

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

PREAMBLE:

We, the members of Saint David's Church (SDC), do hereby establish and submit ourselves to the following by-laws as a means to govern the affairs of this church.

ARTICLE I. Name:

This church body shall be known as Saint David's Church, of Hockley, Texas.

ARTICLE II. Aims, Standards and Objectives:

1. SDC is a body ("corpus", corporation) of Christian believers who are united for the chief purpose of glorifying the Triune God by striving to proclaim and obey His revelation as found in the primary standard of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. As the inspired rule of faith and life for the Christian, the Scriptures are recognized by SDC as the unchallengeable authority and supreme judge to which all religious controversies or creeds, as well as all opinions and regulations of men, must be subordinate. SDC, standing within the distinct religious history of the Reformed churches of the Protestant Reformation, recognizes the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms (originally adopted in Scotland in 1647 and 1648 respectively) as its formal creed and secondary standard of doctrine and life. However, we do not adhere to the Westminster Confession in these areas:
 - 1.1. The identification of the "Pope of Rome" as "that Antichrist, that man of sin and perdition," on the grounds that, while the Pope does indeed exalt himself in an unholy fashion, such an assertion cannot be proven from the Scriptures.
 - 1.2. The prohibition against the participation of covenant children in the Lord's Supper, on the grounds that weaned children capable of eating solid food were participants in the sacramental meals of the Old Covenant and that children of even one believing parent are to be deemed covenantally holy (I Cor. 7:14). In that weaned children of covenant households did partake of the sacramental meals in the Old Covenant, including—pre-eminently—the Passover, and given that such a practice is nowhere overturned or taught against in the New Testament, we are compelled by our system of Scriptural interpretation to teach that weaned covenant children in the Church of Jesus Christ are permitted to partake of the Lord's supper.
 - 1.3. The Elders of the church are fitted to administer the sacraments and provide all spiritual oversight to the church. Their position derives from Christ through the church and not any other external authority.
2. The Elders shall maintain a Book of Procedures, which shall be subordinate in all respects to these by-laws. The purpose of the Book of Procedures is to establish consistency in the practical exercise and expression of the principles contained herein. The Book of Procedures may be modified by majority vote of the Session.
3. Should any conflict arise between these by-laws and any of the above standards (or between the above standards themselves), the controlling authority for resolution of the conflict shall be, in

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

this order: a) Scriptures; b) The Westminster Confession and c) these by-laws. The Elders shall adjudicate and resolve alleged conflicts (or controversies pertaining to such allegations) as defined in the Book of Procedures, and shall always be the first court of adjudication before any recourse is made to other courts.

4. The general objectives of SDC are to make disciples of all nations, promote submission to God's Word in all areas of human life and endeavor, nurture and educate believers and their households in the Christian faith, administer the sacraments and moral discipline within the church, and lead the congregation in united worship, encouragement, fellowship, and charitable service.
5. SDC is a member congregation of the Confederation of Reformed Evangelical Churches (the CREC). The constitution of the CREC and all supporting documents are to be considered as being completely incorporated in this document, and shall be binding as appropriate on all church officers and members.

ARTICLE III. Determination of Members:

1. Communicant members shall be those individuals who have been received by the elders on the basis of the following as defined by the Book of Procedures:
 - 1.1. a credible profession of faith,
 - 1.2. a transfer of membership letter from an acceptable church,
 - 1.3. reaffirmation of faith,
 - 1.4. baptism in the name of the Triune God in an evangelical church or,
 - 1.5. in the case of covenant children, membership in a household in which at least one parent is a communicant member in good standing.
2. The names of members shall be removed from the rolls of the church only by order of the elders on the basis of death, transfer to another church, or moral discipline.

ARTICLE IV. Expectations of Members:

1. Members of SDC shall devote themselves to both the private and public means of grace including the regular attendance of all appointed church services and fellowship meetings, special meetings or conferences, private and family devotions with Bible reading and prayer, and the showing of hospitality to the saints.
2. Members of SDC shall devote themselves to the service of their fellow Christians and church members, sharing both material and spiritual blessings with one another.
3. Members of SDC shall, in obedience to the Word of God and as a token of God's gift to us, give cheerfully and regularly to the ministry and labor of this church.

