

LCC

CONSTITUTION



Puyallup, Washington

September 1992

Last Revision February 22, 2016

**LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTIAN CENTER
CONSTITUTION
Puyallup, Washington**

ARTICLE 1 – Introduction

We have written this constitution in order to ensure unity as a church family, while promoting our purpose as stated below. This constitution provides the means and the structures needed to implement what God called us to do and to be as a church.

ARTICLE 2 – Name

The name of the church, a Washington non-profit corporation, shall be “Lighthouse Christian Center” (LCC) located in Puyallup, Washington.

ARTICLE 3 – Purpose Statement

Our Purpose:

We are a Christ-centered community, reaching out every day to make more and better disciples.

Our Mission:

To attract and lead unbelievers to Jesus and membership in God’s family.
To disciple believers to maturity in Christ.
To equip believers for service and ministry.
To help believers discover their part in the Great Commission.

Our Strategy:

To train and empower our congregation to build, bring, belong and become.

Build means building relationships with people far from God.

Bring represents bringing others to Christ and to church.

Belong represents each believer’s commitment to weekend services and connection to a home group or small group.

Become is the process of becoming more and more like Jesus through growth in God’s Word, in Christian character and in Christian practices, and to help others in this transformation process.

Our Commitment:

As a community we will work together in an attitude of cooperation and love to accomplish this purpose and to these ends we commit our lives, our finances, and our resources as a church.

ARTICLE 4 – Relationship

This church is affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination. Should Lighthouse Christian Center cease to exist as a corporate body, then all of its property, appurtenances, and effects then owned or held by it shall be turned over to the local Christian and Missionary Alliance. The congregation may articulate preferences on distribution, but they will be non-binding.

ARTICLE 5 – Statement of Faith

We believe that the Holy Bible is the inspired and authoritative source of Christian doctrine and precept, and without error in its original monographs. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21)

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:26, 27; 2:7 – 3:19; Romans 3:23; 5:12-21; 6:23)

We believe that the only hope for man is to place his trust in Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is the virgin-born Son of God, who died to take upon Himself the punishment for the sin of mankind. We believe in His sacrificial death and His bodily resurrection from the dead. It is by receiving Him as Lord and Savior that man is made spiritually alive. This begins a relationship with the living Savior. (John 1:12; 3:3-7; 5:24; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 9:11-28)

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and lost, the eternal existence of all men either in heaven or hell, and in divine judgments, rewards, and punishments. We believe as well that Jesus Christ will return in person to earth in power and glory. (John 5:29; Acts 1:11; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 15:51-58; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 John 8; Revelation 19, 20)

We believe that the Holy Spirit indwells those who have received Christ, enabling them to live righteous and godly lives. Both the gifts and fruit of the Spirit are a continuing part of God's plan for His church. It is God's will that each believer be filled with the Holy Spirit. (Galatians 3:2; 5:22; Romans 8:5-9; 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:7-12; 5:18)

We believe that the church is the body of Christ and is composed of all those who through belief in Christ have been spiritually regenerated by the indwelling Holy Spirit. The mission of the church is evangelization on the one hand, and the nurturing and discipling of Christians on the other. (Matthew 28:18-20)

We believe in the ordinances of baptism and The Lord's Supper. (Matthew 26:26-30; 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Romans 6:3-4)

We believe God ordained marriage and the family, and that the only legitimate marriage is a sacred and permanent covenant relationship between one man and one woman, symbolizing the union of Christ and his Church. (Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:4-6; Ephesians 5:22-25)

We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity is to be engaged in outside of the marriage of a man and a woman. Any form of molestation, fornication, adultery, homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, bisexuality, incest, pedophilia, or pornography is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. We believe God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. (Genesis 2:22-24; 19:5, 13; Leviticus 18:1-30; Matthew 19:4-6; Romans 1:26-29; 7:2; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 5:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

ARTICLE 6 – Membership

1. Membership requirements. Those who desire to become members of the church shall have met the following requirements:

- Trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- Publicly express faith in Christ by baptism.
- Agree with the LCC "Statement of Faith."
- Must complete a membership class and submit a membership application.

