

Constitution of Clear River Community Church

CONSTITUTION & BY-LAWS

Introduction and Preamble

Clear River Community Church is a legally constituted Church according to the laws of the State of Virginia. The leadership of Clear River expresses its governance policies in the following Constitution. The leadership of Clear River recognizes that this Constitution is a necessary, descriptive document of the purposes and processes of corporate church life. However, this is not an exclusive rule in its own right -- for it is subject to the rule of Holy Scripture in all points. The church of Jesus Christ is not founded on a constitution penned by men. Rather, it operates upon the actions of God in Christ Jesus and upon the confession of His Lordship by men and women of all ages. It is the goal of Clear River to present a constitution that is true to the dictates of Scripture wherein all statements are in accordance with the matter and spirit of the Word of God.

Article I - Name

This church shall be known as Clear River Community Church (dba "Clear River Church").

Article II - Purposes

Section 1: Tax Exempt

This organization operates exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes in accordance with section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributed to its members, trustees, officers, or other private persons, except that the organization shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of these purposes.

No substantial part of the activities of the organization shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the organization shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, the organization shall not participate in any activities not permitted by:

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- (a) any organization exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code or
 - (b) any organization whose contributions are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code.

Section 2: General

Clear River Community Church exists to worship God, reach out to the lost, and to equip and release its members for ministry and the development of Christian community. This enables us to fulfill our unique Christian mission under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Our stated mission is to say “a deeper yes to Jesus Christ through gathering, connecting, giving and becoming a life-giving river bringing healing and hope to neighbors and nations.”

Section 3: Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the organization, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding section of any future Federal tax code), to organization(s) that are organized and operated exclusively for 501(c)(3) purposes, and/or to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

Article III - Statement of Faith

Section 1: Foundational Beliefs

Clear River Community Church holds to the essential orthodox Christian beliefs best expressed in the historic creeds of our faith: The Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Evangelical Statement of Faith.

Section 2: Doctrinal Distinctives

Clear River Community Church further embraces key doctrinal distinctives held by our local community of faith. These doctrinal distinctives are documented under separate cover as the “Clear River Church Statement of Faith.”

Article IV - Church Affiliation

Clear River Community Church is affiliated with Messenger Fellowship International, a covering body that provides support, fellowship and counsel to ministers and churches.

Clear River remains autonomous in its government but willingly stands under the covering and counsel of Messenger.

Article V - Church Membership

Section 1: General

Affiliation by membership is required for participation in the business affairs of this duly constituted body. Clear River Community Church encourages formal affiliation in order to conduct necessary business of the church and accord it legitimacy before temporal authorities and non-believers.

Section 2: Membership in Clear River Community Church

Individuals are recognized as members of Clear River, provided they have accomplished the following:

- 1) Made a personal profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- 2) Been baptized as a public testimony of one's faith
- 3) Has attended the Clear River Membership Class
- 4) Has made a public commitment to Clear River and its membership expectations as communicated in the Clear River Membership class

Section 3: Membership of Children

While under the care of their parent(s) or guardian who are members in good standing, any child under the age of 18 is also considered a member of Clear River Community Church with all privileges of membership available to him/her with the exception of participating in church business. The privilege of participating in church business will be extended to all members in accordance with Article V, Section 2 of this constitution.

Section 4: Revocation of Membership

Members shall be removed from the Church roll for the following reasons:

1. Death
2. Transfer of membership to another church
3. By personal request of the member
4. Dismissal by the Leadership Team according to the following conditions:
The member's life and conduct are not in accordance with the membership covenant in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the Church in the community. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17.

Section 5: Restoration of Members

Members dismissed by the Leadership Team shall be restored by the Leadership Team according to the spirit of 2 Corinthians 2:7-8, when their lifestyles are judged to be in accordance with the membership agreement.

Article VI - Church Officers

Section 1 - Pastor

The Pastor is the local church under-shepherd of Jesus Christ and is primarily responsible to Christ for the ministry of Clear River church. The Pastor, along with the Leadership Team (aka "Design Team"), function as the executive and administrative officers of the church. The Pastor is called to serve indefinitely.

When the church comes to be without a Pastor, the Leadership Team will serve as the search committee seeking a new Pastor. They shall prayerfully search until one candidate is agreed upon to recommend to the church. Church members will be given the opportunity to vote for the recommended candidate. A two-thirds majority vote will be required to approve the candidate.

Removal of the Pastor requires a business meeting of the church where reasons for possible removal must be presented. The Pastor will be given a 30-day notice of the meeting and the charges to be made against him. The board members of the Pastor's ordaining body will be notified of any action to be taken against the Pastor and will be allowed representation at all meetings related to that action. The Pastor shall be allowed to address any and all accusations at the meeting. A three-fourths majority vote of the church membership will be required for removal.

Section 2 – Leadership Team (aka "Design Team")

The Leadership Team is made up of a minimum of 5 voting units that consist of the Pastor and his wife, two voting units appointed by the Pastor, and two voting units nominated by the Leadership Team and confirmed by the congregation. A voting unit is defined as a single person or a married couple and hereafter are referred to as "leaders."