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

4. Members of SDC shall conduct themselves with godly attitude, speech and conduct toward their fellow church members, being slow to take offense and ready to resolve conflicts according to the instruction of Scripture (Cf. Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15-20).
5. Members of SDC shall recognize, respect, and submit to the elders of SDC in obedience to Hebrews 13:17.

ARTICLE V. The Calling and Conduct of Congregational Meetings:

1. All meetings shall be conducted following the guidelines of *Robert's Rules of Order*.
2. Scheduling and Notice of Meetings:
 - 2.1. Congregational meetings shall be at the call of the elders of the church.
 - 2.2. Public notice of any such meetings shall be made at worship services on the two Sundays preceding the meeting or by circular letter posted ten days in advance of the meeting.
 - 2.3. Regular and Special Meetings:
 - 2.3.1. A regular meeting of the congregation shall be held at least once every calendar year (date set by the elders) at which any relevant and legitimate business of the members may be transacted.
 - 2.3.2. The elders shall call special meetings of the members of the congregation when they deem it best to do so or upon written request by one-fourth of the communicant male heads of households. At specially called meetings no business shall be conducted except that which is stated in the notice of the meeting.
 - 2.4. Quorum and Voting in Meetings:
 - 2.4.1. Only male heads of households, who have been communicant members for at least six months, and who have been approved by the elders, shall be entitled to vote at its congregational or corporation meetings. Female communicant members that do not have male voting representation shall communicate their concerns and opinions by way of the elders.
 - 2.4.2. There shall be no minimum quorum for the transacting of business at a duly called meeting of the members of the congregation.
 - 2.4.3. Legitimate motions made at a meeting of the members of the congregation shall pass by a simple majority, unless otherwise stipulated in these by-laws.
 - 2.4.4. Eligible voters who are present but abstain from voting shall not be counted for the purposes of determining voting percentages.

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

2.4.5. The election of elders and deacons shall always be by signed ballot.

2.4.6. Voting by proxy on the election of church officers shall be permitted by special approval of the elders based on the determination of legitimate need (e.g., illness, job, etc.).

3. Presiding Officer and Secretary

3.1. One of the church officers (elder or deacon) shall serve as presiding officer in meetings of the members of the congregation. The presiding officer has authority to keep order in and direct the operations of the meetings of the members of the congregation. In the absence of duly elected elders, the members may elect a Presiding Officer and/or Secretary Pro-tem to act until such time as elders are elected.

3.2. The presiding officer of a meeting of the members of the congregation may vote in the decisions of that body.

3.3. The elders shall appoint a secretary of SDC who shall serve in the meetings of the members of the congregation. If he/she is absent or unavailable, the elders shall appoint another person to serve in his/her place.

3.4. The secretary shall keep a correct record of all business transacted at the meetings of the members of the congregation. Toward that end the minutes of the meeting shall be approved by the members of the congregation prior to the close of any meeting. The secretary shall preserve such minutes with the records of the elders and grant extracts from them when requested as defined in the Book of Procedures.

ARTICLE VI. Prerogatives of the Members:

1. The business which may be transacted by the communicant membership of the congregation at its duly called meetings shall include and not be limited to the following:

1.1. Reviewing the yearly report of all financial transactions by the elders and offering non-binding advice to them in matters pertaining to the budget, purchases, and/or sale of church property.

1.2. Taking action to raise up men to serve as elders (pastors, teachers, or evangelists), or deacons for the congregation, upon approval of the qualification of such candidate(s) by the elders, voting on the election of such officers.

