

REVISED 7/14/2019
CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS
Cornerstone Church – Myrtle Beach

Article I – Name

The name of this body shall be Cornerstone Church – Myrtle Beach Inc., of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Article II - Purpose

We exist to joyfully glorify God as a Gospel-centered community as we live missionally among the peoples of the world.

Article III – Affiliation

While we recognize that we are an autonomous, local body of the universal church of regenerate believers, we also acknowledge the benefits of cooperation with like-minded bodies. Therefore we have strategically chosen to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the Pillar Network.

Article IV – Membership

“The church is intended to be the community of those who have been born again” (Dever). While we desire to welcome all people at Cornerstone Church, we believe that the church consists only of regenerate people. Therefore, requirements for membership of Cornerstone Church correspond with the Biblical directives of genuine membership to the body of Christ.

Section I: *Qualifications for Covenant Membership*

1. Must be a regenerate believer in Jesus Christ.
2. Must show evidence of regeneration.
3. Must be baptized in obedience to Christ.
4. Each member must subscribe to our Affirmation of Faith and not hold any subtle convictions contrary it.
5. Each member must strive to keep the commitments expressed in the church Covenant.

Section II: *Covenant Membership Process*

1. Membership Class – This is a mandatory class for all who wish to become members of the fellowship at Cornerstone.
2. Membership Interview – Each person who desires to become a member of Cornerstone will be interviewed by an elder or staff member
3. Biblical Believer’s Baptism – We believe that the biblical view of baptism is by immersion. Therefore, we will require all persons who join Cornerstone Church to be baptized by immersion as a public testimony before the world that they are God’s possession.
4. Signing of Church Covenant – Aspiring members will be asked to sign a covenant that is binding between the members of Cornerstone.
5. Signing of Member Affirmation of Faith
6. Presented Before the Church



Section III: *Covenant Membership Privileges*

1. Those who have fulfilled and agreed to the enumerated duties in Section I and II, shall be privileged and expected to participate and contribute to the life of the church. Members are expected to identify and utilize their gifts, talents, time, and material resources, which they have received from God for the edification of the local body. Only members shall be eligible for leadership within the body.
2. It is a privilege and responsibility for members to attend all members' meetings.
3. Members are to vote on the following issues:
 - a. Church member discipline (Matthew 18:15-20, 2 Corinthians 2:5-11)
 - b. Appointment of Deacons (Acts 6:1-7)
 - c. Removal of leaders only on matters of Doctrine and/or morality (Galatians 1:6-10, 1 Timothy 5:19-20)
 - d. Major business and/or financial decisions (Areas of Prudence)
 - i. Budget (annually and significant modifications)
 - ii. Constitutional modifications
 - iii. Building and property decisions (acquisitions, remodeling, construction, and like-scoped projects)
4. Members are to affirm elder nominees

Section IV: *Church Discipline*

If a member is consistently neglectful of his or her membership duties or consistently lives with inappropriate conduct in which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ is dishonored and the welfare of His church damaged, he or she may be subject to the admonition of the elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of the example of Scripture (Matthew 18:15-17; 1 Corinthians 5:1-12; Galatians 6:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:14).

1. The Purpose of Church Discipline
 - a. To bring about repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth in the individual disciplined (Hebrews 12:1-11; Galatians 6:1)
 - b. To instruct other Christians for their good and the good of the church (1 Corinthians 5:11; 1 Timothy 5:20; Hebrews 10:24-25).
 - c. To preserve and maintain the purity of the church body (1 Corinthians 5:6-7; Ephesians 5:27).
 - d. To humbly preserve and protect our corporate witness to the unbelieving world (Matthew 5:13-16; John 13:35; Acts 5:10-14).
 - e. To proclaim the glory of God by seeking to reflect His holy character (Deuteronomy 5:11; John 15:8; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 2:12).

Section V: *Termination of Membership*

Members shall be removed from the church roster if any of the following conditions is met:

1. Death
2. Transfer of membership to another church
3. Failure or neglect to renew Church Covenant
4. By personal request of the member
 - a. Exception: if member is in the process of church discipline and the elders judge that the member has requested removal to avoid the disciplinary process. The request may not be honored until the disciplinary process has concluded.



5. Dismissal by the elders according to the following conditions:
 - a. If the member's life and conduct is not in accordance with the Church Covenant in such a way that the member hinders the ministry influence of the church in the community.
 - b. Procedures for the dismissal of a member shall be according to Scriptures such as Matthew 18:15-17, and other relevant Scriptures as interpreted by the elders.

Section VI: *Covenant Partnership/Dual Membership*

Cornerstone Church will allow those who cooperate with the process and qualifications for membership and choose to maintain dual membership at another church in another community (e.g. college students, 'snowbirds') to serve as fully functioning members in this fellowship, subject to the approval of the elders.

