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CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH

# constitution



## **PREAMBLE**

Since Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Realizing that we, as individual believers, constitute His body, the Church, have indeed become members of that body (Ephesians 5:30), we, therefore, have united into this assembly at Ft. Worth, Texas, not as that Church, but as a congregation of believing members of that Church, to be used by the Lord more efficiently for His honor and glory.

We resolve that all functions of this corporate body shall be dedicated to serving the LORD JESUS CHRIST and to fulfilling the ministry of reconciliation committed to us, that GOD did in CHRIST reconcile the world unto Himself, (2 Corinthians 5:18-19) and

Therefore, we adopt this Constitution, thus establishing statutes for the orderly conduct of the functions of congregational business and activity (1 Corinthians 14:40).

## **ARTICLE ONE**

### *The Church Name*

The church is named the Pantego Bible Church. It currently does business as Central Bible Church.

## **ARTICLE TWO**

### *Incorporation*

I. In August 1959, the Central Bible Church was incorporated under the Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act as a non-profit organization for religious purposes. In December 2018, the church voted to change the name of Pantego Bible Church to Central Bible Church. In August 2019, Pantego Bible Church began doing business as Central Bible Church.

II. The Church Board Chairman, Board Secretary, and Board Treasurer become President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Corporation for the purpose of carrying on any legal matters on behalf of the church.

## **ARTICLE THREE**

### *Purposes of the Church*

One purpose is to provide the opportunity for worship, fellowship, instruction, service and prayer (Acts 2:42).

A second purpose is to provide the ordinances of baptism and communion (Acts 2:42).

A third purpose is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home and abroad (Acts 1:8).

## **ARTICLE FOUR**

### *Church Government*

#### *Spiritual Leadership*

The church acknowledges the Lord Jesus Christ as its Head; the Holy Spirit as its Source of power, its Convicter and indwelling Director; and the Holy Scriptures as the infallible guide in the matters of the faith, church order, and discipline. This spiritual leadership responsibility is understood as being delegated to the Church Board, composed of elders, who are under-shepherds of the Great Shepherd.

#### *Affiliation*

The Church is not affiliated with any denomination but is part of the invisible Church composed of believers in Jesus Christ in the world. At times, the Church Board may decide to partner with like-minded churches and organizations for the sake of the gospel.

#### *Authority*

The government of the church is the responsibility of the Church Board. The Church Board is charged with the task of governing the Church according to the Holy Scriptures and the provisions of this Constitution. The Church Board has final authority in

all matters except in the following, which require congregational approval: Annual Budget, Calling of a Lead Pastor, Election of Church Board, Changes to this Constitution.

The responsibility of the membership is to Christ, the Church Board, and to each other. It is the membership's responsibility to elect the members of the Church Board for leadership.

## **ARTICLE FIVE**

### *Church Doctrine*

I. We believe literally in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as inspired of God, inerrant in the original writings, and of supreme and final authority in faith and life (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).

II. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). Father (Ephesians 4:6), Son (Hebrews 1:8), Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17).

III. We believe Jesus Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, and is true God and true man (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:20-21; Luke 1:35-36; Hebrews 10:12; Philippians 2:5-8; John 14:8-12; 1 Timothy 2:5-6).

IV. We believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins as our substitutionary sacrifice according to the Scriptures, and all who receive Him by faith are justified on the basis of His shed blood. (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Colossians 1:14; Ephesians 1:4-9; Romans 5:8-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Timothy 1:15).

V. We believe in the bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, His bodily ascension into Heaven, and His present ministry as High Priest and Advocate for us (Hebrews 7:25, 9:24, 10:21; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 2:1; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Acts 1:9-11).

VI. We believe the Holy Spirit existed eternally with the Father and the Son; His ministry is to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. During this present age, He convicts men (John 16:8); regenerates the believing sinner (Titus 3:5); places believers into the body of Christ by His baptism (1 Corinthians 12:13); and indwells (1 Corinthians 6:19); and seals (Ephesians 4:30); and fills (Ephesians 5:18) every believer. He guides (Romans 8:14), instructs (John 16:12-15), and empowers the believer for godly living and service.

VII. We believe angels were all originally created holy; but under the leadership of Satan, some angels now exist in a fallen state (Jude 6).

VIII. We believe that man is created in the image of God to be in fellowship with his Creator and to display the glory of God. However, the first man, Adam, and his wife, Eve, sinned when they broke God's commandment. Man thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God. Consequently, all human beings are born with the sinful nature (Romans 3:23, 5:12; Genesis 1:26-27; Psalm 51:5).