1.3. Taking action to remove an officer or officers from their position(s) in the congregation, either by:

1.3.1. Voting to have an elder or deacon divested of his office; such a vote must pass by a three-fourths majority of those voting, and it may be taken only after having been

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

petitioned by one-fourth of the communicant members of the congregation, announced in the call of a congregational meeting, and the challenged officer(s) has (have) been given opportunity to defend his (their) continuance in the office; or

- 1.3.2. Voting to request and/or concur with the resignation of an elder or deacon from his ministerial charge in the congregation.
- 1.3.3. If a majority of the session is exhibiting a scandalous lifestyle and seeking through collusion to avoid accountability for that lifestyle, members may petition the CREC to appoint a commission of elders from other churches to examine those members of the session as to their fitness for office. Further, the congregation may request that the CREC appoint session members pro-tem if necessary.
- 1.3.4. If the congregation votes to remove elders with the result that there is no longer a plurality of elders as required by this document in Article VIII.1.1, appeal must be made as defined in the Book of Procedures to the Moderator of the current CREC Presbytery for pastoral oversight.
- 1.3.5. Approving the secretary's minutes of the congregational meeting.
- 1.3.6. From time to time, the elders or the deacons may call for a poll (a non-binding vote) of all members, or all communicant members, or some special portion of the membership (e.g., the youth, the men, or the women), in order to gain input from them concerning a particular matter.
- 1.3.7. Membership in any formal association with other churches shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the congregation and the approval of the elders.

ARTICLE VII. Church Discipline:

One of the marks of a true church of Jesus Christ is that it maintains discipline. The purpose of church discipline is, through biblical means, to prevent, restrain, or even to remove any evil that may threaten the church and to promote and encourage that which is good and glorifying to God. Church discipline, in all its forms—preventative, formative, corrective, and final—is the line of demarcation between the church and the world; without it, we cannot distinguish between the two.

1. Preventative Discipline: This aspect of church discipline guards the entrance into the church and seeks to prevent unbelievers from becoming a part of the local assembly (Cf. Acts 9:26-27). The church is established for the feeding and care of believers and their households as established in Article III, paragraph (1.).
 - 1.1. The elders will examine and determine those who are eligible for baptism and church membership.
 - 1.2. The elders will examine those who have been baptized and professed faith and to qualify them for membership.

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

2. Formative Discipline: Once a person has become a member of the church, he immediately comes under the primary work of the church, which is formative discipline.
 - 2.1. This aspect of church discipline is the means whereby church members are instructed and trained in the Christian faith by:
 - 2.1.1. both public and private means,
 - 2.1.2. through both formal and informal methods,
 - 2.1.3. with the goal of presenting every person mature in Christ (Col. 1:28-29)
 - 2.1.4. Words (God's and then man's) are the primary means of formative discipline;
 - 2.1.5. through private counsel, instruction, rebuke, and admonition,
 - 2.1.6. through the public ministry of the Word.
 - 2.1.7. This is the routine work of the local church (Eph. 4:11-16).
 - 2.2. It is under this formative discipline of the local church where disciples
 - 2.2.1. are given more of the Word of God by which they are built up in the faith (Acts 20:28);
 - 2.2.2. are to be sanctified and cleansed by the washing of water and the Word (Eph. 5:25-27);
 - 2.2.3. are to be helped to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior (II Tim. 4:1-2);
 - 2.2.4. are rebuked and reprovved and called back to the path of righteousness (II Tim. 4:1-2);
 - 2.2.5. are stimulated to love and good works (Heb. 10:24);
 - 2.2.6. are taught to observe the commands of God (Matt. 28:19);
 - 2.2.7. are equipped for the work of service (Eph. 4:12);
 - 2.2.8. are equipped for every good work (II Tim. 3:17);
 - 2.2.9. and where they become workmen who need not be ashamed because they can rightly divide the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15).
3. Corrective Discipline: A third aspect of church discipline is corrective discipline whereby the church applies lawful (i.e., biblical and constitutional) pressure to a wayward member