The pastorally appointed leaders serve indefinitely at his discretion. Potential future leaders nominated by the Leadership Team will be presented to the Congregation for confirmation. The Congregation will confirm the new or reappointed leaders by secret ballot. The congregationally confirmed leaders serve for a period of two years and have no limit to the number of terms they can serve. Former leaders may on occasion be included in church governmental or oversight discussions. Should the Leadership Team be expanded beyond the minimum, it will be expanded consistent with one Pastoral appointment and one congregational confirmation. The Leadership Team will determine

the number of leadership members required. This team meets, at a minimum, once a month to address church business. A two-thirds majority vote is required on all action items before the team. Detailed Leadership Team responsibilities are documented under separate cover ("Design Team R&R").

Dismissal from the Leadership Team may occur if the member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the membership covenant and which hinders the Church's ministry influence in the community. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Matthew 18:15-17. Leaders shall only be removed from the Leadership Team with the approval of the Pastor and at least half of the remaining elders. Reasons for recommending removal must be presented to the leader who must be given an opportunity to respond to all charges.

Section 3 – Elders

The Elders of the church consist of the Pastor and the men on the Leadership Team. While the Pastor is an elder like the other men on the Leadership Team, he is uniquely identified as the senior elder and considered the "first among equals" as he is the under-shepherd to Jesus Christ over Clear River church. The other elders advise and assist the Pastor in the spiritual life and direction of the church. The elders meet weekly to pray and tend to the spiritual matters of the church. The elders should meet the qualifications given in 1 Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

Section 4 - Staff

The Pastor, with the approval of the Leadership Team, may bring in such staff as are necessary to assist in the operations of the church. The staff will be employed at a salary agreed upon by the Leadership Team with the advice and counsel of the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC - see below). All staff will answer directly to the Pastor, or a staff person designated by the Pastor. The Pastor has the authority to terminate staff employment in consultation with the Leadership Team.

Section 5 – Trustees

The Pastor, with the approval of the Leadership Team, shall appoint no less than (2) and no more than (5) church members to serve as the Trustees of the church. The Trustees will hold in trust any church property, serve on the Financial Advisory Committee for the church, and maintain the church insurance program. Trustees have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease or transfer any property without a specific vote of the church authorizing each action. They shall sign legal papers as needed.

Section 6 - Treasurer

The treasurer shall ensure that accurate records are maintained for all receipts, disbursements and individual contributions. The treasurer maintains and disburses all

records related to federal and state tax requirements. The treasurer will have authority to disburse and deposit funds from/to any church account(s) in support of church operations. The budget shall be prepared annually by the Treasurer and the Financial Advisory Committee (FAC) and submitted for approval to the Leadership team. The treasurer is responsible for investing and disbursing church funds in accordance with FAC recommendations as approved by the Leadership Team. The Pastor appoints the treasurer with approval from the Leadership Team.

Clear River Community Church shall have the right to possess, buy, mortgage, lease, barter and exchange real and personal property, to borrow money, collect funds, receive bills and legacies as it may judge necessary for the attainment of these objects.

Section 7 – Financial Advisory Committee (FAC)

The FAC, as its name suggests, is an advisory body to the Leadership team. FAC membership consists of the church Treasurer along with at least two other members of the congregation approved by the Leadership Team. The FAC provides short- and long-term financial oversight for the church. The FAC is responsible for all church budgeting and financial planning, financial reporting, and the creation and monitoring of internal controls and accountability policies and practices. The FAC shall prepare the annual budget and the church's annual financial report. The FAC reports to the Leadership Team on these matters on a periodic basis. Other FAC responsibilities are detailed under separate cover (FAC Responsibilities).

Article VII - Church Meetings

Section 1 - For Worship

The church shall meet at appointed times during the week for corporate worship, fellowship and education. The church will also conduct ceremonies related to marriage, baptism, burial and other services as necessary.

Section 2 - For Business

The church shall meet for business meetings when the Leadership Team determines it necessary. At this meeting, the Pastor and leaders shall report on the information, activities or decisions that are deemed necessary to present to the entire congregation. The Pastor or the Elders may call special church business meetings. A fourteen-day notice will be given by all communication means available and the purpose of the meeting announced.

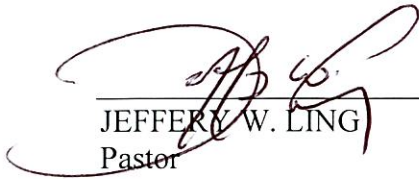
Article VIII – Real Property

Any investments in or purchase/sale of real property require a three fourths approval of the congregation.

Article IX - Implementation

This constitution is effective upon the final signature of all Leadership Team members.
This version supersedes and negates all prior versions.

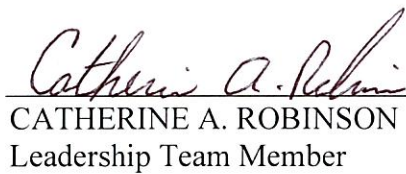
Effective Date: January 25, 2026



JEFFERY W. LING
Pastor



ELIZABETH LING
Leadership Team Member



CATHERINE A. ROBINSON
Leadership Team Member



ANDREW ROBINSON
Leadership Team Member



JODI AUSTIN
Leadership Team Member



MICHAEL AUSTIN
Leadership Team Member



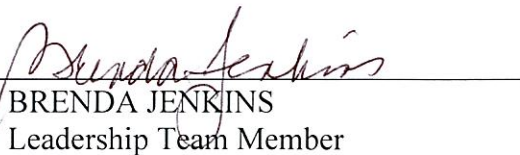
JAYCE NICHOLS
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