IX. We believe in the bodily resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the everlasting blessedness of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:12-15, 21:8; Acts 24:14-15; John 5:28-29; Luke 16:19-31).

X. We believe that believers in Christ are sanctified and set apart unto God for His service:

A. At the moment a person trusts Christ for salvation (1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11; Hebrews 10:10, 14).

B. Daily by the reading of the Word and by the teaching of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 119:11; Ephesians 5:25-26; John 17:17; Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:4).

C. Ultimately upon the return of Christ, believers will experience glorification. (1 Corinthians 15:51-58; 1 John 3:2; 1 Peter 1:4-6; Jude 24-25).

XI. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ, which is His Body, the Church (Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:1-16; Colossians 1:15-18; Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

XII. We believe water baptism and the Lord's Table are the two main ordinances of the church and are for all born-again believers:

A. The ordinance of baptism is for those who have personally accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. Baptism is an outward manifestation and testimony of the spiritual change, which occurred in the believer's life when he accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior. Our mode of baptism is immersion because it more closely typifies the believer's relationship with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection; and, it is the mode of baptism modeled in the New Testament (Matthew 28:19; Acts 8:36-38).

B. The Lord's Table will be observed regularly. It is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, and is open to all Christians who are walking in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:17-34).

XIII. We believe in the imminent, heavenly, visible, and bodily return of Christ to receive His people, to establish His kingdom on earth, and to judge the living and the dead (Matthew 24:30-44; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-5:11, Revelation 20:1-15). We affirm that when Jesus returns, God's promises to His people, including Israel and the Church, will be fulfilled in accordance with His eternal plan. These truths provide Christians with hope and call us to live holy lives as we await His return.

## **ARTICLE SIX**

### *Church Officers*

#### The Church Board

I. The Church Board shall be comprised of men elected for a three-year term. The Lead Pastor shall be a voting member of the Church Board.

A. General qualifications for Church Board Members are found in Titus 1:6-8 and 1 Timothy 3:1-12.

B. Specific qualifications for Church Board Members are:

1. He must be a member of the local church.
2. He must acknowledge and be in agreement with the Doctrinal Statement as outlined in this Constitution and doctrinal positions specified by the Church Board.
3. He must be a spiritually mature Christian.

C. Responsibilities of Board Members are:

1. To oversee the spiritual life of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2; Hebrews 13:17).
2. To govern (1 Timothy 3:4-5, 5:17).
3. To guard sound doctrine (Titus 2:1-7).
4. To assume duties of the Pulpit Committee in the lengthy absence of the Lead Pastor or when the pastorate is vacant.
5. To examine prospective church members.
6. To be responsible for discipline of the church membership according to 1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13.
7. To approve any ministry outside the church considered an arm of the church.
8. To serve on the church Nominating Committee.
9. To establish church policy and delegate appropriate implementation to the Staff. The Church Board shall review the policies and procedures of all church organizations and make changes when it is necessary. Church policy will be published for the benefit of the Board and the congregation.

D. The responsibility of Board Members is to Christ, each other, and the congregation.

E. Election of Board Members

1. The men to serve as Board members shall be elected by the voting members of this church at a congregational meeting. The nominees receiving the plurality vote shall be elected to the office.
2. Church Board Members shall be elected to serve a three-year term. Each year, all members of the Board are subject to reaffirmation by the congregation.
3. After a member serves two consecutive three-year terms, there must be a minimum of a one-year break in his service on the Church Board.

4. There shall be a minimum of seven (7) elected Church Board Members and a maximum of nine (9) elected Church Board Members.
5. The Church Board shall organize itself each year as considered appropriate for ministering to the church.
6. The Church Board Chairman, Vice-Chairman, shall review all Church Board Member assignments annually and Lead Pastor; and current year assignments will be made according to this review.
7. Elected Church Board Members will be accountable for their spiritual oversight and leadership to the congregation. This will require annual approval by a majority vote of eligible voters present at the annual congregational meeting.

#### Pastors

#### II. The pastors shall consist of a Lead Pastor and other pastors as are deemed necessary.

A. General qualifications for all pastors are found in Titus 1:6-8 and 1 Timothy 3:1-12.

B. Specific qualifications for pastors are:

1. The pastors must acknowledge and be in agreement with the doctrinal statements outlined in Scripture, in this Constitution, and in doctrinal positions specified in writing by the Church Board.
2. The pastors must have academic training and experience, which qualifies them for a ministry in the local congregation.