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 3.1. By means of:
 - 3.1.1. informal action (e.g., counsel, reproof, rebuke, barring from the Lord's Table for a season, etc., cf. II Tim. 4:1-2)
 - 3.1.2. and formal action (e.g., public rebuke or censure, cf. II Thess. 3:14-15),
 - 3.1.3. and hoping to see the wayward member restored to a place of conformity to Christ's rule (Gal. 6:1).
- 3.2. If the church has been faithful in maintaining preventative and formative disciplines, then the need for formal corrective discipline will be rare.
- 3.3. Corrective discipline is to be applied by the elders, as they deem appropriate for the case, in those situations where formative discipline has failed to accomplish its purposes. Corrective discipline shall be applied according to the order described in the Book of Procedures.
 - 3.3.1. The elders must perform this duty with love and humility for the good of the wayward member, the good of the local church in general, and for the sake of Christ's glory (Cf. Matt. 18:15-20).
4. Final Discipline: (excommunication), A final aspect of church discipline, which is the church's responsibility to perform, is the removal of a member by judicial action. The church has no choice but to obey Christ in these matters (Matt. 18:17).
 - 4.1. In the exceptional cases where this discipline becomes necessary,
 - 4.1.1. a church member who persistently refuses to yield to the formative and corrective discipline of the church is declared, by judicial action of the elders, to be excommunicated, which means they are no longer members of this church and are considered to be unbelievers.
 - 4.1.2. Final discipline decisions may be formally appealed by making a written request as defined in the Book of Procedures to the elders for a court of appeals:
 - 4.1.2.1. Once requested, this appeal is irrevocable and the court's decision is final.
 - 4.1.2.2. The appellate court shall be composed of a minimum of three men chosen by the appropriate CREC Presbytery or moderator.
 - 4.1.3. Final church discipline has as its goal the elimination of the unrepentant person from the church (I Cor. 5:9-13), with the hope of restoring the spiritual life of one who has fallen into habitual sin (I Cor. 5:5).
 - 4.1.4. Likewise, the church must be faithful to forgive and receive back anyone who repents (Matt. 18:21-22), and grant full restoration in the church upon such repentance (II Cor. 2:6-8).

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 4.2. The procedure to be followed depends upon the nature of the offense. The order of events as defined by the Book of Procedures, however, shall be followed in most cases, unless otherwise directed by the elders (in cases of extraordinary circumstances). The procedure shall include the following principles:
 - 4.2.1. The directions of Matt. 18:15-16 shall be followed in their proper order.
 - 4.2.2. If restoration of fellowship is not accomplished by these means, then formal charges shall be filed with or by the elders (Matt. 18:17-18).
 - 4.2.3. All formal charges shall be stated in terms of God's law (the Bible) and shall be supported by citing which portions of God's law have been violated.
 - 4.2.4. After a fair and impartial hearing of all witnesses accessible and all facts ascertainable, the elders shall make a judicial ruling in the case by unanimous decision.
 - 4.2.5. Any decision by the elders to discipline a member, whether to formally correct or to excommunicate, shall be announced to the congregation.

ARTICLE VIII. Church Officers:

1. Congregational Officers and Corporate Directors

- 1.1. The Congregation: The officers of the congregation in their capacity as functioning church ministers are the congregation's duly elected, ordained, and installed elders and deacons. The congregation shall always (so far as it is possible) provide for itself a minimum of two elders. If at least two elders are not actively serving the church, appeal must be made by the congregation to the Moderator of the current CREC Presbytery for pastoral oversight. Decisions made by the Moderator, the Presbytery or the sponsoring church assigned by the CREC shall be binding on the church unless overridden by a 3/4 vote of the heads of household.
- 1.2. The Corporation: In distinction from the above, the elders of the corporation (that is, the congregation acting in any capacity pertaining to property, business transactions, or civil and corporate law) are its Directors. These shall be the elders, however many have been elected by the members of the congregation, but not less than two.
- 1.3. Terms of Office.
 - 1.3.1. Upon election, ordination and installation, the officers of the congregation shall hold office for their lifetimes, unless removed from such office as stipulated below.
 - 1.3.2. Officers of the congregation shall surrender or be removed from their office(s) under any of the following conditions:

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 1.3.2.1. Resignation of an office by an elder in which the congregation and elders concur;
- 1.3.2.2. Dismissal of an elder which is requested by the congregation by a three-fourths majority vote,
- 1.3.2.3. Excommunication from membership in the congregation.
- 1.3.2.4. The qualifications to serve as an Elder or Deacon of Saint David's Church are based on the standards defined by Paul in 1 Timothy 3:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:1-4. In light of the emphasis on the household, and specifically the children, if an Elder or Deacon, his wife, and/or children (of any age) demonstrate behavior of a scandalous nature (as defined by a majority of the session), the Elder or Deacon shall immediately tender his resignation to the session. The session will initially receive the resignation, then weigh the circumstances to determine whether to reinstate the Elder or Deacon, place him on sabbatical, or call for a vote of the Heads of Household to accept his resignation.

2. Ordination of Officers

2.1. Doctrine of Ordination.

- 2.1.1. Those who have been recognized by the church to have been called and equipped by God to hold office in the church are to be ordained of the elders and the elders' appointed board of examination.
- 2.1.2. The elders may appoint board members from among male communicant members.
- 2.1.3. The elders may, in addition, appoint board members from among ministers from other congregations.
- 2.1.4. Ordination is the authoritative admission of one called to an office in the church, accompanied with examination, prayer and the laying on of hands.
- 2.1.5. Only males shall be admitted to ordination and church office.
- 2.1.6. As every ecclesiastical office, according to the Scriptures, is a special charge, no man shall be ordained unless it be to the performance of a definite work.
- 2.1.7. Saint David's Church administers and recognizes two ordinations, Elder and Deacon, with the various offices of the Church performed under those ordinations.
 - 2.1.7.1. Offices of the Elder's ordination
 - 2.1.7.1.1. Pastor

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 2.1.7.1.2. Ruling Elder
- 2.1.7.1.3. Teacher
- 2.1.7.1.4. Missionary
- 2.1.7.1.5. Evangelist
- 2.1.7.1.6. Church Planter

2.1.7.2. Offices of the Diaconal ordination

- 2.1.7.2.1. Arch Deacon
- 2.1.7.2.2. Deacon
- 2.1.7.2.3. Treasurer

2.2. Trainees for the Gospel Ministry

- 2.2.1. Men, who show promise and interest in the work of the ministry, shall present themselves to the elders for examination and consideration to be placed under the care and training of the elders as defined in the Book of Procedures.
- 2.2.2. Upon receiving the elders' approval, the trainee shall be presented to the congregation of SDC and recognized as one who has placed himself under the guidance and training of the elders.

2.3. Candidates for Church Office (elder or deacon)

- 2.3.1. Men, who show promise and interest in the offices of the church, shall present themselves to the elders for examination and consideration to be placed in nomination for church office as defined in the Book of Procedures.
- 2.3.2. Upon receiving the elders' approval, the candidate shall be presented to the congregation of SDC for vote according to the procedure outlined in paragraph 2.4.1.3 below.

2.4. The Ordination and Installation of Officers

2.4.1. Elders:

- 2.4.1.1. A candidate for ordination to the office of elder shall be examined and approved by the elders and the examining board concerning:

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

2.4.1.1.1. His walk with Christ, especially his personal character and family management (based on the qualifications set out in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9).

2.4.1.1.2. His knowledge of Bible content, theology, the sacraments, church history, and the principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church.

2.4.1.2. If a candidate is denied approval by the elders and examining board:

2.4.1.2.1. A list of deficiencies or areas of concern, stated in biblical terms, shall be provided for the candidate.

2.4.1.2.2. A proposed course of action for remedying these concerns shall also be provided for the candidate.

2.4.1.3. Approved candidates for elder shall be nominated and voted on by the congregation.

2.4.1.4. Once the candidate has been approved by the elders and their board and elected by the congregation, a day of ordination shall be set by the elders, wherein they shall establish an appropriate order for that service.