2. Membership responsibilities. Recognizing the importance and benefits of church membership, we encourage members to aim toward:

- Personal commitment to the LCC Purpose and Constitution.
- Regular worship with the church family.
- Financial support of the church ministry through tithing.
- Submission to church leadership.
- Prayerful attendance and participation in regular and special business meetings.

3. Membership considerations. The membership shall have the following considerations:

- The membership shall give approval to the Leadership Team (abbreviated "LT": see "Leadership" in Article 7) for the purchase of land or commitment to a building project. A two-thirds majority of those voting at an annual or special business meeting is required for approval.
- Membership shall elect the Senior Pastor and all members of the Leadership Team in regular or special business meetings.
- The congregation shall receive a monthly written report of income and expenses.
- The congregation is an integral part of the ministry team in accomplishing God's purpose for LCC.

4. Voting. One must be a member and at least 18 years old to vote in a regular or special business meeting. Absentee voting will be available for those who cannot attend for reasons such as business travel or health. In order to exercise absentee vote, a member must contact the church office, obtain a ballot and turn in a signed ballot prior to the meeting.

5. Receiving members. After satisfying all membership requirements, membership will be granted upon approval of the Leadership Team.

6. Removing members. In order to keep track of the voting membership, members may be removed from the membership roll under the following conditions:

- Transferring to another church.
- Assuming a new permanent residence out of the area.
- Requesting to be released from membership.
- Failing to attend the services and/or support the church for a period of six months.
- Rejecting church discipline.
- Death.

7. Discipline of members. The procedure outlined by Christ in Matthew 18:15-20 shall be encouraged in all cases when one member becomes aware of a willful and harmful sin in the life of another member:

- We will remember during any discipline process that the primary purpose of discipline is restoration.
- Sins that may require discipline might include:
Sins of moral impurity, perversion, etc. (1 Corinthians 5:11);
Sins that promote false doctrine (2 Peter 2:1-3);
Sins of divisiveness that bring confusion and hamper the work of the church (Romans 16:17).
- The following steps outline the disciplinary action to be followed:
 - a) When sin is observed, the concerned party should arrange a private meeting as soon as possible to lovingly confront the member, or request the elders' assistance in arranging such a meeting.
 - b) If the member refuses to favorably respond, then one or two witnesses shall be taken along to attempt to restore the sinning member. At least one of these witnesses should be a church leader as chosen by the eldership. Our desire is to keep the process of restoration in as limited a circle as possible, and to provide good counsel to the troubled member. All parties concerned shall express a spirit of gentleness and a desire to bear the burdens of the troubled member. (Gal 6:1-2)
 - c) If the member refuses to listen to the two or three, the Senior Pastor will call a meeting of the LT and request in writing that the troubled member be present at that meeting.
 - d) If the member fails to appear at the meeting referred to above or heed the counsel of the LT, the LT will determine appropriate action, which may include removal from membership. (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-14)
 - e) The Elders of the Leadership Team shall determine whether or not the counsel has been properly heeded and whether the member is to be restored to fellowship or dismissed from membership.
 - f) A dismissed member may request reinstatement of membership upon repentance and reconciliation.

ARTICLE 7 – Leadership/Staff

1. Church Leadership. It is assumed that all those in ministry positions throughout the church exercise leadership. Elected leadership and staff leadership shall consist of the following:

- **Pastors:** Men who fulfill the qualifications for pastoral ministry. The Senior Pastor is elected, while staff pastors are hired by the Senior Pastor and the Leadership Team (See Article 7.2 below)
- **Staff Ministers:** Men or women hired by the Senior Pastor and Leadership Team to fill a ministry position.
- **Leadership Team members:**
 - a) **Elders:** Men who fulfill the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and who are elected members of the Leadership Team.
 - b) **Leaders:** Men or women who fulfill the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, and who are elected members of the Leadership Team.
 - c) **Past Elders and Leaders** may be called upon to serve in various leadership capacities as requested.