C. Appointment or Dismissal:

1. Call – A Lead Pastor shall be called by a vote of the eligible members of the church and continue in office as long as the Lead Pastor and Church Board agree to continue the relationship. By virtue of the call and acceptance, the Lead Pastor automatically becomes a member of the church. A minimum of 60% of the voting membership of the church shall be required to hold a meeting, and 75% vote of those attending said meeting shall be necessary to call a Pastor.
2. Dismissal – Dismissal of a Lead Pastor shall be made by the Church Board with a vote of at least 75% of the Church Board membership in favor of such action. This action does not require congregational approval.
  - a. In the event of such dismissal, the congregation has the right to call a membership meeting, as set forth below, in which the Church Board will present reasons for such action. The Church Board action may be overridden by a 75% vote of the 60% of the voting membership, which must be in attendance at said meeting. The congregation must be represented by a signed petition containing signatures of 20% of the voting membership in order to call said meeting.
  - b. In the event a resignation is submitted to the Church Board, no further approval will be necessary for acceptance.
  - c. No meeting of record shall be held without meeting requirement in paragraph a.

D. Accountability – Lead Pastor

The Lead Pastor is accountable to the Church Board for performance, doctrinal teachings, morals, and ethics.

E. Pastoral Staff

The Pastoral Staff is organized under the leadership of the Lead Pastor after consultation with the Church Board.

#### III. Deacons

Central Bible Church does not formally have the office of deacon, however we affirm both men and women who function in this volunteer capacity as servant leaders.

#### IV. Responsibilities of the Pastors, Church Board, Staff, and lay leaders.

The responsibility of the Pastors, Church Board, Staff, and lay leaders will be to live lives that are Christ-like in nature. They are expected to uphold and promote the doctrinal positions of the church and to work harmoniously with the congregation within the doctrinal position and administrative framework set by the Constitution. They are to provide spiritual leadership in the areas of preaching, teaching, program development, evangelism, and prayer.

## ARTICLE SEVEN

### *Church Membership*

#### I. Qualification

The membership of the church shall consist of individuals who have confessed the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, accepted the doctrinal statement contained herein in its entirety, agreed to be governed by this Constitution, and approved for membership upon examination by the Board members.

#### II. Interview by Church Board Members

Church Board Members shall interview believers desiring membership. This interview will give the prospective member an opportunity to make a statement of personal faith in Christ and to indicate a willingness to live in accordance with the teaching of God's Holy Word and in communion with other members of the church. The Church Doctrinal Statement shall be explained to the prospective church member. Children shall be examined on the same basis as adults.

#### IV. Baptism After Membership

Every applicant for membership who has not been baptized will be encouraged to receive the ordinance of water baptism. Those who have been baptized prior to their uniting with this church and are satisfied with that baptism shall not be required to be re baptized.

#### V. Voting Members

The voting members at congregational meetings shall be limited to those members who are 18 years of age or older and on the "active" church roll.

#### VI. Membership Roll

Membership is gained by attending a membership class and being affirmed by an Elder of the Church Board or their designated representative. However, the "active" church membership roll is only composed of those members who reaffirm their membership each year. If any member is not on the "active" church membership roll for three consecutive years, he or she will be removed from membership. If one desires to be readmitted to membership, he or she would be required to once again attend the membership class and be affirmed by a member of the Church Board (Hebrews 10:24-25).

#### VII. Disciplinary Termination

Any member who manifests willful, sinful behavior which is clear violation of Scripture and which could damage the church (or any of its members), weaken its testimony, or promote disunity shall be subject to discipline as set forth in Matthew 18:15-22; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; and 1 Timothy 5:19-21. The Church Board shall be vested with the ultimate authority to oversee discipline and to promulgate such disciplinary procedures as shall be consistent with the Word of God. The Church Board may delegate its authority to oversee disciplinary action (under this Article) to the Doctrine and Discipline Committee.

No offenses shall be brought before the church until the instructions of the Lord Jesus Christ have been followed as outlined in Matthew 5:23-24 and 18:15-16. When offended, individual members of the body are responsible to be obedient to these Scriptures and to personally confront the offender. Thereafter, the offender should be confronted by two or three members, which may include members of the Church Board and Staff. If the behavior continues, the Church Board shall investigate the offense as thoroughly as possible. Where the Church Board is of the opinion that further discipline may be necessary, the offender shall be given the opportunity to appear before the Church Board to personally present his/her own defense and be confronted by all the witnesses accessible and all facts ascertainable. After a fair and impartial hearing, the congregation shall be advised of the offense, if a majority of the Church Board finds the offense to warrant such disclosure. Such disclosure will be made at a regular congregational or special called meeting. If the behavior continues, the Church Board may withdraw fellowship.