2.4.2. Deacons

2.4.2.1. The elders should set before the congregation the biblical requirements for the office of deacon as found in Acts 6:1-6 and I Tim. 3:8-13.

2.4.2.2. The congregation shall then nominate from among the communicant men of the church candidates who meet the qualifications for the office of deacon.

2.4.2.3. Candidates for deacon must be approved by a majority of the elders.

2.4.2.4. If a candidate is denied approval by the elders:

2.4.2.4.1. A list of deficiencies or areas of concern, stated in biblical terms, shall be provided for the candidate.

2.4.2.4.2. A proposed course of action for remedying these concerns shall also be provided for the candidate.

2.4.2.4.3. The congregation shall then vote upon the nominated and approved candidate.

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

2.4.2.4.4. Upon the election of a deacon to office, the elders shall set a time for the formal ordination of that man and shall establish an appropriate order for that service.

2.5. Evangelist (Missionary): The ordination of an evangelist (missionary) shall follow a similar order as that of the office of elder.

3. Powers and Duties of the Officers

3.1. Elders:

3.1.1. The authority and duties of the elders shall, in general, be those entailed in pursuing or securing the aims and objectives of the church. (Cf. ARTICLE II.)

3.1.2. The authority and duties of the elders specifically include but are not limited to: maintaining the government of the congregation, adding and removing names from the membership rolls of the church, overseeing all matters concerning the conduct of public worship, administering the sacraments, promoting the spiritual growth of church members, resolving questions of doctrine and discipline reasonably proposed to the elders, acting upon complaints addressed to the elders, exercising moral discipline over members (by sitting in judgment of charges of offense, obtaining evidence and applying discipline), arranging and supervising the evangelistic and educational projects of the church, and overseeing the work of the deacons and all other organizations within the church (including specialized ministries of the congregation).

3.1.3. By resolution the elders may authorize other officers, members or employees to execute and deliver contracts for and in the name of the congregation as defined in the Book of Procedures. Any such contracts when so executed shall be deemed conclusive in favor of any purchaser, seller, or encumbrance dealing with said other authorized agents in good faith and for value.

3.1.4. The elders may appoint, reappoint, remove and replace various chairmen within the congregation who will assist the elders in carrying out specific aspects of the church program and functions. All such chairmen shall operate in submission to the oversight and final authority of the elders and, in relevant cases, to the direction of the deacons.

3.1.5. As defined in the Book of Procedures, the elders may establish or remove specialized ministries within the congregation, as well as boards to manage such operations, which are dedicated to a select line of service within the church under the authority of the elders.

3.1.6. The actions and policies of the elders shall be available to the congregation.

3.2. Deacons

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 3.2.1. The responsibilities of the deacons shall be those duties delegated by the elders of SDC.
 - 3.2.2. Diaconal ministries include, but are not limited to, showing compassion and mercy toward saints and strangers who are in need or distress; collecting and disbursing funds for the relief of the needy; visiting, praying with, and/or meeting the physical needs of the sick and sorrowing; organizing and encouraging church members to engage in such services to others; and caring for the property, grounds, and buildings owned or used by the congregation.
 - 3.2.3. As defined by the Book of Procedures, the Deacons shall review salaries and benefits of church employees who are not officers annually and make recommendations to the session for any needed adjustments.
4. Treasurer
- 4.1. The treasurer (and/or assistant treasurer) shall be responsible to the elders in all financial matters pertaining to the church. He (or they) shall have custody of, and be responsible for, all church funds and securities, and shall deposit all such funds in the name of the congregation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as shall be selected by the elders. He (or they) shall receive and, when needed, give receipt for contributions of value (or monies due and payable), to the congregation. He (or they) shall disburse the funds of the congregation as directed by the elders, taking proper vouchers for such disbursements. He (or they) shall keep and maintain adequate and correct records of the congregation's business transactions, including accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts, and disbursements. He (or they) shall give:
 - 4.1.1. upon their request, a report to elders covering the revenues, expenditures and balance on hand.
 - 4.1.2. a quarterly financial report, as defined by the Book of Procedures, of receipts and transactions to the members of the congregation for the previous quarter.
 - 4.2. The fiscal year for the congregation shall begin the first day of the calendar year and end on the last day of the calendar year.
5. Financial Support of Officers and Staff
- 5.1. The Treasurer shall regularly review the General Fund to determine the amount required to meet all monthly obligations. Monthly obligations must include all contractual expenses, which may consist of but not be limited to rent or mortgage payments, utilities and salaries given to officers and staff members, and may include benevolence, missions support, supplies for the weekly conducting of corporate worship.
 - 5.2. Salaries for officers or staff members shall be determined by the Session and administered according to the Book of Procedures.