2. Pastors and Staff

Senior Pastor:

- **Qualifications:** The Senior Pastor shall meet the character requirements of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, demonstrate one or more of the gifts of Ephesians 4:11, 12, and be licensed or ordained within three years of being hired for pastoral ministry by the Christian and Missionary Alliance. In addition, he must have education and experience commensurate with the position, allowing them to effectively perform their ministry duties.
- **Duties:** It shall be the duty of the Senior Pastor to pray, proclaim God’s Word, set strategic direction, oversee the spiritual health, direction and ministry of the church. In addition, the Senior Pastor is responsible to provide leadership to the staff, Leadership Team and congregation so that the church’s purpose is being accomplished.

The Senior Pastor’s job description and performance shall be reviewed as needed by the Leadership Team.

- **Selection:**
 - a) Upon vacancy of the office of Senior Pastor, the vice-chairman of the Leadership Team (see Article 8 below) will become the chairman of a Search Committee. This Search Committee will include the entire Leadership Team and may also include other church members when it seems appropriate to the LT. The pastoral team and other team leads will be kept informed of current status and may be consulted on a non-binding basis.
 - b) In the absence of a Senior Pastor, the LT shall give one of the pastoral staff limited authority to continue with daily operation for the continuity of the church’s ministry.

- c) The Search Committee has the authority to hire an interim pastor and is to give consideration to any existing pastoral staff for this interim position as well as the permanent Senior Pastoral position.
- d) Upon approval of the Search Committee, the candidate shall be given a variety of interaction opportunities with members of the congregation. The candidate must preach at least one weekend at all weekend services. The congregation shall then vote at a special business meeting on whether or not to extend a call. Affirmation by 80% of the members voting by written ballot shall be required to call a Senior Pastor.
- e) Existing staff pastors and other ministry staff are expected to continue in ministry after the selection of the new Senior Pastor.
- **Term:**
 - a) The term of the Senior Pastor shall be indefinite.
 - b) Every three years a vote of confidence shall be taken at the annual business meeting. A 60% approval will affirm the pastor's continuation of ministry. If less than 60%, the Leadership Team must review the position, arrive at a recommendation, and hold a special business meeting (see Article 9.2) to communicate their recommendation and take a vote of the membership. The Leadership Team will moderate this special business meeting. Whether the recommendation is for dismissal or for continuation of ministry, a vote shall be taken. A 65% vote for dismissal by the membership voting shall be cause for dismissal of the Senior Pastor.
 - c) If necessary, the Leadership Team may call a special business meeting at any time to recommend dismissal of the Senior Pastor. This may be necessary for a variety of reasons including nonperformance of duties. A 65% vote for dismissal by ballot of the members voting is required for dismissal.

Staff Pastors

- **Qualifications:** Staff pastors shall meet the character qualities of 1 Timothy 3:1-7, demonstrate one or more of the gifts of Ephesians 4:11, 12, and be licensed by Christian & Missionary Alliance within 3 years of hire. The Leadership Team may give special consideration for hiring to those who have been ordained in other denominations. Staff pastors must have education and experience commensurate with the position, allowing them to effectively perform their ministry duties.
- **Duties:** Each pastor's job description will be established by the Senior Pastor in cooperation with the Leadership Team. Job performance shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor annually and communicated to the Leadership Team. Each staff pastor will be supervised by the Senior Pastor.
- **Selection of Staff Pastors:** When a need arises for a staff pastor, the Senior Pastor will submit a job description and funding proposal to the LT. After the LT has approved the necessary funds, the Senior Pastor may then begin the search process in cooperation with the LT. The LT must have opportunity to interview the candidate, and/or request pertinent information about the candidate so as to make its best recommendation to the Senior Pastor. Finally, both the Senior Pastor and the LT must then pray and seek God together, and must agree as to the right selection.

- **Term:** Pastors shall serve indefinitely; the relationship may be terminated by the Senior Pastor in cooperation with the Leadership Team on a 30-day written notice. If a written request for a pastor's resignation is submitted to Leadership Team by a member, then the LT must review and respond to the request. A staff pastor may be asked to vacate his office immediately, but must be given all financial benefits for at least 30 days.