Article V: *Meetings and Church Ordinances*

Section I: *Corporate Worship Meetings*

A regular corporate worship meeting shall be held once a week (*on the Lord's Day or on Sunday*) and other such meetings may be held throughout the week as the elders determine.

Section II: *Members Meetings*

1. In every meeting together, members shall act in that spirit of mutual trust, openness, and loving consideration, which is appropriate within the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. There shall be an annual members' meeting, held either prior to or shortly after the start of the fiscal year at which a budget is presented by the Elders and approved by the voting membership. Any other business deemed appropriate by the elders shall also be conducted (such as Deacon evaluations). The elders shall ensure that these meetings are held and that the required reports are submitted to the church by the responsible members.
3. Special members' meetings may be called, as requested by the elders, at an acceptable time other than the regular weekly corporate worship time, or at the written and signed request, submitted to the elders, of not less than 50% of the voting membership. In the event of a written request from the members, the elders shall call a special meeting to be held within one month of their receipt of the request.
4. One of the elders shall preside at all members' meetings of the church.
5. All annual and special members' meetings shall be announced at a regular corporate worship meeting of the church at least two weeks preceding such meetings. No business may take place if such notifications have not been made.
6. For all members' meetings, a quorum shall be as follows:
 - a. Membership under 100: minimum of 50% of the membership
 - b. Membership over 100: minimum of 20% of the membership
 - c. No business may take place if a quorum is not met. All members may make motions, participate in discussion, and vote.
7. A non-member may make presentations to the church, which are informational in nature and may answer questions regarding the presentation with permission from the elders.
8. On any matter that is brought to vote, a two-thirds (67%) majority is needed for it to pass (unless this Constitution specifies otherwise). Abstentions will not be considered as votes cast. Only votes cast by voting members who are present at the time of the meeting will be counted unless an absentee vote is approved by the elders under special circumstances that prevent a member from attending. For an approved



absentee vote to be counted, it must be in a “privacy” envelope. The envelope is to be sealed and signed across the flap by the voter. An absentee vote must be delivered to a current elder at or before the vote. An absentee vote must follow the same formatting as a regular vote. All absentee votes will be separated from their envelopes prior to vote tabulation in order to maintain anonymity of the voter.

Section III: Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus has committed two ordinances to the local church, baptism and the Lord’s Supper. We believe that these two ordinances should be observed and administered until the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. **Baptism** - Baptism is an obligation for every believer, wherein a person is immersed in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, as a sign of their fellowship with the death and resurrection of Christ and of remission of sins.
2. **The Lord’s Supper** - We believe that the Lord’s Supper is in no sense a sacrifice, but was instituted by Christ to remember His death, and to confirm the faith and other graces of Christians, and to be a pledge and renewal of their communion with Him and with each other.

Article VII: Church Officers

Jesus Christ is the Lord and head of this church and he rules primarily through the Scriptures. Scripture indicates that the responsibility for shepherding and leading the church under Jesus Christ belongs to the elders. As necessary, the Scriptures also provide for the appointment of deacons to serve the church, particularly in areas of ministry that would cause the elders to neglect their Biblical responsibilities. All officers must be members of this church prior to assuming their responsibilities.

Section I: Elders

1. Elder Responsibilities
 - A. He will be responsible to manage or administrate the local church before Almighty God. (Tit 1:7)
 - B. He will be responsible to be a guardian to the truth and to care for the welfare of the members of the local church in every area (I Tim 3:1-2; Tit 1:7), responsible to God. (Heb 13:17)
 - C. He is to exercise leadership and authority in the local church as a member of the board of elders. (I Tim 3:4-5)
 - D. He will be required to hold fast to the Scriptures and to be able to apply them to life situations. (Tit 1:9)
 - E. He will be required to reprove, rebuke, and exhort according to the principles of Scripture as necessary. (Tit. 1:9, 13; 2 Tim. 3:16)
 - F. He will be required to “feed the flock,” by ministering the Word of God whether publicly or privately. (I Tim 3:2, I Pet 5:2-3; Acts 20:28)
 - G. He will be an example to the membership of the church. (I Pet 5:3)
 - H. He will be required to “shepherd” (pastor) the members of the local church. (Acts 20:28)
 - I. Cornerstone Church recognizes that the duties of elders are as biblically mandated above, based on individual elder giftings. Given this, the church recognizes the need for a Teaching/Member Care Elder. This shall be a full-time and paid position (not a separate biblical office.)
 - J. Further, Cornerstone Church recognizes that the elders are to operate in plurality (i.e., one elder, one vote) regardless of giftings or position.



2. Elders Qualification

Elders shall meet the qualifications and standards of the Word of God prescribed for their office. They shall endeavor, by God's grace, to live and serve in full conformity to the standards found in John 21:16; Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3; and Titus 1:5-9.