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

ARTICLE IX. The Sacraments:

1. Baptism and the Lord's Supper:
 - 1.1. The baptized children of communicant members are accepted as members of the covenant community and are therefore admitted as communing members of the church. They are to be taught to love God, and to obey and serve the Lord Jesus Christ. All children of church members should be earnestly reminded that it is their duty and privilege to personally repent of their sins, to receive Christ as their Savior, to study the Scriptures and Reformed Confessions to show themselves approved, to increasingly demonstrate self-control and Christian maturity, and to confess the Lord Jesus Christ before men.
 - 1.2. It is the duty of the elders to prudently judge, after careful examination, the qualifications of those who apply for baptism or admission to the Lord's Supper.
2. Baptism:
 - 2.1. When unbaptized persons apply for admission into the communing membership of the church, they shall, ordinarily, make a public profession of their faith, in the presence of the congregation, and thereupon be baptized.
 - 2.2. The form of baptism, whether by immersion, sprinkling, or pouring (being an issue of form rather than substance), shall be left as a matter of conscience for the individual believer or the head of the household and by agreement with the elders.
3. The Administration of the Lord's Supper:
 - 3.1. The Communion, or Lord's Supper, is to be observed frequently, the stated times to be determined by the elders, as it may be judged most for edification.
 - 3.2. Elders administering the Lord's Supper shall instruct or make notification to those present concerning who is qualified to partake of the Lord's Supper, pointing out that those who under any church discipline or who are non-communicant members are not admitted to the Lord's Supper. Likewise, they must admonish all professing believers to examine themselves, to discern the Lord's body, and to partake of the Supper in a worthy manner.
 - 3.3. Since, by our Lord's appointment, this sacrament sets forth the communion of saints, the elders, at their discretion, before the observance begins, may invite all those who profess the true faith of Christ and are communicants in good standing in a church deemed by the elders to practice Trinitarian baptism to participate in the ordinance.

ARTICLE X. Amendments:

1. These by-laws may be amended or altered by a three-fourths affirmative vote of those members present at a regularly called congregational meeting, but only provided that:

Constitution and By-Laws for Saint David's Church

February 2016

- 1.1. the purpose to amend or alter the by-laws has been previously announced in the call for the meeting
- 1.2. the specific wording of any proposed amendment has been available for inspection to the member of the church for ten days preceding the meeting.
2. The above restrictions, having been observed, shall not forbid members present at a duly called congregational meeting from perfecting or reformulating, in terms of the specific issue or subject matter stated in them, those amendments which have been previously proposed and announced. Previously proposed amendments which have been altered at the duly called meeting of the members of the congregation may be voted upon at that same meeting.
3. A constitutional review committee shall be appointed by the elders every five years, in calendar years divisible by 5, in order to review the constitution and make recommendations as defined in the Book of Procedures for possible changes to the congregation.

ARTICLE XI. Position Papers:

From time to time the elders may, at their discretion and with the approval of a majority of members present at any congregational meeting, prepare and add to these bylaws position papers that reflect Christian positions on issues that are important to the church, its members or society in general. These position papers will represent the official position of the church and will be as binding on church members as any of the other provisions of these bylaws. These positions currently include:

- The necessity of Christian education for all covenant children.
- Our opposition to women serving in combatant roles in military organizations.
- The importance of the husband as head of household, determining medical, social, economic standards for the Christian family.