Ministry Staff

- **Qualifications:** Ministers shall meet the character qualities of 1 Timothy 3:8-13. In addition, they must demonstrate the education and experience commensurate with their job description. Ministers might include "Minister of Counseling," "Children's Minister," or "Minister of Music," etc.
- **Duties:** Ministers shall work closely with the pastors in providing leadership and teaching so that the church's purpose is accomplished. Each minister's job description shall be established by the Senior Pastor in cooperation with the Leadership Team. Job performance shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor annually with communication to the Leadership Team.
- **Selection:** (See "Selection of Staff Pastors" above.)
- **Term:** (See "Term" for Staff Pastors above.)

Program and Support Staff

Other staff members shall be hired as necessary by the Senior Pastor or his delegate.

Job descriptions shall be established by the Senior Pastor or his delegate.

Job performance shall be reviewed by the Senior Pastor or his delegate with communication to the Leadership Team.

3. The Leadership Team

The primary role of the LT shall be to prayerfully determine and implement God's will for the church. LT shall be responsible to provide counsel to the pastors in maintaining the effective and efficient operation of the church, and to be active partners in the work of the ministry. The LT shall be responsible for wise stewardship of all church resources. They shall be accountable to manage church funds according to Scriptural principles:

- Showing commitment to live within the means of the church;
- Commitment to limit and/or avoid debt; and
- Commitment to support missionary efforts through funding from the general operating budget.

The LT shall provide an annual budget and have responsibility to act on behalf of the church on all matters not specifically reserved for the members or pastors as stipulated elsewhere in this document.

LT meetings must reflect the team ministry philosophy present in the Scriptures, each person having something to offer to the whole. LT members are responsible to move in prayerful discussion and careful recognition of God's desire for unity as decisions are discussed and made. This must be modeled among LT members.

The LT is an integral part of the team ministry philosophy of the church.

Composition: The LT shall be one group selected from the membership consisting of both Elders and Leaders, as well as the Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor's wife may serve as an unelected member of the LT, or may be elected to the LT.

There must be at least two elders and two leaders on the LT at all times. At no point should the LT consist of more than ten members, or less than six members, exclusive of the Pastor and his wife. The specific number of positions to be filled each year shall be determined by the existing LT.

Qualifications: Any potential LT member must be a church member who is currently fulfilling the responsibilities of church membership. In addition, they must have been actively involved in ministry within the church body during the past year before being considered for leadership. Election to the LT is recognition of a person who is currently demonstrating such servant leadership. The general qualifications for members of the LT are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-13. Both Elders and Leaders shall be men and women who demonstrate the character qualities, spiritual wisdom and gifting of leaders.

Meetings and Agenda: The LT shall meet regularly (at least monthly), as mutually agreed upon by the Senior Pastor and LT. LT members must be informed of all meetings. A quorum for all LT meetings shall consist of 60% of the total membership of the LT.

The LT shall strive to make decisions in unity. Where disagreement continues, the LT shall agree to pray and rethink the issue in order to come to consensus through deferral and compromise. When consensus cannot be reached, a simple majority will decide the matter.

Any church member may submit a written agenda item to the LT for consideration. In addition, any church member may request to be present at an LT meeting. For either request, the chairman must respond to the church member within two weeks.

Duties of the Leadership Team: The Leadership Team shall exercise spiritual authority, providing leadership and oversight of the effective operation of the church. The LT will work in unity as full partners and in cooperation with the Senior Pastor. The role of the LT is described above in Article 7.3 and includes four important functions:

- a) First, the LT is responsible for the overall strategic direction of the church. Though the Senior Pastor and members of his pastoral staff work together to produce and implement ministry strategies aimed at accomplishing the church's purpose, the LT brings oversight to this direction and these strategies, so that the purpose of the church can be accomplished effectively.
- b) Second, the members of the LT are to act as guardians of Lighthouse Christian Center's core values. The LT will be sensitive to how paid staff and members of the congregation are acting in accordance with Lighthouse Christian Center's core values so that the church continues to build and maintain a healthy spiritual environment.
- c) Third, the LT is responsible for the finances of the church. Decisions about how to use God's money are spiritual decisions. The LT is responsible to use whatever God gives, in order to effectively accomplish whatever God assigns.

d) Fourth, the LT shall have authority for biblical discipline of church members.

