs trustees of religious corporations.

3) Other financial officers and staff

The Treasurer must be a member in good standing whereas other church staff need not be members of the church.

a) Treasurer

- i) The treasurer must be a member in good standing (can not be an elder or other paid staff) and shall ensure that all funds and securities of the church are properly secured in banks, financial institutions, or depositories as appropriate.
 - ii) The treasurer shall also ensure that full and accurate accounting of receipts and disbursements are kept in records belonging to the church and that adequate controls are implemented to guarantee that all funds are appropriately handled.
- b) Church staff will be under the supervision of the pastor, elders or deacons as determined in the job description for the position. New staff will be added only according to provisions that have been detailed in the current approved budget.

4) Meetings

In every church meeting, members shall act in a spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

a) Worship Meetings

- i) Public services shall be held on the Lord's Day.
- ii) Prayer meetings shall be held at regularly appointed times.
- iii) Other public services may be held as determined by the elders.

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b) Business Meetings

- i) The Annual meeting shall be held within the first six weeks of each calendar year.
 - ii) Other business meetings from time to time as determined by the elders
 - iii) At business meetings the quorums prescribed in the By-Laws shall apply.
 - iv) An elder will serve as the moderator for all business meetings.
- c) Member meetings (other fellowship and ministry meetings) shall meet as necessary.

5) Property and Finances

- a) It is understood that membership in this church involves financial obligations to support the church and its causes with regular, proportionate, sacrificial giving. Special offerings may be sought by the church, with the approval of the elders.
- b) Financial planning for the church shall be carried out through an annual church budgeting process designating funds to be utilized to affect the work of the church.
- c) Money may not be borrowed in the form of loans or other indebtedness without the approval of the members.
- d) Should a condition arise at any time in the future when for any reason the church were to dissolve, the church property may only be given to another church or missionary organization.
- e) In the event of a division of the church, from which may God in His mercy save us, the property of the church shall belong to that group which represents the portion of the church membership remaining loyal to this constitution, as determined by the elder board.

ARTICLE V: BY-LAWS

By-Laws will be established for the purpose of implementing the articles of this constitution. These by-laws will have the effect of constitutional authority but will not in any way whatsoever supersede the constitution. The body of by-laws will be reviewed periodically and added to, revised, or deleted in order to meet the needs of the church in implementing the constitution.

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ARTICLE VI: AMENDMENTS AND REVISIONS

1) The constitution

This constitution can only be amended at a special member meeting held for that purpose. At least thirty days prior to the meeting, a written notice shall be mailed to all members noting the date and purpose of the meeting and shall include an exact copy of proposed amendments or revisions to be voted on. Amendments or revisions must be approved by a two thirds (2/3rd) majority vote of the total voting membership.

2) The by-Laws

The by-Laws shall only be amended at a special member meeting held for that purpose. At least thirty days prior to the meeting, a written notice shall be mailed to all members noting the date and purpose of the meeting and shall include an exact copy of proposed amendments or revisions to be voted on. Amendments or revisions may be approved by a simple majority vote of the total voting membership.