3. Elder Election

For all elders the election process shall be as follows:

- A. The current elders shall provide the congregation with Biblical teaching concerning the tasks and qualifications of elders.
- B. The current elders shall identify elder nominee(s) for consideration.
- C. The nominee(s) shall perform extensive self-evaluation based upon the Scriptural teaching concerning elders.
- D. The elders shall interview the/those nominee(s) who remain in the process following the self-evaluation.
- E. The nominee(s) shall be presented to the membership for evaluation for a period of time stipulated by the current elders (not less than two weeks.) During this time the membership is encouraged to meet with and examine the nominee(s.) Any concerns shall be taken up first with the nominee in question and then with the current elders. Biblical disqualification issues must be brought to the nominee and/or current elders' attention.
- F. Following the membership evaluation period, the nominee will be presented to the membership for affirmation at a duly called members' meeting. An affirmation by 80% of the membership is necessary to affirm a nominee. Votes against affirmation must be accompanied by a Biblical justification for nominee qualification. In the event a nominee does not receive an 80% affirmation by the membership, the existing elders shall re-evaluate the elder candidate.

4. Elder Tenure

- A. An elder's term of office may be terminated at any time by resignation or by dismissal.
- B. After serving as elder for 3 years (and every 5 years thereafter) and with the agreement of the other elders, elders shall be eligible and are encouraged to take a period of sabbatical rest from church duties as circumstances allow. In no way does this sabbatical relieve the elder from his biblical elder qualifications. The sabbatical period shall be between 2 and 6 months in duration (as agreed by the other elders.) During this time the elder shall pursue activities that encourage rest, restoration, and spiritual growth. At the end of the period, the elder shall resume his previous duties.

5. Resignation of Elders

An elder may resign from his position at any time upon the mutual agreement of the remaining elders.

6. Dismissal of Elders

- A. The dismissal of an elder shall be based upon one of the following reasons:
 - i. Elder Disqualification – requires the unanimous consent of the remaining elders.
 - ii. Doctrine Contrary to the Published Beliefs of Cornerstone Church – See "B" below
 - iii. Unrepentant Sin – See "B" below



- B. An elder being dismissed on a matter of doctrine contrary to the published beliefs of Cornerstone Church or Unrepentant Sin requires the unanimous consent of the remaining elders and a members' vote to be held at a duly called business meeting. The dismissal of an elder requires an 80% majority vote in order to be dismissed.

Section II: Deacons

1. Deacon Responsibilities

Since the original Biblical word for deacon means "servant" or "minister," individuals who are selected as deacons will carry additional responsibility to serve the church. Deacons are responsible for serving the needs of the church by assisting the leadership in various supporting capacities as assigned to them by the elders (Acts 6:1-7).

2. Deacon Qualification

All Deacons must meet the Biblical qualifications and standards of the Scriptures. They shall strive, by God's grace to live and serve in conformity to the Biblical standards prescribed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

3. Deacon Selection

- A. Elders shall provide the congregation with Biblical teaching concerning the tasks and qualifications of Deacons
- B. Elders shall then request nominations for deacons from the membership as the need for deacons arises.
- C. Elders shall interview the nominee(s) and come to a consensus on the nominees who best fulfill the Biblical requirements and the present need.
- D. Upon unanimous approval of the candidates by the elders, the nominee(s) will then be presented to the congregation for voting approval, recognition, and dedication.
- E. There is no limit to the number of deacons.

4. Deacon Tenure

Deacons shall serve one-year terms and are subject to congregational evaluation at the annual Member's Meeting. There is no limitation placed on the number of terms a deacon may serve.

5. Dismissal of Deacons

When necessary, the dismissal of a deacon will be the responsibility of the elders. The dismissal of a deacon will require unanimous consent of the elders.

Section III: Pastoral and Administrative Staff

- 1. Ministerial & Staff Positions - The elders may establish paid and/or volunteer ministry and/or pastoral positions and teams to assist the elders in fulfilling their responsibilities. A paid or volunteer staff position does not necessarily constitute an elder's position. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any ministerial and staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.
- 2. Ministerial and Pastoral Staff Qualifications - All pastoral staff shall meet the Biblical qualifications for elders. All ministerial staff shall meet the Biblical qualifications for deacons.
- 3. Ministerial and Pastoral Staff Supervision - The elders have the responsibility for the hiring, supervision, evaluation, and dismissal of all ministerial and pastoral staff members. Action to hire or dismiss a member of the ministerial pastoral staff shall require unanimous consent of all the elders.
- 4. Non-Ministerial Staff Positions - The elders may hire and dismiss paid and/or volunteer non-ministerial staff positions or delegate that responsibility on a case-by-case basis. The outworking of this responsibility may, on a case-by-case basis, be delegated to



deacons or another ministerial staff member. The scope and approval of job descriptions for any non-ministerial staff position shall reside in the hands of those with hiring authority for that position.

Article VIII: Amendments

This Constitution, Official Position Statements, and Church Covenant may be amended by an 80% majority at a duly called business meeting providing the elders have unanimously approved the proposed amendment(s).