Term: Each elected member of the LT shall serve for two years. After three terms, at least one year must elapse before serving another term.

Selection of Leadership Team Members:

- a) The current Leadership Team shall act as the Nominating Committee to elect new LT members. They will be responsible to determine when vacancies are imminent and go through a nominating process. The LT may nominate more than one person for each open position or choose to submit only one name for each position.
- b) In the year before a vacancy is to occur, the LT will receive recommendations from the congregation at-large from June 1 to September 1. They will also seek recommendations from staff and other leaders. Both single and married members of Lighthouse may be considered for the LT. Since there are advantages of both husband and wife serving together on the LT, if a nominee is married, the Nominating Committee shall strive to also nominate their marriage partner, though individual married men or women may still be nominated.
- c) The LT shall vet all suitable candidates. Information gathering, open discussions and prayer will take place during the process. All votes in the nominating process will be by private ballot. Though the Senior Pastor is the chairman of the LT and may freely engage in the nominating process, he will have no vote in the final nominating ballot.
- d) If an unexpected vacancy occurs, the LT may choose to leave it vacant until the next annual meeting or appoint someone to fill the vacancy.
- e) **Removal:** The LT may request that an LT member resign. If the LT loses confidence in the godly character or conduct of an individual LT member, that shall be grounds for the removal of that LT member. For an LT member to be removed, a majority of the LT must vote for his or her removal.

ARTICLE 8 – Officers of the Leadership Team

1. Selection of Officers. Officers shall be selected by the LT from its membership for one-year terms, except for the office of Chairman.

2. Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the LT. The Senior Pastor is the Chairman of the LT. The Chairman shall coordinate the agenda and lead all LT meetings. The Senior Pastor shall lead all congregational meetings with the full assistance and cooperation of the LT. Should the office of Senior Pastor be vacated, the Vice-Chairman shall serve as Chairman and become the Chairman of the Search Committee.

3. Secretary. The Secretary shall have oversight of the minutes of all LT and congregational meetings and maintain accurate and current membership rolls.

4. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that proper procedures and appropriate internal controls are established and followed to ensure the integrity in the administration of all church funds.

5. Signatories. The Chairman of the LT, the Office Manager of Lighthouse Christian Center, and the Treasurer are the authorized signatories for the execution of legal documents on behalf of Lighthouse Christian Center. For legal documents that do not involve an interest in real property, or indebtedness relating to an interest in real property, any one of the signatories may execute the documents. For legal documents pertaining to an interest in real property, or indebtedness relating to an interest in real property, the signatories of both the Chairman of the LT and the Treasurer are required.

ARTICLE 9 – Organizational Matters

1. Annual Meeting. Between January 1 and February 28 of each year, a congregational meeting shall be held to elect LT members, receive last year's financial statement and a presentation of the coming year's budget, and conduct other business as determined by the LT. Any printed material for the annual meeting must be available to the congregation at least one week prior to the meeting. Agenda items for the annual meeting may be submitted to the LT for consideration any time during the year until December 15th. The Annual Meeting must be publicized one month prior to meeting with at least three announcements in the church bulletin and/or newsletter.

2. Special Business Meeting. The LT shall call a special business meeting of the congregation as needed. At least ten days' written notice by mail to the membership, and an announcement at the worship services on two successive weekends, shall be required for any special business meeting. The LT must review and respond to a call for a special business meeting received in written form from any member. Such a request must detail the specific business intended. If the review results in a special business meeting, proper notice must be given and no other business shall be transacted at that time.

3. Constitution Revisions. Revision of the Constitution may be considered only at the annual business meeting. Any revisions originating from the membership may be presented to the LT in written form at any time during the year up to December 15. A two-thirds' majority of members present and voting shall be required to revise the Constitution. If adopted, the revision becomes effective immediately, but not retroactively. The Constitution shall be completely reviewed by the LT at intervals of no more than five years, and revised if necessary.

4. Quorum. Those of the voting membership present at any duly-called congregational meeting shall constitute a quorum.