VII. The members of Central Bible Church declare that in joining the church they have entered into a covenant to minister to one another's spiritual needs. This relationship is entered into by mutual consent with the church and congregation. Church discipline is intended for the up building of the body by encouraging the restoration and repentance of the offender

and by acting as a deterrent to the other members of the body. Therefore, members whose behavior is subject to discipline provided for in Paragraph VII above may not avoid disciplinary action by unilaterally withdrawing their membership from the church.

Further, in accordance with 1 Corinthians 6:1-8, the members of Central Bible Church hereby covenant and agree that we will not pursue legal action or sue the church, the Pastors, Elders, Church Board Members, Church Staff, or any other members of the body who administer disciplinary action in accordance with their official duties and/or the terms and provisions of this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE EIGHT**

### *Nominating Committee*

- I. The function of the Nominating Committee shall be to:
  - A. Review the church roll for eligible personnel to fill church offices.
  - B. Recommend qualified individuals to fill church offices.
  - C. Select qualified personnel to fill unexpired vacancies of church offices until the next annual meeting.
- II. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of the Church Board and three members at large from the congregation. The at-large members shall be nominated and elected at the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee shall review the church membership roll each fall and interview and nominate candidates for vacancies.
- III. The Chairman of the Church Board shall chair the Nominating Committee.

## **ARTICLE NINE**

### *Church Meetings*

- I. Regular services shall consist of Sunday morning worship, Bible Studies, and others as considered necessary by the Church Board.
- II. The annual meeting of the church shall be held no later than the last day of the current fiscal year.
- III. All congregational meetings to conduct church business shall be duly called by the Church Board through its Chairman. Such meetings shall be announced:
  - A. Twice on a given Sunday in conjunction with a letter as to the time and nature of the meeting, or
  - B. On two successive Sundays prior to said meeting.
- IV. The quorum necessary for a congregational meeting shall be a minimum of 20% of the voting members except in those cases outlined in Article Six, II, C, 1 and 2.
- V. Except as stated elsewhere, any and all matters presented to the vote of the congregation must have the approval of the majority of the voting members present.
- VI. For business meetings Robert's Rules of Order applies in areas not covered by this Constitution.
- VII. The Chairman of the Church Board shall serve as Chairman of all congregational meetings or, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman.
- VIII. In case of a tie vote, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote.

Church business will be funded by voluntary contributions and will be guided by an annual budget to be approved by the Church Board and the congregation at the annual meeting.

## **ARTICLE TEN**

### *Church Committees*

The Church Board will approve all Chairs of all church committees. Committee members will be active members of the church.

## **ARTICLE ELEVEN**

### *Examination of Official Books and Records*

The Church Board will request an independent examination of the financial transactions at intervals it considers reasonable.

## **ARTICLE TWELVE**

### *Funding of Church Programs*

Church business will be funded by voluntary contributions and will be guided by an annual budget to be approved by the Church Board and the congregation at the annual meeting.

## **ARTICLE THIRTEEN**

### *Constitutional Succession*

Upon approval of this Constitution, it shall supersede all previous Constitutions and Constitutional Amendments of Central Bible Church.

## **ARTICLE FOURTEEN**

### *Amendments*

This Constitution may be amended by a vote of 75% of the voting members present at a duly called business meeting called for the purpose of amending this Constitution providing the Church Board has approved the proposed amendment.

## **ARTICLE FIFTEEN**

### *Dissolution of Corporation*

On discontinuance of Central Bible Church, Inc. by dissolution or otherwise, the existing Board of Elders will decide to transfer any remaining assets to either the State of Texas, the United States, or a charitable, educational, religious, or other similar organization that is qualified as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c) (3), Internal Revenue Code.

This Constitution is adopted this 18th day of September, 1977, at the Congregational Meeting of Central Bible Church at Arlington, Texas, to become effective after the January, 1978 annual meeting.

Revisions approved at meetings on January 11, 1980, and superseded on April 24, 1981, are incorporated in Article Six, Paragraph I, Section D, Point 1; and Article Nine, Paragraph II.

Revisions approved at a meeting on February 2, 1986 are incorporated in Article Seven, Paragraphs VII and VIII.

Revisions approved at a meeting on March 27, 1988 are incorporated in Articles Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, and Fourteen.

A revision approved at a meeting on August 31, 1997, is incorporated in a new Article Fifteen.

Revisions approved at a meeting on December 8, 2019 are incorporated in Articles One, Two, Four, Five, Six, Seven and Nine.